

Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association



Constitution and Bylaws

(Revised September, 2012)

Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association

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Constitution

Article 1: MOFA

This Association shall be known as the Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association, hereinafter referred to as “the Association”.

Article 2: Affiliations

The Association is affiliated with the Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club (Manhattan, Kansas), Other affiliations include the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) and the United States Specialty Sports (USSSA).

Article 3: Objectives

The objectives of this Association shall be:

- a) To provide a program that is enjoyable and rewarding for all participants, and which promotes a competitive and advanced level of fastpitch softball
- b) To promote, teach, and govern the game of fastpitch softball among all Association Member teams.
- c) To encourage courtesy, proper conduct, and respect for players, coaches, umpires, parents, and spectators by the players, coaches, parents, and spectators.
- d) To promote good sportsmanship and fair play.
- e) To develop leadership.
- f) To teach respect for the rules of the game.
- g) To develop physical fitness and mental alertness.
- h) To provide fund raising opportunities for Association Member teams and players.

Article 4: Members

Members of the Association include:

- a) Any team, their Head and Assistant Coaches, Team Parents, and Business Managers, and players who have been approved by the Association's Executive Board to become members of the Association, who remain in good standing with the Association, and subscribe to the purpose of the Association and agree to abide by the Bylaws, Policies, and Guidelines of the Association.
- b) All Executive Board Officers that subscribe to the purpose of the Association and agree to abide by the Bylaws, Policies, and Guidelines of the Association.

Article 5: Voting Members

Each member of the Executive Board shall have one (1) vote in Association matters requiring a vote.

Article 6: Executive Board

The authority of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Board of the Association. The Executive Board has the authority and responsibility to conduct all Association business functions, enforce the bylaws, and represent the Association in matters related to the Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club.

Article 7: Executive Board Positions

- a) The business of the Association shall be conducted by the following positions of the Executive Board:
 1. **Executive Officers**
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer

- b) A person may hold only one voting Executive Board position.
- c) The Executive Board has the right to combine, add, or eliminate Board positions as necessary.

Article 8: Voting Rights

- a) Each member of the Executive Board shall have one (1) vote in Association business matters requiring a vote.
- b) No member of the Executive Board shall vote on any matter directly affecting him/herself or any team which he/she is associated.

Article 9: Recommended Committees

To assist the Executive Board in conducting the business of the Association, the following committees are recommended:

- Coach Selection Committee:
- Tournament Committee
- Rules Committee

Others may be formed as required by the Executive Board.

Appendix A contains the descriptions of all duties of the Executive Board officers.

Article 10: Meetings

- a) The Executive Board shall meet whenever the President deems necessary, or if instructed to do so by a majority of the Board, but in any case shall meet at least once every six months.
- b) A General Membership meeting of the Association may be convened at the discretion of the Executive Board.
- c) Notice of the meeting will be by letter from the secretary to the Head Coach of each Member Team at least fourteen days prior to the meeting and shall include date, time, and location of the meeting. The Head Coach of each team will be responsible for notifying Assistant Coaches and players of the meeting.

Article 11: Association Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Association are:

- a) To provide assistance in the application and payment of the following:
 - ◆ ASA/USSSA memberships.
 - ◆ Team insurance.
 - ◆ Tournament entries.

- b) To provide fund raising opportunities for Member Teams through the selling of program advertisements in conjunction with annual tournaments held in Manhattan.

- c) To provide short term loans due to cash flow timing or post-state tournaments:
 - ◆ Normally for memberships, insurance, and tournament entry fees only.
 - ◆ Loan amount available based on the availability of Association funds.
 - ◆ Repayable to the Association through advertisement money paid to the Association.
 - ◆ Special loan arrangements can be made for post-state tournaments.

- d) To provide assistance to new teams:
 - ◆ Information on clinics, tournaments, practice fields, etc.
 - ◆ Mentoring by senior coaches

- e) To identify and provide assistance with other fund raising opportunities.

- f) To purchase equipment used by all teams such as pitching machines and machine balls.

- g) To determine on a yearly bases the age group structure of the Association.

- h) To determine on a yearly basis which teams are to be included in the Association.

- i) To promote the continuing fastpitch softball education of Association coaches

Article 12: Member Team Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Member Teams are:

- a) Payment of insurance fee to the Association by January 1st .
- b) Payment of membership fees to the Association by February 1st .
- c) Payment of tournament entry fees to the Association by May 1st :
 - ◆ Short term loans will be available from the Association (based on availability of Association funds) to help with any cash flow timing problems associated with team fund raising and expenses.
 - ◆ Entries will not be processed until insurance and membership fees are paid to the Association.
- d) Team expenses other than memberships, insurance and entry fees are to be paid by the team's business manager and not by the Association's treasurer.
- e) Payment of all Program Advertising money collected to the Association:
 - ◆ 85%, less any loan amounts and/or other fees not paid, will be refunded immediately to the Member Teams.
 - ◆ When final Program printing costs are determined, any significant differences to the 15% retained by the Association will be refunded or billed.
- f) Member Teams will be responsible for their own funding of:
 - ◆ Association, ASA/USSSA, and insurance fees
 - ◆ Tournament entry fees.
 - ◆ Uniforms.
 - ◆ Equipment (balls, gloves, bats, bags, etc.).
 - ◆ Travel expenses.
 - ◆ Team picnics and parties.
 - ◆ Coach and player clinics.
- g) Where applicable, Member Teams and the Association will develop a repayment plan for the Member Teams that owe the Association money.
- h) Due to the significant contribution of money and facilities by the Optimist Club, the name 'Optimist' should appear in the following:
 - ◆ Team name.
 - ◆ Players and coach's uniform.
 - ◆ Press Releases.

