

# GENERAL RULES FOR SOFTBALL

## A. Intoxicants/Illegal substances

- 1) The Columbus City Ordinance prohibits alcohol in city parks. There is to be no alcohol or illegal substances used, during any league or tournament contest or on any undesignated recreational area before, during or after any set of games.
- 2) Any individual found in violation of this rule will be ejected from the game and must leave the premises. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the game and may result in an individual or team suspension from future league participation.
- 3) An opponent can protest consuming alcohol on the bench, behind the backstop or in spectator areas while engaged in a game. Umpires must be notified and regular procedures must be followed for filing a protest with the Sports Section within two business days.

## B. Team Franchise

- 1) The franchise belongs to:
  - a) The sponsor of the team (person paying the fee)
  - b) The Coach listed on the roster form
  - c) The majority members of the team
- 2) Any attempt to manipulate a franchise or registration form to gain a spot in our leagues may result in the dismissal of the team from our program.
- 3) The Sports Section reserves the right to remove a franchise from our program in the event of three forfeits throughout the season.
- 4) The Sports Office reserves the right to move or adjust any team participating in our program.

## C. Team Coach

- 1) The team Coach is to be designated on the roster form.
- 2) Team Coach is responsible for knowing all the rules and regulations governing Columbus Recreation and Parks leagues and notifying their players of these rules.
- 3) Team Coach also serves as the liaison between the Sports Section and the players.
- 4) It is the responsibility of the Coach to ensure accurate contact information is on file with the Sports Section (address, phone numbers, and e-mail). If the Coach cannot be reached with the information on file, the Sports Section will not be held accountable.

## D. Rosters

- 1) Roster forms are due in the Sports Section Office by 5:00 pm on or before the day of your first game. They can be faxed, mailed, hand delivered or submitted online. **(No postmarks accepted)**
- 2) If any game is protested concerning eligibility and the team in question does not have a roster on file with the Sports Section, the game will result in a forfeit.
- 3) **Roster Limits:** Roster forms are not to include more names than the league allows. All players listed in excess of the limit will be ineligible.
  - a) Church & Corporate – No Player Limit
  - b) Recreational leagues – 30 players
  - c) All others – 20 players
- 4) A Roster form must be submitted for each league a team enters.
- 5) Additions or deletions to roster forms must be made in writing by the Coach, completed and on file in the Sports Section by 5:00 pm Monday thru Friday on the day you play.

Saturday & Sunday Leagues must file by Friday. **DEADLINE FOR ALL ROSTER CHANGES:** Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 by 5:00 pm. (exception: Church & Industrial)

6) Playing under an assumed name will result in game forfeiture, suspension of the player and team Coach.

7) Team Coach's must list **first** and **last** names of all players on the scorecard provided to them by the umpire. The name on lineup must be written as it appears on the roster.

### **E. Player Eligibility**

1) A player can be a member of only one team in the same league. A player is considered a member of the team for which they **first play for** in a regulation game. A player's name on several rosters in the same league is not a rules infraction.

2) A player may not transfer from one team to another in the same league.

3) All players must be a minimum age of eighteen (18) to be eligible to participate.

### **F. Corporate League Eligibility**

1) Employees of a single company or one sub-division of a company can be certified to represent the company using its name as the sponsor of a team.

2) Employees must work a minimum of fifteen (15) hours per week on a continuous weekly basis, during the current season to be eligible. Temporary agency personnel are not eligible.

3) No Player may play on two different corporate teams during the season. A player must play with one company team for the entire year.

4) Corporate Leagues are open to both male and female players. However, most leagues informally play with all male players. Please contact the Sports Section for clarification.

### **G. Church League Eligibility**

1) In order to participate on a church league team, a person must continually be in at least 50% attendance throughout the season.

2) No player may play on two different church teams during the season. A player must play with one church team for the entire year.

3) Church Leagues are open to both male and female players. However, most leagues informally play with all male players. Please contact the Sports Section for clarification.

