



SOFTBALL QUEENSLAND Inc

MEMBERSHIP POLICY

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1. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

1.1 The following categories of Softball Queensland Inc (SQI) membership exist:

- District Softball Associations: and
- Associate Members.

1.2 Definitions

1.2.1 Associate Member – means anybody or person with subordinate status (less than full membership), who has limited rights, privileges and benefits as a member of the Association.

1.2.2 Body Corporate – is a corporation that has an interest in or delivers softball activities.

1.2.3 Clearance - means a written confirmation by the Home Association that a person is free to leave the Home Association and to participate in softball, on a permanent basis, wheresoever that person chooses outside the State of Queensland.

1.2.4 District Softball Association - means any properly constituted incorporated association administering softball competition and activities in the state of Queensland and being a full member of SQI.

1.2.5 Events include, but are not limited to:

- junior recruitment programs; and
- competitive events conducted periodically, including but not limited to:
 - carnivals;
 - tournaments including masters;
 - short duration competitions;
 - Slow-pitch; or
 - recreational games.

1.2.6 Home Association - means that District Softball Association in whose club competition a person is registered with SQI as:

- currently participating; or
- last having participated, prior to any break or period of retirement, either on a regular basis or on an irregular, intermittent or infrequent basis but in circumstances where the person nevertheless may be said to participate or to have participated on a usual basis.

1.2.7 Honorary Members – include, but are not limited to SQI Life Members, Legends and Hall of Fame members.

1.2.8 Incorporated Softball Clubs – means an incorporated body which is registered with a District Softball Association which, in turn, is registered with SQI.

- 1.2.9 Individual Persons – means persons who are registered members of a District Softball Association, a Satellite Softball Organisation or an affiliated club of either and persons who are registered participants of an Event.
- 1.2.10 Natural Persons – include but are not limited to persons who are appointed to a SQI Committee or to deliver programs and events on behalf of SQI who are not Individual Persons.
- 1.2.11 Permit - means a written confirmation by the Home Association that a person is free to compete in softball competition within the State of Queensland but outside his/her Home Association during a period of temporary absence from the Home Association.
- 1.2.12 Person - means a player, coach, manager, statistician or umpire.
- 1.2.13 Satellite Softball Organisation - means an incorporated body conducting or establishing the sport of Softball in an area of Queensland deemed as being rural, remote or in a location targeted by the SQI Board of Directors for growth which is not being serviced by a member District Softball Association.
- 1.2..14 SAL – means Softball Australia Limited.
- 1.2..15 SQI – means Softball Queensland Inc.
- 1.2.16 Transfer - means a written confirmation by the Home Association that a person is free to leave the Home Association and to participate in softball, on a permanent basis, wheresoever that person chooses within the State of Queensland.

1.3 Consistency of Documents

- 1.3.1 For the avoidance of doubt, if any inconsistency remains between the constituent documents of a District Softball Association or Associate Member Entity and the SQI Constitution, the SQI Constitution shall prevail to the extent of that inconsistency.

2. DISTRICT SOFTBALL ASSOCIATIONS

2.1 New Application for Membership – District Softball Association

- 2.1.1 An application for membership of SQI by a District Softball Association shall be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on the form prescribed accompanied by the prescribed fee.
- 2.1.2 New applications will be considered by the SQI Board of Directors and must meet the requirements of membership as stated in Rules and this Policy.
- 2.1.3 Where an application for membership is rejected, the District Softball Association has the right of appeal as set out in this Policy.
- 2.1.4 Each new application for membership shall be accompanied by:
- the history of the applicant organisation including details of the number of current affiliated clubs and teams, registered players, accredited coaches, umpires and statisticians;