- i) All Association and Optimist Park code of conduct and rules must be followed.
- j) Each Member Team **must** have a Head Coach and at least one Assistant coach. It is recommended that each Member Team also have a Team Parent and a Business Manager. See Appendix A for a description of these positions.
- k) It is **required** that each Member Team adopt the Coaches' Code of Ethics (Appendix B). All, Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Parents, and Business Managers must sign this form and return it to the Association each year by October 1. It is recommended that teams also adopt the Parents' and Players' Code of Ethics. These should be signed and kept on file by the Team Parent or Head Coach.
- n) It is suggested that each Member Team identify several people associated with the team to handle fundraising and sponsorship ventures:
 - ◆ Preferably not coaches.
 - ◆ Fund raising should start early (i.e. Late Fall, Early Winter) to ensure funds available for all fees due.
 - ◆ Association can help with identifying potential fund raising opportunities.
- o) Coaches are expected on a continuing basis to upgrade their knowledge of basic and advanced fastpitch skills and strategies.
- p) Each year there will be at least one work day at Optimist Park. Each team is expected to contribute volunteers to this effort.

Article 13: Association Income

a) Income for the Association will consist of:

- ◆ Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club funding.
- ◆ Association fees from Member Teams.
- ◆ Interest income from bank accounts.

b) Excess Income over Expenses for the Association will be used for:

- ◆ Office Supplies (stamps, envelopes, phone calls, etc.).
- ◆ Equipment (pitching machine balls, safety nets, etc.).
- ◆ Short term loans to Member Teams.
- ◆ Optimist Park improvements approved by the Executive Board.

Article 14: Association Fees

Annual fees shall be such amounts as determined by the Association's Executive Board.

Article 15: Constitutional Amendments

Proposed constitutional amendments, signed by the proposer and a seconder, must be submitted in writing to the Secretary thirty days before an Executive Board meeting. The Secretary shall in turn provide each Executive Board member fourteen days notice of such proposed amendments.

Constitutional amendments shall not be adopted unless they receive a majority vote of a quorum of the Executive Board.

Bylaws

Bylaw #1: Interpretation of Association Bylaws

Interpretation of Association bylaws, policies, or any other Association matter not approved herein, shall be referred to the Association's Executive Board, whose decision shall be binding on all parties.

Bylaw #2: Definitions

- ◆ **Association** – Shall be known as the Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association.
- ◆ **Member Team** – Any team that has been approved by the Association's Executive Board to become a member of the Association and is in good standing with the Association. Teams will consist of girls grouped by the following age brackets as of January 1st of the year:
 - 8U – Age 8 & Under girls.
 - 10U – Age 10 & Under girls.
 - 12U – Age 12 & Under girls.
 - 14U – Age 14 & Under girls.
 - 16U – Age 16 & Under girls.
 - 18U – Age 18 & Under girls.
- ◆ **Association Member** – Any Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Parent, Business Manager, and player of a Member Team.
- ◆ **In Good Standing** – Shall mean the completed payment of all fees and loans, or repayment plan in progress, and the return, as and when required, of Association equipment in good condition.
- ◆ **Playing Season** – Shall mean the first scheduled tournament game through the last scheduled tournament or post season game.
- ◆ **Responsible Officials** – Shall mean Head or Assistant Coaches, managers, trainers, scorekeepers, and parents.

Bylaw #3: Appointment and Election of Officers

- a) The members of the Executive Board shall be appointed or elected as follows. Executive officers are appointed for an indefinite period of time.
- ◆ **President** – Appointed by the Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club Board Of Directors and preferably an Optimist member.
 - ◆ **Vice President** – Appointed by the President. A person knowledgeable of and involved with youth fastpitch softball.
 - ◆ **Secretary** – Appointed by the President. A person knowledgeable of and involved with youth fastpitch softball. May be combined with treasurer position.
 - ◆ **Treasurer** - Appointed by the President. A person knowledgeable of and involved with youth fastpitch softball. May be combined with secretary position.

Bylaw #4: Quorum

At meetings of the Executive Board, a majority of Board members present shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business.

Bylaw #5: Filling Executive Board Vacancies

Any vacancy in the Executive Board may be filled by appointment by the Executive Board with a majority vote.

Bylaw #6: Delinquent Executive Board Officers

Any member of the Executive Board absenting him/herself without cause from three consecutive meetings of the Board, or willfully neglecting his/her duties to the Board, may be relieved of their position by the Executive Board.

Bylaw #7: Rules of Order for Conducting Business

The order of business of the Association will be:

- ◆ Call to Order
- ◆ Roll Call of Officers
- ◆ Reading and approval of Minutes
- ◆ Treasurers Report
- ◆ Reports of Officers
- ◆ Unfinished Business
- ◆ Proposals
- ◆ Election of Officers (Annual General Membership Meeting only)
- ◆ New Business
- ◆ Adjournment

Unless otherwise superceded by some article of the Constitution and Bylaws of this Association, Robert's Rules of Order will govern all meetings of the Association.

Bylaw #8: Financial Reporting

A financial statement/report shall be prepared by the Treasurer and presented at the semi-annual meeting of the Executive Board.

