

WESTERVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

2019 SPRING/SUMMER ADULT SOFTBALL RULES

The Westerville Parks and Recreation Department has established the following rules and regulations for citywide softball leagues. This information supplements the playing rules published by USA Softball (Formally known as Amateur Softball Association (A.S.A.)).

It is the team manager's responsibility to become familiar with this information as well as all the rules of softball. Team members are also expected to read these rules and to abide by them.

Drinking of Intoxicants

Drinking of intoxicants or use of illegal drugs on city property is a violation of the city code and is expressly forbidden. **Any player, coach or fan seen by an umpire with an alcoholic beverage or is believed to be under the influence while playing may be ejected from the game.** Violators of this rule must leave the premises immediately or risk forfeiture of the game.

Waiver of Rules

Experience has proven that is impossible to anticipate all problems which may arise when rules are formulated and adopted. Therefore, the Westerville Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to waive any rules governing play in any league under their jurisdiction when, in its judgment, the application of said rules will result in gross unfairness or unreasonable hardship.

Field Conditions

Sportsline – 614-901-6888 – teams may call the sportsline for a recorded message regarding game cancellations after 4:00 p.m. on weekdays and 3:00 p.m. on Sundays. Managers are responsible for notifying the rest of the team.

Fee Policy

“Resident” teams will pay the Resident rate. A “Resident team is one managed by a person who lives or works in the corporate limits of Westerville. A “Non-Resident” team will pay a \$45 increased fee. “Non-Resident” team is a team managed by a person living or working outside the corporate limits.

I. General Rules for Leagues

A. 1st Priority When Registering a Team:

Resident Team Registration

Resident teams will be considered first. "Resident" is defined as one who lives or works within the corporate city limits of Westerville. Working will be defined as any individual who works full-time and pays income tax to the City of Westerville. Eligibility will be affirmed through employer verification or other means.

2nd Priority When Registering a Team:

Open Registration

Teams will be accepted to fill space available in our leagues on a first-come, first served basis until the leagues are full.

Churches may begin registration the same period as resident teams, if the churches address is within the corporate limits.

Additionally:

1. Players may be subject to ID checks at any time.
2. A player may only be on one roster per team in the same league. We realize multiple rosters may be submitted from different managers and may contain the same player. It's the team the player plays for first that they have to stay with.
3. If a protest is upheld on an ineligible player, the team will forfeit all games in which that player participates.
4. The burden of proof is on the manager who signed the roster with the alleged ineligible player.
5. ***If both managers or team representatives agree to allow a player to play, then eligibility cannot be protested. Teams may pickup player(s) on site in order to fill a team if both teams agree.***

B. Spikes

No metal spikes, or football cleats allowed. Shoes with round metal spikes are illegal. Shoes with detachable cleats that screw on are not permitted however; shoes with detachable cleats that screw INTO the shoe are permitted

C. Bats

Bats must say "Official Softball." As well as have an "ASA/USA certified Stamp" Titanium alloy bats are deemed unsafe for Westerville leagues. If it has no markings whatsoever, it won't be allowed. **All Bats (except Miken Ultra and Miken Ultra II) with ASA/USA certification will be allowed even if on the list except Miken Ultra and Miken Ultra II.**

If a player enters the batters box with a non-approved bat, both the player and the bat will be removed from the game. The players spot in the line up is considered an "out" if no substitute is available (batting more than 10). If batting 10 or 9 and this occurs, game is a forfeit if there is no substitute. (New ASA/USA rule for 2007).

Senior Bat Rule-Prior to the first pitch, any senior 60 years or older must present themselves and their ASA approved senior bat to the field umpire for approval. Only these players 60 years and older can use the approved bat. If the bat is used by other players not within the senior age, an out will be assessed and that player will be ejected.

Warm-up bats must be official softball warm-up bats. No sledgehammers, lead pipes, donut rings, etc. are allowed.

D. Clarification of Collision Rule/Sliding

1. The base runner is responsible for any collision, intentional or unintentional, which results in the bowling over or unnecessary contact of a fielder during a live ball. If there is a possible play being made that could result in contact, then the base runner must avoid collision, concede the out or get out of the way.
2. The fielder will be held responsible for any illegal blocking of the base (without the ball) and will be called for obstruction by the umpire and the base runner will be awarded the base. A warning should be given and the next illegal obstruction by that player will result in ejection. If contact occurs, the responsibility will be on the base runner.