- a copy of the applicant's current Constitution including Rules, By-Laws, Ground Rules and Policies, duly certified by the applicant's Secretary as being true and correct;
 - a copy of the applicant's financial reports for the two (2) years preceding the application if relevant;
 - details of the full names and addresses of all members of the Management Committee;
 - a copy of the applicant's Strategic Plan;
 - a copy of the applicant's Certificate of Incorporation and registration of Rules with the Queensland Government Office of Fair Trading or equivalent; and
 - such other details and/or materials as are prescribed from time to time.
- 2.1.5 The SQI Board of Directors may waive any of the requirements of Section 2.1.4 where it deems appropriate.
- 2.1.6 In considering the application, the SQI Board of Directors shall ascertain that the Constitution or Rules of the applicant contain all provisions required under the Rules and Policies of SQI and are not otherwise inconsistent with the Rules and Policies of SQI and that the applicant is:
- able to co-ordinate and conduct regular softball competition between its members in the immediate next twelve months;
 - able to provide properly qualified umpires, coaches and statisticians together with such other officials as are necessary for proper administration, coordination and conduct of softball competition between its members; and
 - respectable, responsible, stable and able to meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due.
- 2.1.7 Within fourteen (14) days of receipt of notification of acceptance, the District Softball Association Secretary shall forward to the CEO:
- a letter accepting membership of SQI, agreeing to abide by the SQI Constitution including Rules and Policies and work co-operatively towards the achievement of the SQI Strategic Plan;
 - duly completed Risk Management Checklist;
 - details of the full names and addresses of members of the applicant association and its constituent member clubs/teams;
 - all natural persons;
 - all persons serving in any official capacity including, but not limited to, coaches, trainers, umpires and statisticians; and
 - all players.
- 2.1.8 Where any change occurs in the contents of the documents or the details submitted, the applicant shall notify the CEO of the change not later than fourteen (14) days after such change occurs.

2.2 Renewal Of Membership – District Softball Association

- 2.2.1 All applications for renewal of membership of SQI by a District Softball Association shall be submitted on the form prescribed accompanied by the prescribed fee.
- 2.2.2 Applications for renewal of membership will be considered by the CEO and accepted subject to the applicant District Softball Association meeting the requirements of membership as stated in Rules 5.1 and 5.3 of the SQI Constitution and this Policy.
- 2.2.3 Where a District Association's application doesn't meet the requirements of membership, the CEO shall issue a notice to comply outlining where the applicant is in breach of the membership requirements, the steps to be taken to rectify such breach and the timeframe for compliance.
- 2.2.4 Where a District Association fails, or is unable, to comply by the due date, the CEO shall notify the SQI Board of Directors and the SQI Board of Directors will determine whether to accept the application, offer an alternate solution or reject the application.
- 2.2.5 In considering any application for renewal of membership the CEO shall ascertain that the applicant is respectable, responsible, stable and able to meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due and has:
- co-ordinated and conducted regular softball competition between its members in the immediate past twelve months;
 - provided properly qualified umpires, coaches and statisticians together with such other officials as were necessary for proper administration, coordination and conduct of softball competition between its members;
 - met all requirements of the relevant incorporation legislation or equivalent, including Queensland Government Office of Fair-Trading requirements where relevant;
 - a current Constitution which contains all provisions required under the Rules and Policies of SQI and are not otherwise inconsistent with the Rules and Policies of SQI;
 - submitted the required forms and documents for the past year including:
 - a copy of the applicant's current Constitution or part thereof which has been updated since the previous year including Rules, By-Laws, Ground Rules and Policies, duly certified by the applicant's secretary as being true and correct;
 - a copy of the applicant's annual financial report for the year preceding the application;
 - duly completed Risk Management Checklist;
 - details of the full names and addresses of members of the applicant association and its constituent member clubs/teams including all:
 - members of the Management Committee;
 - affiliated clubs and their contact details;
 - natural persons;
 - persons serving in any official capacity including, but not limited to, coaches, trainers, umpires and statisticians; and
 - players;
 - a copy of the draw for each competition conducted and the team lists for all teams participating in the competition;

- such other details and/or materials as were prescribed from time to time;
- submitted the required fees and payments as detailed in the SQL Constitution; and
- submitted a declaration that the applicant intends to continue to provide the same in the next twelve-month period.