Bylaw #9: Discipline

- a) The Executive Board shall deal with the business of the Association as a whole.
- b) It shall be known to all concerned parties (parents, coaches, players, etc.) that the Executive Board will perform this function.
- c) Only written grievances (see Appendix I) submitted to the Executive Board will be acted upon.
- d) The Executive Board may review and suspend, or impose other punishment for each player or coach sent from the field of play during any game.
- e) The Executive Board may summon before it any coach, player, or other party in order to inquire into any offense.
- f) The Executive Board shall have the authority to remove any coach or player from the Association given sufficient grounds.

- g) Any violation of the Coaches / Managers Code of Ethics (Appendix B) shall be grounds for Association disciplinary action.

The Association recognizes that sports bring to the surface many concerns, anxieties and feelings for parents and their children. Often problems are the result of a misunderstanding or failure to identify expectations. We expect that coaches, players, and parents can be reasonable and considerate in approaching problems and work with the understanding that no one intends any ill will. To facilitate the resolution of these concerns, we have established the following procedures:

Emergency Situations:

Actions that are inappropriate, or could cause bodily injury or unsafe conditions that could result in injury to a player must be brought to the coach's attention immediately. This can be done by the Coach, Team Parent or parents. An incident report must be submitted to the Association Board of Directors.

Game Day/Tournament Issues:

Parents are asked to wait 24hrs after the completion of a tournament to approach any coach with concerns about a particular tournament and/or game. This policy allows all parties time to reflect on the games, and is intended to protect all involved from hurtful words spoken in moments of high emotion.

All Other Issues:

All grievances will be documented (see Appendix I) and those involved will be asked to sign documentation.

If problems arise during the course of the season, the following policy will be followed:

Step 1: Parent and Player communicates with the Coach.

Players and parents are encouraged to talk directly to the coach and attempt to resolve the problem themselves. Parents are asked to wait until after a practice to address the coach.

Step 2: In the event that the issue still is unresolved, the issue is turned over to the Association Board of Directors.

Parents **MUST** provide a detailed written document outlining their concerns before this step occurs. It may be determined that a member of the Association Board of Directors should meet with the player, the coach, or both to resolve the issue. Decisions are final. If a decision requires the disciplining of a parent/player or coach, this information will not be released by the Association Board due to confidentiality issues.

Action Timelines:

The Association is run by volunteers. All meetings of Board members must occur outside of work hours. Therefore, any step requiring a meeting of the Association Board of Directors will occur within 72 hours of initiation of a written grievance by the parent/player or coach.

Bylaw #10: Player Transfers

- a) A player may not be transferred between Member Teams during the playing season without the consent of the player, player's parents, and both Head Coaches of the respective teams.
- b) A player may be transferred between Member Teams before and after the playing season with the consent of the player, the player's parents and the Head Coach of the Member Team being transferred to.
- c) A player may seek to be transferred to another Member Team at any time if the player's Member Team disbands.
- d) A player may seek to be transferred to another Member Team if a "problem" [recognized as such by the board] exists between the player and coach and/or team member and with prior approval from the Executive Board.
- e) Any team which, through its responsible officials, attempts to induce a player of any team to leave her team before the end of the playing season, shall be held accountable for such action to the Executive Board.
- f) Any team which, through its responsible officials, actively recruits players from other member teams at any time will be held accountable to the Executive Board.

Bylaw #11: Protests

All protests and appeals concerning behavior of Association members lodged by Member Teams shall be referred to the Executive Board in order to obtain the support of the Association.

Bylaw #12: Sponsorship and Fundraising

All sponsorship and fundraising monies paid to the Association will be governed and in accordance with the Association Charge Policy (Appendix E).

Bylaw #13: Insurance

The Association shall ensure that all players and coaches are insured under a standard team sport insurance policy.

No team shall be permitted to participate in any activity under the jurisdiction of the Association if insurance fees have not been paid to the Association.

Bylaw #14: Team Participation

Only teams properly approved by the Association's Executive Board and in good standing with the Association shall be permitted to participate in any activity under the jurisdiction of the Association.

Bylaw #15: Start-up Assistance Policy

The Association is able to provide special assistance to new teams in their first year of operation. Specifically, the yearly Association fee will be waived. All such funding is contingent upon the availability of Association resources and at the discretion of the Board.

Bylaw #16: Level of Competition

- a) The Association and the Manhattan Breakfast Optimist Club recognize the need to balance the goals of providing both a high level of fast pitch softball and an opportunity for participation to as many serious athletes and families as is possible.
- b) Fastpitch Associations that sanction the tournaments in which our teams compete classify teams into three levels of competition – A, B and C. It is the goal of this Association that all of its teams compete at the B-level or higher.
- c) However, the Association recognizes that serious athletes, families, and teams on occasion will enter our program from recreational leagues which have not prepared them for competing at the B or A level.

- d) Hence, in the younger [U8, U10, U12, U14] age groups, the Association will support teams competing at the C level for a maximum of two seasons. It is the Association's belief, based upon the experience of past teams, that, given two seasons, serious athletes, families, and teams can prepare themselves to compete at the A or B level.
- e) Except in very unusual circumstances, the Association will not support C-level teams in the 16U and 18U age groups.

