

# Henry County Parks and Recreation Youth Softball Rules

\* The HCPRD Youth Softball league will be governed by USSSA whereby HCPRD local rules supersedes \*

AGE DIVISION	PITCH DIST	BASE DIST
6U-Ages 4-6y	35 feet	45 feet
8U- Ages 7-8y	35 feet	60 feet
10U Rec & Select- Ages 9-10y	35 feet	60 feet
12U Rec & Select-Ages 11-12y	40 feet	60 feet
MS/HS-Ages 13-17y	43 feet	60 feet
AGE DIVISION	TIME LIMIT	MAX INNINGS
6U-Ages 4-6y	60 min	7 innings (or time limit or run rule)
8U- Ages 7-8y	60 min	7 innings (or time limit or run rule)
10U Rec & Select- Ages 9-10y	70 mins	7 innings (or time limit or run rule)
12U Rec & Select-Ages 11-12y	70 mins	7 innings (or time limit or run rule)
MS/HS-Ages 13-17y	80 mins	7 innings (or time limit or run rule)

**(The Softball Control Date will be 1/1/2025)**

## Equipment:

- FASTPITCH (12") OPTIC YELLOW COVER ONLY BLUE OR RED STITCH
- FASTPITCH (11") OPTIC YELLOW COVER ONLY BLUE OR RED STITCH
- All 10-year-old and younger divisions shall use the 11-inch softball. All other divisions shall use the 12-inch softball. ○ **NO Metal Cleats Allowed** ○
- Defensive facemasks are mandatory for all infielders** ○ **All batting helmets must have a protective facemask**

**\*\* In the event of any equipment rule violation, the player will be removed from play, resulting in an automatic out or substitution. If no substitute is available for defense, a player from the outfield will be reassigned to the infield, leaving three players in the outfield\*\***

**Rule 1.0 Team Eligibility:** ○ 1.2 No team shall be allowed to compete in any HCPRD Softball program without first paying their team registration fee to the Association or HCPRD.  
○ 1.3 All teams shall complete an official roster form and maintain an Official Online Roster.

- 1.4 All team rosters must be submitted by the due date specified on the softball season calendar. Calendars will be distributed at the Youth Softball Association meeting before each season).
- 1.5 All coaches, team moms, and managers MUST have a background check on file with HCPRD and possess a Coaches badge before the first scheduled game to gain dugout access.
- 1.6 Team rosters for age divisions 6U – 12U shall be composed of not more than thirteen (13) players.
- 1.7 Team rosters for scholastic divisions MS/HS shall be composed of not more than twenty (20) players.
- 1.8 The intentional or unintentional act of adding ineligible players to the team's Official Roster shall be grounds for team manager suspension and disqualification of the team.
- 1.9 All Players must participate with the team they have been assigned and may not participate with more than one team during the same season within the respective age group and division. Players are also not allowed to play for an additional team at another affiliated association and or organization.
- 1.10 (Playing Up) Players may play in an age group above their league age, with written consent of the parents, and approval of the Association Director and Coach.
  - Players must remain in the age group for the entire season and will not be allowed to drop down.
- 1.11 (Playing Down) Players are not allowed to play below their age group for any reason.

### **Rule 1.1 Team Tryouts: Team Selections**

1. **TRYOUTS:** Will be conducted by each Association following registration. All players are required to tryout prior to placement on a recreation or select team (that still need players to meet the 9-player roster minimum).
- **TRYOUT FORMAT:** The following format shall be used for all 6u- MS/HS Age Groups (Rec & Select)
    2. Park Directors will appoint a committee consisting of the head coaches in each perspective age group.
    3. All players who are not already frozen to a rec or select team must attend tryouts. Players who do not attend tryouts will be entered into a blind draw.
    4. Each player will be evaluated by the committee and ratings shall be assigned to each player by each committee member and recorded. (Ratings are subject to review and if it is found that a coach tried to manipulate the ratings of any player that coach will be subject to disciplinary action.
    5. All players attending try-outs will be evaluated by both rec and select coaches (select coaches that still need players to meet the 9-player roster minimum).
      - Every player will then be evaluated and given a composite grade 14 and all players will then be ranked.

- Frozen players/Coaches Kids are required to try out and be evaluated. (REC ONLY)
- 6. Select coaches will participate in the draft and can only make selections in rounds where they have an open spot on their roster. For instance, if a select team already has 7 players, they will be eligible to draft in the 7th round or whenever all other coaches also have 7 players."
- 7. Players not attending the try-outs that were frozen by a rec team will be slotted in the highest possible round available. Players not attending the tryout and were not frozen to a rec team will become blind draws.