2.2.6 Where any change occurs in the contents of the documents or the details submitted, the applicant shall notify the CEO of the change not later than fourteen (14) days after such change occurs.

2.3 Rights And Responsibilities – District Softball Associations

2.3.1 District Softball Associations will:

- be incorporated or as otherwise approved by the SQL Board of Directors;
- have objects that align with those of SQL as stated in Rule 3 and do all that is reasonably necessary to enable the Objects to be achieved;
- organise and control softball competitions and activities within its own organisation;
- manage its own affairs within such guidelines as SQL may from time to time prescribe;
- ensure that its own constitution expressly provides that its member clubs, teams and participants will be subject in all respects to the provisions and requirements of the SQL Constitution and SQL Committees and will submit to the jurisdiction of SQL and its committees in all matters pertaining to discipline and the imposition of penalties for any breach of the said SQL Constitution;
- effectively promulgate and enforce the SQL Constitution;
- at all times act for and on behalf of the interests of SQL, the Members, and Softball;
- use the national database as determined by Softball Australia and Member States for all clubs, teams, officials, player registrations and provide a copy of details as required by SQL from time to time;
- be responsible and accountable to SQL for fulfilling its obligations pursuant to the SQL Strategic Plan as revised from time to time;
- provide SQL with copies of its annual financial reports, annual report and other such documents as requested from time to time by the SQL Board of Directors;
- act in good faith and loyalty to maintain and enhance SQL and Softball, its standards, quality and reputation for the collective and mutual benefit of the Members and Softball;
- at all times operate with and promote mutual trust and confidence between SQL and the Members and work cooperatively with each in the pursuit of the Objects;
- pay all fees, levies and other dues as determined by the SQL Board of Directors for all programs, services, activities and competitions;
- not do or permit to be done any act or thing which might adversely affect or derogate from the standards, quality and reputation of SQL and of Softball and its maintenance and development; and
- advise SQL as soon as practicable of any serious operational, administrative or financial difficulties, assist SQL in investigating those issues and cooperate with SQL in addressing those issues, as mutually agreed.

2.3.2 Upon acceptance / renewal of membership, District Softball Associations are entitled to:

- access support, programs and services provided by SQI or a member District Softball Association;
- access relevant Insurance Policies;
- attend the SQI Annual Dinner;
- nominate for SQI Awards;
- participate in events, carnivals or tournaments conducted by SQI, a member District Softball Association or SAL;
- conduct events, carnivals or tournaments and invite other SQI members to participate, with the prior approval of SQI;
- attend forums, workshops and clinics conducted by SQI, a member District Softball Association or SAL;
- be entitled to refer to SQI for determination any questions or disputes arising within its organisation pertaining to softball competition or administration;
- have the right to conduct competitions against other SQI District Associations and their affiliated Clubs, subject to approval by the SQI Events Committee;
- any other activity or benefit approved by the SQI Board of Directors which must not include those exclusions detailed in this section; and
- receive notice of, attend and vote at SQI General Meetings.

3. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

3.1 Associate Members may include:

- Satellite Softball Organisations;
- Softball Clubs;
- Body Corporates;
- Individual Persons participating in a competition or event; and
- Honorary Members, Persons and Natural Persons.

3.2 A person or entity becomes an Associate Member if:

- the SQI Board of Directors decides to admit the person or entity as an Associate Member;
- any conditions on which the SQI Board of Directors made the decision are satisfied;
- they pay the prescribed fees; and
- provide the required membership details in the case of an entity.

3.3 A person or entity ceases to be an Associate Member if:

- the SQI Board of Directors decides to revoke, including expel or suspend, the person's or entity's membership of SQI;
- the Associate Member resigns their SQI membership by giving written notice to the CEO; or
- in the case of an Individual Person, they die.

