



Andover Baseball Association Policies and Procedures Manual

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www.andoverbaseball.org

Table of Contents

Registration.....	5
Fees.....	5
Volunteer Fee.....	5
Refunds.....	6
Substance Abuse.....	6
SafeSport Policy.....	7
Prohibited Conduct.....	7
Sexual Abuse Policy.....	7
Screening Policy.....	8
Physical/Emotional Abuse Policy.....	8
Awareness Program.....	9
Mandatory Reporting.....	9
Complaints Of Sexual, Emotional And/Or Physical Abuse.....	9
Confidentiality.....	9
Anonymous Reporting.....	9
Bad-Faith Allegations.....	10
Infectious Disease.....	10
Weapons.....	11
3 rd Party Background Check Trusted Coaches /Training & ABA Determined Certifications.....	11
Team Definitions: Levels of Play.....	11
In House Player Eligibility.....	12
Traveling Player Eligibility.....	12
Coaches.....	12
Parent/Player- Coach Concern.....	13
Coaches Rights and Privileges.....	14
Team Selection Process:.....	15
T-Ball-8-Year-Old.....	15
9-12-Year-Old.....	15
13-15-Year-Old.....	15
Sandlot.....	15

Borrowed-Player Policy.....	16
In-House Tournaments.....	16
Traveling Tryout Procedures – 9U-14U.....	17
Player Selection Criteria – 9U-14U.....	17
Coach Selection Criteria – 9U-14U.....	18
Travel Tournaments.....	18
Equipment.....	18
In House.....	19
Traveling and High School Age Teams.....	19
Catchers.....	19
Batters and Base Runners.....	19
Designated Uniforms.....	19
In-House Teams.....	20
Criminal Background Checks.....	20
Concussion Training.....	21
Enforcement.....	21
Equal Opportunity.....	22
Incident Reporting and Review.....	22
Discipline.....	22
Grievance.....	22
Players.....	23
Parent(s)/Guardian(s).....	23

Andover Baseball Association Policies and Procedures Manual Introduction

The Andover Baseball Association Board members would like to thank all the Andover families participating in the enrichment of our children's future. To contact an ABA board member, please email the board member. Contact information can be found at www.andoverbaseball.org

ANDOVER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION MISSION STATEMENT

The Andover Baseball Association's Mission is to provide an educational, safe, and fun environment for the youth in Andover through playing our national game of baseball while promoting sportsmanship, pride and community development.

ANDOVER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the ABA is to provide an opportunity to participate in the game of baseball for youth regardless of race, creed, color, nationality, sex or disability. It is further the purpose of ABA to aid youth who participate in this sport:

- To improve and develop baseball skills.
- To teach and promote physical, mental and moral development.
- To teach a sense of fair and honest competition.
- To identify appropriate levels of play that best serves the team, player and ABA.
- To promote fair play at all levels resulting in good sportsmanship.
- To promote effort, positive attitudes and teamwork.
- To encourage, aid, and support acquisition of good facilities and means for the playing of baseball.

Our goals include:

- Improve and add to our existing baseball fields and facilities.
- Provide safe/protective equipment.
- Explore new avenues to reduce cost for our participants.
- To put the good of the team first.
- Create a culture of best effort, positive attitudes and team needs over the individual's needs.

We believe organized baseball is more than bats, balls, gloves, and uniforms. Our organization wants to provide our children the opportunity to learn the aspects of teamwork, the virtues of character, effort, courage, loyalty, and the respect for authority on and off the field. In addition, we strive to promote self-discipline that enables our youth to lead our nation tomorrow. **Our organization is made up entirely of volunteers**, many of whom work year-round to execute the necessary tasks in the interest of our players. We thank all the parents/guardians and players for all their support.

“THE” Andover Baseball Association: (ABA)

REGISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Registration

Andover Baseball Association will have online registrations beginning in the month of January for the levels

of play including T-ball (4 years old) – Sandlot (21 years of age). Players who are selected for travel teams (9U – 14U) will register from September – November. In-House and Traveling players are only permitted to register or tryout for one team.

Fees

Registration for 9U – 14U traveling baseball is required prior to tryouts which are held in the month of August (dates subjects change). The registration fee plus the non-refundable tryout fee is due at the time of traveling tryout registration. If your child is selected for a traveling team, the remainder of the traveling fee will be due by December 31st. No player may start practice until all fees are paid. If the player is not selected the registration fee can be forwarded to the In-House league with any difference in payment adjusted as needed.

Volunteer Fee

The Andover Baseball Association is founded on **volunteering**. To assist in providing a quality program, 5

ABA requires that each family volunteers for a minimum of 5 hours per player, with a maximum of 10 hours per family. Hours must be completed by September 30th of each season. Coaches have until May 31st to confirm all assistant coaches and/or team manager information to the Volunteer Director to receive volunteer credit.

If a parent is a coach or team manager and receives correspondence from the Volunteer Director but ignores the correspondence, their volunteer fee will be cashed/processed by September 30th and the waived volunteer fee for coaching will be void. No exceptions. (See Coaching Section for more information)

Below are some examples of, but not limited to qualified volunteer opportunities:

- Helping at tournaments/tournament field grooming/Celebration
- Equipment pickup or drop off
- Uniform fittings or pickup
- 9-14 Traveling tryout setup
- Concessions
- Sign Placement before Travel and In-House seasons
- Other volunteer opportunities as listed on the website, created and or as needed ● Coaching: Each head coach and up to three assistants/team manager per team. (Coaches/Assistants will only qualify for volunteer hours once their background check/assigned responsibilities/and or training determined by ABA are completed for the season.)

If you do not complete your required volunteer hours by September 30th, your volunteer fee of \$350 will be cashed/processed. **Also, failure to show-up for registered DIBs shifts without finding a replacement will result in automatic forfeiture of the volunteer fee.**

However, if you do not intend to volunteer and wish to waive your volunteer fee at the time of registration, you may “opt out”. Your volunteer fee will be \$350 and will be paid at the time of registration. This will allow us to hire any additional help that may be needed during the season. If you take the opt-out option and then volunteer during the season through confirmation of the volunteer director, ABA will issue a refund by check at the end of the season.

