

City of Deer Park Softball Rules

(Revised April 2021)

Rainout line: (281) 478-2099

The City of Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department coordinates and provides Softball Leagues for the enjoyment and recreation of its citizens. We are members of the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF), which is an organization of municipalities and sports organizations. The City of Deer Park Softball league rules consist of Deer Park guidelines and USA Softball rules.

1. Conduct

- a. Any display of unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated, Should any person be connected with any team guilty of this type of conduct, a forfeit may be declared by the officials.
- b. In the event that a player strikes, curses or otherwise abuses an official or other employee of the Parks and Recreation Department, they will be suspended for at least two games and will be reviewed by the Athletics Supervisor and League Coordinator for further action.
- c. If a player/manager is ejected from a game, they will be suspended for a minimum of one additional game and will be reviewed by the Athletics Supervisor and League Coordinator.

2. Player Qualifications

a, In order to be eligible to play, every player must sign the line-up form each week. (See the following bullet for post-season tournament eligibility),

- a) **Post-Season Tournament Eligibility:** Each team will be required to turn in an original roster the first week of games and will have through the second week of games to determine their twenty (20) -man roster of people eligible to play in the post-season tournament. In summary, you have two (2) weeks to determine your eligible 20-man roster for the post-season tournament. Any and all players picked up on the third week or after can play in the regular season but will be deemed a substitute and **NOT** eligible for the post-season tournament.
- b) Players must present a government issued I.D. to the scorekeeper or League coordinator when checking the roster for tournament play.
- c) If the player is not checked in through the scorekeeper or coordinator, and the other team challenges, it will result in an illegal player and the team with the illegal player will forfeit.
- d) Teams may have a maximum of 20 players for league play.
- e) You may pick up a maximum of three players for a game if needed from other teams or spectators only to accommodate your team up to 9 players.
 - I. For example, if you have 7 players from your roster available, you may only pick up 2 players to field 9 players total.
 - II. For tournament play, you have to choose which team you will play for.

- III. If you play more than the three pick up players allowed, you must ask the other team manager to do so. If you do not, your game could be an automatic forfeit. You may still play the game if you wish, but the win will automatically go to the opposing team.
- IV. Pick up players are NOT allowed for tournaments.
 - 1. Team managers are responsible for questioning whether the number of players that the opposing team has picked up.
 - 2. If it is discovered after a game that an opposing team had picked up more than three (3) players without consent from the opposing team manager, the game will have to be protested and sent to the League coordinator for review. It is up to the other team to bring it to the attention of the scorekeeper as well as the League Coordinator if the other team is playing with more than allowed for pick up.

3 . Forfeit Games

- a. Umpires are required to officiate any game that has at least eight players per team. This will count as a forfeit on standings but the game may still be played.
- b. In the event of a forfeit, the team with enough players may have exclusive use of the field until fifteen minutes prior to the next game unless it is the last hour of games scheduled, If it is the last hour, lights will be turned off and that field will be closed (by the city representative).
- c. A forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases:
 - i. An ejection of a player (without a legal sub) or players from the game results in fewer than the required number of players to continue the game. (Rule 13, sec. A through D)
- d. Game time is forfeit time; no earlier.

4 . Playing Rules and Interpretations

- a. Home team will be determined by a coin toss.
- b. The umpire calling on the field will have the official time. Official's time is correct time!
- c. No one is allowed on the field before game time,
- d. There is a 10 Run Rule in effect after 5 innings, 12 Run Rule after 4 innings and 15 Run Rule after 3 innings.
- e. 5 Run/inning Rule: If either manager wants to use this rule, the manager must notify both the umpire and scorekeeper before the start of the game. **BOTH** teams will have to agree on the rule before it is put in place. If used, when a team batting scores 5 runs in their at bat, that half of the inning is over and they take the field regardless of the amount of outs that have been made. 5 Run/inning can only take effect for 4 innings, at which time the game reverts to regular softball.
- f. 50 minute time limit or 7 innings, whichever comes first on all games.
 - i. If score is tied; an additional inning will be played to break the tie. The last batter from the previous inning will be placed on 2nd base and the inning will be started. Each batter will get only one pitch, if the game

is still tied after that inning (1 inning only), each team will receive a tie.

- g. For games following an extra inning game, the 50 minute time limit starts when the game begins.
- h. Line Ups at the game:
- i. Line-up forms must be turned in to the scorekeepers before the game begins. Line-up forms are provided by scorekeepers or the City representative. **First and Last names must be provided.** Line-ups are required for each game played at each field.
 - i. Re-Entry: There is no re-entry once a player is removed from the batting order for the second time.
 - j. All batters must start with a one and one count and no courtesy foul will be given.
 - k. Throwing bats: If an official feels a bat was or is being thrown inappropriately or hard enough to hurt someone, they have the right to eject the player from the game.
 - l. Any player ejected from a game, must leave the entire complex (out of field, out of gate, out of parking lot) immediately. Failure to do so or stalling may cause their team to forfeit.
- M. Pitching: The minimum arc for a pitch is 6' and the maximum arc limit for a pitch is 10'. Anything more than 10 feet will automatically be called a ball and is an illegal pitch,
- N. Balls and Bats
 - i. All balls must be optic yellow
 - ii. Each team will hit their own ball, you must bring one new ball and one used ball per game,
 - iii. Balls: Maximum COR-52; Maximum 300 Compression. 12" for Men's play and 11" for all women's play (47-375).
 - iv. Titanium bats are not legal. Please check the non-approved bat list for reference.
 - v. Umpires reserve the right to not allow any type of bat to be used that they deem to be illegal and/or altered - for any game played at the City of Deer Park.

