

**TALLAHASSEE PARKS, RECREATION & NEIGHBORHOOD AFFAIRS
FALL ADULT SOFTBALL PROGRAM
CITY RULES AND REGULATIONS**



Forfeits: Any team that incurs excessive forfeits, due to a lack of players to start a game, will be contacted by the athletic supervisor to discuss the team's future participation in the league.

1. **TEAM ROSTER**

- A. Teams can carry as many players as needed on rosters.
- B. Team roster must be turned in with entry fee and team registration forms. On the team registration forms indicate information needed for division and classification preference. The Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department will make the final determination of classification. The players full name, address, and phone number is required on all rosters.

2. **PLAYER'S ELIGIBILITY (LEAGUE PLAY)**

- A. **Men's Division** - All players must be at least eighteen (18) years old on or before December 31 of the current year.
- B. **Women's Division** - All players must be at least eighteen (18) years old on or before December 31 of the current year.
- C. **Church Division** - All players must be at least sixteen (16) years old on or before December 31 of the current year. Church players should be church members or who regularly attend the religious services of the sponsoring church congregation. Church teams that do not register to play in the Church Division will need to be available to play games Monday-Thursday.
- D. **Coed Division** – All players must be at least eighteen (18) years old on or before December 31 of the current year. Batting line-up must alternate sexes with no exceptions. Defensive Position: 2 males and 2 females in the outfield and 2 males, and 2 females in the infield. The pitcher-catcher combination must also be male-female. If a male batter is walked intentionally or unintentionally, it is a two base award. The next batter (a female) will bat. EXCEPTION: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat. All other USA and league rules will be followed. If the "Extra Player" (EP) is used in Coed, it must be made known prior to the game, and be listed on the scoring sheet in the regular batting order. All may bat and any ten (five males and five female) can play defense. Additional extra players may be added in increments of two (male and female pair). In Coed if a player (male or female) is unavailable to participate in the game due to injury, play may continue even if no substitutes are available. Each time the injured player is not available to bat, an out will be declared. A game that starts with 12 players can end with 10 players if injuries occur. A game that starts with 10 or 9 players can finish with 8 players due to injury.
- E. Senior league specific rules: 1. If a player hits the ball into the outfield, they cannot be thrown out at first base. 2. All at bats will start with a 1-1 count. 1 ball and 1 strike. 3. If a courtesy runner is needed, that runner will be the person who made the last out, no exceptions. The only way it would be someone else would be if the person who made the last out left the game to injury. The push rule will not apply to this courtesy runner in SR league only, the courtesy runner can advance as many bases as they would like at their own risk. 4. No more than five (5) runs per inning may be scored through four (4) innings. Beginning in the 5th inning, unlimited runs may be scored.
- F. Players may not play on more than one team per classification. Playing on more than one team or registering more than one team in the same division may result in game conflict that is NOT the responsibility of Parks and Recreation.
- G. Protests regarding player eligibility must be done prior to the end of the game. The player in question must show picture ID to the supervisor before leaving the park. The program supervisor will determine the protest outcome the following business day. Parks and Recreation does not monitor roster and player eligibility, unless a protest is logged. It is the responsibility of the opposing team to protest the eligibility of the players in question before the end of the game.

3. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

- A. Players can transfer from one roster to another within the same classification but must sit out two (2) scheduled games or seven (7) calendar days before being eligible to play. New players being added to a roster during the season that are currently not participating in the league may begin without a waiting period.

4. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. Uniforms for each team shall consist of shirts of similar color. Permanent 3 inch numbers (minimum) are required on the back uniform shirts. USA Rules prohibit the use of Roman numerals.
 - 1) USA Rule Book: Ball caps, visors and headbands are optional for players, but must be worn properly. Handkerchiefs do not qualify as headbands and cannot be worn around the head or neck. NOTE: Plastic visors are not allowed.
 - 2) No cut-off shorts or bathing suits allowed.
 - 3) No steel cleats or shoes with screw-on detachable cleats may be worn. No sandals, crocs or open toed shoes. Shoes must always be worn.
- B. **CASTS/PROSTHESES:** All casts, splints, and braces must be padded. Prostheses may be worn. Any of this equipment judged by the umpire to be dangerous is illegal.
- C. **JEWELRY:** Exposed jewelry may not be worn during the game. If players fail to remove jewelry when requested by the umpire, the player will be ejected from the game. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body, so the medical alert information remains visible.
- D. **BATS:** Refer to the USA Rule Book page 32, for specific guidelines. Also check the USA website at usasoftball.com (Click 'Certified Equipment') for a list of approved and banned bats. Bats are approved for play by the field umpire or park supervisor based on the approved USA bat list. The bat barrel shall be free of any audible rattles when shaken and shall not have signs of excessive wear (free of burrs, dents and visible cracks). All approved bats must have the certification mark and be on the list of approved bats. Item 3 (on website and page 32 in rule book) regarding the rule about bats manufactured before 2000 still applies. Bat rules apply to all divisions and classifications.
- E. **SOFTBALLS:** Each team must provide the ball to be used while their team is batting. All 11" and 12" game balls must be yellow optic color, red stich, ASA stamped, which is the official USA softball for slow pitch. All softballs MUST comply with **Rule 3, Section 3, (B, E, F) page 34-36 of the 2019 USA Participant Manual**. Only USA approved softballs will be used (no off brands allowed). All men teams and men playing coed must use the 12-inch core 52/300 softball. All women teams and women playing coed must use the 11-inch core 52/300 softball. Senior teams may use the 44/375 or the 52/300 core 12-inch softball.

