

2024  
JEFFERSON COUNTY  
CO-ED



SOFTBALL LEAGUE  
RULE BOOK



Games are seven innings, when possible, but after five innings any game is considered complete. The 5:45pm game must begin **PROMPTLY** so the 7:15pm game can start on time. Late-game teams have priority at 7:15. If after 7:05, the 5:45 game teams should **NOT** start a new inning.

1. **Use of alcohol is prohibited during any game, at any field!** If this rule is violated, **the entire team will be suspended from the league.** Smoking is not allowed in the dugout, or on the field. Please smoke elsewhere and dispose of waste properly.
2. Batting orders must **alternate gender**, (even if someone must bat twice in an inning.) Every player must bat. If they are on the roster, and on the bench, they must bat. **NO EXCEPTIONS. Each batter will start with 1 ball and 1 strike against them.**
3. Each 10-member team must have 3 women and 3 men playing infield positions: 2 men and 2 women in the outfield. Each player should be allowed to make his or her own throw/catcher according to position. (Example: male player should not always take the catch away from female player, or vice-versa).
4. If a team has to forfeit a game, as long as both coaches agree, a game can be played for fun.
5. Women hit an 11-inch ball and men hit a 12-inch ball. **Home team must provide these balls. The use of any type of ball other than a restricted flight ball is not permitted.** The balls can be either leather or synthetic.
6. We use an **ASA and/or USSSA** certified "Softball Bat" Please refrain from using any other type of bat.
7. This is an adult softball league. You must be at least 18 years of age.
8. Players may play for one or more teams but they must designate a primary team and play all games of the primary team. (*Players must play "up" in divisions, not down.*) Players may not change their primary team without League approval. Players may play for other leagues. Teams are allowed to add players to their roster during the season without League approval. To be eligible for tournament play, "new" players have to play a minimum of 15 innings.
9. **All players must sign a County Rec Registration Liability Waiver prior to participation in practice or game play. A team that plays with a non-registered participant will forfeit.**
10. No team may score more than 10 runs in an inning, with the exception of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning.
11. All eligible players are to be listed on the lineup at game time. If a player is not at the game when it begins, he/she must be put at the very end of the batting order upon arrival.
12. **Team must forfeit if they have 8 or less players. Can play with 9, but must play one short in the outfield. Same gender that they are short**

13. We will use a STRIKE MAT: Pitchers must have one foot on the pitcher's mound, 50 feet from home plate, when delivering the pitch. If the pitched ball hits any part of the *strike mat* it is considered a strike, and the catcher is responsible for calling out – “STRIKE!” If the ball **doesn't** hit the strike mat, it is not a strike, it is a ball and the catcher must also call out – “BALL!” Each pitched ball must have an arc of 6-12 feet, pitches that are too high or too low are considered an illegal pitch “BALL”. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches will call a “BALL”. **Each batter will start with 1 ball and 1 strike against them.**

14. **A BATTER after his/her 2<sup>nd</sup> strike can hit 2 foul balls, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> they are OUT – Each batter will start with 1 ball and 1 strike against them.**

15. A BATTER WALKS after 4 balls. If a batter is *intentionally* walked then he/she may take two bases.

16. Games may be canceled due to rain: Go to [www.countyrec.com](http://www.countyrec.com) or call 360.385.2221 for the latest in rain out information.

17. **NO METAL CLEATS.**

18. No bunting.

19. No leading off the base, or stealing. The runner's foot must stay in contact with the base until the ball reaches the strike/zone (in the air).