### **H. Eligibility for Postseason Play**

1) **Each player must have participated in at least 4 regular season games for a team in order to be eligible for the playoffs for that team.**

2) If a team receives a forfeit during the season, every player on that team's roster at the time of the forfeit will receive credit for one game played.

3) If a team forfeits during the season, that team will receive no credit for a game played for any player on their roster.

4) **DEADLINE FOR ROSTER ADDITIONS:** All roster additions must be on file in the Sports Section Office **by Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009.** (Exception: Church & Industrial)

5) After the above deadline, the only changes that can take place to the roster are for:

a) **Disability and/or Pregnancy:** A non-eligible player **on the roster** may replace a person who has started 60% of the games played by their team. An **original** doctor's certificate is required stating that the player is unable to participate the rest of the season. Under no circumstances will the player be reinstated to the team.

b) Military Duty: If an individual is activated to duty and unable to continue playing during the season, a non-eligible player **on the roster** may replace a person who has started 60% of the games played by their team. Under no circumstances will the player be reinstated to the team.

## I. Postponements, Cancelled Games and Forfeits

1) The only type of postponed game is a rainout. No other games will be postponed for any reason.

- **POSTPONED GAMES CAN BE SCHEDULED ON DAYS OTHER THAN YOUR REGULAR DAY OF PLAY.** Be prepared to play if it is a rainy summer. The Sports Section will make every attempt to reschedule postponed games.
- **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACH TO CHECK FOR RESCHEDULED RAINOUT GAMES.**

2) **Cancelled games** are games that will not be rescheduled. This occurs only in the rare case that the Sports Section is unable to reschedule postponed games due to time constraints.

3) No games will be rescheduled after August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

4) Forfeits are games when teams fail to show up for their scheduled game and fail to call the office by 2pm the day of their weekday game and by 2pm Friday for weekend games.

5) Teams that forfeit two (2) games are ineligible for the playoffs. Teams that forfeit three (3) games will be dropped from the league. In order to avoid a forfeit teams must call the sports office by 2pm the day of their game for weekday games and by 2pm Friday for weekend games.

## J. Zero Tolerance Policy

1) Zero Tolerance Policy: Unsportsmanlike or abusive behavior by spectators, players or teams **will not** be tolerated. Individual and team penalties will be given by administrators of the program and will be based on the severity of the action(s). The team Coach is responsible for the actions of all of his/her players and spectators. Their actions will directly affect the eligibility status of the team. Penalties for individuals and teams are not progressive. They include probation, suspension or total elimination from participation.

2) Any violation of the Zero Tolerance Policy will warrant a minimum (1) week suspension, from all CRPD leagues including participation as a spectator. The player will then be placed on probation the remainder of the season. The Sports Section will make a determination if a longer penalty is warranted as to the severity of the situation. During the suspension period, the player suspended may not participate in any event or be at any facility sponsored by the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department.

3) The suspension period does not include postponed games.

4) Anyone ejected for unsportsmanlike behavior **must leave** the facility immediately. Failure to do so could result in the game being forfeited.

5) After an incident is reported, the Sports Section will review the situation, collect any necessary information and make a decision. It is the right of every player or team that is suspended to appeal the decision.

6) The Administrative Coordinator of the Sports Office will make the final decision on all appeals.

## K. Protest and Appeals

1) **Protests** may not be made on judgment calls. They may be made on only rule interpretations and eligibility issues.

a) A Team Coach must tell the umpire of their intent to protest a **rule interpretation** at the time of the infraction and before the next pitch. The umpire is to notify the other team and note the conditions surrounding the protest.

b) A Coach or team representative must file a protest form with the Sports Section within two business days of the game played. It must reach the office by 5:00 pm accompanied by a \$30.00 protest fee to be valid. Holidays, Saturdays and Sundays are not considered a business day.

c) Protests concerning **player eligibility for regular season** may skip step (a) go directly to step (b).

d) Protests concerning player eligibility for Playoffs, City League Tournaments, and other post-season games must be declared before the end of the game by a Coach or team representative. The protest will be determined before the start of the next game.

e) If the protest is valid, the \$30.00 protest fee is returned. It may take several weeks to receive the refund.