Bylaw #17: Tournament Participation

- a) Association teams are expected to participate in summer tournaments as follows:
 - ◆ U8 and U10 teams are to participate in a minimum of four tournaments per season.
 - ◆ U12 teams are to participate in a minimum of six tournaments per season.
 - ◆ U14 to U18 teams are to participate in a minimum of seven tournaments per season.
- b) Association teams are expected to participate in tournaments held in Manhattan as follows. Assuming that two events are held before June 1, and one is held during the month of June:
 - ◆ U10, U12 and U14 are to participate in a minimum of two Manhattan tournaments.
 - ◆ All other age groups are to participate in the June Manhattan tournament.
- c) Association teams are expected to participate in at least one state-level tournament.

Bylaw #18: Practice Expectations

The Association has very general expectations regarding organized practice as follows.

- a) During the summer season, Association teams are expected to conduct a minimum of two practices per week.
- b) During the summer season, Association teams should not fail to practice for an extended period of time.

- c) During the off-season, Association teams are expected to conduct a limited practice schedule. Park fields are available during the months of September and October. An inside facility is available on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during the months of December, January and February.

Bylaw #19: Association Age Group Composition

- a) It is the responsibility of the Board to determine the mix of teams and team age groups which is in the best interest of the goals of the Association.
- b) Pursuant to the Association's goal of promoting a high level of competition:
 - ◆ The ideal age structure for the Association would involve one team each at the ages of 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 18
 - ◆ New or substantially new teams at the older age levels [16, 18] will only be included in the Association under unusual circumstances.
 - ◆ We would generally expect that there would be more teams per age group at the younger ages [10, 12 and 14] than at the older ages.
 - ◆ Multiple teams at the same age will generally be discouraged.
- c) The final mix of teams will be publicly announced by the Association no later than September 1.

Bylaw #20: Application for Continuing Association Membership

- a) In order to ensure a mix of age groups that is beneficial to the Association's goals, all teams are required to apply for continuation in the organization each year.
- b) Specifically, by July 15 all teams wishing to continue with the organization should complete and submit to the board the form contained in Appendix G.

Bylaw #21: Tryout Policy

- a) Except in unusual situations, open tryouts should be held for roster vacancies on all teams and these tryouts should be announced in local newspapers.
- b) Given the competition that exists for players, in order to be included in the Association for the following season, all teams should be at or near a full roster by August 15.

Bylaw #22: Continuing Coaches' Education

- a) Critical to the Association's goal of promoting a high level of softball competition is that our coaches be well-versed and up-to-date in terms of teaching both basic and advanced softball skills. The families who entrust their daughters to us assume that our coaches understand the game and also know how to teach it.
- b) The Association has a variety of coaching materials and there are many internet sites that contain very useful materials.
- c) An especially recommended internet site is Cindy Bristow's *Softball Excellence* at <http://www.softballexcellence.com/>. Coaches are very strongly encouraged to complete the "Coaching Certification Courses" which have seven levels.
- d) A coach's clinic conducted by the National Sports Clinics is held in Kansas each year around the beginning of February [www.nationalsportsclinics.com/]. The Association strongly recommends that each team send a minimum of one coach to this clinic each year. The Association will subsidize each coach and assistant coach for this clinic one time.
- e) Coaches are strongly encouraged to draw upon the expertise of the senior coaches in the Association.

Bylaw #23: Youth Protection Guidelines

Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association (MOFA) cares about the safety and welfare of all players, coaches, managers, and other team volunteers. Consequently, MOFA has developed Youth Protection Guidelines designed to help ensure the safety and well-being of all MOFA members, particularly our youth. The guidelines are aimed at eliminating any opportunities for abuse within our sports program. It is the responsibility of all MOFA participants to ensure that these policies are followed.

It must be understood that our volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse, and should never attempt to do so, but they must take responsibility for promptly reporting any concerns to MOFA.

All MOFA Head Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Team Parents, and Business Managers, and other team volunteers, who are working directly with children under the age of eighteen, are required to participate in, and adhere to, the Youth Protection Guidelines which includes:

- a) Reading the MOFA Youth Protection guidelines (Appendix J).
- b) Signing the Code of Conduct for Coaches Form (Appendix B).

Bylaw #24: Parent Communication

The Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association (MOFA) will communicate directly with the parents or guardians of players on informational matters relating to MOFA. These will include, but are not limited to, fundraisers, Optimist Park workdays, grievance procedures, available clinics, and websites.

Appendices

Appendix A: Position Descriptions

President

As President, this position carries over all responsibility of the Association. The President is a member on any and all committees and will chair all Executive Board, Annual General Membership, and Extraordinary meetings of the Association. He/she may delegate someone from the Executive Board to chair any meeting. The President has the privilege of the “tie breaker vote”. This is to say the President will have a vote in case the vote is tied after all members present have voted. The President is to see that the Association is run according to the Constitution and Bylaws. He/she will be a signing officer of the Association.

Vice President

As Vice President, this position will take over all duties and responsibilities of the President in the absence of the President. He/she may be a member of any and all committees and is to assist in any area needed. The Vice President should have exposure to all facets of the Association. He/she will be a signing officer of the Association.

Secretary

As Secretary, he/she is responsible for keeping accurate records of all Association meetings, Association correspondence, and the recording of all policies and amendments of the Association. He/she will be a signing officer of the Association. May be combined with treasurer position.

Treasurer

As Treasurer, he/she shall handle the accounts of the Association along with the President. All funds will be given to the Treasurer for banking. The Treasurer may, from time to time, designate someone to collect funds. He/she will be a signing officer of the Association. May be combined with the secretary position.