When the ball, runner and the defensive player arrive at the same time and place, and contact is made, the umpire should not invoke the crash rule, interference, or obstruction. This is merely incidental contact, or what some persons commonly

call a “wreck”. When a defense player is fielding a thrown ball and the flight of the ball carries or draws them into the path of the base runner, it is not a crash.

PENALTY: For any unnecessary contact the base runner is out and should be ejected from the game.

3. **Sliding is a potentially dangerous maneuver!** Injuries can and do occur when sliding is practiced, even without the presence of a base or home plate. **Sliding is synonymous with injury.**

E. **Profanity**

1. The umpire shall assess one out against the offending team for the use of profanity. For serious violations, the umpire shall eject the offender.
2. The profanity out is assessed on the batter who is to receive the next pitch (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 on the offending team's next at bat.
5. Two (2) violations of the profanity rule by the same player results in ejection.
6. Three (3) or more violations against the same team are grounds for forfeit.

F. **Players**

No game can start with less than 9 players on either team (exception - coed). For coed only: If a player becomes ill or injured, the game may continue with 8 players, but the game cannot continue with less than 8 players. If a player is ejected, causing the number of players to be less than 10, the game will be forfeited you if have no legal substitute (which is an ASA/USA requirement).”

For Coed Leagues, a game may start with 9 players, 4/5 either way. But when the 10th spot in the order comes up, it will be an automatic out. If you play with 8 or 10 players, no outs.

If a team is short players, and as long as the opposing manager or team representative agrees, teams can pick up players so the team can play. Both teams must agree to the players. That “new player added” must bat at the end of the batting line-up. Once the game has begun, the result will stand.

G. **Jewelry**

No jewelry is to be worn during the game for the safety of the players. Each team will be warned about jewelry before the start of the game. If a player enters the batter's box wearing jewelry, he/she will be asked to remove it. If the player refuses, he/she will be called out.

H. **Schedules**

1. There will be a 5-minute grace period for the first scheduled games only. No grace period for second or third games.
2. One warm-up pitch or 30 seconds will be allowed between innings. Teams are not allowed to take a ball onto the playing fields between innings.
3. Game time will start 5 minutes after previous game is completed if the earlier game has gone past the scheduled starting time.

I. **Time and Run Limits**

1. Time - No new inning may start after one hour and ten minutes of playing time has elapsed. If less than five innings have been played, the game will still be considered official (consideration will be given to extenuating circumstances). A full inning will not be played if the home team is ahead.
2. Runs - If one team is ahead by 20 or more runs at the end of four innings, or 12 or more runs after 5 innings, the game will be called.

3. **Church Coed League Only**-In an effort to keep the Friday Coed Church Division as recreational as possible the following rule has been established. A run limit will be established for a team to only score 17 total runs. The breakdown of cumulative score after each inning is as follows: 1st – 7, 2nd – 10, 3rd – 12, 4th – 14 5th – 15, 6th – 16, 7th – 17.

J. **Home Run Limits**

1. **Hoff Woods:** 3 with the one up rule.
 - a. **One up rule:** Once both teams have reached their respective home run limit (3 at Hoff) 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.
 - b. **Any additional home runs above the “one up” will be declared an out.**
 - c. They must be over the fence home runs to count against the limit.
 - d. **NEW 2019--In the Westerville leagues, teams can NOT go “one up” in the bottom of the 7th inning.**
2. *****NEW 2019-Once announced and signaled homerun by the umpire, the batter and any runners on base can proceed immediately to the dugout. Batters and runners no longer need to touch the next base.**

K. **Extra Innings**

If, after the completion of seven (7) innings of play (and still within the one hour and ten minute time limit) the score is tied, the following rule will be played to determine a winning team:

Teams will go to a one-pitch “Texas Shoot-Out” format. Each batter will come to the plate with a count of 3 balls and 2 strikes. Men’s leagues: No free foul. **Coed leagues: No free foul.** Also in the tiebreaker: If a batter is walked (All walks), he/she is placed at 2nd base. In coed leagues, if a male walks, the female following in the order has the option to bat or go to first base.