5. PARK LOCATIONS, GAME TIME, & TIME LIMITS

- A. Locations: Tom Brown Park
Game Times: 6:30, 7:45, 9:00
- B. After one (1) hour and ten (10) minutes of playing time, no new inning will begin. If one team is ahead after a complete inning of play, regardless of the number of innings played, the game is official. NOTE: Delays resulting from rain, injury to player and protest will not be included as playing time. If the home team is at bat and the time expires, the game will be called if the home team is winning.
- C. There is a ten (10) minute grace period for all games, and it will be counted as playing time. The grace period begins at the posted time for all rounds (6:30, 7:45, 9:00), not the conclusion of the preceding game. The game shall begin once the minimum number of players needed to start the game is present. Player(s) arriving

late can be added AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BATTING ORDER when he/she is physically present. If previous game is late, your game time starts one minute after previous game's conclusion. Note: Coed batting rules apply to adding additional players. A game may start early by consent of both managers.

- D. All teams are required to clear their dugout promptly at the end of the game to ensure the next game starts in a timely fashion. Team meetings shall be held outside of the playing field.

6. CALLING OFF GAMES

- A. In case of rain, all 6:30 game teams should report to your designated field at the scheduled time. Games typically will not be canceled earlier than 6:00 p.m. at the field. There will be a recorded message on our HOTLINE # 891-3800 for the latest information on rainy days and/or cancellation of the remaining games that day. Please also visit us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/cotparks or follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/cotparks. If we cancel games earlier than 6:00 p.m., we will put a recorded message on the hotline and post on social media.
- B. If the games are called off due to inclement weather, the fields will not be available for practice to avoid costly damage to the fields.

7. RULES FOR LOCAL LEAGUE

- A. All games will be played under Official USA Slow Pitch Rules with the exceptions noted in Rules for Local League play.
- 1) All Men, Women and Coed Teams - A team must have eight (8) players to start and finish a game, but not less than seven (7) if a player is injured while playing. If a player is ejected, you may play with one less than you started with. If more than one person (Coach and/or Player) are ejected, the game is a forfeit, even if substitutes are available. If after the game starts player(s) leave voluntarily, play will continue without penalty if eight (8) legal players are available to play. NOTE: Teams can finish a game with as few as seven (7) players if due to injury.
 - 2) Optional Extra Player(s) (EP) Rule is in effect. If the EP(s) Rule is used, you list all players batting on the scoring sheet in the regular batting order up to your roster limit of 20 players. There is no limit to the number of players that may be listed in the batting order. Any 10 may play the field at anytime. However, the batting order never changes.
 - 3) After five (5) or more complete innings, it is a regulation game if an umpire calls a game because of rain, power failure, fire, panic, or other causes, which puts the patron or players in peril. If the home team is ahead at 4 1/2 innings, the game is over. Games that have not attained "official game status" will be re-scheduled and replayed as a totally new game. Only tournament games will suspend and restart where left off at time of suspension.
 - 4) Games that are tied at the end of regulation (70 minutes or 7 innings) will utilize the tiebreaker rule (USA Rule 5 Section 11). The courtesy runner rule will still apply. This rule applies to all levels of league play.
 - 5) Players that hit a Home Run over the fence are not required to run the bases and any baserunners may go directly to the dugout without liability to be put out.
 - 6) Courtesy Runner(s) - See Addendum 1 for more information.
 - 7) Pitching Screens – Teams may choose to use pitching screens to protect the pitcher. The only time a screen is required is during competitive level games or senior division games. Any team may request use of a screen. If a team requests a screen, the opposing team will also use the screen. Use of a screen may be made at any time during the game. The screen must be positioned so that one leg is always touching the pitching rubber. The only exception is during senior league play.

Rule 1. Any batted ball that hits a portion of the pitching screen will be declared a dead ball foul and there will be no advance of the runners. If it is a third strike the batter will be declared out and there will be no advance of the runners.