**Rule 1.1 A Player Selections:**

1. League Players will be drafted by the Head Coach of each prospective team.
2. Each recreational team is allowed to freeze up to 3 players, while select teams can freeze 4 players or more, including the head coach's and assistant coaches' children.

**Rule 1.1 B County Draft:**

- The county draft requires all softball association coaches within HCPRD to attend a draft where players are selected in rotating order by age group. This process ensures consistent and fair team formation across all participating associations.
  - County draft locations will be held at any HCPRD park.
  - Each association is responsible for coordinating and hosting their own draft based on participation levels.
  - The draft will be held by age group, and an HCPRD staff member will be in attendance.
  - Associations must provide copies of their draft sheet with all players listed including the freezes. All players must be placed in a ranking of 1 – 5.
1. All Players including 3 freezes/coach's kids must be evaluated (REC ONLY).
  2. The draft shall be a rotating draft with the head coaches selecting players. Each coach will be assigned a draft order and will select players accordingly.
  3. Frozen players will be assigned to a round in the draft order. According to their rank. (Example players rank 5 would be a 2<sup>nd</sup> round pick in a 3-team draft)
  4. Coaches will continue the rotating draft until the total pool of players have been selected.
  5. Players who do not attend will be placed on teams by a blind draw after the completion of the draft.
  6. After the draft concludes, official roster forms must be completed and submitted to the athletic coordinator.
  7. No players may be added to a team after the draft unless approved by the park director and/or HCPRD athletic coordinator.

**Rule 1.1 C Team Entry:** ○ Each Association will attend a meeting in February or August to enter teams into leagues and establish divisions. The director will enter the number

of teams and team names. The HCPRD Athletic Staff shall then divide teams into divisions once the total number of teams has been established.

#### **Rule 1.1.D Forfeits:**

- Any team that forfeits more than 25% of their scheduled games for invalid reasons will have to meet with HCPRD Athletic Coordinator prior to the next scheduled game. Failure to meet results in the team being removed from the HCPRD county schedule.
- Valid reasons to forfeit are school related events and or health related issues.

#### **Rule 1.2 A Uniforms**

1. All teams must be in uniform and wear the same jersey.
2. Players are not allowed to switch uniform numbers unless HCPRD has been notified and the official roster has been updated. Violation of this rule will result in a 2-game suspension for the Head Coach.
3. Players cannot wear any jewelry of any sort.
4. All coaches must be in uniform and easily identifiable; coaches' shirts are encouraged but not required.

#### **Rule 2.0 6U AGE GROUP RULES (COACH PITCH):**

##### **• Field Setup:**

- 2.1 There shall be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.

##### **• The Game:**

- 2.2 Each team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game. If a team does not have at least eight players the umpire will declare a 10-minute grace period (for the first scheduled game ONLY). A team cannot pick up a player from another team. If the team is still under the required number of players at the end of the grace period, the umpire will declare the game a forfeit in favor of the team with the required number of players. If both teams do not have the required numbers of players to play, the game will be declared a double forfeit.
  - All players must play in every other defensive inning. No player may sit out two consecutive innings. (No player should sit multiple innings in a game unless due to illness or injury).
- 2.3 All players present will play in the field defensively, only (6) in the infield including catcher.
- 2.4 Players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the official line-up without penalty. A late player may be inserted as a defender on the field only after requesting and receiving time from the umpire.
- 2.5 A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning for each team.

- 2.6 Run Rule: 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 6 runs after 5 innings.
  - If the home team is ahead by 6 runs or more and there is five (5) min or less left on the clock, no new inning will start.
- 2.7 ALL players will bat; coaches must use a continuous lineup.

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2.8 ALL batters MUST wear a helmet with a face mask or Jaw Guard

- 2.9 Defensive players must remain behind the pitching rubber line extended until the batter has hit the ball.
- 2.10 One player shall be in the pitcher's position on the mound with two (2) feet inside the pitcher's circle at the start of the play.
- 2.11 The pitcher helper must wear a helmet with a face mask or game face protective gear.
- 2.12 The outfield must have two (2) feet in the grass before the pitch.
- 2.13 One player shall be in the pitcher's position and cannot leave its position until the ball is hit.
- 2.14a Only ONE defensive coach may be outside the dugout but not on the field of play.
- 2.14b Defensive coaches must not interfere with base coaches. If a defensive coach enters the infield, all base runners will be awarded an extra base.
- 2.15 No Bunting
- 2.16 No Infield Fly Rule
- 2.17 No dropped third strike Rule
- 2.18 No Stealing bases