2) **Appeals** of a decision by the Sports Section concerning a protest or a suspension must be made in writing and on file with the office no later than 3 business days from notification

a) The appeal should describe specific reasons why the offending party disagrees with the decision by the Sports Section.

b) The Administrative Coordinator of the Sports Section will make the final decision on all appeals.

## L. Post Season Play

### 1) Playoffs

a) First place team automatically advances to Champ of Champs and receives league trophy.

b) 3<sup>rd</sup> place team vs. 4<sup>th</sup> place team - 2<sup>nd</sup> place team plays the winner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> to determine 2<sup>nd</sup> berth to the tournament.

### 2) City League Tournament – 2 teams advance

a) All divisions are eligible for Champ of Champs

b) The office schedules the tournament. Teams must be ready to play when they are scheduled. No requests for times or days will be honored.

c) In order to be eligible for postseason play, player must have played in at least 4 regular season games for that team.

d) **All rule protests must be filed at the time of the infraction and before the next pitch. Eligibility protests must be filed before the completion of the game.**

e) Photo identification is required during participation of this tournament. Proof of identification will be required upon eligibility protest. Failure to present a picture ID when requested will result in automatic forfeiture.

f) **It is the responsibility of the Coach to check and confirm time and location of games.**

See [www.crpdsports.org](http://www.crpdsports.org) for scheduling information

**\*\*\* Note \*\*\***

All league rules will apply during tournament play

- For all post season and tournament play, home team is determined by a coin toss.
- Home team must provide new ball. Visiting team must provide good used ball.
- Extra balls can be purchased at the Sports Section – call 645-3366 for prices

**\*\* Please Read \*\***

The Columbus Recreation and Parks Department reserves the right to remove or adjust teams in any city softball leagues.



**Please keep alcohol  
out of our parks!**

# LEAGUE RULES FOR SOFTBALL

## A. The Game

1) **Home Team:** During regular season play, home team is listed first on schedules. During postseason and tournament play, home team is **determined by coin toss**.

2) **Field Fitness:** The decision of field conditions is the responsibility of the umpire. The umpire shall have the authority to move a game to a nearby available diamond if the field is not fit to play. At the game site, team Coach's have the right to request a postponement of their game, if they both feel conditions are not safe for their players.

3) **Lightning and Inclement Weather:** Due to the fact that this natural phenomenon is highly unpredictable, upon first sign of lightning or other threatening weather (thunder). Upon the first indication that thunderstorm development is within 15 miles of the contest, the contest official shall suspend the competition until thirty (30) minutes after the last bolt of lightening has been seen or the sound of thunder has been heard. All contests suspended shall be resumed at the point of interruption. This is in compliance with the Ohio High School Athletic Association Rule.

4) **Regulation Game:** Shall consist of seven innings unless otherwise listed below:

a) **NO GRACE PERIOD FOR ANY GAME**

b) The home team is ahead after six and one half innings.

c) A game that is tied at the end of seven innings shall be continued by playing **extra innings**, until one team has scored more than the other at the completion of the inning, or the **time limit** is in effect.

d) **Extra innings will be "one pitch" format.**

e) **Mercy Rule:** the umpire declares any game regulation if three (3) or more innings have been played and either team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or five (5) or more innings have been played and either team is ahead by ten (10) runs. The home team, beginning with the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) or fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) inning is allowed to bat in the bottom half of any inning, only if it is behind in the score or is not fifteen (15) or ten (10) runs ahead. In the latter instance, the game ends as soon as the home team gains the fifteen (15) or ten (10) run advantage.

f) **Time Limit:** 1 hour and 10 minutes will be the time limit for each game. No new inning should begin after allotted time has elapsed. Game time starts on the release of first pitch.

g) **Tie Games:** All regulation games ending in a tie will count toward the league standings and will not be resumed or replayed. Tie games occur when time limit is enforced or the umpire for a safety reason calls the game after five innings.

h) **Incomplete Game:** Any game that is not regulation and has not been called due to an act of nature will be rescheduled from the beginning.

