

Youth Softball League



RULES AND REGULATIONS

YOUTH SOFTBALL 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15



Fall 2021

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Article 1. Eligibility

- Section 1. The date of **January 1, 2021** will be the age cutoff date for the Spring 2021 season. The players' age on that day will determine what age group they participate in.
- Section 2. A younger player may participate in an upper age division if they are within one year of the age cut-off date. They can only move up one division (EX: a 7-8 player who is 8 on May 1st of the current year can move up to 9-10). However, after one game in the upper age division, the player is ruled to be ineligible to participate in his or her respective age group for that season. Player may move back down to the lower age group for the following season if necessary.
- Section 3. A player cannot participate in more than one division in our baseball/softball league
- Section 4. We will approve each player's age by use of birth certificates at the start of each season. Each player must be on the team roster before they play their first game to be eligible to play.
- Section 5. A new player may be added to a team roster after the cutoff date with the approval of the athletic staff.

Article 2 Team Composition

- Section 1. Each league/association that plays is responsible for their participants and volunteers. They must follow at minimum the draft policy set forth.
- Section 2. It is the responsibility of the league coordinators to conduct drafts, registration, and for placing Players on the teams and parents with questions or concerns should speak to their coordinator with the concern when it arises.

Article 3 Duties of the Coach

- Section 1. Must wear photo ID badge at all practices and games or be subject to dismissal from duties.
- Section 2. All head coaches must be at least 18 years of age.
- Section 3. The coach is responsible for exchanging lineups before each game with the other team and to meet with the umpires before the game starts.
- Section 4. It is the duty of the head coach to maintain proper conduct among his team and fans.

Article 4 Game and Weather Postponements

- Section 1. In case of inclement weather on practice days, the coach should contact the players on the team. A coach should use reasonable judgment during threatening weather and remove his team from the field if necessary.

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Section 2. For game day cancellations, it is the duty of the home field/association to cancel games when playing conditions are not adequate. The home field coordinator is responsible to contact the coordinators of the teams playing at their site and the officials booking agent. Each coordinator should then call their respective coaches who are responsible for contacting their players.

Article 5 Jurisdiction of Rules

Section 1. The Youth Softball Rules are under the jurisdiction of the City of Concord Parks and Recreation & Harrisburg Parks and Rec Athletic Staff. They have the authority to make amendments to the rules in order to obtain the program objectives.

Article 6 Officials

Section 1. After a game has begun, assigned league coordinators and league officials will be responsible for discontinuing the game for any reason.

Section 2. All officials should report ejections of a player or coach to the home site coordinator. Each site should then contact the league coordinator of the ejected party with information about the ejection who is in return responsible for the disciplinary action as outlined.

Section 3. In the event that only one official is present for a game, that official must start the game on time. The game cannot be protested when only one official is present.

Article 7 Code of Conduct

Section 1. Coaches should always keep in mind that they are setting examples in sportsmanship and fair play and should conduct themselves accordingly. Constant yelling and abusive behavior toward players on either team is strictly prohibited.

Section 2. Any coach not carrying out the duties and responsibilities and policies as established by the league will be subject to dismissal from the league.

Section 3. A coach will be suspended indefinitely for playing ineligible players.

Article 8 Protests

Section 1. Only protests that involve an interpretation of playing rules or the use of an ineligible player will be permitted. Judgment calls cannot be protested. All protest must be done before the conclusion of the game.

Section 3. Any coach who wishes to protest should do so carefully considering the impact of poor relationships and ill feelings that could arise from the process

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Article 9 Practice Guidelines

- Section 1. Practice sessions are made and scheduled by the athletic staff.
- Section 2. Coaches violating practice schedule will be subject to dismissal from coaching indefinitely. All practices and games must take place on approved playing facilities. No practices are to be held prior to 6:00 PM on school days.
- Section 3. Players must attend practices to be eligible for games. Any player not attending practice and shows up for the game that week is subject to the coach's option to play or not. A coach must announce to the home plate umpire before the game which players are being held out for missing practices. The coach must also notify the coordinator of the situation prior to the game and state that the player did not attend practices during the week.