- 3.4 An Associate Member may be expelled or suspended:
- where the Associate Member is in contravention of an Associate Member Agreement between the Associate Member and SQI; or
 - for breaches to the SQI Constitution including the Rules and Policies, in accordance with Rule 8; and
 - where the CEO notifies the Associate Member of the SQI Board of Directors' decision.
- 3.5 An Associate Member may resign their membership of SQI by giving notice to the CEO. The resignation takes effect when the notice is given to the CEO unless a later date is specified in the notice. An Associate Member cannot resign if the resignation would contravene an Associate Member Agreement between the Associate Member and SQI. Where the Associate Member resigns, they are not entitled to any refund of fees paid, unless the Associate Member Agreement specifically states otherwise.
- 3.6 An Associate Member Softball Club shall not be permitted to affiliate with more than one District Softball Association. An Associate Member Softball Club may be permitted, with the agreement of the two District Softball Associations, to participate in another District Softball Association's competitions. They will not, however, be an affiliated member of the District Softball Association to which they are permitted and will not accrue any voting rights with that District Softball Association.
- 3.7 No individual person as identified in this Policy shall be permitted to register with more than one club or more than one District Softball Association. An individual person may be permitted to another District Softball Association in accordance with Section 5 of this Policy.
- 3.8 SQI Registration will be valid for one year from the commencement of the Home Association's playing season, or for the duration of other competitions, programs or events they are registered to participate in.
- 3.9 Honorary Membership is non-transferable and is specific to the individual /organisation concerned.
- 3.10 Rights And Responsibilities – Associate Members**
- 3.10.1 All Associate Members will adhere to all SQI Policies and relevant Codes of Conduct.
- 3.10.2 Associate Member entities will:
- be incorporated or as otherwise approved by the SQI Board of Directors;
 - have objects that align with those of SQI as stated in Rule 3 and do all that is reasonably necessary to enable the Objects to be achieved;
 - organise and control softball competitions and activities within its own organisation;
 - manage its own affairs within such guidelines as SQI may from time to time prescribe;
 - ensure that its own constitution expressly provides that its member clubs, teams and participants will be subject in all respects to the provisions and requirements of the SQI Constitution and Policies and will submit to the

jurisdiction of SQI and its committees in all matters pertaining to discipline and the imposition of penalties for any breach of the said SQI Constitution or Policies;

- effectively promulgate and enforce the SQI Constitution;
- at all times act for and on behalf of the interests of SQI, the Members, and Softball;
- use the national database as determined by Softball Australia and Member States for all clubs, teams, officials, player registrations and provide a copy of details as required by SQI from time to time;
- be responsible and accountable to SQI for fulfilling its obligations pursuant to the SQI Strategic Plan as revised from time to time;
- provide SQI with copies of its annual financial reports, annual report and other such documents as requested from time to time by the SQI Board of Directors;
- act in good faith and loyalty to maintain and enhance SQI and Softball, its standards, quality and reputation for the collective and mutual benefit of the Members and Softball;
- at all times operate with and promote mutual trust and confidence between SQI and the Members and work cooperatively with each in the pursuit of the Objects;
- pay all fees, levies and other dues as determined by the SQI Board of Directors for all programs, services, activities and competitions;
- not do or permit to be done any act or thing which might adversely affect or derogate from the standards, quality and reputation of SQI and of Softball and its maintenance and development;
- advise SQI as soon as practicable of any serious operational, administrative or financial difficulties, assist SQI in investigating those issues and cooperate with SQI in addressing those issues, as mutually agreed;
- strive to grow participation rates on an annual basis through recruitment and retention strategies;
- deliver the sport of softball in a safe, family friendly and enjoyable environment;
- provide education and training opportunities for players and officials;
- provide appropriately qualified coaches, umpires and statisticians for their teams; and
- work co-operatively with and support their Home Association and where applicable Permit Association, in all aspects of delivering and conducting softball activities.