Head Coach [Required]

21+ years of age;

Plans and oversees all practices and games. Goals are to develop each player and teach overall softball skills and game strategy in a fun and positive manner. The Head Coach also directs and develops the Assistant Coaches.

Coach position requires Board approval.

Time Requirement: Must be available for at least 95% of all games & practices, but ideally 100% of games and practices.

Assistant Coach [Required]

21+ years of age;

Works with the Head Coach at all practices and games to teach and develop softball skills in a positive safe environment.

All Assistant Coach positions require Board approval.

Time Requirement: Must be available for at least 75% of all games & practices, but ideally 100% of games & practices.

Team Parent [Recommended]

Female 21+ years of age, not coaches or coaches' families, preferably a parent;

Responsibilities can include, but are not limited to, communication between parents/players and the Association, ensuring player safety and emotional well-being, coordination of team parent volunteers, coordinating fund raisers, communicating practice and games schedules, and ensuring that at least one female over 21 years of age attends all practices and games.

Time Requirement: Manager, or their substitute, attends all games & practices.

Business Manager [Recommended]

21+ years of age, not coaches or coaches' families, preferably a parent;

Receives and distributes Team funds and maintains an up-to-date accounting of Team funds and budget. Responsible for all financial filings and oversees all Team volunteers involved with income-generating activities.

Appendix B: Codes of Ethics -- Coaches / Managers

For a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Parent, and Business Manager, to remain in that capacity, they must, at all times, adhere to the Coaches Code of Ethics. Any deviation from this code may result in a grievance against the individual.

The Code of Ethics is as follows:

1. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.
2. I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.
3. I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and profane language or vulgar gestures and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
4. I will not engage in or tolerate any form of abuse of my players, be it physical, verbal, ethical, or sexual.
5. I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.
6. I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.
7. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.
8. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and umpires at every game or practice.
9. I will be knowledgeable of the rules and I will teach these rules to my players.
10. I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.
11. I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.
12. I will respect the facilities that my team uses for games or practice and do whatever I can to help maintain those facilities.

If a Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Parent, or Business Manager is alleged to have violated any point of the Ethics Code, a grievance may be made against them. Anyone may submit a grievance. A form is available from any Association Board member. The grievance must be submitted in complete written form to an Association Board Member. The Association Board member will immediately notify the remaining Association Board members and a meeting will be scheduled regarding the issue. The Association Board shall review the grievance and decide on the final discipline, if any. This decision will be final and not subject to further appeal.

If a submitted grievance is found to be frivolous or not pertaining to the Code of Ethics, the Association Board can dismiss it and no record will be made.

If a submitted grievance is found to be a violation of the Code (other than point #4) the individual may receive a verbal warning and a documented record of the grievance shall be placed in the individual's file. If this is the second upheld grievance against this individual, they will be suspended from participation in MOFA activities for a time to be decided by the Association Board. If this is the third upheld grievance against this individual, they will be immediately suspended from participation in MOFA activities for the remainder of the season. They may also be barred from further participation in future MOFA activities if so decided by the Association Board. If an upheld grievance is found to be in violation of Ethical Code #4, the individual will be immediately suspended from participation in MOFA activities for the remainder of the season. The Association Board will decide on the eligibility of the individual to participate in future MOFA activities. These guidelines are for the benefit of our members. MOFA cannot list every ethical or moral item that would not be considered portraying a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, tact and maturity. In the event that the Association Board feels that an individual(s) is acting in a way that is detrimental to the Association or its members, the individual(s) may be reprimanded, suspended or barred from further participation in future MOFA activities.

I have read and understand this Code of Ethics. I understand that it is my responsibility as a MOFA volunteer to adhere to this code, and I further understand that I may be subjected to a grievance should I deviate from this Code.

Coach or Manager

Date

Team

Appendix B: Codes of Ethics -- Parents

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.
2. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
3. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and profane language or vulgar gestures and I will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
4. I will not tolerate any form of abuse of my child, be it physical, verbal, ethical, or sexual and will immediately report any such abuse to the Association.
5. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
6. I will support coaches and officials working with my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
7. I will remember that the game is for youth – not adults.
8. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
9. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials, with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
10. I promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectable fan, assisting with coaching, or providing transportation.
11. I will require that my child's coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Ethics.
12. I will respect the facilities that my child's team uses for games or practice and do whatever I can to help maintain those facilities.

Parent

Parent

Team

Date

Appendix B: Codes of Ethics -- Players

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
2. I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
3. I will not use drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and profane language or vulgar gestures.
4. I will not tolerate any form of abuse, be it physical, verbal, ethical, or sexual and will immediately report any such abuse to my parents, Team Parent, and the Association.
5. I will expect to receive a fair amount of playing time.
6. I will do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
7. I will treat my coaches, other players, officials, and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
8. I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun.
9. I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
10. I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it is important to me.
11. I will do my very best in school.
12. I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.
13. I will respect the facilities that I use for games or practice and do whatever I can to help maintain those facilities.

Player

Date

Team

Appendix C: 2013 Fees (Subject to Change)

- ◆ Team Insurance – \$ 108.00 per insured player or coach.
- ◆ Association Fee – \$200 per year.
- ◆ ASA Fee – No fee if team is insured.
- ◆ USSSA Fee – \$ 30 per year.