L. **Balls**

In the interest of consistency, the **12” Dudley Leather Thunder Heat .52 COR/300** pound compression softball will be the only ball approved for Men and Coed play. The home team is required to provide a new game ball and the visiting team must provide a good used ball. In tournament play both teams must provide a new ball. The umpire's judgment of the suitability of the balls presented will be final. Since teams are supplied with 8 softballs at the beginning of the season. **Due to the change of softball COR/Comp, we will not be accepting or grandfathering previous softballs from years past.**

M. **Umpires**

1. The official score will be kept by each team and reported to the umpire between each half inning.
2. The umpire will set ground rules with the team managers prior to the start of the game.
3. The umpire has the right to call a game in case of darkness, sudden rain, field conditions or other extenuating circumstances.
4. Swearing at or arguing with an umpire does not have a place in our leagues and will not be tolerated.
5. Any umpire's decision which involves judgment is final. No manager, coach or substitute shall object to such decision. Offenders will be ejected from the game (see "Unsportsmanlike Conduct").
6. **Physical or vocal abuse by a team member, manager or fan toward an umpire or league official may result in forfeiture of the game. This includes before, during and after the game. Any person causing abuse will be suspended for a minimum of one week of games for each league they participate in, or more depending on the severity of the incident.**

- N. **Rainouts, Postponements, etc.**
1. Make-up games will be played as scheduled by the League Supervisor and may not necessarily be on the league's regular day.
 2. Any unplayed games (i.e., upheld protests, etc.) will be played at the end of the season **only** if they affect the league championships.
 3. Any game, which is not regulation and has been called due to an act of nature will be rescheduled from the beginning (e.g., rain and lightning, etc.)
 4. Umpires will immediately clear the field when lightning is sighted. Lighting Prediction System will be used in most cases but not all.
 - a) Teams are encouraged to seek shelter.
 - b) Games may resume 20 minutes **after** the last lightning sighting, if the fields are still playable.
 - c) The final decision regarding playability rests with the umpire.
- O. **Protest Procedure**
1. The protest **must be announced** to the umpire before the next pitch. The umpire will note the protest on the scorecard, along with game conditions (inning, score, base runners, count on batter, etc.) to the agreement of both managers.
 2. Protests must be filed in writing to the Recreation Office within 24 hours of the game, must be signed by the team manager (with phone number provided) and must include a \$50.00 (cash) fee.
 3. The protest fee will be returned if the protest is upheld. The game will be replayed from the point of the protest at the end of the season only if the game results affect the league championship.
 4. The protest will be ruled on within three days of filing. An appeal must be filed within three days of the ruling.
 5. An appeal of the suspension will be reviewed by the League Supervisor, Recreation Director and a Recreation Advisory Board member.
 6. Protests based upon the umpire's judgment in calling plays will not be accepted.
- P. **Forfeitures**
1. If a team forfeits 2 games, it **may** be dropped from the league and no refund given.
 2. A team that forfeits 2 or more games in a season may not be allowed to renew its franchise the following season.
- Q. **Ball/Strike Count**
- A batter will walk when obtaining 3 balls and strike out on 2 strikes. All pitches must fall in between the 6' and 12' rule with the pitch reaching the minimum of 6' and maximum of 12'. Batter must be set and ready to receive pitch as to prevent from any "Quick Pitch" looking for an easy strike.
- R. **Foul Ball Rule**
- ***New 2019--Batting: After attaining one (1) strike, the batter is declared out if he/she hits one (1) foul ball. The ball is dead and a base runner may not advance.**
- S. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct**
1. Any player, manager or backer causing directly or indirectly any attack upon the umpire or other official, or threatening an official with bodily harm, by word or act, at any time, will subject himself/herself to suspension from all activities conducted by the Westerville Parks and Recreation Department. An official's written report shall describe such offenses. These acts would include, but would not be limited to:
 - a) Bumping, pushing or grabbing an official;
 - b) Swinging at or striking an official;
 - c) Throwing a ball or object at an official, whether or not contact is made; and