Refunds

All refunds are subject to a \$25 administrative fee for players who choose to withdraw from Andover Baseball before participation begins. No refunds will be issued after participation begins as follows:

- T-Ball-12 In-House participation begins when a player has been selected or assigned to a team. Except for 13-15 In-House, participation begins at the player evaluation date.
- Traveling Players – No refunds will be given for traveling tryout fee. Once a player is selected to play traveling baseball, no refunds will be issued. If a player is not selected to play on a travel team, a full refund will be issued, minus the non-refundable tryout fee.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Substance Abuse

Regardless of the quantity, a player shall not: 1) use a beverage containing alcohol; 2) use tobacco (smokeless or otherwise including e-cigs and vaping); or 3) use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any other controlled substance (including steroids). The rule applies to any portion of an activity season. It is not a violation for a player to be in possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the player's own use by his/her doctor. If a player is found breaking this policy, the following penalties will be assessed:

First Violation: After confirmation of the first violation, the player shall lose eligibility for the next two (2) consecutive games or two (2) weeks of a season whichever is greater. No exception is permitted for a player who becomes a participant in a treatment program.

Subsequent Violations: After confirmation of a subsequent violation, the player shall lose eligibility for the next twelve (12) consecutive games in which the player is a participant. If after the subsequent violation, the player on his/her own volition becomes a participant in chemical dependency or treatment program, the player may be certified for reinstatement in ABA activities after a minimum period of six (6) weeks. The director or counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification.

Penalties shall be cumulative throughout the player's participation on ABA teams. Coaches must notify the appropriate age group director and the president within 24 hours of the offense.

A coach may implement stricter penalties but must be at least in minimum compliance with ABA policy with board approval.

SEXUAL ABUSE, PHYSICAL ABUSE, EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND CRIMINAL BACKGROUND AND SCREENING POLICY

SafeSport Policy

Andover Baseball Association (ABA) has instituted the SafeSport Policy created by USA Baseball in

conjunction with the United States Olympic Committee, as addressed in the Pure Baseball by USA: Pure Baseball Policies and Procedures (Available on our website). ABA is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for its participants' physical, emotional, and social development and ensuring it promotes an environment free from abuse and misconduct. As a part of this program ABA has implemented policies addressing certain types of abuse and misconduct, and certain policies intended to reduce, monitor and govern the areas where potential abuse and misconduct might occur.

The policies herein are subject to any contrary requirements in Minnesota State law or local law applicable to USA Baseball Affiliates/Non-Affiliates.

Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is strictly prohibited of all athletes, coaches, and staff personnel:

1. Bullying – (<https://www.usabdevelops.com/page/5015/blog/17360/bullying>)
2. Hazing – (<https://www.usabdevelops.com/page/5015/blog/17623/hazing>)
3. Harassment (including sexual harassment) – (<https://www.usabdevelops.com/page/5015/blog/17621/harassment>)
4. Emotional misconduct – (<https://www.usabdevelops.com/page/5015/blog/17534/emotional-misconduct>)
5. Physical misconduct – (<https://www.usabdevelops.com/page/5015/blog/17919/physical-misconduct>)
6. Sexual misconduct (including child sexual abuse) - (<https://www.usabdevelops.com/page/5015/blog/18087/sexual-misconduct>)

Sexual Abuse Policy

It is the policy of ABA that there shall be no sexual abuse of any minor participant involved in ABA sanctioned programs, Training Camps, Baseball Clinics, Coaches Clinics, Referee Clinics, Invitational, Playoff Tournaments or other ABA events by an employee, volunteer or independent contractor or participant. Sexual abuse of a minor participant occurs when an employee, volunteer, independent contractor or participant touches a minor participant for the purpose of causing the sexual arousal or gratification of either the minor participant or the employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Sexual abuse of a minor participant also occurs when a minor player/participant touches an employee, volunteer, independent contractor or participant for the sexual arousal or sexual gratification of either the minor participant/participant or the employee, volunteer or independent contractor, if the touching occurs at the request or with the consent of the employee, volunteer, independent contractor or participant. Neither consent of the player to the sexual contact, mistake as to the participant's age, nor the fact that the sexual contact did not take place at a baseball function are defenses to a complaint of sexual abuse. Upon proof of violation of this policy, the violator will be permanently banned or suspended from ABA sanctioned programs and/or the programs of its Affiliate Associations.

Screening Policy

ABA will not authorize or sanction in programs that it directly controls any volunteer or employee who has regular, routine or frequent access to children (anyone under the age of majority) who refuses to consent to be screened by ABA before he/she is allowed to have such access to children. Persons may be

disqualified and prohibited from serving as employees or volunteers of ABA if they have:

1. Been convicted (including crimes the record of which has been expunged and pleas of "no contest") of a crime of child abuse, sexual abuse of a minor, physical abuse, causing a child's death, neglect of a child, murder, manslaughter, felony assault, any assault against a minor, kidnapping, arson, criminal sexual conduct, prostitution related crimes, gross misdemeanors, felonies or controlled substance crimes;
2. Been adjudged liable for civil penalties/damages involving sexual/emotional/physical abuse of children.
3. Been subject to any court order involving any sexual, emotional or physical abuse of a minor, including but not limited to domestic orders for protection.
4. Had their parental rights terminated.
5. Complaints from another organization (volunteer, employee, etc.) of sexual or physical abuse of minors.
6. Resigned, been terminated or been asked to resign from a position, whether paid or unpaid, due to complaint(s) of sexual, emotional or physical abuse of minors; or
7. A history of other behavior that indicates they may be a danger to children in ABA.

NOTICE TO ALL PERSONS SUBJECT TO ANDOVER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION SCREENING PROGRAM.

ABA reserves the right to use information obtained in the course of its Screening Program in any reasonable manner to protect its participants, affiliate organizations and programs from risk of future criminal behavior.