- **Pitching/Hitting Rules:**

- 2.19 The coach will pitch 3 pitches to a batter and if the ball is not put into play the batter will have two opportunities from the batting tee to put the ball into play. If the ball is not put into play after two swings from a batter tee, the batter is out. The batter must hit a fair ball off the tee that extends beyond the 10-foot arc in front of home plate to be considered a live ball.
- 2.20 A batter that is four (4) years old is allowed to bypass the three pitches from the coach and go directly to the tee. These players must be identified before the game and noted in the official scorekeeper book.
- 2.21 The coach must have a foot in contact with the pitching rubber upon release of the ball.
  - If the coach does not have a foot in contact with the rubber when the ball is released, an illegal pitch will be called by the umpire and the offensive coach's allowable count will be reduced by one.
- 2.22 If a coach/pitcher is hit by a batted ball, the ball is dead, and the batter will return to the batter's box/plate with the same count. Considered a no pitch.
- 2.23 The coach/pitcher must move across the opposite foul line into dead ball territory as soon as the ball is hit. The coach/pitcher must remain there until the umpire calls time.
  - In addition to base coaches, only a coach in the pitcher's circle is allowed on the field of play. The coach pitcher must deliver the pitch with one foot in contact with the pitching plate. The pitching coach may only coach the

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batter prior to the pitch. He/she may not coach the batter-runner at ANY time. PENALTY: The batter is charged with a PITCH.

- It is the responsibility of the assistant coach to move the tee and bat out of play when a runner is coming home.

2.24 The runner is out when the base coach at first or third base touches or holds the runner, physically assisting that runner in returning to or leaving the base.

- 2.25 The umpire shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as the pitcher has the ball for infield plays. For outfield plays, when the ball reaches the infield and is in the pitcher's glove or any defender's glove the umpire will call "time".
- 2.26 On a batted ball, if the initial throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base is overthrown, runners are not allowed to advance to base.

- **Tie Breaker:**

- 2.27 After time has expired or the completion of 7 innings, if the score is tied the game will end in a tie.

## **Rule 3.0 8U AGE GROUP RULES**

### **(COACH PITCH)- 1<sup>st</sup> Half of the Season**

### **(PLAYER & COACH PITCH)- 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the Season (STARTS SPRING 2026)**

- **Field Setup:**

- 3.1 There shall be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.

- **The Game:**

- 3.2 Each team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game, if the team does not have at least eight players the umpire will declare a 10-minute grace period (for the first scheduled game ONLY). A team cannot pick up a player from another team. If the team is still under the required number of players at the end of the grace period, the umpire will declare the game a forfeit in favor of the team with the required number of players. If both teams do not have the required numbers of players to play, the game will be declared a double forfeit.

- All players must play in every other defensive inning. No player may sit out two consecutive innings. (No player should sit multiple innings in a game unless due to illness or injury).

- 3.3 Players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the official line-up without penalty. A late player may be inserted as a defender on the field only after requesting and receiving time from the umpire.
    - 3.4 Defensive substitutions are unlimited.
    - 3.5 A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning for each team.

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- 3.6 Run Rule: 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 6 runs after 5 innings.
  - If the home team is ahead by 6 runs or more and there is five (5) min or less left on the clock, no new inning will start.
- 3.7 ALL players will bat; coaches shall use a continuous lineup.
- 3.8 ALL batters MUST wear a helmet with a face mask or Jaw Guard ○ 3.9 Defensive players must remain behind the pitching rubber line extended until the batter has hit the ball.
- 3.10 One player shall be in the pitcher's position on the mound with two (2) feet inside the pitcher's circle at the start of the play.
- 3.11 The pitcher must wear a helmet with a face mask or game face protective.
- 3.12 The defense will consist of ten (10) players: six (6) infielders (1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base, catcher, and pitcher or pitcher's helper) and four (4) outfielders.
- 3.13 Defensive players must remain behind the pitching rubber line extended until the batter has hit the ball.
- 3.14 The outfield must have two (2) feet in the grass before the pitch. ○ 3.15a Only ONE defensive coach may be outside the dugout but not on the field of play
- 3.15b Defensive coaches must not interfere with base coaches. If a defensive coach enters the infield, all base runners will be awarded an extra base.
- 3.16 No Bunting ○ 3.17 No Infield Fly Rule ○ 3.18 No dropped third strike Rule. ○ 3.19 No Stealing bases -At the conclusion of any play involving a NONBATTED ball, the ball is dead, all advances shall be nullified, and the runners shall be returned to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. However, all outs shall stand.
- **Pitching/Hitting Rules Coach Pitch:**
- ○ 3.20 The designated coach pitcher may be any offensive coach, and this coach cannot change throughout the game.
  - Designated coach pitchers should be identified at the start of the game.
- 3.21 The coach will pitch 5 pitches or 3 swinging strikes to a batter and if the ball is not put into play the batter will be out. The batter must hit a fair ball that extends beyond the 10-foot arc in front of home plate to be considered a live ball. If the fifth pitch is hit (not bunted) foul the batter will remain at bat if they continue to foul off pitches.