## B. Pitching

1) **ARC:** 6' minimum 10' maximum. The ball must be delivered with a perceivable arc and reach a minimum height of 6 feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum of 10 feet from the ground.

2) **Illegal Pitch:** The umpire shall call illegal pitch after it crosses the plate. If the batter hits the ball, play continues and you take the result of the play.

3) **Ball Strike Count:** 3 balls & 2 strikes.

4) **Foul Ball Rule:** One free foul after receiving 1 strike. On the second foul the batter is declared out; the ball is dead and the base runners may not advance.

5) **Throw Around Rule:** In an effort to keep games moving on time there will be no allowance for throwing the ball around the infield after a play has ended. Ball must be directly returned to the pitcher or a ball will be called on the batter.

## C. Equipment

1) **Balls:** Official game ball should be presented to the umpire at the pre-game conference; both Coaches' should inspect the balls. The home team provides a new "Official Ball" and the visitor provides a playable good used "Official Ball." All Men's leagues will be required to provide an optic 12" .44 COR 400 Compression regular flight "CRPD" stamped official softball". All Women's teams will be required to provide an optic 11" .47 COR 400 Compression regular flight "CRPD" stamped official Softball". All Mixed leagues will provide both balls.

2) **Bats:** For a list of 2009 approved bats visit [www.crpdsports.org](http://www.crpdsports.org), or [www.playnsa.com](http://www.playnsa.com)

a) All bats used must be stamped with 1.20 B.P.F. rating or less.

b) If the player steps into the batters box, with an illegal bat, the batter is out, and ejected from the game.

c) The Sports Section reserves the right to update and/or change this list at anytime throughout the season.

3) **Cleats:** NSA Rule 3, Sec 4 pg. 18 **NO METAL CLEATS.** If it is discovered during the game that an offensive player is wearing metal cleats an out will be declared and the player will be ejected. A defensive player who is wearing metal cleats will be ejected.

4) **Uniforms - Not mandatory. Jewelry Rule-Deviation to NSA** Jewelry is prohibited and includes diamond and other rings, earrings, studs, posts, visible piercing, watches, chains and medallions (medical or religious). Medical/religious medallions can be taped inside clothing. Flat, smooth wedding bands are exempted. Penalty: First offense remove jewelry.

5) **Double Bases:** The purpose of the double base is to provide a safety margin between the batter runner and the first baseman.

a) **Follow these guidelines:**

i. On the initial throw from the infield or the outfield the batter runner must use the orange portion of the base.

ii. The defense can only use the white portion of the base to obtain an out.

iii. A batted ball hitting the orange base is foul.

iv. When no throw is being made to first base, the batter-runner can touch either the white or orange portion of the base with initial contact.

v. If the base runner uses the orange base anytime after the initial contact he is considered off the base.

vi. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base that does not include: Running to the base after over running. Re-tag to advance on a fly ball.

## D. Players

1) **Short Handed Player:** What to do when a team has nine (9) players.

a) Team must list ten (10) names on scorecard.

b) An automatic out is awarded every time missing batter fails to make his/her plate appearance. The tenth player can play without penalty as soon as he/she arrives and is "ready" to play.

c) When a team is left with a vacant player spot, the opposing team may not with two (2) outs intentionally or unintentionally walk the previous batter, in order to get to the "automatic out" created by the vacant spot in the batting order.

d) At no time can a team play with less than 9 players.

e) In Mixed leagues when a team has nine (9) players a combination of five (5) women and four (4) men or five (5) men and four (4) women is the only legal combination.