Any individual who is a covered individual under these policies and/or the rules of the U.S. Center for SafeSport, is subject to the rules, policies, and procedures of the U.S. Center for SafeSport and will submit, without reservation or condition, to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Center for SafeSport for the resolution of any alleged violations of those rules, policies, or procedures, as they may be amended from time to time.

Physical/Emotional Abuse Policy

It is ABA's policy that there shall be no physical or emotional abuse of any participant involved in any of its sanctioned programs; Training Camps; Baseball Clinics, Coaches or Referee Clinics; Invitational and ABA Playoff Tournaments; or other ABA events by any employee, volunteer or independent contractor. Physical abuse means physical contact with a participant that intentionally causes the participant to sustain bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse also includes physical contact with a participant that intentionally creates a threat of immediate bodily harm or personal injury. Physical abuse does not include physical contact reasonably designed to coach, teach or demonstrate a baseball skill. Permitted physical conduct may include, but is not limited to, demonstrating other baseball skills, and communicating with or directing participants, during the course of a game or practice, by touching them in a non-threatening, non-sexual manner. Emotional abuse means a pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior that has the potential to

cause emotional or psychological harm to a participant. These behaviors may include verbal acts, physical acts, or acts that deny attention or support. Bullying, threats, harassment and hazing are all forms of emotional abuse.

Awareness Program

ABA shall incorporate into its various literature and clinic programs education/awareness information as developed by the Committee or by USA Baseball or other authoritative sources as pertinent information become available.

Mandatory Reporting

It is the policy of ABA that every employee, volunteer, or independent contractor, of any Member Program must report:

- (1) Actual or perceived violations of the Pure Baseball/USA Baseball SafeSport Program Handbook;
- (2) Any violations of the Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Bullying, Threats or Harassment, or Hazing Policies; and
- (3) Suspicions or allegations of child physical or sexual abuse to the appropriate ABA representatives.

If ABA receives a report of physical or sexual misconduct involving a minor, ABA will make a report to the proper authorities. The reporting of certain types of misconduct (link) to law enforcement is required by law. <https://mn.gov/dhs/report-abuse/>

Complaints Of Sexual, Emotional And/Or Physical Abuse

Complaints concerning violations of this provisions and/or of USA Baseball's Sexual, Emotional and Physical Abuse Policy shall be in writing addressed to the ABA Board (or SafeSport Coordinator), The complaint shall state in full and complete detail the basis of the complaint concerning the alleged violations.

Confidentiality

To the extent permitted by law, and as appropriate, ABA and all Member Programs shall keep confidential the complainant's name on request, not make public the names of potential victims, the accused perpetrator or the people who made a report of child physical and sexual abuse to the authorities.

Anonymous Reporting

Anonymous reporting may make it difficult for the ABA to investigate or properly address misconduct or abuse. However, ABA recognizes it can be difficult for an athlete, teammate, friend or family member to report an allegation of misconduct and strives to remove as many barriers to reporting as possible. Anonymous reports may be made without the formality of completing a Report Form by completing the Reporting Form without including their name,

by expressing concerns verbally to the USA Baseball SafeSport Coordinator or to their local program administrator (Phone #) or through email to the ABA (email address) or USA Baseball SafeSport Coordinator at https://usabdevelops.com/USAB/Incident_Reporting_Form.aspx.

Upon receipt of such written complaint, the Board (SafeSport Coordinator) shall review the complaint and determine who will conduct the ensuing investigation of the allegations pursuant to the Pure Baseball: USA Baseball SafeSport Policy Handbook. As a mandatory reporter, all credible complaints of sexual, emotional and/or physical abuse shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement officials by the Board (SafeSport Coordinator).

The Board (SafeSport Coordinator) may initiate administrative action against the member against whom the complaint was made pursuant to applicable sections of the By-laws and Rules of ABA.

“Whistleblower” Protection

Regardless of outcome, it is the policy of the ABA Member Programs to support the complainant(s) and his or her right to express concerns in good faith. Neither USA Baseball or ABA Member Program will encourage, allow or tolerate attempts from any individual, group or organization to retaliate, punish, allow or in any way harm any individual(s) who reports a concern in good faith. Such actions against a complainant will be considered a violation of the ABA SafeSport Program and grounds for disciplinary action.

Bad-Faith Allegations

A report of abuse, misconduct or policy violations that is malicious, frivolous or made in bad faith is prohibited. Such reports will be considered a violation of the ABA SafeSport Program and grounds for disciplinary action. Depending on the nature of the allegation, a person making a malicious, frivolous or bad-faith report may also be subject to civil or criminal proceedings.

Infectious Disease

The risk of possible exposure to and injury/ illness from infectious diseases, including but not limited to MRSA, influenza, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, and COVID-19, to participants from the activities involved in these programs are significant, including the potential for permanent disability and death, and while particular rules, equipment, and personal discipline may reduce these risks, the risks of serious injury and illness do exist.

It is also important to note that parents should monitor the health of their children and not send them to participate in sports events if they exhibit any symptom of an infectious disease that has a high rate of contagion, such as influenza or COVID-19. Adult participants should do the same. In the case of exposure to COVID-19, participants should seek COVID-19 testing promptly and report results to team staff and sports organization officials given the implications for other participants, families, and staff. Parents of minor participants and adult participants should protect any vulnerable persons in the same household with whom they come into frequent, close contact. They should also be aware of the enhanced risks for those age 65 or over and/or with compromised immune systems for 14 days after such frequent, close contact.

ABA subscribes to the policies and guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control and appropriate state and local officials regarding COVID-19.

ABA subscribes to the policy put forth by the Minnesota State High School League that reads: **A player who is bleeding or has an open wound or who has any blood on his uniform shall be considered an injured player and must immediately leave the game for appropriate treatment. After bleeding is under control (clean and Steri-Stripped as appropriate) and after all blood on the uniform is**

treated appropriately with alcohol, the player may return. If the uniform is saturated with blood, the athlete may not return to the game without a clean uniform.

