



2025-26 NJSIAA SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

NJSIAA reserves the right to adjust, change or cancel dates, times, and locations for any round of competition during an NJSIAA State tournaments. Schools entering the tournament will not be granted a change of date/time due to any conflicts with school trips, proms, banquets, SATs, unless agreed upon by both schools. During the spring tournament season, we will make every effort to accommodate schools that have a conflict with their graduation.

Member schools will not be eligible to participate in any NJSIAA Tournaments if it has violated the NJSIAA Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Policies, or Procedures. Any student-athlete who transfers after the competition start date will not be eligible for this tournament (Bylaws, Article V, Section 4.K. 5).

Schools are to be reminded of the 3-team DQ rule for state tournament eligibility, which states “Any varsity team accumulating three or more player or coach disqualifications prior to the team’s participation in the state tournament will not be permitted to participate in the state tournament. The 3-team DQ rule is not applicable during participation in the state tournament.

The NJSIAA will follow the procedure below for schools that are disqualified from state tournament competition:

1. If a school is disqualified, either for the use of an ineligible player or violating the 3-team DQ rule, from state tournament competition after the tournament has been seeded but prior to the bracket being final, then the bracket will be reseeded and the next ranked school who entered the tournament will be included.
2. If a school is disqualified, either for the use of an ineligible player or violating the 3-team DQ rule, from state tournament competition after the tournament has been seeded and after the bracket is final, then the bracket will not be reseeded, and no additional school will be included.
3. If a school is disqualified from state tournament competition due to the use of an ineligible player during the state tournament, then the school will be removed from the tournament immediately and their last opponent will advance in their place.

Schools participating in any NJSIAA tournament are responsible for the actions and behaviors of their spectators. Schools are required to provide adequate staff security to ensure there is proper oversight of their spectators. In addition, schools are financially responsible for any damage to the property or premises caused by their student-athletes, staff, or spectators (spectators include, but are not limited to, cheerleaders, marching band participants, students, and other fans).

NJSIAA requires Certified Athletic Trainers at all its tournament events. The ATC must document all injuries on an injury report form. This form must be available to the NJSIAA upon request.

Member schools that are not willing or able to comply with NJSIAA tournament regulations and any relevant procedures found in the state tournament operating procedures handbook should not enter the tournament. Member schools are encouraged to review NJSIAA tournament regulations with the school administration. Coaches must have a copy of the tournament regulations as well as a copy of the rule modifications (if any) available at all contests. Copies of these documents are available on the NJSIAA website.

NJSIAA Softball Tournament Staff

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Important Dates

Event	Date
First Practice:	March 9, 2026
Competition May Begin:	March 16, 2026
Entry Form Opens:	May 1, 2026
Entry Form Closes:	May 11, 2026
Conflict of Interest Form:	May 11, 2026
Cutoff:	May 16, 2026
PowerPoints Close (12:00pm):	May 17, 2026
Seeding:	May 19, 2026
Regular Season Competition Ends:	June 14, 2026

Tournament Dates

Public Tournament	Date	Location
Round 1:	May 26, 2026*	Higher Seed
Round 2:	May 28, 2026*	Higher Seed
Round 3:	June 2, 2026*	Higher Seed
Sectional Finals:	June 4, 2026*	Higher Seed
State Semifinals:	June 8, 2026#	Higher Power Points
State Finals:	June 12, 2026	Ivy Hill Park
Non-Public Tournament	Date	Location
Round 1:	May 27, 2026*	Higher Seed
Round 2:	May 29, 2026*	Higher Seed
Round 3:	June 3, 2026*	Higher Seed
Sectional Finals:	June 5, 2026*	Higher Seed
State Finals:	June 10, 2026	Ivy Hill Park

*These tournament dates listed above can be moved only upon mutual agreement by both schools. If schools do not agree, then it must be played on the date listed. If any date is moved by mutual agreement, the potential next round opponent must be notified ASAP. No tournament game may be scheduled on or before Memorial Day. Schools may play on Sunday only if both schools agree.

For the public state semifinals, the game date may be moved upon mutual agreement. If schools cannot agree on the date, the game will be played on the scheduled date above. Game time for the state semifinals will be set at 4:00pm. The game time cannot be moved unless approved by the NJSIAA.

Schools that did not qualify for the tournament, have been eliminated, or have a bye should not schedule any non-tournament games on the dates listed above.

State Finals Schedule

Non-Public B	June 10, 2026	1:00pm	Ivy Hill Park
Non-Public A	June 10, 2026	3:00pm	Ivy Hill Park
Group 1	June 12, 2026	12:00pm	Ivy Hill Park
Group 2	June 12, 2026	2:00pm	Ivy Hill Park
Group 3	June 12, 2026	4:00pm	Ivy Hill Park
Group 4	June 12, 2026	6:00pm	Ivy Hill Park

For the state finals, the team with the higher PowerPoints will be the home team and use the first base dugout.