2) **Extra Player:** Men and women's leagues can play with one extra player.

a) The extra player is considered a starter.

b) When using an extra player, teams must list eleven (11) names on the scorecard.

c) Any of the eleven players listed can play the 10 defensive positions. (Moving the extra player from the bench to the field is not considered a substitution.) Mixed Only: Play with two (2) extra players, one male, and one female.

3. **Ejected Player: DEVIATION** to Rule 4, Sec 4b, pg. 22 NSA Rule Book. If a player is ejected from a game due to unsportsmanlike conduct, and such ejection causes a team to drop below the declared number of players stated prior to the first pitch of the game, the game will be immediately forfeited.

4. **Blood Rule:** A player or coach who is bleeding or has blood on his/her uniform shall be prohibited from participating in the game, until appropriate treatment can be administered. If medical or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is to be left to the umpire's judgment. Uniform rule violations will not be enforced if a uniform change is required. The umpire shall: Stop the game and allow treatment if the injured player would affect the continuation of the game. Immediately call a coach, trainer or authorized person to help the injured player. Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution, short-handed player and re-entry if necessary.

#### **E. Substitutes: DEVIATION to NSA Rule.**

1) Re-entry – A starter and their substitute may re-enter an unlimited number of times for each other. The starter and substitute must occupy the same batting positions whenever in the lineup.

2) The starting player and their substitute may not be in the lineup at the same time.

3) If a player re-enters the game in a position in the batting order other than their original starting or substitute position, this is considered an illegal re-entry.

4) All other NSA substitute rules apply. Rule 4, pg. 20 NSA Rule Book

#### **F. Base Running**

1) **DEVIATION** to rule 4, Sec 3 pg 56 Courtesy Runner. **No** courtesy Runner allowed.

2) **Appeal Rule:** An appeal must be made before the next pitch. Any infielder may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball.

3) **Over Throw:** All runners are awarded two bases and the award will be governed by the positions of the runners when the ball left the throwers hand.

4) **Collision:** It is the greater responsibility of the runner to avoid a collision. Intent has nothing to do with it.

a) The Collision Rule does not apply when the base runner is sliding.

b) When a player avoids a fielder who is illegally blocking the runner, the runner will be declared safe. Even though he/she may not have reached the base.

i. The penalty for colliding with another player is:

ii. Runner is out.

iii. Runner is ejected.

iv. Ball is dead.

v. All other runners must return to the base last touched at the time of the collision.

5) **Stealing** is not permitted in our leagues.

## **G. Mixed Leagues**

1) **Walk Rule:** If a male batter is walked, intentional or unintentional, he is awarded second base and the female that follows in the line up:

a) With less than two outs: female must bat

b) With two outs: female has choice of batting or taking a walk

2) **Fielding Positions** - A combination of five (5) women and five (5) men can play any of the ten defensive positions. (No alternation is required).

3) **Balls:** All mixed leagues will use both 12" and 11" softballs.

## **H. Profanity**

1) The umpire shall assess one out against the offending team for the use of profanity. For serious violations the umpire will eject the offender.

2) The profanity out is assessed on the batter who is to receive the next pitch from the offending team. (Both offense and defense)

3) There can be only one profanity out assessed against a team per play.

4) If the profanity out occurs on the third out of an inning, the out will be assessed on the offending teams next at bat.

5) Two violations of the profanity rule by the same player is ejection. Three or more violations against the same team are grounds for forfeit.

## **I. Dugout Rule**

1) **Loitering outside the dugout will not be tolerated**

2) The only players allowed to be outside the dugout will be the batter, base coaches and the on deck batter. All other players must remain inside the dugout. Failure to do so will result in the following:

a) The first violation shall result in an out being assessed on the batter who is to receive the next pitch from the offending team.

b) A second violation shall result in an out being assessed on the batter who is to receive the next pitch from the offending team and the offending team's Coach is ejected

c) A third violation by the same team will result in a game forfeit by the offending team. Loitering outside the dugout will not be tolerated.