Weapons

The possession, use and/or transmission of a weapon(s) or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon(s) will result in immediate suspension from all team activities. Weapons means a knife, firearm or any item which looks like a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, in working or nonworking condition, explosives, any incendiary device or instrument which is utilized in such a manner so as to threaten.

The suspension must be immediately reported to the appropriate ABA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will review the incident at the next (or special) Board meeting and has the option to lift the suspension or to disqualify the player from participation in the ABA program.

3rd Party Background Check Trusted Coaches /Training & ABA Determined Certifications

A deadline will be given for coaches to complete board determined background check through a certified 3rd party organization which consists of a background check and training. **ABA will pay for the training for up to 4 coaches per team.** The 3rd party training and background must be completed on an annual basis and can be used in other sports. Travel coaches need to complete their 3rd party training and background check before January 1st. All In-House coaches need to complete their 3rd party background check and or training by May 1st. Any additional training, coaches' meetings, or communication from the board must be addressed and acknowledged by the head coach and any appropriate assistants or they will be subject to losing their volunteer credit for coaching. **Only coaches that have successfully completed their background checks will be allowed in the dugout or at practice.**

PLAYER & COACH POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Team Definitions: Levels of Play

- **“AAA”** – The highest competitive level, essentially a development program designed to enhance team and individual skills. AAU/Gopher State will provide for district, regional and/or state competition at this level.
- **“AA”** – The intermediate competitive level, also essentially a development level, but primarily intended to provide a uniform competitive experience for players or teams that are not able to compete effectively at the AAA level.
- **“A”** – The developmental level of traveling baseball. The A level is used to place teams preparing for a higher level of play.
- **“9U Open Traveling”** – An introduction to traveling baseball.
- **“T-Ball and In-House Programs”** – Intended for those who are seeking a good competitive experience until they are ready to advance to an All-Star and or traveling level or those wishing to participate only in the Andover community. There shall be an end of the year Celebration/Tournament for all levels of the In-House program but is subject to interest on the T-Ball level of play.
- **“All In-House Levels”** – Players can be subject to placement on the appropriate team based on but not limited to, the following: coaches' available for the given year, team size, skill level, in the interest of the player(s) development, the team need, league/tournament rules and or in the best

interest of the ABA to produce a competitive product representing the community, level of play, prior incidents or conflict, and or growth of the organization.

- **“All Levels of Traveling Baseball”** – All players will play with their grade. Please reference Player Selection Criteria 9U-14U for further clarification.

In House Player Eligibility

A player must not be older than the age restriction on **or before May 1st** of the season in which they are registering for. **A player’s grade is determined by the grade he/she is in on January 1st of the current school year.**

- 6/7U** 1st Grade
- 8U** 2nd Grade
- 9U** 3rd Grade
- 10U** 4th Grade
- 11U** 5th Grade
- 12U** 6th Grade
- 13U** 7th Grade
- 14U** 8th Grade
- 15U** 9th Grade

ABA requests that In-House players play at their grade level as of January 1st.

Traveling Player Eligibility

Traveling Teams should showcase the highest rated talent on any given team. This talent should always be determined by a 3rd party evaluator who has no personal ties with Andover and its community, its coaches, its players, or its family members. This talent should include overall skill, baseball IQ, behavior, and attendance.

Coaches

A coach is responsible for the operation and conduct of his/her team. He/she is the teacher of skills and a developer of players, socially and physically. The coach is responsible to the ABA Board of Directors. These recommendations include:

1. All coaches and assistants will be required to participate in an online concussion training session every three years. Coaches are required to submit proof of completion to the appropriate Age Director. Failure will result in the coach being suspended from all duties until the training and background sessions are complete.
2. Conduct a parent-coach-player meeting during the first week of the season. Have written team guidelines and discuss them with the parents and players at the meeting. Review with the parents and players the ABA codes of conduct. Provide clear and consistent communication throughout the
3. season through at least one of the following: email, phone and or hardcopy notices.
4. Respect, encourage and compliment players. Use constructive criticism only. Come up with team goals.
5. Promote Effort, Attitude and Teamwork that is representative of ABA and the Andover community.
6. Develop each player as much as possible within the limits of their physical and mental abilities.
7. Use proper control at all times because the coach is the steward for the program.

8. This includes restrained conduct with all umpires and officials, language, actions, and or overall moral conduct.
9. Enforce rules fairly, without prejudice toward any one player, remaining fair, firm and consistent.
10. **Be enthusiastic**, utilize assistant coaches, ask for help when applicable and make baseball fun.
11. Coaches with family member(s) on their team should remain impartial towards that member(s)
12. restraining from favoritism, bias or obvious favoritism on said player over others on the team.
13. Maintain team discipline. When a player is disciplined, the coach should fairly inform the player of the reasons for the punishment before leaving the field. Matters of discipline should be discussed privately between the player/parent and the coach(es).
14. Support the ABA philosophy noted throughout the policy and procedure document.
15. Communicate regularly with individual players and parents. If a player has a serious discipline problem, the head coach should meet with the player, his/her parent(s) or guardians and at least one assistant and/or the team manager. Full game suspensions cannot be given without the coach discussing it with the appropriate Age Director.
16. In the event of a concern, we ask our parents, players, and coaches to keep the lines of communication open. These steps should be followed:

Parent/Player- Coach Concern

- a. Discuss issue privately and respectfully with Head Coach as soon as possible.
- b. If not resolved, contact Director associated with Age group/program.
- c. If not resolved, contact the President of ABA.