Appendix D: Coaches Miscellaneous Information

- ◆ Advertisements for the tournament programs need to be given to Diane as soon as possible. Since Association personnel must prepare the final camera-ready document, the deadline for submitting ads is one month before the date of the first tournament.
- ◆ ASA & USSSA rosters need to be completed as soon as possible as parent signatures are required. The rosters may be needed for sanctioned tournaments.
- ◆ Copies of players' birth certificates and photo ID's are needed for State and NIT play. They may also be needed for proof of age at other tournaments.
- ◆ Insurance cards should be brought to tournaments.
- ◆ A copy of the team roster and a schedule of games should be provided to the Manhattan Mercury as soon as possible.
- ◆ Written stories should be provided to the Manhattan Mercury before 9:00 a.m. Monday morning after a weekend tournament.

Appendix E: Charge Policy

Effective January 1, 1999, the Association's policy on charging is:

- ◆ Member Teams of the Association, or any individual, will not be allowed to make charges to the Association.
- ◆ The Association will not be responsible for, nor will pay for, any charges made to the Association by any representative of Member Teams, or any individual.
- ◆ Only the Executive Officers of the Association will be allowed to make charges to the Association. The Executive Officers currently are Bruce Bidwell, Diane Brummett and Jim Franke.
- ◆ Member Teams of the Association will be allowed to establish their own team charge accounts if necessary. The Association will not be responsible for the payment of any charges made to these accounts.

Appendix F: Coach Selection

POLICY

Every person involved in the selection of Association coaches shall follow these guidelines.

PURPOSE:

To ensure that the best available candidates are selected to coach Association teams, and to identify and exclude inappropriate candidates from being involved with our youth, in a position of authority.

SELECTION COMMITTEE MAKEUP:

At the discretion of the Association Board, the committee shall consist of either: 1) the Association Board; or, 2) 1 Association Board Member and 2 Team Member coaches.

GUIDELINES:

1. Each applicant shall complete the Coach/Assistant Coach Application Form and return it to the Selection Committee Association Board Member.
2. All 3 references given by each applicant shall be checked. All information given by the references shall be attached to the Application Form.
3. If applicable, Manhattan Parks and Recreation supervisors shall be contacted for the purpose of evaluating prior coaching history of each applicant. Coach Evaluation Forms shall be used for this evaluation. All information given by the supervisors shall be attached to the Application Form.
4. If applicable, at least 3 parents selected at random from teams coached by each applicant shall be contacted for the purpose of evaluating prior coaching history. The parents contacted shall not be any of the 3 references given by the applicant. Coach Evaluation Forms shall be used for this evaluation. All information given by the parents shall be attached to the Application Form.

GUIDELINES (continued):

5. Evaluation criteria includes at a minimum the following items:

- ◆ Previous successful youth coaching experience.
- ◆ Knowledge of softball basics and rules of the game.
- ◆ Ability and willingness to teach players of all skill levels.
- ◆ Ability to teach the key skill positions of pitcher and catcher.
- ◆ Ability to provide positive reinforcement to players in both practice and game situations.
- ◆ Ability to teach respect for officials and opponents.
- ◆ Attention to safety issues including conditioning, equipment, and playing conditions.
- ◆ Attendance and active participation in coach and player clinics.
- ◆ History of adherence to Guidelines and Policies and willingness to work within the Association.

Appendix F: Coach Selection – Head Coach/Assistant Coach Application Form

Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches are approved by the Executive Board and the Coach Selection Committee.

By signing this form, you are not guaranteed of being selected as a Head Coach or Assistant Coach.

FIRST NAME & INITIAL	LAST NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY #
ADDRESS	CITY	STATE ZIP CODE
HOME PHONE	BUSINESS PHONE	DATE OF BIRTH
FAX NUMBER	E-MAIL	GENDER
DRIVER'S LICENSE NO.	STATE	EXPIRATION

CIRCLE APPROPRIATE CATEGORY: Coach Assistant Coach

1. Background in work with youth Position _____ Year(s) _____
2. Experience in fastpitch softball Position _____ Year(s) _____
3. Experience in youth fastpitch softball Position _____ Year(s) _____

LIST THREE REFERENCES:

FIRST & LAST NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
FIRST & LAST NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE
FIRST & LAST NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE

Have you ever voluntarily resigned, been removed from a position of authority, or arrested, for moral turpitude or dishonesty? Yes _____ No _____

Have you ever been refused participation in any other youth program? Yes___ No___

Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty to any felony or class A, B, or C misdemeanor under the Kansas Penal Code, equivalent federal law, equivalent law of another state, or equivalent Code of Uniform Military Justice: Yes___ No___

If yes, describe each in full: (Attach additional pages if needed).

Do you currently have pending against you any criminal charges of any type or are you currently on "deferred adjudication" for any criminal offense? Yes___ No___

If yes, describe each in full: (Attach additional pages if needed).

Are you a registered Sex Offender? Yes___ No ___

Have you ever been convicted of any crime involving or against a minor? Yes___ No ___

I would like to coach a Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association team because:

Briefly describe your coaching philosophy:

I understand that:

- a. It is the intent of the Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association to deny coaching of any Association team to any person who has been convicted of a crime of violence or of a crime against a person, or who has a poor credit history.
- b. In applying for a Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association coaching position, the information which I have furnished on this form is subject to verification, which may include criminal history and credit checks.
- c. I must sign and abide by the Association's Coaches' Code Of Ethics.
- d. I must abide by the rules of the Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association and their affiliated organizations and sponsors.

