



Organizational Mission:

Arlington Sage will provide motivated and talented Arlington fastpitch softball players an opportunity to achieve a higher level of play as individuals and as members of a team. The goal is to provide dedicated support so that every Sage player can develop her skills and ultimately be a competitive member of her high school softball team. Teams are expected to compete at least at the B level, with the exception of newly formed Sage teams.

1. Travel Program:

The Sage program is a division of Arlington Girls Softball Association, and is intended to complement the existing offerings of AGSA House, Spirit, and Impact. Team(s) will be formed in August and participate in competitive league and tournament/travel play through the following July. The program will strive to provide opportunities for play at all age groups: from 10-and-under to 18-and-under. The scope of the program will depend upon the availability of qualified coaches, interested players and AGSA capacity. Unless otherwise stated in this charter, AGSA rules and by-laws, as amended and approved by the AGSA executive board, apply to the Sage program.

1.1. Sage Travel Team Program Administration

The Sage program's administration will be composed of the Sage commissioner, the Sage assistant commissioner, the AGSA treasurer, and coaches of participating teams.

1.2. The Sage Commissioners

The Sage commissioner and Sage assistant commissioner will be elected members to the AGSA executive board. The Sage commissioner and assistant commissioner will be the overall managers of the Sage program with the same administrative authority as other AGSA league commissioners. The Sage commissioner is responsible for recruiting coaches, coordinating team tryouts and tournament schedules, presenting the tournament schedule to the AGSA executive board, and reporting the program's progress to the board. The assistant commissioner is responsible for operations in the absence of the lead commissioner or by assignment from the lead commissioner.

1.3 The Team Business Manager (TBM)

The team business manager (TBM) is an individual recommended by the coach and approved by the Sage commissioner. The TBM will develop team budgets, secure team insurance and ensure all players have completed all requirements to participate on the tournament/travel teams. The TBM will report to the team coach who reports to the Sage commissioner. The AGSA treasurer will support the work of the TBM. The AGSA treasurer is responsible for ensuring the TBM follows the requirements of a 501.3c non-profit organization. A head coach may act as TBM with approval from the Sage commissioner.



2. Tournament Year and Reporting Requirements:

2.1 Tournament Year

Individual tournament/travel teams will form in August, begin competing in tournaments in September and continue through July of the following year.

2.2 Team Budget

Each team will prepare a budget for the upcoming season (fall/winter or spring/summer) along with a schedule of planned tournaments, doubleheaders, scrimmages or other team events, and present these documents to the Sage commissioner at least one week prior to the first practice. In addition, the team fee must be presented to the AGSA Registrar for input into the online registration system at least two weeks prior to player registration.

2.3 AGSA Executive Board Approval

The SAGE commissioner will prepare and present to the AGSA executive board a plan for the tournament year with a schedule of events for spring/summer by March 15th and for fall/winter by September 15th.

3. Travel Team Coaching Staff:

To support the objectives of player development, the Sage program will seek out coaches of high caliber with strong experience. Coaching opportunities will be advertised via social media, the AGSA website, and email.

3.1. Coach Application

Individuals interested in becoming a Sage head coach must first contact the Sage commissioner and undergo an initial screening for the position being sought. At this time, candidates must disclose any coaching or administrative affiliations with non-AGSA, softball-oriented organizations and/or business relationships with potential team parents and players, such as paid instructional work. Additionally, business relationships with potential team parents and players, such as paid instructional work, must also be disclosed.. The Arlington Impact commissioner and AGSA president will review and determine whether those affiliations present a conflict of interest that would require the affiliation to be dissolved prior to accepting a coaching position. Upon initial approval by the commissioner, the candidate will submit an online coach application available on the AGSA website. Based on the information and personal references supplied by the applicant on the application form and perhaps firsthand knowledge by the commissioner, a recommendation will be made to the AGSA Executive Board.

3.2 Selection Requirement

Once head coaches have been approved and announced, each head coach must provide the Sage commissioner with a list of prospective assistant coaches for approval. Ideally, each Arlington Impact team should have a head coach and 1-2 assistant coaches who represent the



gender and racial diversity of our community. Each team may also appoint a team manager to handle logistical, uniform, and equipment requirements of the team. All head coaches and assistants must register and undergo a background check.

3.3 Safe Sport Training

To promote the highest level of integrity and safety of the Program, all head coaches and assistants will be required to complete designated training and education via the US Center for Safe Sport.

3.4 Paid Coaches

Non-parent coaches can be paid an annual stipend, or per-player fee, as determined by the Sage commissioner. Stipends should be consistent across coaches for different teams, but may vary based on experience and age group of team. Coaching fees should be incorporated into each team's individual budget for the year.

3.5 Private Coaching Services/Instruction

It is understood that coaches may provide private paid instruction to softball players on their personal time. However, these services may not be provided to players who are members of their current team.

