



Adult Softball Rules and Regulations

The Nelson County Parks and Recreation (NCPR) Softball League will be governed by the rules and guidelines included in this book. This league will not be sanctioned by any specific softball organization; certain league guidelines will be referenced and enforced. All rules are at the discretion of Nelson County Parks and Recreation.

Section 1: TEAMS & EQUIPMENT

1. Teams

- a. Teams are expected to field up to 10 players. A minimum of 8 players is required to start and finish a game.
- b. Rosters are comprised of a maximum of 17 players
- c. All rosters must be submitted to NCPR no later than April 25th.
- d. Players are not permitted to be listed on more than 1 team roster.

2. Field Dimensions and Markings

- a. All games will be held at the Nelson Center.
- b. Field will be marked before games by NCPR.
- c. Bases will be measured at 65.'
- d. Approximate Field Dimensions
 - i. Right Field: 245'
 - ii. Center Field: 310'
 - iii. Left Field: 270'

3. Players & Positions

- a. A team must have a minimum of 8 players to start and continue a game. Two of these players must play the pitcher and catcher positions. A team can add the ninth and tenth player(s) when they arrive at the game at the bottom of the batting order.
- b. Batting Order: Teams must bat a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 14 players. Exception: Teams fielding less than 10 players must bat all players present. Starting lineup cards with at least 10 players may not add additional players to the batting lineup. Any player on the lineup card can play in the field at any time on defense.
- c. Substitutions: Please see Section 2, Article 8.

4. Equipment

- a. NCPR will provide the official ball used in league play.
 - i. The ball will be a yellow optic color, red stitch, 12" .44 COR / 375 Compression.
 - ii. **Women will have the option of using an 11" .52COR / 300 Compression; an 11" ball will be given to the team captain of any team that consists of women at the start of the game so that the ball can be put into play when necessary.**
 - iii. **If a MALE hits a Women's ball, the penalty is as follows**
 - a. **First Offense: Warning (Dead ball) & ALL baserunners must return to where they began the play**
 - b. **Second Offense and On: Batter is Out & ALL baserunners must return to where they began the play**
 - iv. We ask that teams retrieve their own balls fouled out of play as well as home run balls.
- b. All bats must be ASA and/or USSSA stamped.
 - i. Use of bats not approved will be subject to removal from the game and potentially player ejection or team forfeit.
 - ii. NCPR will not provide bats. All bats must be provided by each team and may be subject to inspection before each game.
- c. Uniforms
 - i. Full team uniforms are not required and will not be provided by NCPR.
- d. Footwear

- i. All players must wear closed-toe and closed-heel shoes or cleats
- e. All loose jewelry must be tucked inside clothing or removed.

Section 2: GAMEPLAY

5. Game Format

- a. The home team and away teams are displayed on the schedule. The home team in the playoffs **will be determined by a Higher seed (Unless it is the “if” game). In that case, it will become a coin flip.**
- b. Team Captains are required to turn in a lineup card with the first and last name of players to the umpire before the start of the game.
- c. The game shall be seven (7) innings or a 60-minute time limit. There shall be no new innings started after the time limit has been reached.
- d. If the game is tied after seven (7) innings or after the bottom of the current inning at the time limit, one (1) extra inning shall be played. For the extra inning, a runner will be placed on 2nd base. This runner is required to be the final out from the previous inning.
- e. Each team will have the opportunity to play the final extra inning with a runner on 2nd. All other regulation gameplay rules apply to extra innings.
- f. If the game is still tied at the conclusion of the extra inning. The game will be declared a tie.
- g. Playoff games will continue playing until a winner is decided. Extra inning base runner rules do not apply for playoff games.
- h. A three-ball and two-strike pitch count will apply
 - i. No courtesy Foul
- i. Mercy Rule
 - i. 20-run mercy rule applies after three (3) innings
 - ii. 15-run mercy rule applies after four (4) innings
 - iii. 10-run mercy rule applies after five (5) innings
- j. There is no stealing in slow-pitch softball.
- k. There are no leads in slow-pitch softball; a runner may only leave the bag when the ball is contacted by the person at bat
- l. Any game suspended due to inclement weather is official if four (4) innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead) have been played
- m. If a game fails to reach the midway point, regardless of inning, it will be resumed from the point that it left off at a later date, and all occurrences will be recorded for when that game does take place/resume

6. Pitching

- a. The pitcher shall maintain contact with the rubber during the pitch until the ball is released.
- b. The pitch shall be a minimum of 6 feet and a maximum of 10 feet in the air.
- c. Pitchers may be substituted at any point and may not return to pitching until the following inning.
- d. The strike zone is any part over home plate that is lower than the top of the batter's highest shoulder and higher than the bottom of the batter's front knee.
 - i. A strike must cross any portion of home plate within the strike zone.
 - ii. Any contact with home plate will result in a ball.

