



## **SOFTBALL (SPRING & FALL) LOCAL LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The current issue of the National Federation High School rule book will prevail other than the exceptions listed in this publication. FCPR as needed may issue Addendums and Clarifications to these rules. No other local league rule exceptions will be allowed. These are the sport specific rules – you must also obtain a copy of the Basic Rules For All Youth Sports for complete information.

### **1:00 AGE GROUPS**

1:01 For girls in the following age groups:

- 8U
- 10U
- 12U
- 14U
- 17U

1:02 Spring league age is the age the player will be prior to January 1 of the current year.  
*Fall league age is the age the player will be prior to January 1 of the next year.*

1:03 Each team will have a minimum of 12 players on a roster.  
Each team will have maximum of 14 players on a roster (15 players for 14U).

1:04 Each team will have a maximum of 3 coaches on the roster.

1:05 Coach pitch (8U) will have a maximum of 4 coaches on the roster.

### **2:00 EQUIPMENT**

2:01 **STEEL SPIKES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED in the 8U, 10U, and 12U leagues.** Only rubber molded cleats or tennis shoes will be allowed..

### **3:00 PLAYING RULES**

3:01 **SLIDE RULE:** The runner is out if she does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag. The ball is dead and other base runners take bases they had reached, in the umpires' judgment, when the violation occurred. If contact occurs and the umpire rules it flagrant, the runner will be ejected.

3:02 **MINIMUM PLAY REQUIREMENT for 8U, 10U, 12U**

**Defense:** players must play, at a minimum, every other inning in the field in a defensive position In each game, Example: a team begins the game with 14 players. 9 players will start the game defensively, with 5 substitutes. When the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning begins, the 5 substitutes will enter the game defensively, replacing 5 starters. When the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning begins, the 5 players who come out in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning will return to the field defensively. Teams will continue rotating 5 players in defensively every inning until the game is concluded. The only defensive changes that will be allowed during the inning will be pitching changes or when a player is injured or ejected.

**EXCEPTION:** 8U has 10 defensive players (four outfielders)

**NOTE:** a pitcher, once removed from the mound, cannot return to the mound, but can go to another defensive position.

**Offense:** all players will be required to bat in each game using the continuous, all bat lineup.

- Batting order shall be 1 - 14 (or maximum number present).
- All players will bat in this order throughout the game.
- **Teams will follow standard three (3) outs per inning.**
- Batter #1 will not bat again until Batter #14 (or the maximum number present) completes his/her turn at bat.
- Teams may play any 9 of the 14 batters in the field at anytime.
- All players will be placed on a line-up card in the order they will bat.
- Late players will be added to the bottom of the line-up.
- Players that become unable to play will be skipped in the line-up with no penalty. If players are able to continue later in the game then they will assume their position in the line-up.
- Players who are injured while at bat and cannot continue will be replaced by the next batter in the lineup who will assume the count of the injured batter.
- Players that become injured or cannot continue after reaching base will be replaced by the last player to make an out.

3:03 **MINIMUM PLAY REQUIREMENT for 14U, 17U**

**Defense:** All players present for the game must play 6 consecutive outs on defense.

**Offense:** All players present for the game must complete 1 time at bat using the standard batting lineup. **Fall Season: All Bat: Please follow 3:02 Offense above**

3:04 If a team violates the minimum play requirement, the head coach shall be suspended in accordance with the Code of Conduct guidelines.

3:05 Coaches are not obligated to play an individual the minimum time under the following conditions:

- Player late for start of game or a no-show.
- Player with unexcused absence from practice in the week before the game.
- Player who has been a discipline problem.
- Injured player who could have played the minimum time if uninjured.

A coach who suspends a player according to this rule must notify the opposing manager and site supervisor. Coaches who use the exceptions to the all play rule to gain an advantage over another team will lose FCPR coaching privileges.

- 3:06 Speed up rules will be enforced in all leagues:  
(1) Runner for the catcher with 2 outs; (see note below)  
(2) Intentional walk without pitching to batter.  
(3) Ball thrown directly to pitcher after each out.  
(4) Maximum of 4 warm-up pitches after first inning.  
**NOTE:** the runner for the catcher or injured player shall be the last player to make an out and continue in reverse order.
- 3:07 Line-up cards shall be turned into the scorekeeper 10 minutes prior to game time. Exception-fall league does not use a scorekeeper.
- 3:08 Each team is responsible to retrieve foul balls and home run balls on their side of the field.
- 3:09 The penalty for a thrown bat will be as follows:  
Incidental: 1) first offense – warning to the offending team; a warning to team A does not apply to team B. 2) following offenses - dead ball, batter out, runners may not advance.  
Flagrant (intentional): dead ball, batter out, batter ejected, runners may not advance, no warning necessary.  
NOTE: It will be up to the official to determine if a player intentionally throws a bat.
- 3:10 **TRIPS TO THE MOUND (10U, 12U, 14U, 17U)**  
A manager or coach may come out twice in 1 inning to visit with the pitcher, but the 3<sup>rd</sup> time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.  
A manager or coach may come out 3 times in 1 game to visit with the pitcher, but the 4<sup>th</sup> time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.
- 3:11 Teams must have 9 legal players in order to play. There will be a 10-minute grace period for the early game only. Penalty: forfeit.
- 3:12 **Fall Softball ONLY: ALL AGE GROUPS**
- Scores and won-loss records are not maintained.
  - Tournaments are not played.
  - Extra innings are not played.
  - When the time limit expires, the game is over at that point and no new inning is started.
- 3:13 **PROTESTS:**
- **Protesting coach will notify the umpire and scorekeeper before the next pitch**
  - **Protest must be based on rules and not judgment; protest must list the rule that they feel was misapplied**
  - **Coach will submit protest in writing by the next working day**
  - **Protest on game ending play must be filed before the teams leave the site**
  - **Protest committee will make a ruling**