5. Field Conditions

- a. In the event of questionable playing conditions, the Parks and Recreation Maintenance Supervisor and umpires will be the sole judge of whether a game can be played or not.
- b. We will notify you via email, text or phone call if games are cancelled before 3:30pm.
- c. If you have not received a cancellation by 3:30, you may call the Deer Park Parks and Recreation Gym at 281-478-2056. The League Coordinator and officials do have the authority to make a decision at the field.

6. League Winners:

- A, Best Win/Loss Percentage if no tournament is played.

- b. In the case of identical records, the team having the best win/loss percentage involving tied teams will be the winner.
- c. If teams are still tied, Head to Head differentials will the follow.
If still tied, the tiebreaker goes to total runs for, and then total runs against.

Awards

- a. The winner of the season, in its entirety, will be determined by the team that wins the post-season tournament **ONLY**. The tournament champion will receive (1) a trophy, (2) a guaranteed spot towards next season, and (3) a discount towards the NEXT SEASON ONLY.
 - NOTE: The tournament champion will automatically be enrolled for the next season to ensure their spot is secured, unless otherwise instructed. That team will be required to pay the registration cost of if they elected the discount one (1) week prior to the start of the NEXT SEASON.
7. Miscellaneous
- a. The score of a forfeited game is 7-0,
 - b. Double forfeit: Both teams receive a loss.
 - c. Alcohol is strictly prohibited! Any member of a team consuming alcohol will result in suspension by the league. If it is caught in sight, you will be asked to dispose of it for the first infraction, For the second infraction, you and your team will receive a forfeit.
 - d. Age limits: For league play, minimum age is 16.
 - e. Metal spikes, football cleats and track spikes are **NOT** allowed, Only molded rubber cleats are allowed. Players may not play barefoot.
 - f. Base Stealing (See page 7).
 - g. If your team forfeits more than twice consecutively, your team will be eliminated from the league. We do not charge a forfeit fee or a forfeit deposit. However, if you forfeit more than twice in a row, it will be assumed that your team is not returning, Subsequently, the schedule will be adjusted.
 - h. The orange safety bag at first base is used for players' safety. Once a runner is on first base, that base will become one single bag for that runner to use as well as the defensive team to use. When running to first, players must use the orange part of the bag unless a hit occurs where the runner is intending on rounding first or going to second. Defensive team must use white side of the bag unless the runner is rounding the bag or returning to first.

8. Home Run Limits:

- a. For Deer Park leagues:
 - i, Co-Recreation League is 4 home runs per game per team only. (USA Softball, rule 5, sec 8)
 - A) Men's League is 6 home runs per game per team only. (ref. above)
 - B) Hit and Sit Rule:
 - a. When a player hits a home run, they do not have to run the bases. They may go directly to the dugout. Runners on base may also go directly to the dugout.

10. Protests

- a. Protests must be submitted in writing and accompanied by a \$100 cash deposit to the City of Deer Park Parks and Recreation office or the League Coordinator within 24 hours of the scheduled game time in question. The

deposit is refunded only if the protest is upheld. Committee is the Athletics division.

- b. Umpires, scorekeepers and opposing manager will be notified that the game is under protest, and failure to do so will invalidate the protest. (Protest rule 9, USA Softball)

11. Number of Players Required to Start a Game

a. **Minimum number of players** to play an official game is **NINE**. You may play a game with eight, but it will be an official forfeit. (Rule 3a). You must start and finish the game with the same number of players (Ex. Start with 9, end with 9, etc.). If a player has to leave the game due to injury or an emergency, the team may play with an absence. Ejected players must have a legal substitute otherwise, the game will constitute a forfeit.

b. Eight players may be used to play the scheduled game but this will count as a forfeit in the standings, (If less than eight players are present, the game will not be played. Please refer to Rule 3, 4B and 4).

c. Men's league: 9 minimum, 10 normal, 11 Extra player

d. Co-Recreation league: 9 minimum with one spot as an out, 10 normal, 11 Extra player with one spot in batting order as on out unless extra is a female, 12 as extra hitters.

e. Scorekeepers will assume your number of players is "normal" unless you declare otherwise before the game begins.

9. League Options

- a. When playing with 9 players in Men's, there is no automatic out. However, a 10th player may not be added during the game.
- b. When starting a game with 9 players (10th added upon arrival), the 10th player has an out until he arrives.
- c. When starting the game with 9 players (10th and 11th added upon arrival) the team will have two automatic outs until the players arrive.
- d. When starting a game with 10 players (11th added upon arrival), there is an automatic out until the player arrives.
- e. Starting a game with 11 players (see governing rules for "Extra Player", #17)
- f. If a team is going to start play short-handed and is expecting players to show up, those missing names should be listed on the starting line-up.

