



## **Softball Rules & Regulations Softball Rules**

**\* Rev. June 2024**

**Softball contests will be governed by the official rules of the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) with the following modifications:**

### **Slow Pitch 6' to 12' Arc Team Rosters**

All teams should have a minimum of twelve players on their team at the start of the season.

A full team on the field consists of 10 players. There may not be more than 6 players in the infield. A maximum of 7 males are allowed on the field at any time.

### **Player Equipment**

#### **Gloves**

Players must supply their own gloves. Players must wear a glove at all times on the field. No one will be permitted to play on the field without a glove.

#### **Bats**

Each team must supply its own bats. Bats must be **ASA Certified. Please seek a valid source online for the latest ASA Non-approved list.**

For the collective safety of all members involved in NJ Coed Sports, any bat believed to have been altered, shaved, or rolled, even if it's an approved bat, will not be allowed for play. A bat that has clear signs of end cap tampering will not be allowed in the league. The bat must clearly bare the true ASA Certification stamp.

**Your safety is PARAMOUNT.** Anyone found to be using a bat that has clear telltale signs of being physically altered or “doctored” so that it will outperform its original specifications will be asked to leave that bat in their car. NJCS will also document this bat. If the bat is found to be used again that player will be asked to leave the field and be

immediately removed from any NJ Coed Sports leagues. Bat Doctoring will NOT be tolerated. **League managers and umpires reserve the right to inspect any bat at any time during league play.**

### **Helmets and Catcher's Mask**

Helmets and catcher's masks are optional. We do not provide them for any of our leagues. Each team may bring their own helmets or masks to use if they feel it is necessary.

### **Lack of Full Team**

If you do not have a full team ready to play at the start time you may play with a minimum of 8 players INCLUDING at least 2 females. All games will begin on time. If a team only has 1 female 10 minutes after start time, it's a forfeit and the game can be played for fun.

A team can play with 2 females but MUST take an OUT every time in the batting order when the female is missing (if both teams are missing a female and each team has two females, a male will be added to the lineup to make 8 males and 2 females and a regular game will be played with no outs on either side. This also applies when a team is on the field. 10 field players (8 males and 2 females)

If one of the teams only has 2 females, that team must leave an empty field position where the missing 3<sup>rd</sup> female would be. In other words, a maximum of 9 on the field.

### **SUBS – (See Substitution Rules )**

Check in with the field manager PRIOR to the start of the game with \$12. A WAIVER must

be signed. **Absolutely No guest players at the Playoffs and Finals.** a. There must always be a majority of roster players playing.

**b.** A team may not exceed their original roster size with subs so if a team has 15 roster players they may not exceed that number with subs.

**c.** A guy can sub for a guy a girl can sub for both a guy or a girl. **Borrowing Players from other teams:**

A team can borrow a maximum of 2 players (2 guys or 2 girls or 1 guy + 1 girl) but must play with 9 players on the field.

If a team already has 9 roster players, with 3 girls present, that team CANNOT borrow players. They must play with 9.

Everyone playing for the team MUST be added to the batting order.

In order to play with a full team of 10 on the field when missing players, a team must bring in outside subs/guest players and not “borrow” any players.

### **Borrowing Female Players from other teams:**

You can borrow a maximum of 2 girls to make 3 girls. If a team borrows 1 or 2 girls, the team must play with 9 players on the field. All 3 girls must play the field. Girls can also be borrowed to sub for a guy. The team must still play with 9 on the field.

### **Remember, “borrowing” players means a maximum of 9 on the field. Borrowing Guy Players from other teams:**

**If a team borrows 1 or 2 guys, the team must play with 9 players on the field. A guy cannot sub for a girl.**

### **Attire**

Please remove jewelry. No metal cleats. You must wear your team shirt.

### **Lineup Cards**

Each team must write out a lineup card. Once the lineup has been made it cannot change. Only players present at the start of the game may be included in the lineup and players that arrive last must be put at the bottom of the order or as close to the bottom while still preserving the gender rule. The umpire or the opposing team captain can request to see the lineup card at any time during the game to verify that a team is keeping true to their batting order.