7. Batting

- a. A three-ball and two-strike pitch count will apply (See Section 2-5:i)
- b. When a third out of an inning is made before the batter can complete his turn at bat, the same batter will be the first batter in the next inning, and all previous called balls and strikes will be canceled.
- c. The batter is out if:
 - i. He hits the ball with an illegal or altered bat. The umpire must discover this illegal action before the next pitch, either by observation or because of an appeal from the defensive team.
 - ii. He bunts or chops the ball deliberately downward (either fair or foul).
 - iii. He steps across the plate with the pitcher in pitching position.
 - iv. He intentionally interferes with the catcher attempting a play.
 - v. Any member of his team interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball.

- vi. He hits a fair fly ball or line drive that an infielder intentionally drops, with a runner on first, runner on first and second, first, second and third, or on first and third with less than two outs.
NOTE: A trapped ball that hits the ground is never ruled intentionally dropped.

8. Batting Order and Substitutions

- a. Batting Order: Teams may have a maximum of 14 players on the line-up in the batting order. Any player on the lineup card can play in the field at any time on defense.
 - i. Starting lineup cards with at least 10 players may not add additional players to the batting lineup once the game begins and the order has been gone through once (1).
 - ii. Teams must bat a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 14 players. Exception: Teams fielding less than 10 players must bat all players present.
 - iii. If a player knows before game time that they will not be able to play out the entire game, they must notify the umpire before the game to have their place in the order dropped from the lineup and not counted as an out for the remainder of the game once leaving.
 - 1. Teams with additional players present not on the batting line up, must substitute one of the additional players into that spot in the order that they will be taking over for.
 - iv. The umpire must be made aware of substitutions at the time of the switch.
 - v. Players batting out of order or not taking the plate will be counted as an out.
- b. All players listed on the line-up card must be on the official team roster submitted before the season.
- c. A team is permitted to substitute players in the game on defense at any point. There is no limit on the number of times the player may substitute in and out of the game on defense.
 - i. Players not in the batting lineup are permitted to play defense at any time without notifying the umpire.
 - ii. Pitchers may be substituted at any point and may not return to pitching until the following inning.
- d. Re-Entry
 - i. Any of the starting players may withdraw and reenter once, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup. A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.

9. The Fielder and Base-Runner

- a. When the defensive player has the ball or is about to receive the ball, the base runner is responsible for contact. It is the base runner's responsibility to avoid contact by going around or sliding under the defensive player. If the runner does not, they will be called out. If, in the judgment of the supervisor or umpire, the act is flagrant, the runner will be ejected.

10. Sliding

- a. Sliding with cleat spikes up may be subject to the runner being called out and potentially ejected.
- b. Head-first slides are permitted. Player sliding must slide with arms in reach of the bag and not interfere with defensive players.

11. Courtesy Runners

- a. Teams are permitted to use one (1) courtesy runner per inning.
 - i. If a courtesy runner is on base at the time they are scheduled to bat, the base runner is out, and the courtesy runner must return to take their at bat.
- b. Teams are permitted to use a free courtesy runner for the pitcher. This does not count toward their courtesy runner limit per inning.

12. Home Runs

- a. Each team is allowed a maximum of 3 home runs per game by male players.
 - i. Female home runs will not count toward the game limit.
- b. Each home run hit by a male after the maximum of 3 in the game will be counted as an out.
- c. Any ball clearing the fence without touching the ground is considered a home run.
 - i. If a player contacts the ball without completing the catch, resulting in the ball going over the fence, it is considered a four (4) base error. All runs will be counted; however, this will not be counted toward the team home run limit.

13. Staff

- a. All games will be supervised by at least 1 umpire and 1 site supervisor.

- i. Umpires are used to enforce rules and player conduct throughout the game.
- b. The site supervisor will be monitoring facility activity. They will not be expected to make on-field rules decisions.