Article 10 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- Section 1. Players, coaches, and fans should conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. This includes before, during, or after a game. Players and coaches who are ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct (throwing equipment, arguing, etc.) will be suspended for 7 days. A second ejection during the season will result in an indefinite suspension from all Athletic Leagues
- Section 2. Any player, coach, or fan that is ejected from a game or facility for fighting, profanity, or threatening others will be suspended indefinitely from all facilities from all Athletic Leagues.
- Section 3. If a player, coach, fan, or official's actions become harmful and disruptive to the program, they face being suspended from their remaining games for that season.
- Section 4. A player or coach who pulls a team off the field for any reason will be suspended indefinitely. If the suspension occurs in the last game of the season, an indefinite suspension will occur.

Article 11 Playing Rules

North Carolina High School Federation Rules apply with the following exception of the local league rules.

Section 1. Team Composition

7-8, 9-10

1. A team must field 7 players from its own roster to avoid a forfeit.
2. A team can play 10 players on defense (6 infielders and 4 outfielders).
3. An outfielder cannot freeze a play, acquire a timeout, or make the first play on a base runner.
4. The ball must be thrown to an infielder to make a play at a base or on a base runner.
5. Players arriving after the start of the game can be added to the bottom of the lineup

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11-12, 13-15

1. A team must field 7 players from its own roster to avoid a forfeit.
2. A team can play 10 players on defense (6 infielders and 4 outfielders).
3. Players arriving after the start of the game can be added to the bottom of the lineup without penalty.

Section 2. Pickup Players

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. A team must have 7 of its own players before being allowed to pick up players.
2. There is a maximum of 3 players allowed to be picked up. Pickup players are required to play outfield only and must bat in the last 3 positions of the lineup.
3. **If players are picked up a team is limited to playing with no more than 10 players.**
4. Pickup players must be from the same age group as the teams **AND** be on a team in the league **AND** must be replaced by eligible team members if they arrive after the start of the game.
5. Players removed from the game because of sickness, leaving early, injury, etc. are skipped in the lineup with no penalty. First time the player bats after being removed from the lineup is not an out. Player can re-enter on their next at bat after being removed but if they do not return at that time then they are out for the remainder of the game. They are not charged with an out.

Section 3. Grace Period

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. There is a 10-minute grace period from the games scheduled start time for a team that does not have 7 eligible players. A team with less than 7 players after the grace period will forfeit the game. Grace period time begins from the **scheduled game time**.

Section 4. Length of Game

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. The length of the game is 6 innings or time limit is reached. See Section 8.

Section 5. Regulation Game

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. It is a regulation game if 4 or more innings of playing time has been played is called because of darkness, curfew, etc. If the game is called before 4 innings or 1 hour is complete then the game will be restarted if rescheduled.

Section 6. Tie Games

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Any game that is tied at the end of regulation will end in a tie.

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Section 7. Run Lead

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. The run lead is in effect as follow: a 15-run lead after 3 or a 10 run lead after 4 providing the losing team has had equal number of bats.

Section 8. Time Limits

7-8, 9-10

1. The time limit shall be 1 hour and 15 minutes finish the inning for age groups 7-8 and 9-10 from the start of the first pitch of the game. No new inning will start within 10 minutes left in the time limit.

11-12, 13-15

1. The time limit shall be 1 hr. and 30 minutes finish the inning from the start of the first pitch of the game. No new inning will start within 10 minutes left in the time limit.

Section 9. Curfew Times

7-8, 9-10, 11-12

1. Weekday curfew times for all practices and games are 9:30 pm.
2. Weekend curfew times for all practices and games are 10:00 pm.

13-15

1. Weekday curfew times for all practices and games are 10:00 pm.
2. Weekend curfew times for all practices and games are 10:00 pm.

Section 10. Participation Rule

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. The entire roster shall bat.
2. Each player must play defense in every other inning.
 - a. First offense: Failure to abide will result in head coach being suspended for one game.
 - b. Second offense: Failure to abide will result in head coach being suspended for remainder of season.
3. Each player must sit out at least one inning on defense in every game.
4. Each player must sit once during the game and cannot sit a second time until all players have had to sit out. **EXAMPLE:** A player cannot be the same one setting out every other inning.