### **Sliding**

is allowed at 2nd and 3rd base. **No sliding** on first plate and home plate. Head first sliding is allowed.

### **Safety Base**

Safety base at first base must be used whenever the ball is hit into the infield or if there is a play at first base or the runner will be called OUT. If the ball is hit into the outfield then the runner may use first base to round the bag to second base. In this case, the first

baseman must move off the bag to allow the runner to round first otherwise it will be called obstruction and the runner will automatically be called safe at second.

The Safety Base at Home Plate must be used at all times. If you do not use the safety plate at home plate, you will be called OUT even if there is no play at home plate (including out-of-park home runs). The safety of the players is our main concern so the umpires will be enforcing this rule in full effect.

### **Tagging at Home Plate:**

Runners that cross the Commit Cone may NOT be tagged when running home. The ball must be thrown to the catcher otherwise the base runner will be called safe.

### **Commit Rule**

After you touch or cross the Commit Cone (approx. 1/2 way from 3rd base to home plate) you must continue home. It is always a force out at home plate. This only applies to home plate. You must always use the “safety home plate” or you will be out. If there is a fly ball in the outfield you must not cross the commit line or you have committed home. \*If there are 2 outs and a runner crosses home plate before or after a force out at another base, the run does not count at home.

### **Time Limit**

Games are seven (7) innings or 75 minutes. Innings started before the time limit will be finished. Starting a final inning is up to the discretion of the umpire. Games called after 4 innings are considered a completed game.

### **Pitching**

Pitch Arc: The maximum arc of a pitch must lie between 6 and 12 feet above the ground. The umpire must declare a pitch illegal by shouting “Illegal” while the pitch is in the air. If a pitch does not meet this requirement, it will be called a ball.

The batter may still choose to swing at the pitch. A declared illegal pitch that is hit in play is treated as any other hit pitch. A declared illegal pitch counts as a strike if the batter swings and misses or fouls the pitch off.

## **Walks**

Only 3 walks per inning is allowed.

**\* Walking Batters Intentionally:** Walking any particular batter is allowed only twice per game. Also when there are two outs, any male batter being “intentionally walked” who is followed by a female batter will be awarded two (2) bases upon being walked.

## **Run Limit**

Once a team has scored 7 runs in an inning they must take the field and allow the other team an at-bat. This rule does not apply in the last inning. The last inning can be the 7th inning or the very last inning played which at times, is not necessarily the 7th inning.

## **Batting**

Every batter will start with a 1-1 count. This will make for more innings and more opportunities to get up at bat by ultimately increasing the tempo of the game.

Three balls will be a walk and two strikes will be an out. A foul ball will be counted as a strike and a foul ball with two strikes will be an out.

## **Batting Order**

All players may be put on the batting order (those playing the field and those substituting). Changes to the order can only be made at the top of the inning or due to injury. No more than 3 males can bat in a row. Females can re hit as necessary to keep the batting order correct. If a team only has 2 females, an auto out is taken every time in the batting order when the female is missing (if both teams are missing a girl they can decide to use this rule or not). Captains would need to work this out prior to starting the game not during the game.

## **Batting Out of Order**

It is the responsibility of the fielding team to determine if a player is batting out of order and notify the umpire.

- a. If the out of order batter is batting out of order and has not taken any pitches then the correct batter will take their place with no penalty.
- b. If the out of order batter is still at the plate but has taken pitches the correct batter will take their place and continue with whatever their count was.

c. If the incorrect batter reaches base and is discovered before the next batter takes a pitch, then the incorrect batter will be declared out and all runners will return to the original base they were at before the at bat.

d. If the error is discovered after the next batter has taken a pitch, then play will continue with that batter assuming that spot in the lineup taking into account gender rules.

Teams that have chronic issues with maintaining the correct batter order may be subject to game forfeit, player suspension, and other measures that are deemed appropriate by NJCS.