Section 3: PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

14. Eligibility Guidelines

- a. All final rosters must be submitted to NCPR no later than the week before the season begins.
- b. Players are not permitted to be listed on more than 1 team roster.
- c. All players must be at least 17 years of age before the first scheduled game.
- d. Players must play a minimum of 3 games during the regular season to be included on the playoff roster.
- e. Players may be allowed to join/sub on a team after the first game in the situation of injury, player relocation/Out of town, or any other situation approved by NCPR staff before the day of the game.
 - i. Late roster additions will only be approved in the instance of replacing a player currently on the roster and not adding in vacant roster spots.
 - ii. Players can be replaced up until playoffs. No roster changes will be allowed during league playoffs.
- f. Line-up cards may be reviewed periodically during the season by NCPR staff to match the approved roster sheet submitted before the season or any replacements.
- g. In the event of a roster protest, players may be required to show proof of identification such as a Driver's License. Failure to do so may result in an ejection from the game.
- h. Failure to follow any eligibility guidelines may result in a forfeiture of affected games.

15. Extra Player

- a. 1 additional Extra Player is allowed per team.
 - i. This player can play a maximum of 2 games during the regular season to replace players on vacations, absences, etc., to prevent forfeits.
 - ii. This player is unavailable to participate in playoffs.
 - iii. If a team has 14 players present and hitting in the lineup, this Extra player is not permitted to play.
 - iv. This player must not be a member of any other team's roster.
 - v. Once this space is filled, no additional Extra players are permitted on this official roster.

Section 4: EJECTIONS & INJURIES

16. Injuries

- a. If a player becomes injured, and the team does not have a sub, and the team no longer has the minimum required to play the game (minimum 8 players), the game ends in a forfeit.
- b. There are no penalties or outs taken if a player becomes injured and the team can continue the game with the required minimum player count.

17. Ejections

- a. If a player is ejected, that player must leave the field immediately. The ejected player's team will take an out each time that player is due up in the batting order. The team shall not substitute another player in the ejected player's spot in the batting order or on the field.
 - i. The maximum number of players that the ejected player's team can field following an ejection is 9.
 - ii. If a second player is ejected, this number goes to 8 players.
 - iii. If a third player is ejected, the game ends in a forfeit.

Section 5: FORFEITS

18. Forfeits

- a. Teams are required to start and end a game with a minimum of 8 players.
- b. A coach or designated team representative shall turn in the line-up card five minutes before the start of the game. time of the game. The line-up card shall be given to the site supervisor.

- c. There is a five-minute grace period for all games. If a team does not have the required players once the grace period is over, the game is ruled a forfeit.
- d. ****NEW** If a team must forfeit twice (2) during the 8-game guaranteed regular season, they will be removed from the league, and an updated schedule will be created. A forfeit not only affects your team, but the league as a whole. It also takes games away from the opponents you were scheduled to play. (No Refund will be given)**

Section 6: PROTESTS

19. Protest Guidelines

- a. Team Captains are the only players on the field allowed to question a call. Any questions must be addressed before the next pitch. At any other time, a general player questions an umpire, that player is subject to ejection. General questions may be answered between innings or after the game to keep pace of play.
- b. Player Eligibility: The Captain may protest a player's eligibility. This must be completed by the end of the third inning or the inning after the player enters the game. If the player is in fact ineligible, the player will be immediately ejected from the game. All ejection rules will apply for the remainder of the game.
 - i. If a questioned player is on the team's roster, the protesting team will be served an out. If that team is in the field at the time of protest, the out will be issued to the first batter of the next inning. The on deck batter will lead off the inning with 1 out.

SECTION 7: SCHEDULING

20. Regular Season Format

- a. All teams will be guaranteed a minimum of 8 games including regular season and playoffs.
- b. The NCPR staff is taking scheduling preferences into account before the schedule is created based on answers at the time of registration. You may be scheduled outside of one of your preferences.
- c. As a general rule, NCPR does not take reschedule requests for games. Games will be played as scheduled unless rainouts occur.

21. Playoffs

- a. All teams will be eligible for playoffs.
 - i. Playoff format will be determined before the start of the season based on the number of teams.
 - ii. Time limit will not be enforced in the playoffs
- b. Standings are determined by:
 - i. Winning Percentage
 - ii. Head-to-Head Competitions
 - iii. Total Runs For
 - iv. Season Run Differential
 - v. Coin Flip

22. League Awards

- a. Awards will be given to, at most, the Playoff Champions and Playoff Runner-Ups.
- b. League awards may be adjusted by NCPR based on the number of participating teams.