Section 11. Base Paths & Pitching Distances

7-8, 9-10

1. Softball base path is 60 ft.
1. Softball pitching distance is 35 ft. with an 8-foot radius circle.

11-12

1. Softball base path is 60 ft.
2. Softball pitching distance is 40 ft. with an 8-foot radius circle.

13-15

1. Softball base path is 60 ft.
2. Softball pitching distance is 43 ft. with an 8-foot radius circle.

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Section 12. Shoes

7-10, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Players are not allowed to wear metal cleats.

Section 13. Jewelry

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Jewelry is not allowed to be worn during games.
2. Jewelry is not allowed to be taped over.
 - a. (Penalty) When discovered, the player is asked to remove it. Failure to remove it will result in that player being removed from the game.

Section 14. Playing Equipment

Batters Helmets

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Batting helmets must be worn by all batters and base runners at all times.
2. Failure to wear a helmet results in player being removed from the game.

Catchers Gear

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Catchers must wear mask/helmet, shin/leg guards, throat guard, and chest protector during all practices and games.

Misc. Equipment

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Mouthpieces are mandatory. A game face guard can replace the use of the mouthpiece.
2. Faceguards are mandatory for all softball helmets.
3. **Faceguards/mask are mandatory for all pitchers and pitching positions.**

Game Balls

7-8, 9-10

1. Game balls (softball – 11 inch) are the responsibility of the home team on the schedule. They must be Little League or other National Organization approved (PONY, Federation, Dixie, USSSA, NFHS, etc.).

11-12, 13-15

1. Game balls (softball – 12 inch) are the responsibility of the home team on the schedule. They must be Little League or other National Organization approved (PONY, Federation, Dixie, USSSA, NFHS, etc.).

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Bats

7-8, 9-10

1. Small barrel bats with 2 ¼ barrel.

11-12, 13-15

1. High School Federation Rules apply to bats.

Section 15. Players & Coaches Positions

Defensive Players Position

7-8

1. Defensive player must play even with the pitcher or behind the pitcher on either side.

9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. No defensive restrictions for this age group.

Offensive Field Coaches

7-8

1. Base coaches and coach pitcher are allowed on the playing field.
2. Base runners coach may only instruct the base runners.
3. Coach (Pitcher) is not allowed to instruct runners.
4. A coach may be positioned behind the catcher to assist with passed balls but they are not allowed to give instructions.

9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. National Federation Rules apply.

Defensive Field Coaches

7-8

1. A coach may be positioned on each foul line in the outfield and must remain in dead ball territory at all times in an area (coaching area) that is halfway from outfield fence to first and/or third base.
2. The outfield coach is confined to coaching the outfielders only. A coach in violation of the coaching box rules will be confined to the dugout (can be replaced by another coach).
3. At no time may a coach step onto the playing field except in the case of an injury.

9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. National Federation Rules apply.

Section 16. Batter/Run Limit

7-8, 9-10

1. Each team may score a maximum of 5 runs in the first inning.
2. In the 2nd – 5th innings, the team leading may always score 5 runs, even though their lead could be greater than 5 runs.
3. The team behind when batting after the first inning may always be able to score as many runs as possible to even the score and then 5 additional runs in those innings as well.
4. The 6th inning is unlimited scoring. NOTE: Unlimited scoring is not in effect if the umpire deems any inning other than the 6th inning as the last.

11-12, 13-15

1. In the 1st and 2nd innings, teams are allowed to score a maximum of 5 runs or score more than 5 runs to go ahead by no more than 5 runs if they are trailing.

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2. In the 3rd – 6th innings, scoring is unlimited.

Section 17. On Deck Batters

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. On deck batters are allowed to go to the opposite circle to be behind batter.

Section 18. Speed Up Rules

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Speed up rules will be used for the catcher only.
2. The last batter that is not on base may run for the catcher at any time but it is not mandatory.

