ATHLETE GUIDE

USA SOFTBALL HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

ABOUT THE HPP

MISSION

The USA Softball High Performance Program (HPP) will identify a pool of athletes to train, compete and represent USA Softball through domestic and international competition. The program will focus on providing an equal opportunity for players to show their talent while growing the game of softball in the United States. Serving as ***The Pipeline to the Women's National Team Program,*** the HPP is inclusive to all that wish to participate and develop their skills.

Beginning at the regional level, athletes will have the opportunity to be identified as top athlete in their age group and earn an invitation to the HPP National Selection Event. At the National Selection Event, athletes will have the chance to be recognized as Top Performers. Those selected as Top Performers and other athletes that have been identified by the Junior Women's National Team Committee (JWNTSC) will be considered for age-specific Junior Women's National Team (JWNT) roster. Rosters will be selected based on WBSC calendar of events.

USA Softball is divided into ten (10) regions. The program is headed by the USA Softball National Office, which works to place individuals in roles throughout the regions and adjust the program, as necessary.

ABOUT THE HPP

AGE CLASSIFICATION

The HPP age classifications are based on the age guidelines for the WBSC competition schedule. Age groups are defined by birth year and an athlete must be the age group age throughout the entire year. For example, if an athlete is trying out for the 2026 U-14 age group, the athlete must not turn 15 until 2027. The age of the athlete on Dec 31, 2026 determines their age group for the calendar year of 2026.

Please check the USA Softball HPP webpage for updated Age Classifications & Years.

https://www.usasoftball.com/hpp/

REGIONAL IDENTIFIERS

Identifiers are open to anyone from any region. Athletes may choose a maximum of two positions at an identifier. Identifiers are the first step in making a Junior Women's National Team roster. During these events, athletes will have their metrics taken and hitting/position specific skills evaluated. Athletes will be identified in their specific age division.

NATIONAL SELECTION EVENT

The National Selection Event will be held for the top athletes of each age group based on evaluations from the Regional Identifiers. Following the National Selection Event, 18 athletes from each age group will be identified at Top Performers. Each Top Performer will then be eligible for age-specific Junior Women's National Team rosters base on age for the following calendar year and WBSC schedule of events.

Ex. The 2027 U-15 Women's National Team will be made up of U-13/14 athletes from the 2026 National Selection Event.

**The JWNTSC may also extend direct invites to athletes to attend the National Selection Event.*

ABOUT THE HPP

REGION BREAKDOWN

- **Region 1:** Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania
- **Region 2:** Maryland, DC, Delaware, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia
- **Region 3:** Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida
- **Region 4:** Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi
- **Region 5:** Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico
- **Region 6:** Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Chicago, and Michigan
- **Region 7:** Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska
- **Region 8:** Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin
- **Region 9:** Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming
- **Region 10:** Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada

HPP TIMELINE

Regional Identifier (RI): January — May and September — October

- Regional Identifiers are to identify regional area athlete pool. Athletes can be identified at any Regional Identifier.
- Cost — $125 Early Registration fee — Includes a T-shirt.
    - *REFUNDS WILL BE MADE WITH A $25 CONVENIENCE FEE UNTIL THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE WHICH IS ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE EVENT.*
    - Late Registration fee is $145.00. **T-Shirt not guarenteed*

National Selection Event (NSE): Typically held in the month of December.

- ***INVITE-ONLY!*** Available for those who have been identified at a Regional Identifier. These athletes will be invited to participate in the NSE and additional evaluation.
- **Fees associated with the HPP go toward the expenses associated with each event, including but not limited to: Evaluator expenses, facility rental fees, equipment, and umpires when needed.*

NEED TO KNOW INFORMATION

- Before the event, you must register. Early registration cuts off one week before the event. Late Registration is available the week prior for an extra fee. ($20)
- If you pre-register, you must bring your confirmation receipt or be able to pull it up on your phone.
- During the event, you will wear your bib number on your shirt for easy identification.

REVISED JAN. 28, 2026

HPP EVALUATIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Athletes can only be identified for TWO POSITIONS.

Athletes can only be identified for the positions in which they signed up for.

- Before Regional Identifiers, athletes must register. Early registration cuts off one week before the event. Late Registration is available the week prior to the event for an extra fee. ($20)
- If you pre-register, you must bring your confirmation receipt or be able to pull it up on your phone.
- During the event, you will be provided a bib number that you must wear on your shirt for easy identification.

EVALUATIONS & METRICS

HITTING EVALUTIONS

Soft Toss

Soft Toss Pitcher at 20-25 ft.

- Pitches to be belt-high and down the middle
- Each player receives 8 swings and/or slap swings

Exit Velocity

Tee with catch net in front

- Each player receives 4 swings and/or slap swings
- Pocket Radar behind the catch net

SCORING:

Soft Toss:

Athletes are being evaluated based on mechanics, power and timing.