**Player & Coach Pitch (STARTING SPRING 2026):**

- 3.22 The hitter will receive pitches from the player-pitcher until 4 balls have been called by the umpire, the batter has struck out, or the batter puts the ball into play, whichever comes first. If 4 balls are called by the umpire, the coach will then step



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in and pitch the remaining strikes that batter has left (i.e., the batter has no strikes, then the coach will pitch 3 pitches, if the batter has 2 strikes, then the coach will pitch 1 pitch). The batter CANNOT RECEIVE A BASE ON BALLS BUT CAN STRIKE OUT. The umpire will not be behind the plate for the coach pitches. There must be an umpire behind the plate during the player-pitcher pitches to make a call on the pitches.

- 3.23 The designated coach pitcher may be any offensive coach, and this coach cannot change throughout the game.
  - In addition to base coaches, only a designated coach pitcher is allowed in the pitcher's circle or on the field of play. The coach pitcher must deliver the pitch with one foot in contact with the pitching plate. The pitching coach may only coach the batter prior to the pitch. He/she may not coach

the batter-runner at ANY time. PENALTY: The batter is charged with STRIKE.

- 3.24 The coach must have a foot in contact with the pitching rubber upon release of the ball. If the coach does not have a foot in contact with the rubber when the ball is released, an illegal pitch will be called by the umpire and the offensive coach's allowable count will be reduced by one.
  - ○ 3.25 The coach/pitcher must move across the opposite foul line into dead ball territory as soon as the ball is hit. The coach/pitcher must remain there until the umpire calls time.
  - 3.26 If a coach pitcher is hit by a batted ball:
    - If in the umpire's judgment, a coach interferes unintentionally with the batted ball and/or defensive play, the ball will be declared dead, and the pitch replayed.
    - If in the umpire's judgment, a coach interferes intentionally, the lead runner is out, and the play is replayed. If there are no runners, the batter is out.
  - 3.27 If a coach-pitcher hits a batter, the pitch will not count, and the batter will remain at bat.
  - 3.28 If at any time a batter is hit by a player-pitcher, she may take first base.
  - 3.29 NO pitcher may pitch more than 4 innings per game.
  - ○ 3.30 The runner is out when the base coach at first or third base touches or holds the runner, physically assisting that runner in returning to or leaving the base.
  - 3.31 Any batter who slings a bat will be warned once. Next time she slings the bat she will be called out and base runners cannot advance.
  - 3.32 A runner may not leave a base until the ball is hit, penalty for leaving early the runner is OUT.
  - 3.33 A Courtesy Runner is permitted for the catcher only.
  - ○ 3.34 A player may advance at their own risk on an overthrow to a base when the ball is put into play by the batter. (There is no limit to bases on an overthrow on a batted ball).
  - 3.35 If a base runner is halfway or more past the base when the thrown ball reaches the infield, the runner is allowed to continue to the next base.
  - 3.36 The umpire shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. Once the pitcher has the ball back in the pitcher's circle or any defender has the ball ahead of the lead runner "Time" shall be called. The umpire shall also call time once all base runners stop attempting to advance.
- **Tiebreaker:**
    - 3.37 If the game is tied after regulation innings and has not yet reached the time limit, a tiebreaker will be played in which both teams will start their turn at bat with runners on 2nd and 3rd and no outs. The last two girls to bat in the previous inning will be on the 2nd and 3rd. If the game is still tied after this inning, the game will be declared a tie.

- On school nights, TIE games can be played up to 30 minutes past the time limit.