Section 19. Bunting

7-8

1. Bunting is NOT allowed.
2. No fake bunts allowed. Once a player squares to bunt he must bunt (or take the pitch). **PENALTY:** Batter is out and ball becomes dead and no runners advance.

9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. National Federation Rules apply for bunting.
2. Bunting is allowed in 9-10, 11-12, 13-15.

Section 20. Dropped Third Strike

7-8, 9-10

Does not apply to this age group.

11-12, 13-15

1. High School Federation Rules apply to dropped third strike

Section 21. Base Stealing/ Overthrows

7-8

1. Base stealing is not allowed at any time. Batted balls, unless called foul by the umpire, are live and in play until the defense stops the progress of all runners and the umpire calls time. Ball remains dead until next batter.
2. Runner must stay in contact with the base until the batter has hit the ball.
3. If a runner leaves the base before the ball is hit, the umpire shall indicate the infraction immediately by removing the runner from the base. The ball/pitch becomes dead immediately and NO PITCH is declared.
4. The first overthrow at a base on a batted ball will result in the batter and base runners **NOT** being able to advance one extra base. Balls hit to the outfield are live balls until the defensive team returns the ball to the infield dirt. When the ball is returned to the infield dirt the ball shall be called dead.
NOTE: Overthrow is considered any ball **not caught** by the defensive player at any base.

9-10

1. Runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. **PENALTY:** runner is removed from the base and called out. Ball becomes dead and no pitch is declared.
2. Runners may not steal home on a passed ball. Base runners may **ONLY** score on hit balls or being walked to home plate.

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11-12, 13-15

1. High School Federation Rules apply

Section 22. Appeal Play

7-8, 9-10, 11-12

1. The appeal play is not in effect.
2. The umpire will call the infraction when play becomes dead.

13-15

2. High School Federation Rules are in effect for appeal plays.

Section 23. Infield Fly Rule

7-10, 9-10

1. There is no infield fly rule for this age division.

11-12, 13-15

1. High School Federation Infield Fly Rules apply.

Section 24. Head First Sliding

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. Head first sliding is not allowed at home plate. **If there is going to be a play at the plate the runner must slide.**
 - a. (Penalty) - Runner is out and ball remains live.
 - b. Dive backs to the bases (head first) are not considered head first sliding.

Section 25. Pitching Limits/Rules

7-8

1. A total of 5 pitches can be thrown from a coach
2. If a batter swings and misses 3 times, the batter is out.
3. The fifth pitch may be fouled or tipped indefinite number of times.
4. There are no bases on balls or hit by pitch advancements to first base.
5. Player (pitcher) must stand beside, even with, or behind the pitcher/coach until the ball is batted.
PENALTY: Batter is awarded first base and other runners advance only if forced to do so.
6. Softball coaches pitch underhand.
7. Any batted ball that hits a pitcher/coach is dead. The pitch will not count and the pitch will be done over.

9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. No pitching limits.

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Section 26. Hit Batters

9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. If the same pitcher hits 4 batters that pitcher must be immediately removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
2. The player may continue to play any other position.

Tournament Play - Left up to association on tournament play.

7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15

1. The tournament shall be single elimination
2. There will be no seedings except for separating the 1 and 2 teams which will be determined by the coordinators. Every other team will be placed randomly in the bracket.
3. There will be NO pick up players during tournament play. Teams must have 7 of their own players to start a game.
4. Time limits will remain the same during tournament play. If the time limit expires and the teams are tied than we will go to International Rule to begin the next inning.
 - a. International Rule – The batting teams last out from the previous inning will start the current inning at second base. The rule will continue until a winner is determined.
5. All tournament games that are halted before a winner is determined shall resume from the exact point where play was ceased.
6. The ten run rule, fifteen run rule will be in effect.
7. The player participation rule will remain the same during tournament play.
8. If a coach is not following the participation rule the coach will be suspended for one calendar year.
9. If a player arrives late, he can enter the game immediately and will bat last in the batting line up. There will be no penalty.
10. Teams must sign the scoresheet provided by the hosting organization in order to make it a final game.

Revised August 24, 2021