

2023

YOUTH SOFTBALL COACHES MANUAL



City of Tallahassee Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs
Department

**TALLAHASSEE PARKS, RECREATION AND
NEIGHBORHOOD AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**

**YOUTH SOFTBALL PROGRAM
2023**

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Sue McCollum (Lafayette Park)	Doris Hayes	322-5450
Levy Park	Rod McQueen	322-2961
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LEAGUES

League	Ages
Rookie League	6 – 8
Minor League	8 – 10
Major League Fast Pitch	11 – 13

I. PURPOSE OF THE YOUTH SOFTBALL PROGRAM

We believe that through good leadership our program will ensure successful experiences for all participants. It should encompass all of the benefits listed below:

1. Participation should develop and keep a healthy mind in a healthy body.
Certain physical results are considered desirable and can be attained, subject to the differences in individual ability. These are: speed, strength, endurance, coordination, flexibility and agility.
2. Self-reliance and emotional stability can be developed through athletics.
 - A. Making decisions and accepting responsibilities.
 - B. Developing and exercising leadership.
3. Social growth is enhanced by athletics.
 - A. Appreciating what other people are really like.
 - B. Learning to get along with people - a living laboratory of democracy in action.
 - C. Learning to cooperate—"Team Work".
 - D. Learning to compete— self-discipline, emotional balance.
 - E. Making new friends.
 - F. Learning respect for rights of others.
4. Sportsmanship is an immediate and long-range goal.
 - A. Being responsible to law (rules) and order.
 - B. Observing fairness and custom.
 - C. Treating others with consideration.
 - D. Recognizing and applauding fine play and sportsmanlike acts of opponents.
5. There are other goals and values:
 - A. To develop initiative, willingness to try new things
 - B. To encourage intelligent use of leisure.
 - C. To have a fun and satisfying experience.
 - D. To participate in a wide variety of activities.
 - E. To obtain recognition, respect in the community.
 - F. To promote mental alertness.

Together, these will help make our children become better all-around citizens.

II. BILL OF RIGHTS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

1. Right of the opportunity to participate in sports regardless of ability level.
2. Right to participate at a level that is compatible with each child's developmental level.
3. Right to have qualified adult leadership.
4. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
5. Right of each child to share in the leadership and decision making of the sport in which he/she is participating.
6. Right to play as a child and not as an adult.
7. Right to proper preparation for participation in the sport.
8. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success.
9. Right to be treated with dignity by all involved.
10. Right to have fun through sport.¹

¹ Youth Sports Guide for Coach and Parents AAHPER Publication, 1201 16th St., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

III. ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs (PRNA) would like to thank you for accepting the responsibility of coaching one of our youth football teams. No program can be a success without good leadership.

The hours will be long, and you are serving without pay, but your job is most important. You will be building the moral fiber, mental health, and physical strength of young boys and girls who will be the citizens of tomorrow.

These athletes are at a most impressionable age and the training you give them, good or bad, will have a lasting effect on their young lives.

For some, playing on your team may be their only contact with organized sports. We know you will want them to remember it as a pleasurable and meaningful experience.

Without your help, this program would not be possible. For the players, parents, and the Tallahassee PRNA, THANKS!

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

Background Check

All head coaches and primary assistant coaches must complete a National Background Screening Consent/Release Form. Coaches must be cleared before coaching any Tallahassee PRNA program, this includes practices. Any team assistants or team parents are encouraged to complete a Tallahassee PRNA Volunteer Information Sheet.

Parents Meeting

All coaches must have a preseason meeting with team parents to discuss the purpose and scope of the program, code of conduct, rules and regulations, and other necessary information.

Player Supervision

In order to ensure the safety of all players, Tallahassee PRNA is asking each coach to stay with their players after practices and games until all players have been picked up. If the same parent(s) are consistently late, please let your park supervisor know. The Park supervisor will talk to the parent(s) regarding the issue. If the issue continues, a player may be dismissed from the league. Under no circumstance shall a coach leave a player unattended.