***We insist that our coaches create an atmosphere of trust and openness. It is our hope that players feel they can talk to their coaches about issues or concerns. All coaches are subject to review post seasonal survey and feedback provided by parents/community throughout the season.**

1. Coaches have the authority to bypass playing time guidelines (see age specific rules) if they see a need to discipline. In these cases, the coach is expected to meet with the parent and the player and explain the cause of the discipline as soon as possible. If the coach needs to take extensive action (suspension beyond one game), he/she should review their recommendation with the ABA Board.
2. Assure that all players line up and shake hands after every game, showing respect and positivity.
3. Each team will maintain a minimal medical supplies inventory. If no emergency medical personnel are available, the coach or his/her assistant should follow recommended medical procedures. However, in all situations, the parent has the ultimate responsibility.
4. Coaches will refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages and tobacco 3 hours prior to and during games and practice situations.
5. A coach who continually violates the ABA guidelines shall; 1) first meet with the appropriate Director; 2) if no improvements, the coach personally meets with the appropriate Director and the President; 3) if steps one and two fail, the coach may be dismissed by the President with the approval of the full board and a suitable replacement named.
6. Coaches must report ALL ejections to the appropriate In-House Director, Travel Director, and President within 24 hours of the incident (48 hours if during tournament play).
7. Traveling coaches are expected to conduct at least 3 mandatory player practices per week before games begin and 1-2 practices during the weeks when games are scheduled. If there are no games scheduled during a week coaches would be expected to hold at least two practices. Practice

schedules must be scheduled and communicated with as much notice as possible.

8. Head coaches have until April 1st to submit all assistant coaches and/or team manager information to the Volunteer Director. This should include the assistant coaches' name, number and email. Coaches are allowed 3 assistants and or combination of assistants/team manager. Teams may have more help than 4 members, however only 4 volunteer credits (which includes the head coach) will be afforded per team. Volunteer credits will only be valid once each member of the coaching staff completes a background check and any additional training issued by ABA. Coaches and Assistant Coaches must complete the mandatory training and background check prior to practices and/or games.
9. If a parent/guardian is a coach or team manager and receives correspondence/communication from the Volunteer Director, they must respond in a reasonable timeframe or by the confirmed deadline assigned by the Volunteer Director. If the coach ignores the correspondence and does not respond, his/her volunteer check will be cashed. No exceptions!
10. If a team is found getting/issuing/purchasing non-approved uniforms without board pre-approval which is deemed associated with the Andover Baseball Association (i.e. logos, themes or colors) without board approval prior to the production and issuing of said material/items, the head coach will be face consequences immediately suspended for 2 games for the first offense. If a second offense takes place, the coach or family associated with the unapproved material/items will be removed from the league. If the vendor is a vendor that ABA currently up to and including suspension. works with and they use ABA's logo for a uniform without board pre-approval, that vendor will not be able to do business with ABA for two years.
11. End-of-Year evaluations and feedback from the 9U-11U year old in-house head coaches must be submitted to the 9-12-year-old in-house director at the end of the summer by the determined date in order to assist with team selection for the following year. (Failure to submit the end of the year evaluation will result in the cashing of your volunteer check submitted at the beginning of the year). 12-year-old coaches do not need to submit as players turning 13 will undergo evaluations in the spring.
12. Coaches and fans are expected to represent ABA in a positive manner, including the following behaviors: respect the game officials, other coaches and players of both teams. All complaints will be
13. reviewed and investigated by the age director and president; they will determine the legitimacy of the complaint. First offense may result in a 1 game suspension; second offense may result in removal of the coach/player/fan from the remainder of the season. (See player, parent, and coaches code of conduct policy)

Coaches Rights and Privileges

- To expect team members to show up on time and ready to listen.
- The right to exercise reasonable discipline over the team and for the team to respond to that discipline without any verbal or physical abuse from players and or parents/guardians.
- The right to penalize player's innings or games depending on the severity of the offense.
- The right to expect team members to be responsive to his/her instructions.
- To expect continued support from the ABA board with training, practice ideas, reviewing parent concerns, and following ABA standards as noted.

TEAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN- HOUSE PROGRAM

Team Selection Process:

T-Ball-8-Year-Old

Players will be placed on teams by the Age Director. A player may request on his/her application to play for a certain coach or be on a team with another player as determined by the online registration form. ABA will try to honor every request when possible or as numbers allow. Head coaches will be allowed to select up to three assistants whose children will be placed on his/her team. Assistants will only be valid once they complete the mandatory background check and or any additional training requested by ABA.

9-12-Year-Old

The 9–12-Year-Old In-House Director will work with the head coaches to ensure player talent is distributed evenly amongst all teams by using the previous season's End-of-Year evaluations and feedback from the head coaches during the team selection meeting. Head coaches will be allowed to protect up to three players (including his/her own child) by selecting the parent as an assistant coach. Coaches interest forms will have to be turned into the age director before the draft. Failure to submit an application will result in the coach's child not being able to be "protected". Assistants will only be valid once they complete the mandatory background check and or any additional training requested by ABA.

The evaluation scores will be placed in order of highest score to no evaluation. The evaluations will then be divided by number of teams and grouped. Team colors and the order that coaches will pick players will be determined by a simple process of drawing a number.

13-15-Year-Old

The 13-Year-Old – Sandlot In-House Director will work with the head coaches to ensure player talent is distributed evenly amongst all teams by hosting evaluations and team selection meeting. Kids will be evaluated on form, strength, and accuracy for pitching, catching, infield, and outfield. The coaches and an independent person(s) will evaluate the kids based on a 1 to 5 scale. Scores will be transparent to all coaches. Head coaches will be allowed to protect up to three players (including his/her own child) by selecting the parent as an assistant coach. Assistants will only be valid once they complete the mandatory background check and or any additional training requested by ABA. Coaches interest forms will have to be turned into the age director before the draft. Failure to submit an application will result in the coach's child not being able to be "protected".

The evaluation scores will be placed in order of highest score to no evaluation. The evaluations will then be divided by number of teams and grouped. Team colors and the order that coaches will pick players will be determined by a simple process of drawing a number.

Sandlot

Teams are formed by players ages 16-21 Years Old.