- d) Situations in which physical restraint is required to keep a player from attacking an official.
2. Officials shall eject from the game any player, coach, manager or fan guilty of foul, obscene, profane or abusive language. The official shall immediately report the incident to the Recreation Department.
3. Any player, coach, manager, team franchisee or fan involved in any unsportsmanlike conduct which occurs before, during or after a game and is judged detrimental and/or degrading to the Recreation Department and/or its employees, **and is ejected from a game will be suspended for a minimal period of one week of games from each league in which they participate in and may be suspended from participation in all programs conducted by the Department.**
4. A player receiving his/her second ejection in a season will be automatically removed from the team roster. Severe misconduct by team members, coaches, managers or fans may result in additional penalties. The protest committee consisting of the League Supervisor, Recreation Director and a Recreation Advisory Board member shall determine additional penalties.
5. Penalties occurring at the end of a season will carry over into the next season.
6. The team manager is responsible for the conduct of his team's players and fans.
7. Any manager or team member who refuses to give the correct name of an ejected player(s) to the official will automatically cause their team to forfeit their next game.
8. Any player, coach, manager or fan that has been ejected must leave the park immediately. Refusal will cause forfeiture of the game.

T. **Team Rosters and Roster Changes**

There are minimum and maximum numbers for rosters. For men's and women's teams, there is a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20. For coed teams, there is a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 players. For church teams, there is a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24.

Tournament roster eligibility is based on every player participating in three (3) regular season games.

ALL PLAYERS ARE SUBJECT TO ID CHECKS IF ELIGIBILITY IS QUESTIONED!

There is also a ceiling on the number of changes that can be made to a submitted roster. Changes will not count until after the 1st game. The roster changes are as follows:

Men's Teams: 5 roster changes
 Coed Teams: 6 roster changes
 Church Teams: 10 roster changes

One "change" equates to a removal AND adding of one player.

PLEASE HAVE YOUR ROSTER COMPLETE! ADDITIONS TO YOUR ROSTER ARE CONSIDERED CHANGES!

Also:

1. No roster changes can be made after:
 - a. 9th Game. (Men's League)
 - b. 8th Game (Coed League)
 - c. 7th Game (Church League)
2. There is no such thing as a "substitute player". If a player is on the roster, all non-resident fees apply.
3. Additions or deletions to eligibility forms should be made in writing or in person twenty-four (24) hours prior to that individual playing in a game. No changes will be accepted over the telephone or at the fields.
4. Players may only be on one roster per league (See page 2).

5. To play a player under an assumed name is considered a serious infraction. Managers as well as players are subject to indefinite suspension if they resort to such unsportsmanlike conduct. The team franchise may also be in jeopardy for future participation in Westerville Parks and Recreation Department programs.

U. **Determining the League Winner**

1. The league winner will be determined by overall record.
2. In case of a tie, the winner will be determined in the following order:
 - a. Team record in head-to-head competition
 - b. Run differential between those in head-to-head competition
 - c. Team record against top four (4) teams in standings

V. **End of Season Men's and Coed Champ of Champs and League Tournaments**

League Supervisor will schedule The Champ-of-Champs Tournaments and league tournaments at the end of the season. Open league winners will get preference when determining 1st round byes.

1. All Men's and Coed League regular season winner and runners-up will be entered into the Champ of Champs (determined by overall record). Those teams not qualifying for Champ of Champs will participate in a single-elimination league tournament. Exception: Church Coed will have league tournament.
2. **“New”** teams qualifying for Champ of Champs from Thursday “B” league may be subject play in Open league the following season.
2. All regular league rules apply.
3. Only players who have participated in three or more regular season games will be eligible for post season play (Champ-of-Champs or tournament play, 3 games for Friday night Church league players).
4. If 2 of your teams (entire or almost entire teams) make the Champ of Champs, you must decide which team is going to the Champ of Champs. Both teams cannot go. The team that decides to go is permitted to take up to 5 players from the team that is not going and put them on their roster, as long as the roster does not exceed 20 players. In the league of the team that doesn't go to the Champ of Champs, the 3rd place will be eligible to go.