Parent/Spectator Control

A team is responsible for its parents and spectators. Officials may penalize a team for the behavior of its parents and spectators. Please read through the Code of Conduct and the definition and penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Reporting Injuries

During games, park supervisors are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form for any injury that requires medical attention, or for any injury that may potentially require medical attention. During warm-ups or practices, coaches are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form. A copy of the report should be turned into Tallahassee PRNA within 24 hours.

V. CODE OF CONDUCT

Tallahassee PRNA directs many youths' athletic recreational programs. We are committed to creating opportunities and experiences that will foster the development of positive moral and ethical values, and we strive to promote good sportsmanship among all participants. As a volunteer coach, I hereby pledge to live up to the following code of conduct:

1. I will abstain from using any tobacco or alcohol products in or around the playing field, or the sports complex in which the field is located. I will also refrain from participating in any practice or game activity when it is apparent that I have consumed alcohol prior to arriving. ____ Initials
2. I will refrain from using abusive or profane language in or around the playing field or the sports complex in which the field is located. ____ Initials
3. I will refrain from permitting a player to participate in a practice or game when in doubt as to the player's health or physical condition, and I will abide by a doctor's decision in all matters relating to a player's health or physical condition. ____ Initials
4. I will provide equal opportunities for all players regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, or otherwise qualified characteristic. ____ Initials
5. I will refrain from accepting any gift, gratuity, or favor that might influence my judgment. I will refrain from offering any gift, gratuity, or favor with the intent of obtaining special privileges, and will not exploit any relationship with a player for personal gain or other advantage. ____ Initials
6. I will strive to promote good mental and physical health in all aspects of participation and refrain from any type of verbal or physical abuse of any players. I will make any criticism "constructive" in nature and reserve it for private moments. ____ Initials
7. I will consistently display and demand good sportsmanship in practice and in games, including but not limited to accepting decisions of the officials in a professional manner; refraining from criticizing opposing coaches, players, and spectators; refraining from "running up the score" and congratulating opposing teams following a game. ____ Initials
8. I will conduct myself in accordance with all rules, regulations, and determinations of the particular league or program in which I am volunteering. ____ Initials
9. I will hold a pre-season parents' meeting and maintain open communication with parents relating to all aspects of participation, including conduct of both spectators and players. ____ Initials
10. I will consistently act in the best interest of all players and the particular program in which I am volunteering, so as to provide a positive experience for all players and to promote a positive image of the program. ____ Initials

Coach Signature

Date

V. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We want to emphasize the importance of conducting yourselves properly in dealing with medical emergencies at your facilities. Realizing we are not empowered or trained to "treat" victims, we still have the responsibility to render front line aid and supervise the situation. This may involve discussing the situation with the victim, coach, or parent, or to call in the Ambulance Service. Listed below are some guidelines to follow, which should always be coupled with good common sense.

In the event of an accident or emergency:

1. Try to determine the extent of the injury. If in doubt as to the seriousness of the accident, do not move the patient. Keep him comfortable and reassured and call an ambulance. If the situation calls for it, apply ice or keep the patient warm and comfortable.
2. Front line care of an accident would include use of ice, stoppage of bleeding, restoring breathing, and treatment for shock, heat exhaustion or stroke.
3. Be sure victim is as comfortable as possible. If it's cold, cover them. If it's hot, loosen equipment, etc. **USE GOOD COMMON SENSE!**
4. Call for additional support. Use other adults to secure necessary materials and never leave the patient alone with other players.
5. If an ambulance is called, be sure you have someone to direct it to the site. Assist paramedics in any way you can.
6. Always prepare an accident report that will be turned in to the supervisor who will then get the information to the Parks and Recreation Dept.
7. Be sure you have access to a phone within a short period of time.
8. Submit a follow up report of the injured person. Call to find out the extent of the injury and how he is doing.

Above all, supervisors and coaches are to take charge during these incidents and must coordinate aid rendered.

Please advise all your coaches of the importance of being sure all aspects of an accident are handled properly and expeditiously.