- Ages 16-21 (not to turn 22 before end of season)
- Sundays 1:30pm; 3:45pm; 6pm; 8:15pm
- All games at ASN – First game in early June
- No July 4th weekend games
- Up to 16 games and an end of season tournament
- Preformed teams allowed (no boundary league)

- No volunteer fee/hours
- An entire team can register
- Uniform Shirt and Equipment Bags/Supplies Included
- Cost is \$230

The Coach for a "Preformed Team" (up to 12) must turn in roster to Director in Charge and all players must register individually during open registration. If not a full squad, players will be added from registration.

Borrowed-Player Policy

If a coach needs to borrow players in order to field a team, ABA will allow it if the following conditions are met:

- Player(s) MUST be a registered ABA player.
- The coach offering the player, the coach borrowing the player, and the opposing coach must all agree and send verification of the decision to the age director. If all coaches do not agree, the game should be rescheduled.
- Under no circumstances should a pitcher be used from another team.

***Exception:** A tournament series in which the borrowed player's team has opted out.

- A borrowed player can be added for a league game if the team cannot field nine players. Exception: tournament play – 11 players.
- At no time should a rostered player be sitting the bench in favor of a borrowed player. ***Exception:** Fair

playing time for the rostered player is expected during tournament play. **In-House Tournaments**

T-Ball-8-year-old In-House teams will have an end of season "Celebration". Each team will play at least one game or combination of games and or skills contest in a tournament style setting. T-ball through 6-7 may alter their format to meet the needs of the number of players and or interest of creating a competitive and fun event.

9-12-year-old In-House teams will participate in the A-Town Mid-Season Classic. Teams in this age group will also select players from each team to participate in an end of season All Star Game. (See New All-Star Team Development for ages 9-12)

13-year-old In-House teams will play in the Anders Flaa Mid-season and MYAS Rec End-of-Season tournament. These tournaments could be hosted by communities other than ABA. ABA will pay the registration and associated gate fees for these tournaments. Teams that choose to participate in the appropriate age group MYAS Rec State Tournament will have their registration fees for the tournament and associated gate fees paid by ABA.

14/15-year-old In-House teams will participate in the Anders Flaa Mid-season and End-of-Season tournament. These tournaments are hosted by communities other than ABA. ABA will pay the registration and associated gate fees for these tournaments. Teams that choose to participate in the appropriate age group MYAS Rec State Tournament will have their registration fees for the tournament and associated gate fees paid by ABA.

TEAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES – TRAVELING PROGRAM

Eligible players to participate in the Andover Baseball Association traveling program must either reside within the Andover city boundaries or be enrolled in any public, private, charter or magnet school within the Andover city boundaries.

Traveling Tryout Procedures – 9U-14U

Traveling Selection Committee will consist of **three (3)** voting members (current or previous board) **four (4)** including Travel Director (non-voting) who may present or make presentations. Two (2) of the three (3) voting members must **not** have players in the travel program.

Contract or Service Agreement needed for Evaluations/Evaluators **must be** completed by end of March.

Coach Interviews (all applicants) to be completed before Tryouts. Coach applications will be posted online by June 1st and attached to player registration. **If you haven't applied, you cannot be at tryouts.** AAA or AA coaches are selected first, depending on where a child falls on a team level. Coach Recruitment if needed would occur at the 2nd level tier. Coaches will check-in at tryouts sign-in similar to players. (Wrist bands will be provided to coaches & evaluators).

Minimum of 2-day Tryouts with Outside Evaluators (Mandatory, average of both days) Even distribution of tryout groups no more than 15 players.

The 9-14 Traveling Director will inform players of the dates and locations for the tryouts. Each player will be evaluated by a panel of 3rd party evaluators.

Scores will be processed by an independent organization and sent to ABA to have on record. Prospective coaches will be observing the tryouts and doing their own evaluation of the players. Only prospective head coaches will be allowed at tryouts. Only scores from the 3rd party evaluators factor into the player section ranking system.

Only players who have a tryout score will be eligible to play ABA traveling program. In the event of an injury or unusual circumstance, a player will receive 80% of the previous year's tryout score. (9U is not applicable for this exception only if the 9U player is able to make the tryout makeup date, will the player be considered). An injury will require an official proof of injury. Players who are injured are required to register and pay. Players may not wear any traveling attire from previous seasons or other organizations to tryouts.

Player Selection Criteria – 9U-14U

Players will be selected by the head coach. The players that are selected must finish in the top 16 according to the outside evaluations. Four of the top six scores must be selected. Coaches will have access via hard copy to player evaluation scores during the player selection. During the draft there will be no copies distributed during or after the session. Additionally, a Coach may select a player ranked 17 through 25 with justification and approval by the sub-committee. Remaining players will be re-ranked and selected using the same process for subsequent teams. Coaches must justify their selections with a sub-committee that includes the Traveling Director and other board members. Attitude, baseball IQ, and coachability can affect player selection.

Coach Selection Criteria – 9U-14U

Coaching candidates will be interviewed by an independent panel that is selected by the Traveling Director. The panel will consist of the travel subcommittee which includes members who do not have a child playing

traveling baseball. Candidates are expected to come to the interview prepared to discuss and show their practice plan, qualifications, and vision for the upcoming season. Any previous surveys of the coach will also be used to identify strengths and/or concerns about the applicant. The travel subcommittee will make recommendations to the Traveling Director based on the results of the interview process. The Traveling Director will then inform the board of the coach selections. A travel sub-committee and Travel Director will meet to determine the number of teams and the level of play for each age group, based on the evaluation process. The top-level coach will be selected after the tryouts are completed. The AAA (or highest level for the age group) coach will be the highest rated coach based on the panel's recommendations provided his/her child falls within the criteria for being selected to said team. After the top-level coach has picked his/her team, the next level coach will be selected using the same criteria with the remaining players in the tryout pool.

Travel Tournaments

ABA will cover the registration fee and any associated gate fees for up to three tournaments, not including the GSTC. ABA will also register all teams for their Gopher State Tournament of Champions and cover the registration fee and Gate fees for the GSTC.