I certify that all of my statements on this application, the information provided, and attachments hereto, are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

DATE

Appendix F: Coach Selection -- Coach Evaluation Form – Part 1

Coaching Applicant

Date

Manhattan Parks & Recreation Supervisor

Parent

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
LEADERSHIP SKILLS			
1. Establishes goals for players and team			
2. Uses a democratic coaching style			
3. Is a good role model			
4. Develops leadership skills in players			
5. Has a positive relationship with umpires			
6. Interacts effectively with parents			
7. Helps players maximize their potential			

Other Comments:

Appendix F: Coach Selection -- Coach Evaluation Form – Part 2

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
TEACHING SKILLS			
1. Teach the necessary softball skills			
2. Teach skills using proper sequence & progressions			
3. Teaches skills using understandable language			
4. Realizes players differs in their readiness to learn a skill			
5. Realizes players learn skills at different rates			
6. Teaches more than just softball skills			

Other Comments:

Appendix F: Coach Selection -- Coach Evaluation Form – Part 3

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS			
1. Plans effective practices			
2. Selects good assistant coaches			
3. Has parents assist in the program			
4. Attends to details			
5. Communicates effectively			

Other Comments:

Appendix G: Continuing Membership Application

Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association Continuing Membership Application For 20_____ Season

Team Name:
Head Coach:
Assistant Coach[es]:
Age Group for Next Season
Competition Level Next Season [A, B, C]
Players from this year's roster committed for next year:

Appendix H: Optimist Ball Park Scheduling Information

The facilities at Optimist Park include four practice fields, three batting cages and two practice pitching lanes. The fields are Brummett, Bidwell, Jessica and South. All scheduling of practice fields, batting cages, and the pitching lanes is done through Bruce Bidwell.

- ◆ 3 separate schedules are maintained; 1 for the practice fields, 1 for the batting cages, and 1 for the pitching lanes.
- ◆ Schedules are available on line at <http://www.manhattanoptimist.com/>
- ◆ The infields of all the practice fields are suitable for infield practice for all teams (up to 60-ft. base paths). Bidwell Field and South Field have a limited outfield.
- ◆ All practice fields and the batting cage are normally scheduled in 1 1/2-hour increments (or less) during the weekdays and 2 hour increments on the weekends as follows:

<u>Weekdays</u>	<u>Weekends</u>
4:00 - 5:30 pm	10:00 am - 12:00 n
5:30 - 7:00 pm	12:00 n - 2:00 pm
7:00 - 8:30 pm	2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
	4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

- ◆ Younger teams (8U, 10U, 12U, & 14U) are given preference for the 5:30 - 7:00 pm practice times.
- ◆ Practice days and times should be consistent.
 - i.e. every Mo & We at 5:30 or every Tu & Th at 7:00 etc.
- ◆ Older teams (16U & 18U) are given preference on Brummett, and Jessica fields.
- ◆ If possible, each team should have a minimum of one practice a week on Brummett, Jessica or South fields.
- ◆ Practice games are given priority over team practices.

- ◆ Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association softball teams have 1st priority on practice fields and batting cages with the following exceptions:
 - KSU Girls Softball Club given priority on Brummett field during Spring and Fall season. Days & times will vary.
 - Optimist supported T-Ball given 5:30 & 7:00 times on Bidwell field on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights.
- ◆ Other Optimist supported teams are given scheduling preferences over non-Optimist supported teams unless prior approval given.
- ◆ Most coaches prefer not to practice the day before a tournament and the day after (Friday & Monday). There is not enough 5:30 – 8:30 practice time on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays to allow 10 teams to do this. Some teams will have to practice on Friday and/or Monday. Preferences on the Tuesday – Thursday times will be based on prior year's practice schedules and length of time coach/team has been a member of the Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association.
- ◆ Use of Optimist Park will not be allowed for the current year until insurance, Association, and ASA/USSSA fees are paid.
- ◆ For those teams with a negative balance to the Association, use of Optimist Park will not be allowed for the current year if significant reduction of debt has not been accomplished or a repayment plan has not been agreed to.
- ◆ Practice at Optimist Park will not be allowed if loans have not been repaid.
- ◆ Softball teams that are not a member of the Association will not be allowed to use Optimist Park without approval from the manager(s) of Optimist Park.
- ◆ Exceptions handled if possible.

Appendix J: Youth Protection Policy

The parents, families, relatives and members of the Manhattan Optimist Fastpitch Association trust our program to provide a safe environment for all participants. The MOFA Youth Protection Policy does not tolerate abuse in any form, whether it is emotional, physical, or sexual.

Adults who assume volunteer roles within MOFA have the opportunity for a rewarding experience. The opportunity to work with youth is a privileged position of trust that should be held only by those who are willing to demonstrate behavior that fulfills this trust.