20. **TAGGED OUTS** are those where, after a ball has been batted and base runners are advancing, the ball can be controlled by a defensive player and used to “tag” a runner out before they make it to a base. **FORCED OUTS** are those where after a ball has been batted and runners are advancing, if there is a runner on a base after you – you are forced to run. A defensive player controlling the ball can touch the base you are advancing to and you would be automatically out. (Ex: A runner on first and a batter, or bases loaded.) (Ex: If there is a batter, and a runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> only, the runner on 2<sup>nd</sup> is not “forced” to run, therefore must be tagged out if they advance.) new rule 6/3/2021- **HOME PLATE-** *To avoid contact/injury at home plate, if the ball beats runner to home plate, and is under control by the catcher, no tag necessary. Catcher must be over home plate, all plays at home, forced-out or not, runner is out. Runner can run towards the strike-mat, no sliding. If it's a close call, first/third base coaches will make the call, if they didn't see the play, runner safe. There will be a “commitment line” Once a runner has touched or crossed the “Commitment Line”, he or she has committed to trying to score and may not return to third base (Tournament rule with umpire; plays at home plate. If there is a play at home plate, player must avoid contact with the catcher, by sliding, or slowing up. If there is contact with the catcher, player is out and can be ejected if the umpire sees fit.)*

21. **BASE RUNNING:** The base runner **MUST** avoid the fielder attempting to make a play on the ball. If the base runner is obviously out before they reach the base, he/she must not interfere with the play. If, for instance, a possible double play is interrupted by a base runner that is already considered out, both players will be called out.

22. A **BASE RUNNER** who charges into a fielder/catcher attempting to force a collision that jars the ball loose is **OUT**, and **EJECTED** from the game. **(Slide, don't charge!)**

23. PINCH RUNNERS are only allowed for players slowed by injury or special condition. After batting, the batter must make it safely to 1<sup>st</sup> base. Pinch runner must be the teammate, of the same gender, who was last out.

24. Infield Fly Rule: The infield is generally considered to be the field's dirt portion. When a fly ball is hit in that area, and an infielder makes an ordinary attempt to catch the ball, the batter is an automatic out with runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup>, or with bases loaded, all with less than 2 outs... Rule not in effect if no fielders make an effort to catch the ball.

25. An OVERTHROW occurs when a ball is thrown OUT OF PLAY, not simply when a ball is dropped and rolls a few feet away from a 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman.

26. FOUL BALLS cannot be caught for outs once they cross the OUT OF PLAY line. **Memorial and HJ Carroll fields all have different OUT OF PLAY zones.**

27. HOW MANY BASES DO YOU GET ON AN OVERTHROW? When a defender makes an overthrow OUT OF PLAY, the base runners get the base they are running toward, plus another base. HOWEVER, the call is made from the *point the defender threw the ball*, not when the baseman missed the throw. An overthrow affects ALL base runners active at the time. For example, if a base runner is approaching 2<sup>nd</sup> base when the ball is thrown, and the ball goes OUT OF PLAY, the runner is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases. If the runner has reached 1<sup>st</sup> base, the overthrow would award 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. *\*\*When the ball is "not caught" has nothing to do in deciding how many bases are awarded – it is when the ball is THROWN.\*\**

28. If a baseman DROPS the ball but it does NOT go OUT OF PLAY, a runner can still attempt to advance. But there are no "free" bases and the runner can be thrown (by tag or force out) out if the defender recovers in time.

29. Mercy Rule If a team is leading by 15 or more runs after 4 complete innings, the mercy rule is in effect. If a team is leading by 10 or more runs after 5 complete innings, the mercy rule is in effect.

## FIELDS

**REMEMBER** to Patrol your bench areas for litter and cigarette butts! If you want the infield to be in the best possible condition, bring your own rake!

**HJ CARROLL:** An **OUT OF PLAY** zone is the edge of bank in 1<sup>st</sup> base / right field line and straight line extended from backstop-fence down 3<sup>rd</sup> base/ left field line. If a ball is hit or rolls into the drainage swale in right field or center it is a **NO PLAY-HOME RUN**.