10. Co-Recreation Player Options

- a. When playing with 9 players (10th player to be used), 10th spot is an automatic out to prevent two men from batting back to back.
 - i. 5 men, 4 women=10th spot is an automatic out.
 - ii. 4 men, 5 women=there is no automatic out.
 - iii. 3 men, 6 or more women-there is no automatic out.
- b. When starting a game with 9 players (10th added upon arrival), there is an automatic out until the player arrives.
- c. When starting a game with 10 [only 11th added upon arrival), 11th and 12th will be an automatic out until 11th player arrives. Then the 12th spot is an automatic out unless two men are not back-to-back.
- d. When starting a game with 10 [11^h and 12th added upon arrival), both are outs until players arrive.

- e. When starting with 11 (not adding 12th player), 12th spot is an out unless the 11th player is a woman.
- f. When starting with 11 (12th added upon arrival), 12th spot is an out unless 11th player is a woman.

11. Co-Recreation Rules

- a. Batting order: Must alternate man, woman, man at all times except when playing with more women than men. Any time men bat back to back, there is always an automatic out recorded in the women's spot.
- b. Defensive Alignment:
 - I. Pitcher and catcher must be of the opposite gender for Recreation only.
 - II. Infielders must be equally divided according to gender.
 - III. Outfielders must have three players behind the restraining line until ball is hit. The restraining line is a 160 foot arc from home plate.
 - IV. Other outfielder may play anywhere including the infield
 - V. If violation of Restraining Line Rule occurs, the batting team has the option of taking the results of the play or taking the penalty. Penalty: The batter is awarded 1st base and all runners advance one base.
 - VI. Base on Balls: If a male batter is walked, whether intentionally or unintentionally, he goes to 2nd base. The manager of the batting team has the option only after 2 outs of having the next batter, if it is a woman, awarded 1st base or having her bat. Less than 2 outs, she bats. If there are 2 outs, the woman has the choice to bat or walk. If the team is short one woman and the next batter is male, there is no option. The male batter bats as if no walk has occurred. (Rule 8, Sec 1)

A Co-Recreation team may play with as few as 3 men. This is a local rule only. A team may not play with fewer than 3 men.

Women may hit any 11" ball. It is the responsibility of the hitting team to get the 11" ball into and out of the game. If a mistake is made using the wrong ball, the play stands as is.

Sportsmanship: Unsportsmanlike conduct and unnecessary roughness will not be tolerated and the offender is subject to immediate ejection from the game, Umpires are instructed to look upon any form of unnecessary roughness as grounds for ejection.

12. Extra Player

- a. Any team may use an Extra Player, provided it is made known to the scorekeeper and umpire prior to the start of the game.
- b. The Extra Player may bat in any spot in the batting order.
- c. The Extra Player must remain in the same spot in the batting order.
- d. The Extra Player may play defense. Any 10 of the 11 players listed may play defense.
- e. The key to using the Extra Player is the batting order. As long as there are no changes in the batting order, any player may play defense. If a player comes out of the batting order, they are out of the game.
- f. The scorekeeper is responsible for reporting any illegal use of the Extra Player after the first pitch has been made to a batter or when an appeal has been made. It is not the responsibility of the scorekeeper to prevent a team from forfeiting by reporting before a pitch or an appeal.
- G. The penalty for misuse of the Extra Player is forfeiture of that complete inning, including any runs that may have been scored if a violation is

detected by the team at fault before being detected by someone else, the situation may be corrected with no penalty. Simply have the correct person bat as usual,

13. Base Stealing:

- a. Base runners can advance once the pitched ball reaches the front edge of the plate.

- i, Exception(s): When the ball does not reach the front of the plate and/or hits the plate. In either scenario, it will be ruled a dead ball and all-runners return to the last base occupied.

- ii, Runners leaving their base before the ball reaches home plate, umpire shall declare "dead ball" and runner(s) will be declared "out." No pitch will be declared on the batter.

14. Umpires for the City of Deer Park will be sanctioned ASA umpires.

15. Refund Policy: The City of Deer Park has a no-refund policy. Once a team is registered and the season has effectively begun, the City will not issue a refund to any team for any reason.

- a. The City will make its strongest effort to make up all cancelled games. Please see the following (Rule 21. "Rainout (Makeup) Days").

16. Rainout (Makeup) Days:

- a. In the event of a cancellation, whether due to rain or other circumstances, games will be pushed back to the end of the season for make-up purposes.
- b. No more than three (3) rainout days issued for an entire season.
- c. If a makeup day(s) is cancelled whether by rain or other circumstances, those makeup games will be moved to the end of the schedule and add an extra week of games.

- I. For example: If week 3 is rained out, we will move week three in place of where it will follow the last week of regular season. Therefore, we just push the week of rainouts to the end of season for make-up.