VI. INCLEMENT WEATHER & LIGHTNING SAFETY

Tallahassee PRNA currently uses the AccuWeather Sky Guard System. This system provides staff with lightning advisories and warnings via text or email message based on a given park or facility location. Full-time athletic supervisors will receive an email and/or text with information regarding a potential storm. The athletic supervisors will alert park supervisors of one of two messages received: **Lightning Advisory** and **Lightning Warning**. During games onsite park supervisors will inform their coaches of any advisories or warnings. This system will be used to determine whether play should be suspended and able to resume activity.

Lightning Advisory = Lightning conditions exist within 15 miles of the park or facility location. Play may continue until a warning is received.

Lightning Warning = Lightning conditions exist within 8 miles of the park or facility location. All players, coaches and officials must clear the playing field. Anyone onsite at the park or facility location is encouraged to seek appropriate shelter. Play will resume when the warning expires.

During practices or when a park supervisor is not onsite, coaches will be responsible for determining whether play should be suspended. Please be aware of weather conditions. Use common sense and good judgment and make safety a priority! Lack of rainfall is not an adequate indicator for suspending play.

If you see it (lightning), flee it! If you hear it (thunder), clear it!

Ultimately, players, coaches and spectators are responsible for their safety. If participants feel they are in danger from inclement weather or impending lightning, they have the right to leave the park or facility location in order to seek shelter, without fear of repercussion or penalty.

VII. MEDICAL ISSUES/CARE

Heat Related Emergencies

Heat related emergencies usually result from loss of fluids and electrolytes (salts) from heavy sweating. As a person continues to lose fluids through sweat, the blood volume is decreased. Blood flow to the skin increases, reducing blood flow to the vital organs. The circulatory system is affected; therefore, the person goes into mild shock. If treated immediately, heat cramps and heat exhaustion can usually be reversed with prompt care.

Heat Cramps – Loss of fluids and electrolytes can begin to produce painful spasms of skeletal muscles, generally in the legs and abdomen. Skin is moist. Body temperature is usually normal.

Treatment – Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Exhaustion – Cool, moist, pale, clammy or ashen, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, exhaustion.

Treatment –Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Stroke – Red, hot, dry. Body temperature continues to climb. Person may vomit and begin to show changes in level of consciousness. Sweating may stop because body fluid levels are low. When sweating stops, the body cannot cool itself effectively and body temperature rapidly rises. Soon the brain and other vital organs, such as the heart and kidneys begin to fail. Convulsions, coma and death will result. TREATMENT ON NEXT PAGE

Treatment for Heat Stroke

- ❖ Check ABC's
- ❖ Call 911
- ❖ Remove person from the hot environment.
- ❖ Have the person lie down in a cool or shady area. Elevate the legs slightly.
- ❖ Loosen or remove clothing
- ❖ Apply cool, wet towels or sheets or cold packs to the body.
- ❖ Fan the person to help increase evaporation.
- ❖ If you only have ice or cold packs, place them on the person's wrists and ankles, in each armpit, and in the groin to cool the large blood vessels.

- ❖ Give small amounts of water to a fully conscious person.
- ❖ Do not apply rubbing (isopropyl) alcohol. The alcohol may cause poisoning through the skin or through inhalation.
- ❖ Monitor vital signs.

Concussions

After recent discussion of concussions, our program has adopted recommendations each coach will follow for the season. The following guidelines were established by the CDC.

1. Every coach will receive "A Fact Sheet for Coaches" provided by the CDC at the beginning of the season at a coaches meeting. We will also explain signs and symptoms a coach will look for at the coaches meeting.
2. Every coach will also receive a couple copies of "A Fact Sheet for Parents" that will be distributed to a parent of a child that shows signs and symptoms of a concussion.
3. Review the four steps in an action plan with each coach if they suspect a child has a concussion:
 - a. Remove athlete from play.
 - b. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
 - c. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.
 - d. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it OK to return to play. A player must bring a written clearance to the main office before the player can start back playing. League supervisor will notify the coach when a player is cleared to play.