**MEMORIAL FIELD:** An **OUT OF PLAY** zone is chalked to protect the "dugout benches". Otherwise, the **BASE OF THE HILL** on both the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> base lines is considered OUT OF PLAY. A ball overthrown to 1<sup>st</sup> base remains IN PLAY until it reaches the slope. **BALL considered IN PLAY:** Ball hit off grandstand façade, off fence, off light poles, or rolls or bounces into the shed is in play. **NO PLAY – GROUND RULE DOUBLE:** Ball is hit into or bounces into out of play area between storage shed and fence. If ball is hit in the air and hits the storage shed this will also be a double. **NO PLAY – GROUND RULE DOUBLE:** Ball hits on field and

bounces into bleachers. (If ball is hit, bounces, or rolls into opposite diamond and if other team delays outfield's pursuit, or ball's natural path are interfered with, it is a double. If ball's path is not delayed, it is a "live" play.) **HOME RUN IS GIVEN:** When ball is hit, rolls, or bounces into grandstands' concrete corridor; when ball is hit into the grandstand bleachers or over the grandstand roof.

**No Home Run Rule:** Any ball hit over the fence extending west of the grandstands to the right field foul line will be an **Automatic Out/ Dead Ball.**

IRIONDALE: If a ball is hit or rolls into the playground area in right field or center it is a **NO PLAY-HOME RUN.** Straight line extended from backstop-fence down 3<sup>rd</sup> base/ left field line, if the ball hits the tree line; dead ball/out of play

## Sporting Activities COVID-19 Requirements

Sporting Activities COVID-19 Requirements. (COVID – keep in mind; COVID rules may change before season starts and may change during the season)

1. Athletes/officials allowed to remove facial coverings for competitions. Facial coverings are recommended to be worn by athletes when training/practice or when not actively competing in a game or match against another team or when on the bench waiting to play.
2. All attendees must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer regularly; at least before they enter the event, after they use the restroom, immediately after the game, and when they leave the event.
3. Self-screening is required: any players or spectators, who are under quarantine, or have had any of the following COVID-19 symptoms in the previous 72 hours are not allowed to attend any Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Fall Soccer event: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or a new loss of taste or smell. Any individual who develops or displays any of these symptoms must remove themselves, or be removed by their parents or caregivers from the event immediately. Coaches and/or Rec Staff have the right to ask parents and caregivers to remove any individual they observe with these symptoms.

### Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

**Symptoms may include one or more of the following:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headaches</li><li>• “Pressure in head”</li><li>• Nausea or vomiting</li><li>• Neck pain</li><li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>• Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision</li><li>• Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li>• Feeling sluggish or slowed down</li><br/><li>• Feeling foggy or groggy</li><li>• Drowsiness</li><li>• Change in sleep patterns</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amnesia</li><li>• “Don’t feel right”</li><li>• Fatigue or low energy</li><li>• Sadness</li><li>• Nervousness or anxiety</li><li>• Irritability</li><li>• More emotional</li><li>• Confusion</li><br/><li>• Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)</li><li>• Repeating the same question/comment</li></ul> |
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**Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears dazed</li><li>• Vacant facial expression</li><li>• Confused about assignment</li><li>• Forgets plays</li><li>• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily or displays in-coordination</li><li>• Answers questions slowly</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Slurred speech</li><li>• Shows behavior or personality changes</li><li>• Can’t recall events prior to hit</li><li>• Can’t recall events after hit</li><li>• Seizures or convulsions</li><li>• Any change in typical behavior or personality</li><li>• Loses consciousness</li></ul> |
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**What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns to soon?**

Adapted from the CDC and the 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport  
Document created 6/15/2009

## **Concussion Information Sheet**

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athlete will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, Coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete’s safety.

### **If you think your child has suffered a concussion**

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The new “Zackery Lystedt Law” in Washington now requires the consistent and uniform implementation of long and well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years:

“a youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time”

**and**

“...may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider”.

You should also inform your child’s coach if you think that your child may have a concussion Remember its better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Adapted from the CDC and the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Concussion in Sport

Document created 6/15/2009