## **Rule 4.0 10U AGE GROUP RULES (PLAYER PITCH)-Rec & Select**

- **The Game:**

- 4.1 Each team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game, if the team does not have at least eight players the umpire will declare a 10-minute grace period (for the first scheduled game ONLY). A team cannot pick up a player from another team. If the team is still under the required number of players at the end of the grace period, the umpire will declare the game a forfeit in favor of the team with the required number of players. If both teams do not have the required numbers of players to play, the game will be declared a double forfeit.
  - All players must play in every other defensive inning. No player may sit out two consecutive innings. (No player should sit multiple innings in a game unless due to illness or injury).
- 4.2 Players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the official line-up without penalty. A late player may be inserted as a defender on the field only after requesting and receiving time from the umpire.
- 4.3 Defensive substitutions are unlimited.
- 4.4 A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning for each team.
- 4.5 Run Rule: 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 6 runs after 5 innings.
  - If the home team is ahead by 6 runs or more and there is five (5) min or less left on the clock, no new inning will start.
- 4.6 ALL players will bat; coaches shall use a continuous lineup.
- 4.7 ALL batters MUST wear a helmet with a face mask or Jaw Guard
- 4.8 NO pitcher may pitch more than 4 innings per game.
- 4.9 One player shall be in the pitcher's position on the mound with two (2) feet inside the pitcher's circle at the start of the play.
- 4.10 The pitcher must wear a helmet with a face mask or game face protective.
- 4.11 The defense will consist of ten (10) players: six (6) infielders (1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base, catcher, and pitcher's) and four (4) outfielders.
- 4.12 Defensive players must remain behind the pitching rubber line extended until the batter has hit the ball.
- 4.13 The outfield must have two (2) feet in the grass before the pitch.
- 4.14a Only ONE defensive coach may be outside the dugout but not on the field of play
- 4.15b Defensive coaches must not interfere with base coaches. If a defensive coach enters the infield, all base runners will be awarded an extra base.
- 4.16 Defensive substitutions are unlimited.

- **Pitching/Hitting Rules**

- 4.17 Prior to the pitch, the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and their non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24" length of the pitcher's plate. Hands must be apart.
- 4.18 The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without possession of the ball, and the pitcher may not simulate pitching with or without the ball when near the pitcher's plate.
- 4.19 There will be an extended strike zone in place for 10U.
  - The extended strike zone in our softball rules extends vertically from the batter's knees to chest height. Horizontally, it spans from one edge of the batter's box ("river") to the opposite edge of the batter's box ("river"), covering the area along the edge of the plate and connecting to the white chalk lines of the batter's boxes.
- 4.20 The pitcher must take a position with the ball in the glove or pitching hand, with hands separated.
- 4.21 Pitchers may NOT pitch with anything on the pitching wrist or hand.
- 4.22 Stealing - Base-runner may steal when the ball leaves the pitchers' hand. Leaving early will be an OUT.
- 4.23 If a base runner is halfway or more past the base when the thrown ball reaches the infield, the runner is allowed to continue to the next base.
- 4.24 Any batter who slings a bat will be warned once. Next time she slings the bat she will be called out.
- 4.25 No Infield Fly Rule.
- 4.26 No dropped third strike rule.
- 4.27 Bunting IS allowed.
- 4.28 Look-Back Rule is in Effect – When a runner is legally off of their base after a pitch, or because of a batter completing her turn at bat, she must attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to the base left while the pitcher has the ball within the 8' radius of the pitcher's plate.
- 4.29 COURTESY RUNNER- The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher any time after they reach base other than by substitution.

The same runner may not be used for both positions in the same inning.
- 4.30 The umpire shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as base-runners are not attempting to advance.

**Tiebreaker Rule:**

- 4.31 If the game is tied after regulation innings and has not yet reached the time limit, a tiebreaker will be played in which both teams will start their turn at bat with runners on 2nd and 3rd and no outs. The last two girls to bat in the previous inning will be on the 2nd and 3rd. If the game is still tied after this inning, the game will be declared a tie.
- On school nights, TIE games can be played up to 30 minutes past the time limit.