W. **Service and Disability**

1. At anytime during the season a name may be added to the form to take the place of person entering the service. Proof that a player has left for the service must be presented at the Parks and Recreation Office before the change can be made official. Such changes must be made within two weeks after their induction. This rule does not apply to a person called for their physical examination. The added player assumes all the qualifications held by the player entering the service, which may qualify them for league playoffs or the Champ-of-Champ series. A player returning from the service may be added back to the original roster immediately with the removal of another player.
2. A person who has participated as a starting player in approximately 60% of the games played by their team since their name was placed on the eligibility form may be replaced, if they sustain an injury, which will prevent their playing for the rest of the season. Such replacement must be made within two weeks of the injury. Such a player will assume the accrued number of games played by the injured player to qualify them for league championship of Champ-of-Champs series. A doctor's certificate is required in such cases before the change can be made official. In no case will the replaced player be allowed to resume playing during the current season with any team in the Parks and Recreation Department leagues even though their disability is removed. Penalty for such action would be a suspension period of twelve months, effective the day on which they participated.
3. A female player who has participated as a starting player in 60% of the games played by their team since their name was placed on the eligibility form may be replaced if she is pregnant and unable to continue play during the season. A doctor's certificate is

required in such cases before the change can be made official. In no case will the replaced player be allowed to resume playing during the current season.

X. **Substitution** - A.S.A/USA rules will be used as guidelines for substitution. The Westerville Parks and Recreation rules listed below supersede A.S.A/USA.

1. Teams may bat all players present. If all players are in the batting order, free substitution in the field is allowed. Players not in the batting order are subject to A.S.A/USA. guidelines.
2. Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the batting order only if team hasn't completed one turn through the order. **They must be added at the bottom of the order. (Teams can go from 9 to 10 at any time, but the 10th player must be added at the end of the order.)**
2. If you are batting 10 in Men's, if a player for any reason must leave the line-up, that spot in the line-up will be considered an out if no substitution is available. If batting 11 or more, then there is no penalty for leaving (as long as 10 are remaining).
3. If a team is batting 11 or more players (Men's Leagues) and a player is injured, he/she can come out of the batting order as long as 10 players are able to play defensively. When the injured player's spot comes up in the batting order, no out will have to be taken.
4. If a team is batting 10 players and an injury occurs, the game can continue with 9 players but an out will be taken in the injured players' spot if no substitute is available.
5. Coed Leagues will have to bat an even number. For example, if you are batting 12 players (6 men/6 women) and a female player is injured, a male player will have to be taken out of the line-up also, so the team is batting 10 - no penalty. The injured player may not re-enter the game.
6. Courtesy Runner- Teams will be allowed one courtesy runner per game. The courtesy runner must be the previous batter or runner to have made an out. In coed leagues, the courtesy runner must be the same sex. In coed leagues a courtesy runner for each sex may be used, subject to rules of the courtesy runner.

Y. **Stealing**

1. Base stealing is not allowed in the Westerville Leagues.

Z. **Specific League Rules**

1. Coed Church Leagues
 - A. Eligibility - All players must be members of the church.
 - B. Minimum age for Church League is 18.
 - C. Teams must meet the fee requirements as stated under the fee policy. Non-resident fees do apply.
 - D. Tournament will be split into an Upper Bracket and Lower Bracket based on regular season standings.
2. Men's Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday Leagues (Open and "B")
 - A. Players must be 18 years of age.
 - B. Teams will qualify for the Champ-of-Champs Tournament as stated in Rule I.W.I. Wednesday Mixed and Thursday "B" qualifiers may be subjected to play in Open league following season.
3. Coed Leagues
 - A. The team will consist of five men and five women. Teams may play an official game with 8 (4 men and 4 women).
 - B. A game may start with 9 players, 4/5 either way. But when the 10th spot in the order comes up, it will be an automatic out. 8 or 10 players - no outs.
 - C. The batting order will be per A.S.A/USA. rules. **No fielding restrictions.**

- D. Any player causing intentional contact with a fielder will be called out and the ball will become dead. See Clarification of Collision Rule (I.D.)
- E. Teams will qualify for the Champ-of-Champs Tournament as stated in Rule I.W.I.
- F. ***Players must be 18 years of age.***

NOTE: Walk Rule: If a male walks on the first 3 pitches, he is awarded 2nd base, and the female that follows in the line-up may choose to bat or be awarded first base.