New for this year's state tournament

1. The power points for softball will go back to calculating the 16 best power-pointed games from opening day to the cutoff date regardless of how many games were played.
2. For contests against out-of-state or non-member opponents, we will use the actual record of the opponent as of the cutoff date. It is imperative that coaches continue to update their out of state/non-member opponents records in highschoolsports.com throughout the season.
3. Officials' fees for the first three (3) rounds of the state tournament will be determined by the State Officials Fee Committee recommendations. Starting with the Sectional Finals, the fees will be established by the NJSIAA.

Tournament Eligibility

1. Teams must be competing on a varsity interscholastic basis.
2. Sixty percent (60%) of the games played on or before the cutoff date must be against New Jersey schools.
3. Any player with two (2) or more disqualifications in the current season, prior to the start of the tournament, will be unable to compete in the state tournament.
4. Any varsity team accumulating three (3) or more player or coach disqualifications prior to the start of the tournament will not be permitted to participate in the state tournament.

Tournament Qualifications

1. The top 16 teams from each section & group will qualify for this tournament using the PowerPoint system.
2. Games played after the cutoff date will not count toward the PowerPoint calculation even if they were started before the cutoff date.
3. The minimum number of games to be played by the cutoff date is 16.
4. Teams that play less than the minimum number of games will still be eligible for the tournament based on their total power points achieved at the cutoff divided by 16.
5. If there is a tie in power points, the current NJSIAA tie-breaking procedure will break all ties.

Tournament Entry Procedure

1. The entry form must be completed online during the time listed above. If you do not wish to enter the tournament, you don't need to do anything.
2. All varsity schedules & rosters must be entered in njschoolsports.com by the start of the season. Rosters must be checked and updated, if necessary, by the start of the tournament. We cannot guarantee any roster changes made after the start of the tournament will make it into the tournament program.
3. All varsity scores must be reported to www.njschoolsports.com as soon as possible after each contest. If you encounter problems, please contact hssupport@njadvancemedia.com.
4. PowerPoints will be downloaded from the [njschoolsports](https://njschoolsports.com) website on the date listed above at noon. Coaches are reminded that all team information must be totally up to date and checked for accuracy before the data is downloaded.
5. The officials conflict of Interest form must be completed by the date listed above. If there is no conflict of interest, you do not have to complete this form.

Tournament Entry Fee

- \$90.00 Payable to the NJSIAA (Please note Baseball Tournament).
- Forward all entry fees to the NJSIAA, 1161 Route 130 North, Robbinsville, New Jersey 08691

Withdrawal Policy for Tournament Participation

1. Schools that withdraw from the tournament before seeding will not be subject to any penalty.
2. Schools that withdraw from the tournament after having been seeded will be subject to a fine, unless truly extraordinary circumstances are present.
3. Schools that withdraw from the tournament after the brackets have become official will be subject to a fine, unless truly extraordinary circumstances are present. In addition, the program will be placed on probation for one year.
4. Schools that withdraw from the tournament at any point while on probation will be fined and barred from participating in the tournament for the following school year, unless truly extraordinary circumstances are present. In addition, the program will be placed on additional year of probation.
5. Schools that repeatedly withdraw from tournaments across multiple sports may be referred to the NJSIAA for review and may be subject to Athletic Department probation.

Tournament Seeding

1. The 16 qualifying schools in each group and each section will be seeded using the NJSIAA power point system.
2. Teams will be seeded based on their power point totals.
3. If there is a tie in power points for seeding, we will use the current NJSIAA tie-breaking procedure.

The media may post brackets following the completion of the seeding meeting. Brackets do not become official until 12:00pm on the day after seeding.

Tournament PowerPoint Procedure

The NJSIAA power point system will be used for all qualifying purposes.

1. The PowerPoint procedure for this tournament will be using the 16 best power-pointed games from opening day to the cutoff date regardless of how many games were played.
2. The residual points earned from opponents will be calculated using your opponent's first 16 boys games played.
3. Teams that play less than the minimum number of games will still be eligible for the tournament based on their total power points achieved at the cutoff divided by 16.
4. In League, Conference, County or Cup tournament games that require a team to advance, regardless of the overtime procedure used, the winning team will receive all the PowerPoints.

Out of State / Non-Member Opponents (OOS / NM)

Contests against out-of-state or non-member opponents will count for power points and will follow the same calculation procedure as games against member schools. We will use the actual record of the OOS/NM opponent as of the cutoff date. It is imperative that coaches continue to update their OOS/NM opponents records in highschoolsports.com throughout the season. When entering records for OOS/NM opponents, only enter the opponents' first 16 games. The system will not let you enter any games above 16.

PowerPoint Tie Breaking Procedure

1. Head-to-Head Competition. Any ties involving 3 or more teams, move to step #2
2. Average quality points per game.
3. Average residual points per game.
4. Average OOWP for all opponents.
5. Common opponent winning percentage
 - a. Example: Team A is 3-0 (100%) vs. team C and team B is 2-0 (100%) vs. team C, go to #6
 - b. Example: Team A is 2-1 (.667%) vs. team C and team B is 1-1 (.500%) vs. team C, Team A wins Tiebreaker
6. Team total winning percentage
7. Coin Toss

The tie breaking procedure above includes all contests from the competition start date to the cutoff date.