3.10.3 Associate Members are entitled to:

- access support, programs and services provided by SAL, SQI or their parent body;
- access relevant insurance cover as detailed in the various policies applicable from time to time;
- attend the SQI Annual Dinner;
- nominate for SQI Awards through their Home Association;
- participate in events, carnivals or tournaments (other than State Championships) conducted by SQI, a member District Softball Association, a SQI Associate Member or SAL;
- hold events, carnivals or tournaments and invite other SQI members to participate;

- attend forums, workshops and clinics conducted by SQI, a member District Softball Association or SAL; and
 - any other activity or benefit approved by the SQI Board of Directors, except for those specifically excluded through this Section, provided the Associate Member adheres to the conditions of participation in all activities and pays all associated fees.
- 3.10.4 Natural Persons and Honorary Members are not required to pay a membership fee as a result of that type of membership alone, and are entitled to receive communications, invitations to events and such other benefits as determined from time to time by the SQI Board of Directors.

3.11 Exclusions

- 3.11.1 Unless otherwise provided for in this Policy, Associate Member entities are not entitled to:
- call, or participate in the calling of, a general meeting;
 - be given notice of, attend or vote at a general meeting;
 - nominate, or participate in nominating, a person to serve as a Director;
 - participate in State Championships; or
 - access SQI talent identification or elite development programs.
- 3.11.2 Notwithstanding 3.11.1, Life Members are entitled to receive notice and attend SQI General Meetings. Life Members may speak on any topic but cannot vote at the SQI General Meetings.
- 3.11.3 Notwithstanding 3.11.1, Individuals persons registered with a District Softball Association are eligible to be selected in a representative team to compete in a State Championship.

4. APPEALS

- 4.1 Where an application for new or renewed membership from a District Softball Association is rejected, the District Softball Association has the right to Appeal as set out in Rule 5.3.2.
- 4.2 Where an application for membership or renewal of membership from an Associate Member Entity is rejected, or where the Entity breaches their conditions of membership and their membership is suspended or cancelled, the Entity may lodge with the CEO a written notice of intention to appeal against the decision. Upon receipt of such notice of appeal the CEO shall place the appeal on the agenda for determination at a SQI Board of Directors Meeting. Two (2) delegates from the Entity shall be permitted to attend such meeting for the purpose of making submissions on behalf of the applicant. Upon conclusion of submissions, the SQI Board of Directors shall make a determination on the appeal by a majority of votes of the SQI Board of Directors Members present, eligible to vote and voting and such determination shall be final and binding. Proxy votes are inadmissible.
- 4.3 Where an Associate Member Individual has their membership suspended or cancelled, they may lodge with the CEO a written notice of intention to appeal against the decision. Such matters will be considered under the provisions of Rule 8.3.

5. CLEARANCES, TRANSFERS AND PERMITS

5.1 Interstate Clearances and Permits

5.1.1 Any Person wishing to participate in softball in Queensland and who currently participates or last participated in softball in another state or territory of Australia shall not be eligible to participate in Queensland until:

- that Person finalises and has approved by all relevant governing bodies, a Clearance.

5.1.2 Any person who currently participates or last participated in softball competition within Queensland and who wishes to participate outside Queensland:

- shall first obtain a clearance;
- such clearance shall be effective for a minimum period of three (3) months from the date of receipt of application by the Association; and
- applications must be accompanied by the appropriate administration fee.

5.1.3 Any person who currently participates or last participated in softball competition within Queensland and who wishes to participate outside Queensland on a temporary basis:

- shall first obtain an interstate permit;
- such permit shall be effective for a maximum period of twelve (12) months from the date of receipt of application by SQL; and
- applications must be accompanied by the appropriate administration fee.

5.2 Intrastate Transfers and Permits

5.2.1 Any person wishing to leave their Home Association for the purpose of participating in softball on a permanent or indefinite basis elsewhere in Queensland shall first obtain a Transfer.

5.2.2 Any person wishing to participate, during a period of temporary absence from their Home Association, in softball in a District Softball Association in Queensland other than their Home Association shall first obtain a Permit.

5.2.3 The holder of a Permit shall be ineligible to represent any District Softball Association other than the Home Association.

5.2.4 It shall be the responsibility of any District Softball Association which issues a Transfer or a Permit, or which accepts a Transfer or a Permit, to follow the procedure as determined by the National Database.