VIII. PREVENTING PROBLEMS

Develop Policies and Procedures: *Clearly defined organizational policies and procedures help clarify the rights and responsibilities of parents and how they should behave within the confines of the youth sports environment. Without boundaries and guidelines for behavior it is difficult to hold individuals accountable for their actions later. Often, parents are out of control because no one has ever told them they are not supposed to be out of control!*

Communication: Communication is the key to so many things a youth sports administrator is responsible for and dealing with parents is no exception! Policies and procedures will have no effect unless all involved, including the parents, are made aware of them and understand them. This is where communicating with the parents is vital. Parents must be acknowledged for the important role they play. There are several opportunities for the administrator to communicate with parents effectively: Registration, orientation and parent meetings.

Registration: Provide parents with important information in the following areas following, or during registration:

- Organizational philosophy and goals
- Season schedule
- Maps to fields or other facilities
- Policies and Procedures Manual
- Safety information about equipment
- Information about areas for parent involvement
- Details about the orientation meeting
- Parents' Code of Ethics
- The coaching approach and philosophy to be employed
- Team goals

Orientation Meeting: A parents' orientation meeting is a vital tool in developing a positive youth sports experience for children. Orientation meetings can be held on a league wide basis, on an individual basis with each coach meeting his/her team's parents, or both. The orientation meeting allows parents to raise questions and concerns while coaches and administrators are both present. It also allows the coach to get to know the parents he/she will be dealing with during the season. A healthy two-way communication process should be encouraged and initiated at the orientation meeting. Time should be left at the end of the meeting for questions from parents.

Topics to be discussed at this meeting should include:

- Structure of the league – who should parents contact with concerns or questions.
- Philosophy of the league – equal play, skill development, FUN, etc.
- Program specifics – rules, location, times, etc.
- Season specifics – duration, special events, etc.
- Equipment specifics – what is needed, what is optional, etc.
- Transportation guidelines
- Health & safety guidelines – inclement weather policies, etc.
- How parents can get involved
- The rights & responsibilities of the youth sports parent
- Parent's Code of Ethics

Get to Know the Parents Informally: The administrators and coaches of each team should make a point of getting to know the parents of the children. The coach should be aware that all families are different and the motives for children being involved in sports will vary. It may be useful for the coach to have the parents complete a simple questionnaire, asking them specifically what they want their child to get out of the youth sports experience. This questionnaire can be completed at the time of registration and then given to each coach.

By informing each parent know of the organizational philosophy many problems may be prevented in the future. Also, if the parents feel comfortable, it is more likely that youth sports administrators will have an open, constructive relationship with them. Coaches may make the effort to contact each of his/her players' parents on an individual basis or simply spend time talking to each parent at the orientation meeting. What is important is that during and after practices and games the coaches and administrators acknowledge the parents as a valued part of the youth sports experience. If ignored or shown any disrespect, parents feel less secure and are less likely to be supportive.

IX. GENERAL RULES FOR ALL AGE DIVISIONS

League

The league shall consist of at least four (4) teams. Some parks may be combined to form a full league. Practices and games may be played at a park/field other than your home park.

Number of Players

Each team will ideally consist of no more than 12 players and a new team may be formed if 11 players are available. The Athletic Supervisor must authorize any modification of team numbers.

Eligible Players

- A. Players may only play in their designated age group, or a higher age group. Players may NOT play in a younger age group.
- B. The age determining date is December 31, 2021.
- C. Proof of Age – PRNA reserves the right to request proof of age by birth certificate, baptismal or school record.

League Boundaries

Girls will be permitted to play at the park or field that is most convenient to them.

