

Softball Ontario Umpire Communication Policy and Protocol

This document outlines the Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel and Umpires who register with Softball Ontario regarding all forms of communication such as email, phone and fax communication.

Rational: Because our Association relies almost entirely on forms of communication over large distances and it is very important that all Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel and Umpires follow these policies and protocols for communication. The Softball Ontario Umpires Program must rely on volunteers to deliver the Umpires program and it is important that effective communication is occurring to ensure the success of the program.

Policy: Communication Policy: Softball Ontario Umpires Program will make every effort to meet the following protocols in their communication to all participants in the game of softball and the business of Softball Ontario.

1. Communicate in a positive, polite and supportive manner always keeping in mind the positive image of Softball Ontario and it's volunteers and members.
 - 1.1 In cases where the communication may reflect frustration or conflict then a Softball Ontario Representative will be advised and include all the necessary parties.
 - 1.2 This does not preclude communication that may be corrective in nature as a Softball Ontario Representative needs to correct someone due to incorrect information. It does not mean that such communication will be done respectfully and with a positive reinforcement.
2. Softball Ontario's preference for communication is first email, then phone and fax.
 - 2.1 It should be noted that this is a preference only. If at any time someone cannot contact via email for technological reason or for the necessity clarity that comes with direct to direct voice-to-voice communication, the Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel will indicate an appropriate time to speak on the telephone. If a representative is not available directly then contact can be arranged through the Softball Ontario office.
 - 2.2 All Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel are responsible to manage their own email in an organized fashion within their email program.
 - 2.3 All email message sent to info@softballontario.ca will be forwarded onto the appropriate representatives.
 - 2.4 All Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel will confine their email communication and not to use Softball Ontario supplied email lists for personal use.
3. One day turn around in all communication with the exception of weekends and holidays where the time line will extend to the next working day.
 - 3.1 Each Umpire Personnel will respond to correspondence in a timely manner.

- 3.2 All emails, phone messages and faxes sent before a deadline the day before they need to be answered by 4:30 pm the next day or the communicated deadline.
 - 3.3 If an email, phone message or fax arrives after 4:30 pm then the Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel is not responsible to return that specific email until the next day.
 - 3.4 If Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel can answer the communication sooner the quicker response is always encouraged.
 - 3.5 People email Softball Ontario Umpire Personnel should avoid the use of urgent makers in email (Importance: HIGH!) unless the issue is truly urgent or time sensitive.
 - 3.6 A returned message does not mean that the issue is necessarily resolved within the timeline; it only means that communication has been returned.
4. In the case where communication is not be followed through a timely manner as outlined in previous points, the participant should notify the Softball Ontario office that they have not had timely communication.
 - 4.1 Initially this contact should be for the purposes of re-establishing communication and resolving the particular communication need.
 - 4.2 If after the first contact with the Softball Ontario office is made and the communication issue is not resolved then the sender may make a formal complaint directly to the Executive Director of Softball Ontario.
5. All Umpires are expected to follow the proper communication chain of command.
 - 5.1 If an Umpire has a question about a rule interpretation or one of Softball Ontario policies, they should contact their immediate Zone Umpire-in-Chief. If the Zone Umpire-in-Chief does not know the answer, he then should forward the question onto their assigned Fast Pitch Umpire Committee Member. If the Fast Pitch Umpire Committee Member does not know the answer, then it should be forwarded onto the Fast Pitch Provincial Umpire-in-Chief to respond.
 - 5.2 Any matters regarding Softball Canada, umpires are asked to follow the proper chain of command as listed above. Softball Canada only wants to correspond with Softball Ontario Program Coordinator and Provincial Umpires-in-Chief. Softball Ontario will distribute the necessary information to Umpires in the Province of Ontario.