If individual teams wish to add additional tournaments, they will be responsible for the registration and applicable gate fees. ABA encourages teams to add at least one tournament throughout the season. The Travel Director should be contacted by the head coach if a team decides to play additional tournaments. Teams may not pick up players from other teams to play additional tournaments during the MYAS tournament season. Players must be part of the original roster.

If any tournaments are cancelled, regardless of if ABA or an individual team registered for the tournament, it will be the coach's responsibility to inform the Travel Director. The Travel Director will need to know if the team chose to get a refund or if the host will hold the money for another tournament. The Treasurer must be notified if a tournament is cancelled or postponed.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equipment

Required equipment is outlined below but may not be limited to the following:

In House

- Team equipment bag to carry equipment.
- Catcher's face mask
- Catcher's chest protector
- Catcher's glove for 8-year-old and older
- One dozen age-appropriate game balls
- Approximately two dozen practice balls
- First aid kit with two one-time use ice packs
- Official score book for 9-year-old and older
- Pitching machine for 6/7-year-olds
- Tee for T-ball through 6/7-year-olds

Traveling and High School Age Teams

- Team equipment bag to carry equipment.
- Catcher's face mask
- Catcher's chest protector
- Catcher's glove
- One dozen age-appropriate game balls
- Approximately two dozen practice balls
- First aid kit with two one-time use ice packs
- Official score book
- Tee

Catchers

Must always wear, at the minimum, the supplied catcher's protective gear. Warm-up catcher must wear protective mask. All players in the catching position will be required to wear personal protective devices (cups).

The Uniform Director shall distribute the appropriate uniforms to each player based on their age and level of play. The uniform worn must be the uniform issued by the ABA and or approved by the ABA should a need arise prior to use as per a special tournament, in memoriam, or unforeseen need. No likeness of ABA can be used without board consent via any merchandise, clothes, signs etc... If a team is determined to have used alternative merchandise without the consent of ABA, the teams coach will serve a two-game suspension for the first offense and removal from the league for the second offense. Required personal protective equipment is outlined by the governing authorities and includes, but may not be limited to the following:

In-House Teams

All players should wear the following:

- Athletic supporter
- Personal protection devices (cups) – strongly recommended.
- Appropriate shoes – cleats are recommended but not required.
- Designated uniform as outlined below:

- **6/7-year-olds:** Shall consist of t-shirt/jersey, pants and baseball hat, as issued by ABA. Player keeps entire uniform at the end of the season.
- **8-year-olds:** Shall consist of a jersey, pants and baseball hat, as issued by ABA. Player keeps entire uniform at the end of the season.
- **9-year-olds:** Shall consist of a jersey, pants and baseball hat, as issued by ABA. Player keeps entire uniform at the end of the season.
- **10-12-year-olds:** Shall consist of a jersey, pants and baseball hat, as issued by ABA. Player keeps entire uniform at the end of the season.
- **13-year-olds:** Shall consist of a jersey, pants and baseball hat as issued by ABA. Player keeps

entire uniform at the end of the season.

- **14–21-year-olds:** Shall consist of a jersey and baseball hat, as issued by ABA. Player keeps entire uniform at the end of the season.

➤ **Traveling Teams:**

All players must wear the following:

- Personal protection devices (cups)
- Appropriate shoes – cleats are recommended but not required.
 - Ages 9-12: Molded cleats ONLY
 - Ages 13 and up: Molded or metal cleats

- **Travel Players:** Each team will be issued, by ABA, a team uniform consisting of 1 hat, 2 jerseys, 1 belt and 1 pair of baseball pants. No youth team shall deviate from the approved uniform that is issued, unless written approval is received from ABA Board of Directors. Player keeps entire uniform at the end of the season.

OPERATIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Criminal Background Checks

ABA seeks to provide a safe environment for all youth. It is the intention of ABA to ensure that those persons selected by ABA to coach or assistant coach are of good moral character and are free of criminal records for such crimes as would deem them unsuitable for such positions.

All ABA Head and Assistant coaches or others, as required by the Board of Directors who are 18 years of age or older, including the Board of Directors, shall participate in the Criminal Background check process.

ABA President, Traveling Director and In-House Director(s) shall act as the Screening committee to review the results of background investigations performed. Perspective Head and Assistant coaches or others as required by the Board of Directors will complete and sign a Background Check Consent form. Such persons are not required to pay the cost of the background investigation. The screening committee will review the results provided by the Background check to determine if the applicant has met or failed to meet the established criteria. The Screening committee shall treat and deal with any information provided by the Background Check in a professional and confidential manner as provided for in Minnesota Statutes regarding data privacy. No information obtained from Background Checks will be disclosed to other persons outside of the Screening Committee.

These Policies and Procedures will be made available to those individuals requested to participate in a Background Check prior to them completing the consent form. The rejected, disqualified, or dismissed person must be told that such action is a result of the Background Check investigation results. Anyone

rejected, disqualified, or dismissed, as a result of the Background investigation shall have no right to appeal. However, the person may request a meeting with the Screening Committee to review the accuracy of their Background investigation results. No Liability shall accrue to ABA for the release of any information discovered as a result of any background check made by them. No liability shall accrue to the Company hired by ABA to perform the Background Check for selection or disqualification/rejection/dismissal decisions made by ABA.

The criteria for determining disqualification include but are not limited to:

Physical or sexual abuse	Murder	Manslaughter
Prostitution related crimes	Neglect or Endangerment of minor	Criminal sexual conduct
Kidnapping Conduct indicating abuse of power or authority	Assault Controlled substance crimes within past five (5) years	Arson Driving under the influence two (2) or more times during past three (3) years
Domestic abuse within the past five (5) years		

Concussion Training

Each head coach and any assistants must undergo concussion training pursuant to Minnesota’s new concussion law every three years. ABA will provide information to the coaches so they can receive the training.

Enforcement

As elected members of Andover Baseball Association Board of Directors, we as a board will uphold all policies, procedures and guidelines that are contained in this manual.