## **Rule 5.0 12U AGE GROUP RULES -Rec & Select:**

- **The Game:**

- 5.1 Each team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game, if the team does not have at least eight players the umpire will declare a 10minute grace period (for the first scheduled game ONLY) A team cannot pick up a player from another team. If the team is still under the required number of players at the end of the grace period, the umpire will declare the game a forfeit in favor of the team with the required number of players. If both teams do not have the required numbers of players to play, the game will be declared a double forfeit.
  - All players must play in every other defensive inning. No player may sit out two consecutive innings. (No player should sit multiple innings in a game unless due to illness or injury).
- 5.2 Defensive substitutions are unlimited.
- 5.3 Players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the official line-up without penalty. A late player may be inserted as a defender on the field only after requesting and receiving time from the umpire.
- 5.4 A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning for each team.
- 5.5 Run Rule: 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 6 runs after 5 innings
  - If the home team is ahead by 6 runs or more and there is five (5) min or less left on the clock, no new inning will start.
- 5.6 ALL players will bat; coaches shall use a continuous lineup.
- 5.7 ALL batters MUST wear a helmet with a face mask or Jaw Guard.
- 5.8 NO pitcher may pitch more than 4 innings per game.
- 5.9 The pitcher must wear a helmet with a face mask or game face protective.
- 5.10 The defense will consist of ten (10) players: six (6) infielders (1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base, catcher, and pitcher) and four (4) outfielders. with two (2) feet in the grass.
- 5.11 All defensive coaches must be inside the dugout.

- **Pitching/Hitting Rules:**

- 5.12 Prior to the pitch, the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and their non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24" length of the pitcher's plate. Hands must be apart.
- 5.13 The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without possession of the ball, and the pitcher may not simulate pitching with or without the ball when near the pitcher's plate.
- 5.14 The pitcher must take a position with the ball in the glove or pitching hand, with hands separated.
- 5.15 Pitchers may NOT pitch with anything on the pitching wrist or hand.
- 5.16 The "Infield Fly" Rule is in effect.
- 5.17 The "look-Back rule is in effect - When a runner is legally off their base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat, she must attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to the base left while the pitcher has

the ball within the 8' radius of the pitcher's plate. ○ 5.18 Stealing - Base runner may steal when the ball leaves the pitchers' hand. Leaving early will be an OUT.

- 5.19 Drop 3rd strike is in effect.
- 5.20 Bunting IS allowed.
- 5.21 COURTESY RUNNER- The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher any time after they reach base other than by substitution.

The same runner may not be used for both positions in the same inning.

- **Tiebreaker Rule:**

- 5.22 If the game is tied after regulation innings and has not yet reached the time limit, a tiebreaker will be played in which both teams will start their turn at bat with runners on 2nd and 3rd and no outs. The last two girls to bat in the previous inning will be on the 2nd and 3rd. If the game is still tied after this inning, the game will be declared a tie.

- On school nights, TIE games can be played up to 30 minutes past the time limit.

## **Rule 6.0 MS/HS AGE GROUP RULES:**

- **The Game:**

- 6.1 Each team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game, if the team does not have at least eight players the umpire will declare a 10minute grace period (for the first scheduled game ONLY) A team cannot pick up a player from another team. If the team is still under the required number of players at the end of the grace period, the umpire will declare the game a forfeit in favor of the team with the required number of players. If both teams do not have the required numbers of players to play, the game will be declared a double forfeit.

- All players must play in every other defensive inning. No player may sit out two consecutive innings. (No player should sit multiple innings in a game unless due to illness or injury).

- 6.2 Players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the official line-up without penalty. A late player may be inserted as a defender on the field only after requesting and receiving time from the umpire.
  - 6.3 A maximum of five (5) runs can be scored each inning for each team.
  - 6.4 Run Rule: 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 6 runs after 5 innings
    - If the home team is ahead by 6 runs or more and there is five (5) min or less left on the clock, no new inning will start.
  - 6.5 ALL players will bat; coaches shall use a continuous lineup.
  - 6.6 ALL batters MUST wear a helmet with a face mask or Jaw Guard
  - 6.7 No pitcher may pitch more than 4 innings per game.
  - 6.8 The pitcher must wear a helmet with a face mask or game face protective.