Youth Protection Guidelines

The following guidelines and expectations have been established for persons serving in volunteer roles with MOFA:

1. Conduct yourself in a courteous, respectful manner demonstrating behavior appropriate for a positive role model for youth.
2. Demonstrate exemplary behavior at all times when dealing with parents, coaches, assistant coaches, umpires and other personnel.
3. Encourage good sportsmanship by the players during both practices and games.
4. Treat all players with respect and dignity. Promote respect for all the participants including the opposition and game officials.
5. Put the welfare and well-being of the players first, before winning. Kids first, winning second.
6. Create a positive environment for training and competition. Make sports enjoyable and promote fair play.
7. Encourage and support players. Provide constructive feedback. Take time to offer praise whenever the youth does anything praiseworthy. Focus on the positive.
8. Where possible, avoid one-on-one situations with individual players. Meetings, discussions and drills should be conducted in view of other adults and/or youths.
9. Obtain parental consent to transport young players to and from practices and games.
10. While physical contact between an adult and a youth is not absolutely prohibited, as in high-fives when congratulating a youth for an accomplishment, adults must be very alert to the appropriateness of any physical contact. It is possible that it may be experienced by the youth or seen by others as inappropriate. For example, as in most social situations, you should avoid bear hugs and limit yourself to "shoulder-to-shoulder" hugs, maintaining space between your bodies.
11. Respect privacy. All youth are entitled to personal privacy from adults, and when necessary or appropriate, from other youth as well. A health and safety concern is the only exception. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.
12. Discipline used in youth programs should be constructive and reflect high values. Profanity and corporal punishment are never permitted.

13. Physical hazing, initiations, ridicule, inappropriate teasing or aggression are prohibited and may not be included as part of any youth activity.
14. Coaches, managers and other team volunteers must ensure that MOFA's policies are followed.
15. Young players must not be left alone without guidance or supervision. Ensure that a child is not left alone at any time (such as waiting for his/her parents to pick them up after a practice or game).
16. Keep medical and emergency contact details for the players with you at all practices and games in the event of an emergency.
17. Comply with anti-discrimination laws. MOFA offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status.
18. The use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products is prohibited at all MOFA practices and games.
19. Team managers or coaches should communicate all relevant team information to their teams. Details should include number, length and times of practices, games dates and other related team information.
20. In the event of an injury, immediately obtain or provide the appropriate medical assistance.
21. Respect, adhere to, and enforce the rules, policies, and guidelines established by MOFA including all state laws related to child abuse and substance abuse.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Youth protection policies and procedures address issues of child abuse. Child abuse is deliberate emotional, physical or sexual injury of a child by an adult or older child. Neglect is harm caused by withholding life's necessities: food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and education.

Signs of Abuse

Any abrupt change in behavior that is maintained for a week or longer is a sign that the child is experiencing stress that could stem from a variety of causes, including family disruption, illness, death of a pet, a move to a new neighborhood, or child abuse. Some of the possible specific signs for each kind of abuse are listed below:

Possible signs of Physical Abuse: Suspicious injuries that are different from those normally associated with childhood "wear and tear" such as burns, bruises, lacerations, abrasions and fractures.

Possible signs of Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse of others, extreme sensitivity to criticism, self-destructive behavior, appears to be a danger to others, continuous unwillingness or inability to form trusting relationships, chronic rebellion against authority, constant socially disruptive behavior, lagging physical development, and in severe cases habit disorders such as thumb sucking or rocking.

Possible signs of Sexual Abuse: Difficulty in walking; torn, stained, or bloody clothing; pain or itching in the genital area; bruises or bleeding in the body's private areas; sexually transmitted diseases; an age-inappropriate understanding of sex; reluctance to be left alone with a particular person; persistent and inappropriate sex play with peers; wearing excessive amounts of clothing; fear of touch; and abuse of animals.

Possible signs of Neglect: Child consistently shows up inappropriately or poorly dressed, shows obvious need of medical care, lacks personal hygiene, repeatedly borrows money for basic necessities, and is consistently overly hungry. If asked, the child will likely make excuses for his or her parent(s).

Your Responsibility

1. Show support and concern for any youth who might be affected
2. Do not jump to any conclusions. Act with all due diligence.
3. Ask the youth in indirect ways if "everything is all right." Be available for the child.
4. Consider stating your observations to the child's parents. Do not directly or indirectly accuse a suspected adult of child abuse.
5. Speak confidentially with other adult leaders who have contact with the child.
6. Handle the matter as discreetly as possible.
7. If necessary, remove the child from danger and obtain medical treatment as needed.
8. Report any team related concerns to the MOFA President. The law requires only that you have a reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused.

Reporting Procedures

MOFA views the reporting of suspected child abuse as both a personal and ethical obligation. All MOFA members should be alert to the physical and emotional state of all program participants.

1. If child abuse is suspected, report your reasonable suspicions to the MOFA President who will immediately investigate the allegations. During the investigation period, the accused individual will be suspended from all activities involving the supervision of children. The suspension will continue until the person is cleared or allegations are proven. If the allegations are proven correct, the individual will be removed from all MOFA activities.
2. When any MOFA member suspects child abuse or neglect occurring outside of the MOFA program, they are urged to report the situation to appropriate local authorities at the Department of Human Services at (Phone #).
3. All information regarding alleged child abuse will be maintained under strict confidentiality. Information will be communicated only on a "need-to-know" basis.

Appendix K: Addresses & Telephone Numbers

Bruce Bidwell, **Vice-President**
1524 Nichols
Manhattan, KS 66503-2442
bruce@manhattanoptimist.com
785-537-7538 (home)
785-776-4041 ext. 259 (work)
785-556-0431 (Cell)

Diane Brummett, **Secretary/Treasurer**
6216 Tuttle Creek Blvd.
Manhattan, KS 66502
brummett6@kansas.net
785-539-8698

Jim Franke, **President**
3339 Newbury St.
Manhattan, KS 66503
jfranke@ksu.edu
785-542-0451 (Work)
785-565-2682 (Cell)

Optimist Ball Park
317 Plymate Lane
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-539-1677