Rule 2. Any thrown ball that hits the pitching screen will remain a live ball.

Rule 3. Any pop fly near the pitching screen, in the umpire's judgment, regardless of how many players are on base, will be treated as a dead ball out. There will be no advance of the runners.

- 8) Pitching Rule- The ball must be delivered with perceptible arc and reach a height of at least six (6) feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum height of 12 feet from the ground.
- 9) Pitch Count- City league starts with a 0&0 pitch count.

8. HOME RUN RULES

Men's Division (Competitive w/ pitching screen) – 3 home runs then an out

Men's Division (Recreational) – 2 home runs then an out

Senior's Division – 1 home run then a single

Church Division – 1 home run then a single

Coed Division – Men: 2 home runs then an out / Women: Unlimited

Women's Division - Unlimited

Note: any ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory should be considered a four base award and is not included in the total of over-the-fence home runs.

9. UMPIRES

- A. Umpires are instructed to discuss matters with the manager only.
- B. **AUTHORITY AND DUTIES.** The umpires are the representatives of the Parks and Recreation Department by which they have been assigned to a game, and as such, are authorized and required to enforce each section of these rules. They have the power to order a player, coach, captain or manager to do or to omit any act which, in their judgment is necessary to give force and effect to one or all these rules and to inflict penalties as herein prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to make decisions on any situations not specifically covered in the rules.
- C. **UMPIRE'S JUDGMENT.** There will be no appeal on any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he was not correct in his conclusion as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a base runner safe or out, a pitch a ball or strike, or on any play involving accuracy or judgment; and no decision rendered by any umpire will be reversed except when he is convinced it is in violation of USA rules. In case the manager, acting manager or captain of either team does seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question will, if in doubt, confer with his associates before taking any action, but under no circumstances will any player or person other than the manager, acting manager, or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules.
- D. The umpire shall have complete authority over the game and the players thereof, and may expel any player, coach or fan from the field for unsportsmanlike conduct of a gross and willful nature or cursing at the officials or opponents.

Here are just a few (but not all) of the ways a player may be ejected from game play:

- Anytime a bat is thrown intentionally, or in anger.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct with profanity, vulgar language, any form of verbal abuse of an umpire, threatening an umpire and/or physically touching an umpire with any portion of the body or throwing "any" object at an umpire in any manner. Fighting within your own team or with an opposing team member.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct that results in an injury to any other player or spectator.

The umpire will request the park supervisor's assistance in the ejection of any player. The park supervisor will require the manager of the team to sign a player ejection form. The following day or before the teams next scheduled game, the team manager will be contacted by the Athletic Supervisor who will determine the exact length of suspension. The manager is responsible for notifying the player of the suspension and preventing him or her from participating in the next scheduled game(s).

8) Senior League Board-The Senior League will use the provided boards for all their games. The boards will be 17 inches by 32.5 inches as specified in the USA Rule Book as the SR strike zone. The board will go over the top of the plate and any pitched ball that hits the board will be called a strike as long as it is a legal pitch.

10. SCOREKEEPERS

The home team is required to provide an official scorekeeper. Each half inning the official scorekeeper is to report the score to the umpire who in turn will announce the score to both teams and record the score on the official score card. Appeals must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal of the next half inning. After this, the score becomes official and cannot be appealed, protested or changed. Note: At the conclusion of the game, an appeal can be made up until the umpire leaves the field of play.

11. LINE UPS

Your line ups must be written and made available upon request 10 minutes before scheduled game time. Line-ups must list shirt number, last name, followed by first name (Smith, John). Changes may be made until game time without penalty. If the previous game is late, your game time starts one minute after previous game's conclusion. Delays in getting line ups count as game time.

12. PROTESTS

- A. All protests will be settled by the athletic supervisor. Protests must be written and in the hands of the athletic supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours after the game (weekends and holidays excluded).
- B. Protests that shall be received and considered concern matters of the following types:
 - 1) Misinterpretation of a playing rule.
 - 2) Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation.
 - 3) Failure of an umpire to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.
 - 4) Player eligibility.
- C. The notification of intent to protest must be made immediately before the next legal or illegal pitch. (exception player eligibility)
 - 1) The manager or acting manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is played under protest. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper.
 - 2) All interested parties shall take notice of the conditions surrounding the making of the decision, which will aid in the correct determination of the issue.
 - 3) NOTE: On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, or before the defensive team has left the field. For this rule, the defensive team has "left the field" when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area. At the end of the game, an appeal can be made up until the umpire leaves the field of play.
 - 4) Once the game is completed and both teams have left the field, no protest can be filed. **EXCEPTION:** Player eligibility.
- D. **THE FORMAL WRITTEN PROTEST SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**
 - 1) The date, time and place of the game.
 - 2) The name of the umpire(s).
 - 3) The rule and section of the official rules under which the protest is made.
 - 4) The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
 - 5) All essential facts involved in the matter protested.
 - 6) A \$50.00 protest fee (fee will be returned if protest is upheld).
- E. The decision rendered on a protested game must result in one of the following:
 - 1) The protest is found invalid, and the game score stands as played.
 - 2) When a protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected.
 - 3) When a protest for ineligibility is allowed, the offending team shall forfeit the game being played, or the game last played, to the offending team.

13. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Warming up inside the complex (swinging bats or throwing balls) in any of the runways is illegal. One warning will be given for a player found warming up inside this area. (This will be considered a team warning.) The second offense by any team player(s) will result in his suspension of that evening's game.
 - 1) Teams may warm-up on their half of the outfield before games on all fields, if time permits.
 - 2) Teams must not use the infields or hit balls against the fence for warm-up purpose. NOTE: (2) will carry the same penalty as warming up inside the lanes.
- B. Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department always expect all players to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Each manager shall be responsible for the conduct of his/her players. Players must, always, act in a manner becoming a good sportsman under liability of expulsion from the game and/or the league. No alcoholic beverages, profane or abusive language will be tolerated! Only personnel directly connected with the teams shall be allowed on the players' bench.
- C. All players are responsible for their children's safety and conduct while participating in Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Department Athletic sponsored programs.
- C. It is the Manager's responsibility to inform her/his players of all USA and Parks and Recreation Department Rules and Regulations governing play in all leagues. **PLEASE TREAT THE UMPIRES AND OTHER PLAYERS, AS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED!!**
- D. Please clean out all trash from your dugout at the end of the game.
- F. No animals, whether restrained on a leash, shall be allowed on or around active recreational areas such as athletic fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, etc.

14. GROUND RULES

The following ground rules apply for the Adult Softball program at Messer Park, Tom Brown Park and Springsax Park.

- A. Any batted or thrown ball inside the fence is in play provided it hits no obstruction.
- B. Any ball that hits a wire or tree is dead (Umpire's Judgment)
- C. Teams are permitted only one (1) minute between each inning to be ready for play. The batter must take his position within 10 seconds. PENALTY: Umpire will direct pitcher to pitch and each legal pitch will be called a strike.
- D. Any player who throws a bat against the fence is automatically out of the game (Umpire's judgment).
- E. All protests, and appeals must be made immediately and properly to be considered.
- F. One (1) minute is allowed for the removal of a player from the field.
- G. Please - no alcoholic beverages in the parks and this includes parking lot.

These ground rules have been adopted to make the Adult Softball program more enjoyable for everyone. It is the manager's responsibility to inform all players of these rules and USA rule changes for the upcoming season.

Addendum 1 **COURTESY RUNNER RULE-does not apply to SR League**

Courtesy runners may be utilized using the following guidelines:

- 1. Either team may use a courtesy runner at any time with or without the approval of the opposing manager.
- 2. The courtesy runner can be any player in the line-up or on the bench.
- 3. A courtesy runner may not advance more than one (1) base unless forced by the **batter-runner**.
- 4. A courtesy runner will always score on a home run, regardless of what base is occupied.
- 5. A courtesy runner may **ALWAYS** advance one base on any batted ball.
- 6. A courtesy runner may advance one base on a sacrifice fly.

7. Any “courtesy runner” advancing beyond the base entitled is at risk and could be called out as defined in the rules. If the “courtesy runner” is called out ALL PLAY stands. After a play is over and if the “courtesy runner” has advanced beyond the base entitled (**without being forced by the batter-runner**) the “courtesy runner” shall be returned to the base entitled without liability to be put out.

In each scenario above, keep in mind that a courtesy runner must also be forced to advance on a fielding error and is always in JEOPARDY to be played on, subject to runner interference or be subject to an appeal for missing a base or home plate.

Play #1 Courtesy Runner (CR) on second. Batter hits a double to left scoring the CR from second. RULING: After the play is over the CR must return to third since the Batter stopped at second. See rule 3.

Play #2 CR on second and Runner (R1) on first. Batter singles to left, CR scores, R1 goes to third, batter stops at first. RULING: After the play is over the CR must return to third and R1 returns to second, since the Batter stopped at first.

NOTE: PLAY THE GAME AS NORMAL! After the play is over, the umpire will move the courtesy runner and all other runners back to the proper base(s), if necessary.

We feel that the above rule will assist in preventing abuse of using a courtesy runner when such player does not have an injury or physical defect yet provide the opportunity to utilize a courtesy runner when there is a legitimate injury or physical disability.