- 6.9 The defense will consist of ten (10) players: six (6) infielders (1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base, catcher, and pitcher) and four (4) outfielders. with two (2) feet in the grass.
- 6.10 All defensive coaches must be inside the dugout.
- 6.11 Defensive substitutions are unlimited.
- **Pitching:**
  - 6.12 Prior to the pitch, the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and their non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24" length of the pitcher's plate. Hands must be apart.
  - 6.13 The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without possession of the ball, and the pitcher may not simulate pitching with or without the ball when near the pitcher's plate.
  - 6.14 The pitcher must take a position with the ball in the glove or pitching hand, with hands separated.
  - 6.15 Pitchers may NOT pitch with anything on the pitching wrist or hand.
  - 6.16 The "Infield Fly" Rule is in effect. ○ 6.17 The "look-Back rule is in effect - When a runner is legally off their base after a pitch, or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat, she must attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to the base left while the pitcher has the ball within the 8' radius of the pitcher's plate.
  - 6.18 Stealing - Base-runner may steal when the ball leaves the pitchers' hand. Leaving early will be an OUT.
  - 6.19 Drop 3rd strike is in effect.
  - 6.20 Bunting IS allowed.
  - 6.21 COURTESY RUNNER- The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or catcher any time after they reach base other than by substitution. The same runner may not be used for both positions in the same inning.
- Tiebreaker Rule:
  - 6.22 If the game is tied after regulation innings and has not yet reached the time limit, a tiebreaker will be played in which both teams will start their turn at bat with runners on 2nd and 3rd and no outs. The last two girls to bat in the previous inning will be on the 2nd and 3rd. If the game is still tied after this inning, the game will be declared a tie.
    - On school nights, TIE games can be played up to 30 minutes past the time limit.

## **Rule 8.0 SPORTSMANSHIP & EJECTIONS**

- 8.1 The umpire shall have the authority to eject from a game any player, coach, or spectator whose actions, whether physical or verbal, are in the umpire's judgment jeopardizing the continuation of the game or being abusive toward any individual.
  - This includes chanting or taunting directed at a participant of the opposing team by name or position, yelling "swing" or "balk", etc. to

distract a participant from the opposing team, or taking any action, verbal or nonverbal, to distract or intimidate a member of the opposing team.

- 8.2 Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. The head coach for each team is responsible for the actions of every member of his/her team, including assistant coaches and parents of his/her players.
- 8.3 Any coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove themselves from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game.
- 8.4 Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove them self from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of the game.
- 8.5 Any player, coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and will be suspended for 1 game or up to 1 calendar year based on the investigation findings that will be determined by HCPRD staff game.
- 8.6 If any team leaves the playing field during a game without being instructed by the umpire, association director or HCPRD staff the Head Coach will be suspended for 1 calendar year.
- 8.7 If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the HCPRD Youth Softball League
- 8.8 All ejections must be reported to the Athletic Coordinator by the umpire responsible for the ejection within 24hours. This report must include the completion of an ejection form detailing the circumstances surrounding the ejection situation.

## **Rule 9.0 UMPIRES**

- 9.1 All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of HCPRD Softball shall utilize Umpires who are registered with the county.
  - All Umpires will be scheduled by HCPRD.
  - Each Association will be responsible for the umpire fees for games held in their Home Park.
  - Invoices will be issued by HCPRD every Monday and must be paid by the Friday of that week.
- 9.2 Any Umpire's decision, which involves judgment, such as whether a hit is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or ball, or whether a runner is safe, or out, is FINAL. If there is a reasonable doubt about some decision conflicting with the rules, the coach or captain may call time and ask for an explanation or that the correct ruling be made by the umpire. The Umpire making the decision may ask another Umpire for information before making a final decision.
- 9.3 If there is only one Umpire, that Umpire has complete jurisdiction in administering the rules and shall take a position behind the catcher.
- 9.4 All umpires must be properly equipped and committed to enforcing all rules and regulations in this rulebook.



- 9.5 All umpires must conduct themselves in accordance with the league's code of conduct, maintaining professionalism, fairness, and respect for players, coaches, and officials always.

### **Rule 10.0 PROTESTS**

- 10.1 Only protest concerning ineligible or illegal players; rule interpretation or playing requirements will be accepted. A protest must be officially declared during the game by the team coach. Notification must also be made to the plate umpire and the home scorekeeper.
  - **RULE INTERPRETATION:** must be declared prior to the next legal or illegal pitch. Failure to declare shall deny a protest.
  - **ILLEGAL OR INELIGIBLE PLAYER:** must be declared prior to the completion of the game. Failure to declare shall deny a protest.
  - **PLAYING REQUIREMENTS:** must be declared prior to the completion of the game. Failure to declare shall deny a protest.
  - A written protest and \$100.00 fee must be turned into the HCPRD Heritage Park office by 4:00 pm the next business day. If the protest is determined to be legal, the league office shall accept the protest and make a ruling.
  - If the protest is upheld, the \$100.00 fee will be refunded. If the protest is denied the league office will retain the \$100.00 fee.