If a situation occurs, we will follow the appropriate procedures and take the necessary disciplinary actions abiding by the Andover Baseball Association Policy & Procedure Manual.

The membership has put faith in each of us by electing us to hold a position on the board. We have taken a vow to represent Andover Baseball Association in the best manner we possibly can. The best way is to follow the policies, procedures and guidelines that enable our association to function as a whole.

As elected board members, we are obligated to report any type of situation, good or bad, which has occurred within our association. Each month that a regular board meeting is held, each Director is required

to provide a report to the members of the Board. Under no circumstances will the Director NOT BE allowed to submit a report. This is to keep every board member aware of what is happening within each area of the association and also gives him/her a chance to prepare for any rebuttals on the said reports.

Equal Opportunity

ABA seeks to provide an equal competitive opportunity taking into account ability, physical size and other athletic criteria, to amateur athletes, coaches, administrators and officials consistent with the requirements of the Amateur Sports Act of 1978. ABA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin.

Incident Reporting and Review

The head coach must report any player, coach, or parent who during the season engages in fighting, violence, or abusive language or who receives an ejection to the appropriate Director. The Director and the President will review the incident to determine the appropriate discipline. The Director will be responsible for notifying the individual and the head coach of the disciplinary action.

If a player, coach, or parent is suspended, an appeal may be made to the Board and if the circumstances are warranted, the Board may reinstate them. Appeals will not delay the disciplinary action.

Discipline

Any player, coach, or parent who during the season engages in fighting, violence, or abusive language or who receives an ejection that is reported to the appropriate Director in a timely manner *could* be subject to the following:

First Offense: Player, coach, or parent is suspended for two games. A board meeting will be held to further discuss repercussions and discipline. Based on the circumstances of the incident, the player, coach or parent may receive further suspensions.

Second Offense: Player, coach or parent is suspended until a meeting is held with the appropriate Director and President. This request must be made within 24 hours of the offense to the committee and the meeting must take place within 5 calendar days. Based upon the seriousness of the offense, the player, coach or parent will be suspended for 3 games.

Third Offense: A third offense will result in permanent suspension. An appeal may be filed within 24 hours with the Board.

Any ejections that are not properly reported will be subject to the maximum penalty allowed as written above.

Grievance

If you or your player have a complaint regarding an incident or have been violated according to one of ABA's policies, you may file a complaint for the appropriate action to be taken.

- All parties should wait 24 hours after a problem occurs. This is a cooling off period so one doesn't act out of anger. Except in cases of harassment, assault and/or substance abuse.

- Parent meetings, coaches' meetings and or meetings that are intended to be informational only are not the intended forums to bring grievances to the attention of the board and will be tabled in order for the formal grievance procedure to take place. If public grievances continue to advance the party will be asked to leave and to submit their grievance in writing.
- After waiting the said time, you may discuss the problem with the involved party(ies) and try to find a resolution. All matters should be kept internal and should not be discussed with outside parties.
- If you are still not satisfied after the discussion with the said party(ies), you must put your complaint in writing and submit it to the appropriate Director.
- The appropriate Director that you have submitted your complaint to, will then bring it to the President's attention at the next regular board meeting.
- The Board will investigate and discuss the complaint.
- The Board will then issue the proper disciplinary action(s).
- A letter will be issued to all persons involved outlining the resolution that was decided upon by the Board.
- Decisions made by the Board will be final.

If you have any questions regarding any step in the grievance procedure, please contact any of the respected board members presiding on the current ABA Board of Directors.

PLAYERS AND PARENTS ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Players

Players who participate in ABA should consider it an honor and a privilege. This privilege comes with responsibility to teammates, coaches, parents, community and the entire ABA baseball program. Among these responsibilities are:

1. Show respect towards your coach, opposing coaches, all players, and game umpires at all times. Understand the spirit of discipline and adhere to it.
2. The use of profanity and/or gestures toward umpires, players, spectators or coaches will not be tolerated.
3. Follow the directions of your coach and be willing to accept instruction towards improvement.
4. Exhibit good sportsmanship at all times.
5. Attend all scheduled team activities except when properly excused.
6. Be a competitor. You are expected to give your best at all times. Play hard but fairly.
7. Line up and shake hands with the opposing team after all games with respect and dignity.
8. Maintain good citizenship (e.g., grades, attendance and conduct in the community and public places.)
9. Playing time, positions, and batting order are determined by the coach(s) via the rules associated with the specific age or level of play.
10. It's the players' equipment too. Players will help coaches maintain and pick up equipment post games and practices.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Being involved in ABA demands time and effort on the part of the parent. Parents, in no small measure, contribute to the success of the baseball program by understanding the requirements of team participation. Some of the things that parents can do to help their child and the team are:

1. Put the welfare of the team ahead of personal reflected glory.
2. Make sure your child knows that, win or lose, you appreciate the effort made. Praise. Don't criticize.
3. Accept disappointment gracefully; don't pass it along to the player or team members.
4. Learn to know the coach.
5. Discuss your problems or the progress of your player with him/her at the proper time. The proper time is RARELY right after a difficult defeat or in the company of players and/or other parents.
6. Appreciate the fact that the coach has the responsibility of an entire team; he/she is a volunteer.
7. Don't be a chronic complainer. If you are convinced something is wrong on your player's team, please follow the appropriate escalation process as written in the ABA Policies and Procedures.
8. Parents are asked to conduct themselves in a sportsmanship-like manner and instill in their players the desire to reflect such sportsmanship.
9. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging transportation for their players. 9. Parents are to support the ABA philosophy of encouraging players to enjoy baseball as a sport and to have fun. Parents that place undue expectations on their players minimize the player's enjoyment and development in the game of baseball.
10. Parents are expected to assist the team where needed.
11. The safety of the player is ultimately the responsibility of the parents. If a parent fears injury or is witness to poor sportsmanship, he/she has the right and responsibility to remove their child from playing under those conditions.
12. Parents whose conduct reflects negatively on ABA may be referred to the appropriate director for discussion and appropriate consequences.