



Athlete Development Committee

Purpose:

The Athlete Development Committee ("Committee") is a committee established by Softball BC and accountable to the Board of Directors. The Committee does not exercise the governance authority of the Board of Directors.

The Committee's primary purpose is to advise on the design, alignment, accessibility, and continuous improvement of athlete-development pathways across British Columbia—from entry into softball and foundational skill development through lifelong recreational participation, competitive development, and performance. The Committee will support alignment with Sport for Life and Long-Term Development (LTD) principles, promote greater coordination across provincial programming, athlete identification, and performance pathways.

For these Terms of Reference, "athlete" is used inclusively to describe people participating in softball at any age, stage, discipline or level of aspiration, including recreational and lifelong participants.

Core Values for Guiding the Committee:

The Athlete Development Committee is guided by Softball BC's values, as stated in the strategic plan. The committee recognizes that the culture at the committee level should reflect Softball BC's culture and expectations.

In carrying out its work, the Committee will also apply the following principles:

- Athlete-centred development—the needs, safety, wellbeing, experience and long-term development of athletes will guide the Committee's advice;
- Development before short-term results—programs and competition structures should support age- and stage-appropriate learning, progression, recovery and retention;
- Equity and geographic access—location, income, gender, identity, culture, ability or other systemic factors should not create unnecessary barriers to athlete development;
- Reconciliation and cultural relevance—the distinct needs, experiences and strengths of Indigenous athletes and communities must be reflected in pathway design;
- Evidence and learning—recommendations should draw upon research, technical expertise, program data, evaluation findings and lived experience; and,
- Collaboration and role clarity—the Committee will work through established management structures and avoid duplicating the responsibilities of staff, other committees, advisory councils or authorized selection bodies.

Key Duties:

LTD Implementation and Association Support:

- Review the provincial athlete-development pathway and recommend priorities and improvements across entry, recreational, development, competitive and performance stages;
- Advise on the practical application of Sport for Life, LTD and Softball Canada's Athlete Development Matrix with Softball BC programs, resources, and partnerships;

- Support the development of practical recommendations, resources and tools that affiliated associations and clubs can adapt to their respective age categories, classifications, disciplines, communities, and delivery capacities; and,
- Identify transition points where athletes may be lost, underserved, advanced too quickly, or unable to access an appropriate “next opportunity”.

Coordinated Athlete Identification and Performance Pathways:

- Advise on a coordinated provincial athlete-identification framework that recognizes different purposes, eligibility requirements and selection criteria associated with individual programs and events.
- Recommend approaches through which eligible athletes may be identified and considered for opportunities such as the BC Summer Games, Canada Summer Games, North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) and Team BC programming without automatically requiring completely separate identification processes.
- Recognize that participation in a provincial identification process or athlete pool does not guarantee eligibility, assessment or selection for any team or event. Event-specific criteria, residency requirements, age requirements, Indigenous eligibility requirements and other applicable conditions will continue to apply.
- Advise on appropriate consent, privacy, access, retention and data-stewardship requirements before Softball BC creates or maintains any consolidated athlete information system or identification pool.
- Review the relationship among athlete development, talent identification, Team BC programming, competition opportunities and transitions into Softball Canada pathways.
- The Committee will not evaluate, rank or select individual athletes. Individual selection decisions will remain with the selectors or selection committees authorized under the applicable selection policy or criteria.

Strategic Partnerships & Collaboration:

- Work in close collaboration with the Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Council (iSPARC) to ensure equitable access, cultural alignment, and shared pathways for Indigenous athletes across NAIG and provincial team streams.

Access, Inclusion and Regional Development:

- Identify geographic, financial, cultural and structural barriers affecting access to quality athlete-development opportunities;
- Recommend scalable regional delivery approaches, which may include regional hubs, travelling technical expertise, shared resources, virtual learning, camps, clinics, and partnerships;
- Consider the distinct realities of rural, remote, northern, Indigenous, and underserved communities when reviewing programs or proposing solutions;
- Promote development opportunities across female, male and gender-diverse participant populations and across fastpitch, slo-pitch, modified, adaptive and other recognized or emerging forms of softball.
- Coordinate with Zone Representatives to elicit support for more equitable regional access to identification opportunities across BC.

National Alignment:

- Advise Softball BC staff on opportunities to collaborate with Softball Canada on skill-development camps, athlete-development resources, and national-team identification opportunities within British Columbia;

- Support alignment between provincial programming and applicable Softball Canada development models, technical frameworks, and performance pathways; and,
- Partner with Softball Canada to coordinate and deliver skill development camps and national team identification camps within the province.

Measurement and Continuous Improvement:

- Recommend practical measures relating to participation, progression, retention, athlete experience, regional access, inclusion and performance outcomes.
- Review aggregated program information, evaluation findings and stakeholder feedback at least annually.
- Identify evidence gaps and recommend proportionate approaches to data collection, program evaluation and continuous improvement.
- Provide an annual summary of observations, priority issues and recommended actions for consideration through Softball BC's operational-planning process.

Authority:

The Committee may review information, seek input, analyze issues and make recommendations within its approved mandate. Its recommendations are advisory and are not binding upon the Executive Director, staff or Board of Directors.

The Committee is an active advisor to the Executive Director or their designate.