Section 8: INCLEMENT WEATHER

23. Weather Policy

- a. The inclement weather hotline is 434-263-7131. A decision will be made to cancel by 4:00 pm. If rain occurs after 4:00 pm, the decision to cancel will be made on-site.
- b. A game is considered complete after the end of the 5th inning. All games that are cancelled after the completion of the 5th inning will not be made up. The score after the last full inning is the final score.
- c. Postponed games from inclement weather are resumed from the stoppage point. Teams may use different lineup cards for incomplete games that are postponed. This includes different stranded base runners at the time of postponement.
- d. Rainout game make-ups will be determined by NCPR staff based on field and umpire availability.

Section 9: PLAYER CONDUCT

24. Nelson County Parks and Recreation adult sports leagues are created to provide residents and non-residents the opportunity to participate in a safe, competitive, and fun environment. Though competition can be inherent in all sports, we believe sportsmanship and fair play are values we at NCPR strive to achieve.

25. Conduct Violations

- a. Conduct applies to all individuals participating or attending. We require all individuals on site to adhere to the following guidelines in order for this to continue to be a family-friendly environment for all to enjoy.
- b. No Participant or Spectator Shall: Verbally argue or visually demonstrate, in a disrespectful manner, disagreement with an umpire or league official's decision. Includes slamming/deliberately throwing the bat.
- c. No Participant or Spectator Shall: Use rough or aggressive playing tactics
- d. No Participant or Spectator Shall: Use profane language at any time
- e. No Participant or Spectator Shall: Harass, heckle, insult, jeer or use verbal tactics to embarrass or insult a league official, employee, or other participant at any time before, during or after a game. This includes prolonging the game intentionally.
- f. No participant, Team Manager or Spectator Shall: Express malicious verbal threats or use racial or sexually discriminatory comments directed at any player, spectator, umpire, or league official.
- g. No Team shall: Use an ineligible player
- h. Other non-violent acts deemed detrimental to the game will be subject to review by NCPR staff.

26. Penalties for Conduct Violations

- a. Automatic one-week suspension will be imposed for each individual violation. Including participants and spectators.
- b. Penalty is doubled when it is the second Conduct Code violation in a one-year period
- c. A third violation will result in suspension for the rest of the season.

27. Alcohol / Drug Violations

- a. No participant, Team Manager, or Spectator Shall: Be intoxicated before, during, or after a game.
 - i. Individuals found consuming alcohol on site may be subject to ejection.
- b. No participant, Team Manager, or Spectator Shall: Possess or consume drugs or illegal substances on the site of the Nelson Center.
 - i. Individuals found consuming drugs or illegal substances on site may be subject to ejection.

28. Penalties for Alcohol / Drug Violations

- a. Automatic two weeks' suspension will be imposed for each violation
- b. Participant, Team Manager or Spectator will be suspended for one (1) year for second violation

29. General rules regarding ejections/suspensions

- a. The umpire and/or field monitor have the authority to remove a player, coach, or spectator from a game and/or forfeit the game due to unsportsmanlike conduct
- b. Players, coaches, and spectators are subject to ejection before, during, or after a game for unsportsmanlike conduct. If an incident about the sport occurs on Nelson Center property, action will be taken accordingly.
- c. Misconduct by players, coaches, and spectators occurring off site but relating to NCPR Adult Softball League may be subject to further actions and ejections.
- d. If a player, coach, or spectator is ejected from a game, that person must vacate the premises immediately.
- e. If an individual is suspended, they will be ineligible to play or participate on ANY team for the duration of the suspension.
- f. Individuals who have been issued a suspension will not be permitted at the game facility during this suspension. In the event said individual deviates from this ruling, it will constitute a forfeit and the opposing team will receive credit for a win.
- g. Any player, coach, or manager ejected from a game must meet with NCPR staff before playing any further games.

- h. If a player or coach is ejected from their last regular season or playoff game, the suspension will carry over to next season.
- i. Nelson County Parks and Recreation reserves the right to amend and deliver any suspension and punishment that it deems necessary.
- j. **All punishments handed out by Nelson County Parks and Recreation are final with no subject for an appeal**

Nelson County Parks and Recreation thanks you for your participation and cooperation. We strive to make this league an enjoyable environment for all participants and spectators. It is up to all in attendance to follow these guidelines for this league to be a success both on and off the field for years to come.

If you ever have any issues or concerns, please reach out to Nelson County Parks and Recreation.

Office Location: The Nelson Center

Office Phone: (434)263-7130

Email: Recreation@nelsoncounty.org