4. **Program Relationships:**

4.1 AGSA House Requirement for 10U and Younger

Sage players participating on teams at the 10U or younger level are required to play on AGSA house teams during the spring house season. Playing in the house league in the fall is not a requirement. Exceptions to this policy include:

1. Non-resident players that are participating in their local spring house league.
2. Players registered to participate in other spring sports programs, i.e. soccer, tennis, track, etc.
3. Players having non-sports related school commitments, i.e. band, theater, etc.

Exceptions other than the above will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Sage commissioner at the written request of the Sage head coach. Financial constraints are not normally a viable cause for a waiver as confidential scholarships are available through AGSA. In addition, all Sage players, at any age level that are not playing High School ball, are strongly encouraged to play on an AGSA house league team. It is expected that House Coaches and Sage Coaches will work together with the spirit of equal compromise in an effort to allow the player to participate in both programs without undue demands on their school work and other activities.

4.2 House League Participation for Sage Players

AGSA believes participating in both programs is beneficial as it provides practice time and game experience to develop and refine players' skills, especially at younger levels. Sage players represent the next level for many AGSA players and, as such, should be role models for house players. Their presence elevates the play of house teams and sets the standard for skill level. Sage players are expected to lead by example, encourage other players in a positive manner, and bear the standard for the Sage program. We hope this experience ingrains their responsibility to give back to the sport that showcases their special talents. Sage coaches are expected to work closely with House League Commissioners and the Field Scheduling Coordinator to ensure that scheduling conflicts are minimized. In the event a conflict occurs, the rule of thumb for prioritizing attendance is as follows:

1. Sage games
2. House games
3. Sage practice
4. House practice

If a house game and Sage game occur on the same day but at different times, the Sage player should make every reasonable attempt to make the house game.

4.3 Scheduling with House League Teams

Since 10U Sage players are required to play on house league teams during the spring, Sage coaches must consider the published House league schedule, while registering for 10U tournaments. The maximum number of tournaments allowed for a 10U team (or younger), during the House spring season, is four, including Memorial Day weekend tournaments. Sage 10U teams are not permitted to schedule tournaments over the AGSA opening day weekend or during House playoffs. Exceptions may be made for national qualifying tournaments.

4.4 Program Relationship with High School Softball Programs

AGSA will work closely with the high school softball programs to ensure scheduling conflicts are minimized and the primacy of the high school program is maintained. It is expected that Sage players at the 14U, 16U and 18U levels will participate in their high school programs; the Sage program will complement, not compete with, Arlington High School Athletics. During the high school season, high school teams will take priority.

4.5 Local Community

Community engagement fosters positive relationships between the program, its members, and the local community. As a member of the Arlington community, the Sage program will seek opportunities to actively participate in and contribute to the local community via social and athletic activities, donations, and/or service projects.

5. Player, Parent/Guardian and Coach Responsibilities:

5.1 Team Conduct

All players, parents/guardians of players and coaches participating in the Sage Program are subject to the [AGSA Code of Conduct](#).

5.2 Team Commitment and Contract

All players, parents/guardians of players, and coaches in the Sage Program must sign a **Player/Parent/Coach Contract** stipulating the commitment made by players, parents/guardians and coaches. This contract will clearly and simply address recruitment, playing time, fees, coaching philosophy and the program schedule, including a plan for practices, tournaments, and other league play during the 11 months (September-July) of team play. This contract will define what is expected and required of team members, parents/guardians and coaches. The purpose of this written agreement is to ensure a clear understanding of how the team will function during the upcoming year of play. The agreement will require the signature of the player, the parent/guardian, and the respective head coach[FME[C4] . Lack of adherence to the contract may result in disciplinary action and, in some instances, a player's removal from the Sage program and/or team.

5.3 Playing Time

There is no guarantee, stated or implied, of playing time or for a particular position. The coach shall make every effort to provide sufficient opportunity for players to gain field and positional playing time. Failure to comply with team expectations (e.g. attendance, timeliness, level of efforts, sportsmanship) will negatively impact playing time.

6. Player Eligibility

6.1 Sage Residency Requirement

The tournament/travel teams are primarily intended to improve the level of play of players from Arlington. Therefore, at the 10U and under levels, at least 75 percent of a Sage team's roster must be Arlington players ; at the 12U and 14U levels, at least 50 percent of a Sage team's roster must be Arlington player; and, at the 16U and 18U levels, at least 25 percent of a Sage team's roster must be Arlington players. An Arlington player is a player who meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. Is an Arlington County resident
2. Has played one or more seasons under the AGSA House League Program.
3. Attends school in Arlington County
4. Is a resident of Falls Church City or Washington, D.C., which do not have travel softball programs



7. Team Selection Process:

7.1 Tryout

Competitive tryouts shall be conducted in August or earlier for all tournament teams. All 'age eligible' registered players of Arlington Girls Softball Association may try out. A public announcement of the tryouts will be done via email, social media and websites, such as the AGSA website, to alert players of the tryout dates, times and locations. Prospective players must register for tryouts via the **AGSA registration system**. Sage coaches who would like to recruit a player(s) from an existing AGSA team must disclose their intent with the current coach prior to contacting the player and/or the player's family.