### **Rule 11.0 LEAGUE STANDINGS**

#### **Determining Standings:**

- 11.1 Best Record (if tied, move to #2)
- 11.2 Head-to-Head
  - Cannot be determined with a 3-way tie (or more), therefore, move to #3
  - Cannot be determined if tied teams have not all played each other, therefore, move to #3
  - Points Allowed
  - Common Opponent
  - If still tied and the standing determines a playoff spot, there will be a tie breaker game played during the week. (Mon prior to the playoffs)

### **Rule 12.0 PLAYOFF RULES**

- 12.1 The Playoffs are a single-elimination tournament.
- 12.2 All teams are eligible for the playoffs and will be seeded according to their regular season standings.
  - Teams must participate in 75% of their regular season scheduled games to be eligible for the playoffs.
- 12.3 The HIGHER SEED will be the home team.
- 12.4 Game Time limits are still in effect from the regular season.

- 12.5 Runs will be unlimited (Championship Game Only). Regular season run rules will still apply from the regular season.
- 12.6 Mercy Rule: The game will end when there is a 10-run lead or greater after the completion of the 4th inning (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead).
- 12.7 There is consecutive batting. (The entire team must bat, just like regular season.)
- 12.8 Free Defensive Substitutions – Except 6u each player must play at least 1 full Inning.
- 12.9 In the event there is a tie the international tie breaker rules will apply.
- **1st Extra Inning:**  
If the game is tied after regulation innings and time-limit, a tiebreaker will be played with both teams receiving an opportunity to play offence. Teams will start their turn at bat with runners on 2nd and 3rd and no outs. The last two girls to bat in the previous inning will be placed on the 2nd and 3rd base.

#### **2nd Extra Inning:**

If the contest remains tied after the 1st extra inning the teams will play a final ½ inning in a “Sudden Victory” format with no outs. Before the start of the inning, the manager of both teams will join the home plate umpire at home plate for a coin toss. The manager of the home team will choose heads or tails, and the umpire will toss the coin. The manager of the team that wins the coin toss will decide whether to play offense or defense. The offensive team will begin with a runner on second base (the batter that made the last out in the 1st extra inning) with no outs. The offensive team will continue hitting with whoever was scheduled to hit next in the lineup. If the offensive team scores, the offensive team wins. If the offensive team doesn’t score, the defensive team is awarded 1 point and wins the contest.

### **Rule 13.0 LINEUPS**

- 13.1 Lineups must be turned into the home team's scorekeeper at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.
  - Each coach shall make a batting order consisting of all members of the team that are present for the game. Players will bat in this order throughout the game.

- 13.2 Free substitutions of all players for all age divisions are allowed without reporting the substitution to the umpire.
- 13.3 All pitching changes must be reported to the scorekeeper.
  - Pitchers may re-enter after being removed.
- 13.4a No player may sit out more than two consecutive innings. (No player should sit multiple innings in a game unless due to illness or injury). ○ 13.4b Coaches should report possible violations of the mandatory playing rule to HCPRD Softball. A penalty may be issued for repeat infraction. ○ 13.4c The mandatory playing rule may only be waived for disciplinary reasons, Illness, or injury.
- 13.5 If a player gets injured/illness and must leave the game, their batting position will be skipped and no out will be recorded.
- 13.6 Once a game has started, any players arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the official line-up without penalty. A late player may be inserted as a defender on the field only after requesting and receiving time from the umpire.

**Rule 14.0 SCOREKEEPER PROCEDURES** ○ 14.1 Each home team must have a scorekeeper. ○ 14.2 Scorekeepers must ensure accurate recording of game scores and statistics on the provided scorebook. ○ 14.3 The home team scorekeeper must complete the scorebook for each game and submit a picture of it to the HCPRD Athletic Coordinator

- 14.4 Submit the completed scorebook to the athletic coordinator promptly after the game or within 24hrs.
- 14.5 Double-check all entries on the scorecard for accuracy before submission.
- 14.6 Maintain professionalism and integrity while performing scorekeeping duties.

**Rule 15.0 Coach Procedures** ○ 15.1 All COACHES must wear a county issue id badge to be in the dugout or field.

- 15.2 Each team can have only one manager/team mom and three coaches in the dugout (1 head coach 2 assistants)
- 15.3 One Manager/Team Mom or Coach must always be in the dugout.
- 15.4 All Coaches/Asst. Coaches and manager/team moms (to be allowed in the dugout) must complete a criminal background check.
- 15.5 All coaches must conduct themselves in accordance with the league's code of conduct, maintaining professionalism, fairness, and respect for players, coaches, and officials always.



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