5.2.5 It shall be the responsibility of any District Softball Association to apply to SQL for a team permit when intending to compete interstate or overseas.

5.2.6 Any player wishing to play with a softball team in a tournament or event (other than their club and Home Association) must first obtain a permit from their club and Home Association.

5.3 State Championship Release

- 5.3.1 A District Softball Association which is unable to field a team entirely of Individual Persons registered with their association may request assistance for the provision of players and/or officials on a State Championship Release from other District Softball Associations. Such request for assistance should come through the SQI office, but may go direct to a specific association. An individual person is not permitted to apply for a State Championship Release.
- 5.3.2 A District Softball Association may issue a State Championship Release for an Individual Person or Person registered with that District Softball to participate in a State Championship for a District Softball Association other than their Home Association provided that:
- the person has made themselves available for selection in their Home Association trials and has been unsuccessful in the selection process;
 - the person's Home Association will not be fielding a team in the relevant State Championship;
 - there is agreement between both the Home Association and the District Softball Association to which he/she is released to play; and
 - the State Championship Policy is adhered to.

5.4 General Provisions

- 5.4.1 Until a Clearance, Transfer or a Permit, as the case may require, is obtained, a person shall not be eligible to participate in softball;
- within the state of Queensland (where Section 5.2 applies);
 - outside the state of Queensland (where Sections 5.1 applies); or
 - outside the Home Association (where Sections 5.2 or 5.3 apply).
- 5.4.2 No person shall be eligible to be granted a Clearance, Transfer, Permit or Championship Release where that person:
- has failed to discharge any financial obligation (including a financial obligation imposed as a disciplinary measure) to their club, Home Association or SQI; and
 - is serving a period of suspension or disqualification from eligibility to participate in softball (whether in their Home Association or elsewhere) or from membership of his/her club, Home Association or SQI.
- 5.4.3 Any person desiring to participate in a softball competition in a District Softball Association other than their Home Association, shall be required to obtain a Clearance, Transfer or Permit where that person has participated in a softball competition within the period of one (1) year prior to commencement of the softball season in which that person seeks to recommence participation.
- 5.4.4 A copy of every Clearance, Transfer, Permit or Championship Release shall be submitted to SQI office using the prescribed method within the national database which shall include confirmation from the Secretary of the Home Association or register with the delegated authority (such confirmation not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed) that no ground of ineligibility pursuant to Section 4.5.2 exists with respect to the applicant.

- 5.4.5 In accordance with the SQI Insurance Policies, insurance cover will only be provided to those registered participants who first obtain the relevant permit to participate in activities outside their home association.

6. SQI MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES

- 6.1 The Following general principles will be taken into account by the SQI Board of Directors in considering applications it lodges to join other bodies

- The objects of the body offering membership must not be in conflict with the objects of either SQI or SAL;
- Membership of the body offering membership must either be inclusive in nature or must provide for identified disadvantaged groups, for example, indigenous Australians, people with disabilities;
- There must be benefits that accrue to softball from the membership, for example, marketing of softball or individuals within softball; opportunities to recruit additional members to softball; access to appropriate information that will support SQI's operations; or political benefits;
- Any membership fees charged must provide value for money, with regard to any cost-benefit analysis;
- The membership should provide for recognition of softball or members of softball in a meaningful way;
- The organisation being considered must have a sound financial and governance basis to its operations and SQI are not to be held accountable for any liability or actions of the organisation;
- The business and actions of the organisation being considered and its members must be ethical and must not impact negatively on the image and brand of SQI;
- The organisation being considered must have processes in place to provide SQI with regular updates on activities;
- Membership should enhance, or as a minimum not negatively impact on, any of SQI's funding arrangements, including sponsorship or government grants;
- The organisation must be a legal entity under an appropriate legislative framework;
- Preference will be given to, but not restricted to, not-for-profit organisations; and
- Memberships which allow the potential for SQI members to be elected to the Board of Management will be highly regarded.

7. REVIEW OF POLICY

- 7.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three (3) years or as otherwise determined by the SQI Board of Directors.