



# USA Softball of South Mississippi

## Zero Tolerance Policy

Effective 4/27/2022

USA Softball of South Mississippi is committed to creating a safe and fair environment for all participants. Respect for the game, the opponents, coaches and officials is a critical part of the environment that is created. USA Softball of South Mississippi implements this “zero tolerance” policy toward any cases of abuse that are reported and confirmed by umpires, parents, spectators, managers/coaches or board members. This policy is effective immediately.

*Abuse at its simplest is defined as any deliberate action that makes an individual feel physically threatened, verbally intimidated or emotionally humiliated. Disrespectfully objecting to calls, yelling at, publicly calling, constantly disagreeing with an umpire by action or verbally can be deemed umpire abuse. Coaches should always show decorum, respect and observe all game rules whenever questioning an umpire about a call. Parents/fans are expected to be a positive role model by treating all players, coaches, officials and fellow spectators with respect and support. Officials are required to conduct themselves in a businesslike, sportsmanlike, impartial and constructive manner at all times.*

The penalties for coaches, parents and/or fans with any confirmed case of umpire abuse will be:

- **1st incident** - Umpire may give warning or take any other appropriate action, including reporting the incident to the League President, Umpire-In-Chief, and District Commissioner.
- **2nd incident** – Two (2) game suspension for a coach regardless of past history, coaching experience or program involvement. This suspension will be IN ADDITION to any suspension due to an ejection from a game, before returning, coach must take coach development course(s) as the league and League President deems appropriate. Threats of future physical action, e.g. parking lot meetings, are automatic two (2) game suspensions.
- **3rd incident** – A lifetime ban from coaching any USA Softball of South Mississippi team or program.
- Any incident that involves physical abuse by bodily threatening, shoving, bumping or harming an umpire or anyone will result in an immediate indefinite suspension and notification of proper authorities.
- In addition, if a coach confronts an umpire after a game in order to continue verbally abusing an umpire, these penalties will be increased to 3 games for the 1st and 6 games for the 2nd incident.

Ejections require an investigation to determine if further penalties should be considered. Complaints may also originate from anyone threatened or with direct knowledge of the incident. A manager or coach wishing to be reinstated will have to appear before the USA Softball of South Mississippi Coaches Review Board for a hearing. Each league shall honor the suspensions and disciplinary actions of the other member leagues.

Managers and coaches are expected to lead by example, and enforce these policies where necessary. For example, if a parent/spectator is making comments on umpire calls, the manager and/or coach should ask them to refrain. The above penalties would apply to the coach that allows this behavior to occur. If it continues, they will be asked to leave and/or authorities may be called.

### **Zero Tolerance Policy Concerning Other Teams and Players**

Managers, coaches, players and parents should demonstrate good sportsmanship toward other teams and players. Managers and coaches are the role models for players and parents and should make every effort to be friendly and cordial before, during and after games. Good plays should be applauded by both sides. No razzing or “Hey, batter batter”, chatter towards the other team is permitted. Never make negative remarks about players on either team. Examples of such behavior can include things such as saying, loud enough to be heard, “he can’t hit,” “pitchers can’t pitch”, calling attention to miscue by player, sarcasm, etc. This is unacceptable by anyone - managers, coaches, players, parents or spectators.