Equipment

- A. Players must wear batting helmets. For the Minor and Major leagues, batting helmets must be equipped with NOCSAE approved face mask/guard.
- B. Closed toe athletic shoes are required. Screw-on or metal cleats are prohibited.
- C. Uniform shirts will be supplied by the Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department (PRNA) and must be visibly worn during the game.
 - a. Visonors will also be provided and may be worn at the player's discretion.
 - b. Other uniform and equipment are optional, and coaches should not ask players or parents to purchase additional uniforms or equipment.
 - c. Uniforms may NOT be altered without written approval from the Athletic Supervisor.
- D. All equipment provided by PRNA including bats, balls, catcher gloves, catchers' helmets, masks and batting helmets must be returned to the Park Supervisor at the conclusion of the last scheduled game.
- E. Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during 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.
- F. Ball Size by League
 - Rookie League = Level 5 RIF Softball
 - Minor League – 11" COR .47 Red Stitch Balls
 - Major League – 12" COR .47 Red Stitch Balls

COACHES

- A. Each team shall have a Head Coach and at least one assistant coach.
- B. All head coaches and one (1) assistant coach must complete the National Background Screening/Consent form.
 - a. Any additional volunteers who wish to be involved with team activities must complete the Volunteer Coaches form prior to providing any assistance. Volunteers are NOT PERMITTED to assist with practices/games until this form has been submitted.
 - b. Submit completed forms to your park supervisor.

- c. At least one head or assistant coach who has completed the National Background Screening/Consent form must be present at all team activities.
- C. Coaches may not unduly delay a game.
- D. Coaches are expected to stay with participants until a parent/guardian arrives to pick them up. Notify your park supervisor if you have a parent who is habitually late arriving to pick up their child.

UMPIRES

The umpire's decision on matters not covered by the league or ASA softball rules shall be final.

INTER-LEAGUE PLAY

Coaches should not attempt to coordinate additional games or scrimmages with teams from other leagues/parks. Inter-league or inter-park play will occur when it is necessary to combine parks to form a league.

STANDINGS AND AVERAGES

Official standings or statistics are NOT kept. Records are kept in Major League only.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department does not endorse or take responsibility for any team activities beyond what is established as standard procedures for conducting this program. Events such as photography sessions, team parties, etc. are activities that parents must understand are their personal choice and their participation is optional. Coaches should refrain from organizing "outside" activities. Parents who wish to engage in these events are prohibited from requiring mandatory donations and failure to participate may not affect a participant's right to any benefits afforded to any other players.

Note: All "outside" activities/functions are not supervised by the City of Tallahassee and are the sole responsibility of the individual(s) conducting them.

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

- A. Six (6) innings will constitute a complete game.
 - a. **Time limits**
 - i. **Rookie – one-hour time limit – drop dead time, we will not finish the inning, game ends at time limit.**
 - ii. **Minor Fast Pitch League – one-hour fifteen minutes time limit – drop dead time, we will not finish the inning, game ends at time limit.**
 - iii. **Major Fast Pitch League – one-hour twenty minutes – drop dead time, we will not finish the inning, game ends at time limit.**
 - b. Game time will be 6:00 p.m. or 6:15 p.m.
- B. If a team does not have at least 8 players at the scheduled game start time, they may ONLY borrow a player or players from the opposing team.
 - a. Use of players from a 3rd team or allowing a sibling/non-registered individual to participate is prohibited.

- C. All players present at a game must be listed in the batting line-up. The batting order is to be established prior to the game and must be made available to the opposing coach if he/she desires. Once the batting order is established it may not be changed.
 - a. Ex: If the 9th batter is the last out, the 10th batter will lead off in the following inning.
- D. Player Participation Rule: Players cannot sit the bench defensively for two consecutive innings.
- E. Players must be given the opportunity to play different positions and must be given the opportunity to play both infield and outfield positions each game. Coaches should plan their lineups before each game and make adjustments as necessary at game time. This will save time between innings and ensure each player the chance to play different positions.
- F. There will be a maximum of 10 batters per half inning for all leagues.
 - a. When the 10th batter comes to the plate, the offensive coach should declare that the player is their "10th batter".
 - b. If a pitched ball hits the 10th batter, she will have a courtesy runner and the 11th batter will be permitted to bat. This is the only occasion where eleven (11) batters would be allowed.
- G. Each inning will conclude when there are 3 outs, or 10 batters have hit.
- H. Players are prohibited from intentionally hitting or throwing balls against fences. Coaches should strictly enforce this policy due to the damage it causes to the fences.
- I. The "on-deck" batter must stand in the on-deck circle to warm-up.
- J. Base runners are not required to slide when there is a play at home plate.
 - a. The runner may not initiate a collision with the catcher with the intent of dislodging the ball.
- K. Runners will be called out if in the opinion of the umpire, a player removes her helmet while running the bases. If a helmet falls off without assistance, the player will not be called out.
- L. Showing bunt and then swinging away (Slashing) is not allowed in our league. Any player that shows bunt must attempt a bunt.
- M. Batters may not "sling" the bat. In the event a batter "slings" their bat, the umpire will declare a dead ball, call the batter out and have all base runners return to their original bases.
- N. Unsportsmanlike conduct of any nature will not be tolerated by players, coaches, or spectators.
 - a. Negative chants/cheers, excessive chatter or any other action deemed to be of an unsportsmanlike nature may result in removal/ejection from the game by the umpire, site supervisor or league supervisor.
- O. ASA rules govern play in any situation not specifically addressed in these rules.

X. LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES

Rookie League

- A. All players must play in every inning on defense.
 - a. 6 infielders: Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Baseman, 2nd Baseman, 3rd Baseman and Shortstop.
 - b. All other players are outfielders and must be positioned to form an arc in the outfield.

- c. Outfielders may not stand adjacent to a base or in the baseline to function as an infielder.
 - d. The home plate umpire can assist the catcher in returning the ball to the pitcher.
- B. Coaches: Defensive coaching should occur from near the player bench in foul territory next to the fence.
- C. Umpires: It is the intent of PRNA to provide one (1) umpire for each Rookie League game. In the event an umpire is not available each team will supply an individual to serve as an umpire. It is preferred that a parent perform this duty instead of a coach.
- D. PITCHING
 - a. There will be no use of a tee; coaches will do all the pitching.
 - b. The offensive team coach or assigned volunteer shall pitch the ball. Players are not permitted to pitch in the Rookie League.
 - c. The coach shall deliver the ball as a modified pitch (Slingshot-between slow and fast pitch delivery)
 - d. The pitcher coach can only pitch a total of six (6) pitches to each batter. Strikes will be called on foul balls and missed swings. A batter will strike out if she gets 3 strikes, even if she has not received 6 pitches. If a batter does not put the ball in play during her six pitches, she will be called out regardless of the number of strikes she has. A foul ball on the third strike or 6th pitch shall be considered a foul ball as in regular fast pitch softball and the batter will swing again. This is the only time she would get more than 6 pitches.
 - e. The pitcher (coach) may stand any distance between the pitching rubber and 10 feet in front of the mound.
 - f. A player will play in the pitching position standing behind the pitcher (coach) and will be even to and one stride to the left or right of the rubber.
 - g. If the pitcher (coach) is hit or touched with the ball, the umpire will declare a dead ball and all base runners will advance one base and the batter advances to first base. If, in the opinion of the umpire, the pitcher (coach) intentionally allows himself/herself to be hit by a batted ball, the umpire will call time, the batter will be declared out, and any runners who advanced will be sent back.
- E. Batters may not bunt the ball. The umpire will declare a strike if they believe a player intentionally attempted to bunt.
- F. Defensive players may not intentionally roll the ball to the base. If in the judgment of the umpire this occurs, the base runner will be declared safe.
- G. The infield fly rule is not enforced.
- H. Timeout will be called by the home plate umpire as follows:
 - a. Ball hit to the outfield: Time will be called when the ball is thrown into the infield. An infielder does not have to have possession. As soon as the ball crosses into the infield either in the air or on the ground, time will be called.

Minor League

- A. Pitching Rules: Fast Pitch – Players will pitch the entire game.