Rate each player 1 – 3 with 3 being the best on overall hitting ability.

- **1 = DEVELOPMENTAL —** This athlete is still in the developmental stage.
- **2 = AVERAGE —** This athlete displays average mechanics and power.
- **3 = ABOVE AVERAGE —** This athlete displays above average mechanics and power. This athlete consistently delivers above average hits.

Exit Velocity:

All four speeds off tee recorded.

THROWING EVALUTIONS

The athlete will throw 4 balls consecutively into a catch net, with each velocity recorded.

- Distance: 10 yards from the catch net
- Equipment: Pocket Radar positioned behind the net

**Accuracy will be evaluated during the defense portion.*

SCORING:

All four throws recorded.

RUNNING EVALUTIONS

40-Yard Dash (total of 2 runs recorded)

- The player runs from start line through the 40-yard Laser

5-10-5 Shuttle (total of 2 runs recorded)

- Place three cones in a straight line, each five yards apart. The player starts at the middle cone. Player starts on their own, with timer to be started on first movement. At the start, the player runs to either the right or left cone, then sprints to the opposite cone (10 yards away), and finishes by running back through the middle cone.

The player must wait until everyone in her group has run one trial before running their second trial at each station.

**Note: Players must start with front toe behind the line*

SCORING:

All four times recorded.

PITCHING EVALUTIONS

- Distance — 43'
- Pitchers throw to a catcher attending the tryout.
- Each pitcher will throw fastball and 2 of their best pitches (5 of each)
- Pitchers will throw five pitches of each type, identifying the intended location beforehand.

SCORING:

Athletes are being evaluated based on combination of speed, location and movement.

Rate each player 1 – 3 with 3 being the best on overall pitching ability.

For each pitch thrown record the following:

- **Speed:** Record speeds for all 5 pitches thrown.
- **Location:** 1=missed location, 2=right side of plate to high/low, 3=hit spot
- **Movement:** 1=no movement, 2=average movement, 3=great movement

CATCHING EVALUTIONS

Defensive Evaluations:

Catchers to be evaluated on Receiving & Framing while catching pitchers.

Pop Times:

Catchers will get 4 throws to 2B for pop time.

**Note: Catchers will do their pop times once the pitcher they catch is done throwing to them.*

SCORING:

Defensive Evaluations:

Athletes are being evaluated based on combination of receiving and framing.

Rate each player 1 – 4 with 4 being the best on overall catching ability.

- **1 = DEVELOPMENTAL —** This athlete is still in the developmental stage.
- **2 = BELOW AVERAGE —** This athlete displays below average receiving and framing.
- **3 = AVERAGE —** This athlete displays average receiving and framing.
- **4 = ABOVE AVERAGE —** This athlete displays above average receiving and framing.

Pop Times:

Volunteers to record all four pop times.

OUTFIELD EVALUTIONS

Players will receive 6 balls.

- 2 Ground balls right at them – Throw home
- 1 Ground ball to LF gap – Throw to 3B
- 2 Fly ball to right at them – Throw home
- 1 Fly ball in RF gap – Throw to 2B

Players will throw to fielders at bases.

SCORING:

Athletes are being evaluated based on combination of accuracy, velocity and range coverage.

Rate each player 1 – 4 with 4 being the best on overall outfield ability.

- **1 = DEVELOPMENTAL —** This athlete is still in the developmental stage.
- **2 = BELOW AVERAGE —** This athlete displays below average accuracy, velocity, and range coverage.
- **3 = AVERAGE —** This athlete displays average accuracy, velocity and range coverage
- **4 = ABOVE AVERAGE —** This athlete displays above average accuracy, velocity and range coverage. They are able to throw an above average one-hop on a line.

INFIELD EVALUTIONS

Each position throws as follows:

First Base: 2 throws to 2B (complete double play), 2 throws to 3B, 1 ball received through the gap (to identify range), 1 chopper received down line with throw to 1B

Second Base & Shortstop: 2 throws to 1B, 2 throws to 2B (complete double play), 2 balls received through the gaps (to identify range)

Third Base: 2 throws to 1B, 2 throws to 2B (complete double play), 1 ball received through the gap (to identify range), 1 chopper received down line with throw to 1B

SCORING:

Athletes are being evaluated based on combination of accuracy, velocity and range coverage.

Rate each player 1 – 4 with 4 being the best on overall infield ability.

- **1 = DEVELOPMENTAL —** This athlete is still in the developmental stage.
- **2 = BELOW AVERAGE —** This athlete displays below average accuracy, velocity, and range coverage.
- **3 = AVERAGE —** This athlete displays average accuracy, velocity and range coverage.
- **4 = ABOVE AVERAGE —** This athlete displays above average accuracy, velocity and range coverage. They are able to field the ball at an above average level.