7.2 Team Composition

A team of players will be selected as the 'core' team. The head coach also may identify a number of alternate or "developmental" players who will practice with the team and may attend tournaments as substitute players for injured or unavailable primary players.

7.3 Team Selection

The head coach, in consultation with the Sage commissioner, will determine the method of evaluation and the individuals doing evaluations. Evaluation should include consideration of player availability for practices and games. Consideration also should be paid to Arlington residency status; a player's proximity to Arlington; and whether the player represents a racial or ethnic group that is under-represented on Sage teams.

7.4 Finalizing Team Rosters

Once evaluation has been completed, the respective head coach will submit a proposed roster to the Arlington Impact commissioner (or his/her designee), AGSA president, and the AGSA registrar to obtain final roster approval. Player registration will be enabled by the AGSA registrar only after final approval is granted.

8. Team Fees:

8.1 Fee Allocation

Every Sage team is expected to operate on a break-even basis, and maintain at least \$1,000 carry over at the end of each season. Each team will be responsible for paying its playing costs, including tournament fees, uniforms, equipment, insurance, coach stipends, rental of indoor practice facilities, Sage administrative costs, spirit wear, decals, and any other miscellaneous items.

8.2 AGSA Fee Assessment

Sage is a division of AGSA and shares resources, fields, equipment, administrative costs and non-profit organizational status under the AGSA umbrella. Sage players and coaches must register in



AGSA, just like House players and coaches must register. Registration is for the protection of the players and coaches as well as the organization. An annual nominal fee will be assessed for all players at the time of registration in the fall. This fee covers operating costs of the organization, including county field fees, coach background checks, field maintenance supplies, administrative costs and scholarships.

8.3 Team Fee Assessment

Each team will raise funds through a combination of player assessments, direct donations, and/or fundraising activities. AGSA/Sage will provide player scholarships to the extent determined by the AGSA president, the Sage commissioners and the AGSA treasurer.

8.4 Scholarships

Scholarships are offered to players with financial need through a separate Sage scholarship account in the general Sage account, funded primarily through Sage registration fee and direct donations. Sage scholarships do not cover the entire cost of playing Sage, and each team should plan appropriately to cover the gap for its scholarship players. Consider these factors in planning:

1. The Sage organization will cover a maximum of \$500 per season (fall/winter and spring/summer) per player.
2. Players must apply for scholarships prior to each new season.
3. The Sage scholarship account will be maintained at a minimum level of \$3,000 at the start of each season. The parent or guardian (or head coach) should apply for scholarships directly to the AGSA president and Sage commissioner, who will approve the scholarship after the AGSA Treasurer has confirmed adequate funds are available. The availability of funds is a limiting factor. If funds are not available, the scholarship will not be awarded.

8.5 Team Fundraising

Sage teams are encouraged to fundraise for their teams. Fundraising dollars can be used at the coach's discretion to cover the cost of a variety of team expenses such as team equipment, tournament fees, and reduction of player costs. However, the fundraising dollars are to be allocated "in the year, for the year" such that the team members contributing to the fundraising effort are reaping the benefit of those efforts. For transparency, it is also expected that the coach will communicate to the players and parents how the fundraising dollars are being spent.

9. **Operating Budget:**

9.1 Establishing a Team Operating Budget

Before a team budget can be prepared, the coach must establish a tournament schedule and ascertain their fees, as well as registration and umpire fees for any local doubleheaders or games. If non-parent coaches are to be paid stipends, the amount also must be determined and added to the season budget. Paid instructors and fee-based players clinics also should be



detailed in the budget. Player fees are calculated using the team budget. Those fees are expected to be paid before the start of the fall/winter and spring/summer seasons. If dues are not paid on time, players will be ineligible for practice/training/games.

9.2 Team Financial Account Carryover

By August 15, the team manager or head coach must submit all invoices, reimbursements or other debts incurred by the team in the previous season to the AGSA Treasurer for final disposition of the team account.

A team is required to carry-over at least \$1,000 from season to season. This carry-over is intended to provide coverage of expenses from the following season before fees are collected from families. The carry-over remains with the team and is intended to act as a reserve. Exceptions to the \$1,000 carry-over must be approved by the Sage commissioner and AGSA president.

9.3 Team Disbandment

In the event of team disbandment, the disposition of its funds and equipment will be at the discretion of the Sage commissioner and AGSA president. A team is considered to have disbanded if at least 75 percent of its players *and* its head coach leave.

9.4 Aging Out

When a Sage 18U team ages out of the program, the team's required \$1,000 carry-over funds will transfer to the Sage general fund. Any funds in excess of \$1000 and any equipment will be disbursed at the discretion of the Sage Commissioner and AGSA President.