- a. If the batter draws a walk, the batter's coach will pitch 2 pitches. The batter will have to put the ball in play or strike out. There will be NO WALKS in the game, however if a batter is hit by a pitch, they will be awarded first base. This rule is intended to advance pitching in the league, while allowing for defense and base running skills to develop.
 - b. The strike zone for minor league will be from the shin to the chest to encourage hitting.
- B. Umpires: It is the intent of PRNA to provide one (1) umpire for each Minor League game. In the event an umpire is not available each team will supply an individual to serve as an umpire. It is preferred that a parent perform this duty instead of a coach.
- C. Ten (10) players will play on defense each inning.
 - a. 6 infielders: Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Baseman, 2nd Baseman, 3rd Baseman and Shortstop.
 - b. 4 outfielders: Left fielder, Left Center fielder, Right Center fielder and Right fielder.
 - c. Outfielders may not stand adjacent to a base or in the baseline to function as an infielder.
- D. Runners aren't allowed to steal bases in this league.
- E. The runner may advance one base at his own risk on an over-throw to first or third base. She may attempt as many bases as she wishes on an overthrow that is within fair territory, runners may advance until an infielder possesses the ball.
- F. A foul on the third strike is not an out and the batter will receive another pitch.
- G. The distance between home plate and the pitching rubber shall be 35 feet.
- H. Catcher Speed Up Rule: Any catcher who is on base with 2 outs will be replaced by the last out to allow the catcher to return to the dugout and get their equipment on so play may continue in a timely fashion the next half inning.
- I. The infield fly rule does not apply.
- J. Timeout will be called by the home plate umpire as follows:
 - a. Ball hit to the outfield: Time will be called when an infielder has possession of the ball. All base runners that are halfway to the next base may advance. Any base runner less than halfway must return to the previous base.
 - b. Ball hit to the infield: Time will be called after one attempted play is made and an infielder has possession of the ball. Ex: In the case of an overthrow, runners may advance until an infielder possesses the ball.

Major League Fast Pitch

- A. Pitching: Players will pitch the entire game.
- B. If the batter draws a walk, the batter's coach will pitch 2 pitches. The batter will have to put the ball in play or strike out. There will be NO WALKS in the game, however if a batter is hit by a pitch, they will be awarded first base. This rule is intended to advance pitching in the league, while allowing for defense and base running skills to develop.

C. Umpires: It is the intent of PRNA to provide two (2) umpires for each Major League Fast Pitch game. In the event umpires are not available, each team will supply an individual to serve as an umpire. It is preferred that a parent perform this duty instead of a coach.

D. EXCEPTIONS TO ASA RULES

- a. The defense will consist of 10 players in the major fast pitch league. The 10th player will be an outfielder.
- b. 6 innings (not 7 innings) is a regulation game; the home team will keep the official score.
- c. The batter may not run if the catcher drops the third strike. It will be an automatic out. However, base runners may advance at their own risk.
- d. The runner may steal when the ball reaches home plate (not when it leaves the pitcher's hand). A runner leaving the base early must go back. If the runner is off the base and the batter gets a hit, the runner may not advance more than one base in front of the batter.
- e. Rule for courtesy runners for pitchers/catchers is not in effect except for the catcher speed up rule. Any catcher who is on base with 2 outs will be replaced by the last out to allow the catcher to return to the dugout and get her equipment on so play may continue in a timely fashion the next half inning.

E. IMPORTANT ASA RULES TO NOTE

- a. Infield Fly Rule will be called
- b. The pitching rubber shall be 40 feet from home plate.
- c. Pitching Regulations (Fast Pitch). Read and understand this rule completely. If you have any questions, call your league supervisor or PRNA.
 - i. Coaches are to use good judgment when selecting pitchers. Coaches must ensure pitchers can pitch.
 - ii. You are encouraged to send your pitchers to schedule PRNA Pitching Clinics.
- d. Bunted foul ball on 3rd strike is an out.
- e. A batter is awarded first base when hit by a pitched ball even if the ball strikes the ground before hitting the batter. If a pitch hits a batter, a dead ball situation will occur, and runners may not advance.
- f. The "Look Back" rule – When the pitcher controls the ball in the circle, all runners off base must choose to advance or retreat "immediately". After a walk the rule is not in effect until the batter runner reaches first base. After rounding a base, all runners are allowed one "stop" before choosing to advance or retreat. Stopping a second time after choosing a direction is a violation unless the pitcher fakes or makes a throw which releases all runners. After a fake throw all runners must once again immediately choose a direction.