Tournament Rules & Information

1. All current NFHS rules along with any NJSIAA rule modifications will govern all tournament games.
2. The tournament dates listed can be moved only upon mutual agreement by both schools except for the state finals. If schools do not agree, then it must be played on the date listed. If any date is moved by mutual agreement, the potential next round opponents must be notified ASAP. Schools may play on Sunday only if both schools agree.
3. All game times for all rounds up to and including the sectional finals will be designated by the higher seeded (home) team. The recommended start time for school days is 4:00pm. For non-school days, times will be established by the home team.
4. For the state semifinals, the game date may be moved upon mutual agreement. Game time for the state semifinals will be set at 4:00pm. If schools cannot agree on the date, the game will be played on the scheduled date above. The game time cannot be moved unless approved by the NJSIAA.
5. All game times are pending the official's availability. Athletic Directors must communicate consistently through all rounds of the tournament regarding start times and field locations.
6. The NJSIAA may need to determine the start times if there is any disagreement between schools.
7. Game times for all state group championship games will be established by the NJSIAA.
8. Regular season or league/conference tournament games cannot replace NJSIAA tournament games.
9. If any circumstance causes postponement, the game must be played on the next day. If the home team cannot get their field ready the next day, the home team has to either find a neutral site or move to the opponent's field if playable. If the next day is a Sunday, the game may be played if both schools are permitted to play on Sundays, otherwise, the game must be played on Monday. Non-NJSIAA regular season or tournament games must be moved.
10. After a second consecutive postponement of a game because of field conditions, and either team cannot get their field ready, the NJSIAA may designate an alternate site as the home field.
11. In the case of multiple days of rain, the first school to get their field ready will be the site of the game unless NJSIAA has secured a field.
12. Responsibility for postponing a game shall rest with the host school. It is recommended that the host school should notify their opponent before the departure of the visiting school's buses if possible.
13. The NJSIAA assignors must be notified of any postponement in a timely fashion.
14. All bench personnel for this tournament must be approved by the school district. Bench personnel are limited to uniformed players, coaches, managers, and athletic trainers. Under no circumstances are fans, private coaches or club coaches permitted in the dugout.
15. Dugouts may be extended away from home plate if needed.
16. The lineup card must include the name, uniform number, position and batting order of each starting player. The lineup card must also include the name and uniform number of each eligible substitute. Once the lineup card is official, no additions to the card will be permitted.
17. The winning school must notify njschoolsports.com immediately after each game, which must include the pitch count information.
18. Fields should be lined in accordance with the National Federation Rules.
19. Sites will not be declared unsuitable merely because recommended minimum fence distances are not available, or field conditions are less than perfect unless Leagues or Conferences have ruled such sites unsuitable for League or Conference play. However, NJSIAA staff reserves the right to move a game to another site if the field conditions are not considered to be suitable for competition.
20. The host school must provide an adequate amount of crowd control/security as needed based on the host school's facility and magnitude of the event.
21. The visiting school must provide at least one (1) staff member, not associated with the coaching staff, to be present at each tournament game, to maintain control of visiting spectators.
22. Only Optic Yellow softballs meeting NFHS & NOCSAE specifications may be used in the tournament. The home team will provide the game balls. At the State Finals, all game balls will be provided by the NJSIAA. The Wilson A9011 Optic Yellow softballs will be the official ball for the State Finals.

Extra Innings (Ghost Runner) Procedure

1. This procedure applies to all state tournament games that are tied after seven (7) complete innings and any ensuing completed innings.
2. Starting with the top of the 10th inning, the offensive team shall begin its turn at-bat with a runner on second base.
3. The player who is scheduled to bat ninth (last) in that respective half inning will be placed at second base.
 - Example - If the number 5 batter is to lead off, the number 4 batter in the batting order would be placed on second base.
4. A substitute may be inserted for the ghost runner, however a courtesy runner may not be used for the ghost runner.

Officials Assignments

The NJSIAA will assign all officials for all rounds of the tournament.

Rounds 1 & 2

- Two (2) umpires will be assigned by NJSIAA.
- Schools may contact the assigner for a third umpire if available.

Rounds 3

- Three (3) umpires will be assigned by NJSIAA.

Higher seeded schools will pay all officials for the first three (3) rounds (see fees below).

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
\$110	\$110	\$110

Sectional Finals

- 3 umpires will be assigned to this round by the NJSIAA.
- NJSIAA will pay for all umpires.

State Semis-Finals (Public Only)

- 3 umpires will be assigned to this round by the NJSIAA.
- NJSIAA will pay for all umpires.

State Finals

- 3 umpires will be assigned to this round by the NJSIAA.
- NJSIAA will pay for all umpires.

Awards

Sectional Champions:

A team trophy and twenty-five (25) certificates for each Sectional Championship in each Group.

State Champions:

A team trophy and twenty-five (25) certificates for the State Champion in each Group.