### **Fielding**

You can have no more than 10 players on the field with a minimum of 3 girls (2 girls with an OUT). A team can have no more than 6 infielders at any given time and this includes the catcher and pitcher. You may have up to 5 outfielders. Outfielders must stay no less than 10ft from the infield dirt until the ball is hit. Players may not switch positions when the team is on the field but may switch between innings. Teams may change field players between innings, but not during the inning.

### **Substitutions Rules (Subs / Guest Players)**

Subs are allowed during the regular season only. Once playoffs begin, only fully paid registered roster players may play. Subs must pay a \$10 fee and sign a waiver. If a sub is found playing without out paying or signing a waiver, they will be removed from the game and the team will be forced to forfeit the game.

### **Scoring**

The umpire will keep track of runs scored. However, teams are encouraged to keep their own score during the game for discrepancies at the end of play.

### **Substitute Runners**

The last out or last to score is the runner. A guy runs for a guy. A girl runs for a guy or girl.

### **Stealing**

No stealing bases or leading off. One foot on the bag until contact is made with the ball. Stealing or leading off will result in the player being called out.

## **In-Field Fly Rule**

The batter will automatically be called out if there are less than 2 outs with runners on first and second or the bases are loaded and there is a pop fly which the umpire judges could be caught by an infielder in fair territory.

## **Bunting**

No intentional bunting is allowed.

## **Ties**

In the event of a tie, time permitting extra innings will be played. If time does not permit the game will end in a tie. See special rules for playoffs.

## **Forfeits**

A forfeit is counted as a 7-0 loss

## **Mercy Rule**

12 runs after 5 innings or 10 runs after 6 innings. The mercy rule applies for outdoors only.

There is no Mercy Rule for Indoor Softball.

## **PLAYOFFS**

**\*All players must make at least 2 season games in order to be eligible for playoffs and finals. No one is allowed to miss the entire season and come for playoffs and finals only.**

The top 4 or 6 teams will go to the playoffs based on season rankings. The top teams will be determined by record (3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie, 0 points for a loss).

In case there is a two-way tie between teams, the following tiebreaker system will be used:

### **~Head-to-head matchup**

~If there is still a tie or if they played each other twice and both have a 1-1 record we will move on to **Head-to-head run differential** (Head-to-head runs scored minus runs scored against)

~**Overall season run differential** (Overall season runs scored minus overall runs scored against)

In the event that a tie persists, **the team with the most forfeits loses.**

~In the case that a tie still persists, **a coin flip** will determine the winner.

**In case there is a three-way tie** (or more) between teams, the following tiebreaker system will be used:

~Head-to-head matchup

~ If the winner of the head-to-head matchup can't be determined (i.e. 2 teams played each other twice), then the head-to-head run differential will be used and compared for all 3 teams. (i.e. Average Runs scored minus average runs scored against). Whoever has the highest average run differential will take the higher playoff seed.

**\*\*Average run differential** will be used when two tied teams in the three-way (or more) tie played each other twice. If Team A and Team B played each other twice and Team C (and D) only played them once, we will use the average score for Team A and Team B's two games. To determine this, we will add up the runs scored for both teams in both games and subtract runs scored against. This number will then be divided by 2 to determine the average.

~Overall season run differential (Overall season runs scored minus overall runs scored against)

In the event that a tie persists, the team with the most forfeits loses.

~In the case that a tie still persists, a coin flip will determine the winner.

In the event of a tie in the tournament extra innings will be played with the same rules listed above to determine a winner.

## **Sportsmanship**

Sportsmanship must be practiced at all times. Directors and umpires reserve the right to remove any player from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. Fighting will not be tolerated! Any players engaging in any fight will be ejected from the game and, most likely, the league and banned from future leagues. If you believe a player is acting in an unsportsmanlike manner, please email us at [jay@njcoedsports.com](mailto:jay@njcoedsports.com)

NJCS will handle all disputes on case by case basis and resolve them in the fairest possible way.

Any questions or concerns should be emailed to [jay@njcoedsports.com](mailto:jay@njcoedsports.com)