## **J. Umpires:**

1) In the event the appointed umpire is not present for a game, seek out Sports Office Staff or Field Rep for instructions, or if an individual acceptable to both Coaches' may be chosen to umpire the game. If both teams agree to play, this game will count for the season. The substitute umpire should contact the Sports Section the following day and give his/her name, address and social security number in order to be paid for umpiring the game.

2) **Any arguing on the judgments of balls and strikes called by the umpire will constitute a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member.**

## **K. Rainouts**

1) 645-RAIN (7246) or [www.crpdsports.org](http://www.crpdsports.org) at/by 4:30 pm daily. Weekends will be updated periodically.

- 2) POSTPONED GAMES CAN BE SCHEDULED ON DAYS OTHER THAN YOUR REGULAR DAY OF PLAY. Be prepared to play if it is a rainy summer. The Sports Section will make every attempt to reschedule postponed games.
- 3) IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACH TO CHECK FOR RESCHEDULED RAINOUT GAMES.
- 4) No games will be rescheduled after August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

## HOME RUN AND ELIGIBILITY RULE

Home Run Rule applies to Fenced Diamonds Only

Men's	Women's	Mixed
<p><b>MEN'S MAJOR - Highest Skill Level</b> 2 homeruns (fenced fields) with one up rule. <b>Ineligible to play Men's Competitive or Rec.</b></p>	<p><b>WOMEN'S COMPETITIVE - Most Common Level</b> Unlimited homeruns Ineligible to play in Women's Recreational.</p>	<p><b>MIXED COMPETITIVE - Highest Skill Level</b> 2 homerun per gender (fenced fields). Excess is an OUT. Ineligible to play in Mixed Recreational. Players from Elite, Premier and Major leagues must play Mixed Competitive</p>
<p><b>MEN'S COMPETITIVE- Most Common Level</b> <u>1 homerun (fenced fields)—any more will be a dead ball out only.</u> Ineligible to play in Men's Recreational. NO Elite, Premier or Major players</p>	<p><b>WOMEN'S RECREATIONAL Non-Competitive</b> NO homeruns over fence No Comp players.</p>	<p><b>MIXED RECREATIONAL Non-Competitive</b> NO homeruns. NO Elite, Premier, Major or Mixed Comp players.</p>
<p><b>MEN'S RECREATIONAL Non-Competitive</b> NO homerun over fence. NO Elite, Premier, Major or Comp players.</p>	<p><b>ANY PLAYER FOUND TO BE PARTICIPATING ILLEGALLY WILL FORFEIT HIS/HER STATUS TO PLAY IN ANY POST SEASON GAME AT ANY LEVEL</b></p>	<p><b>ELITE &amp; PREMIER INVITATIONAL LEAGUES</b> Tournament Level Play, Rules TBD, Limited eligibility in other divisions- Contact Sports Office regarding eligibility</p>

<p><b>Church</b> - Only Church Teams 2 homeruns with one up rule. No gender bias May play in other levels of play. Only one Church Team</p>	<p><b>Corporate</b> - Only Corporate Teams 2 homeruns with one up rule. No gender bias May play in other levels of play. Only one Corporate team.</p>
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**One up rule:** Once both teams have reached their respective home run limit (2), either team may hit an additional home run; however, no team may ever go more than one (1) home run up on the other team. Any additional homeruns above the "one up" will be declared an out. The home team cannot go "one up" in the bottom of the seventh or any subsequent innings. If the umpire has declared an inning to be the last due to the time limit, the home team cannot go "one up".

**\*\* All rules not covered in this rule booklet shall be governed by the \*\*  
Official Rules of Softball set forth by the National Softball Association.**