The Committee has no independent authority to:

- direct staff or manage day-to-day operations;
- approve or commit Softball BC resources;
- enter into agreements or represent Softball BC publicly;
- select, rank, appoint or remove individual athletes, coaches, team staff or contractors;
- approve or adjudicate athlete-selection criteria, exemptions or appeals;
- address complaints, discipline, safe-sport matters or individual athlete cases;
- change bylaws, policies, special operating rules, championship formats or technical rules; or
- exercise responsibilities assigned to another Softball BC committee, council, staff member or authorized decision-maker.

The Committee may identify issues in these areas and refer them through the designated staff lead to the appropriate decision-maker or organizational body.

Material recommendations requiring governance approval, significant policy change, unbudgeted expenditure or a change in strategic direction will be advanced by the Executive Director to the Board through the appropriate process.

The Committee will exercise its authority in accordance with the provisions as set out in these Terms of Reference.

Composition:

The Committee will be composed of 4-7 individuals with the combined competencies, lived experience, geographic knowledge and perspectives required to support the full athlete-development pathway.

Members may satisfy more than one representation or competency requirement; however, the Committee as a whole must demonstrate the required breadth of perspective.

The Executive Director, with the approval of the Board of Directors, will appoint committee members and the chair from a pool of volunteers curated by staff.

Required Representation and Competencies:

The Committee's composition will include:

- A Chair with demonstrated leadership, facilitation and athlete-development knowledge;
- At least one representative with direct knowledge of association delivery in regional, rural, remote or northern communities, drawn from more than one geographic area;
- At least two members with recognized technical or athlete-development expertise, which may include skill acquisition, coaching, strength and conditioning, sport science, athlete wellbeing, pathway design or program evaluation;
- At least one person with direct knowledge of Indigenous sport, community development or culturally relevant participant pathways. Where mutually agreed, this position may be nominated or supported by I-SPARC;
- The head coach of both the Team BC Women's and Team BC Men's program; and,
- At least one current or recently active athlete or participant who can contribute direct experience of the softball pathway.

The President or designee may serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee, but does not have a vote.

The Committee will be supported through the Sport Development Director. The Softball BC staff support representative does not have a vote.

Other staff members, athletes, representatives of related committees or councils, partners and subject-matter experts may be invited to participate in specific agenda items. Invited participants do not vote or count toward quorum.

Appointments and Terms:

- Voting members will normally be appointed for two-year terms, with terms staggered to support continuity.
- Members may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms. After an absence of at least one year, a former member may be considered for reappointment.
- The Chair will normally be appointed for a two-year term, renewable once as Chair, subject to the member's overall term limit.
- Initial appointments may be made for one or two years to establish staggered rotation.

Should a vacancy occur on the Committee for any reason, the Executive Director may appoint a qualified member to fill it.

A person appointed to fill a vacancy will serve the remainder of the vacant term. A partial term of less than one year will not count as a full term.

Meetings:

The Committee will meet by videoconference or in-person, as required. The Chair will call meetings. At a minimum, the committee shall meet three (3) times per year.

Each committee member, along with the Chair, will have one vote. Where needed, voting shall be by simple majority.

Resources or Support:

The Committee has no independent budget. Staff support, consultation, travel, meetings and other expenses must be included in an approved Softball BC budget or authorized in advance by the Executive Director. Reimbursement will be governed by Softball BC's Expense Policy.

The Committee will receive administrative support from Management, as determined by Management in collaboration with the Chair.

Any additional technical, legal, financial, data, consultation or administrative support will be provided at Management's discretion and subject to available resources and organizational priorities.

Responsible to

The Committee reports to the Executive Director (or their designate). The Chair shall provide written or verbal status reports quarterly to the Board, as well as upon request. Operational communication and reporting will normally occur through the Sport Development Director or other designated staff lead.

The Chair and designated staff lead will provide the Executive Director with status updates at least semi-annually and an annual summary of activities, recommendations, management responses and emerging issues.

The Executive Director will determine which matters should be incorporated into Board reporting, strategic or operational plans, budgets, policies or member communications. The Chair may participate in a Board presentation or report when requested by the Executive Director or Board.

Evaluation

The Executive Director and the Chair of the Committee will evaluate the Committee's performance. Support may be provided through other staff as needed.

The Committee will establish an annual work plan, approved by the Executive Director, identifying its priorities, intended outputs, timelines and required support.

The Committee's performance will be assessed against the achievement of yearly objectives/deliverables and the fulfillment of the key duties outlined in these terms of reference.

Review and Approval of Terms of Reference

The Executive Director will review these Terms of Reference regularly, with input from the Committee as required.

A formal review will occur at least every two years or earlier if there is a material change to Softball BC's strategy, organizational structure, athlete-development system or committee model.

Material amendments affecting the Committee's mandate, authority, composition or accountability require Board approval on the recommendation of the Executive Director. Administrative changes that do not materially alter these provisions may be approved by the Executive Director and reported to the Board.

Other

All members of the Committee shall be members in good standing of Softball BC.

All Committee members must:

- comply with Softball BC's Code of Conduct and Ethics, Conflict of Interest Policy, Privacy Policy and applicable confidentiality requirements;
- complete any screening, orientation or training required for their position;
- act in the best interests of athlete development throughout British Columbia rather than as delegates of a single association, program, discipline, region or constituency;
- protect confidential, personal and athlete information received through Committee work; and
- support respectful, inclusive, culturally safe and constructive discussion.

A member who is unable or unwilling to meet conduct, confidentiality, conflict-of-interest, attendance or participation expectations may be removed by the Executive Director following appropriate review.

Date of Approval: September 1, 2026

Date of Review: September 1, 2028