## **4:00 8U (COACH PITCH) PLAYING RULES:**

### 4:01 REGULATION GAME

- 6 innings (unless shortened by time, weather, 10 run rule)
- Time limit (90 minutes)
- 10 run rule after 4 innings.
- Extra innings will not be played
- No inning will begin after 10:00 p.m.

### 4:02 Field dimensions:

- 35 ft pitching distance (coach pitcher can be no closer than 15 ft to the batter)
- 60 feet bases

### 4:03 THE BATTER (refer to local league rule 3:02)

### 4:04 Each batter will be allowed 3 strikes or 5 pitches before being called out.

(The batter will either **hit the ball** or **strike out swinging – the umpire does not call “BALLS & STRIKES”**)

- If a batter hits a foul ball on the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, he/she will not be called out unless it is caught by a defender before it hits the ground.
- There will be no walks.
- There will be no bunts. PENALTY-if the ball is hit, the batter is out and ball is dead; if the ball is not hit, a strike shall be called.
- The catcher does not have to catch the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.

### 4:05 “7 runs equals 3 outs”

Each team will be limited to 7 runs per inning. After scoring 7 runs in an inning, that team's at-bat is concluded, regardless of the number of outs. If a team commits 3 outs before scoring 7 runs, the at-bat is concluded. In other words, "7 runs or 3 outs, whichever comes first". There is no limit on the number of runs a team can score in the 6th inning.

### 4:06 The player-pitcher must be in the pitchers circle behind the coach-pitcher and must remain in the circle until the pitched ball reaches home plate.

### 4:07 A coach will pitch to his own team either overhand or underhand from any spot in a direct line between the pitcher's plate and home plate, but no closer than 15 feet from the batter.

A pitching plate will be placed 35 feet from the back point of home plate and it is recommended for the coach-pitcher to deliver all pitches from this spot

### 4:08 When the coach pitcher delivers the pitch and it is hit, the coach-pitcher is to squat down to minimize being a distraction to the defensive players. The coach-pitcher will not be allowed to call time out to talk to offensive players or other coaches and must not do any coaching while on the field.

4:09 **Interference by the coach pitcher:** The coach-pitcher must not touch a batted or thrown ball until the ball is declared dead. Interference will be declared at the umpire's discretion.

**Penalty:**

Intentional: the batter is called out and ball is dead and all base runners shall return to the base they occupied at the time the batter took position in the batters box. No runs allowed.

Unintentional: the ball is dead and the pitch is replayed and all base runners shall return to the base they occupied at the time the batter took position in the batters box. No runs allowed.

4:10 **THE RUNNER**

- Runner may not leave base until the bat has touched the ball. **Penalty** - base runner is out.
- A 3 foot chalk line perpendicular to the base path will be drawn halfway between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases, and halfway between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. When the ball is declared dead, runners will be allowed the next base if they are past the halfway point and that base is unoccupied.
- If the umpire sees a runner miss the base, then the runner shall be called out.

4:11 Time shall be called and the ball shall be declared dead immediately by the umpire when the lead runner is stopped or abandons any effort to advance further, if the ball is within the infield area. The umpire will look at the other runners to determine if they are to advance to the next base or return to the last base touched. If any subsequent runner has not passed the half way mark, the runner must return to the previous base. A play on any other runner will release the lead runner if the ball has not been declared dead. Players will not be allowed to call time just to stop a play. Players may call time out while the coach-pitcher has possession of the ball.

**SUGGESTION TO COACHES:** In order to stop the play, have infielder with the ball cut off the path of the lead runner. This will force the runner back to his base and time may be requested.

4:12 The head coach shall be entitled to request time, ON DEFENSE, to talk to his/her players twice in the same inning without penalty. A 3<sup>rd</sup> time out will not be granted.

4:13 One time-out shall be allowed on offense to talk to a batter during the same time at-bat. A 2<sup>nd</sup> time out to talk to the batter during the same at-bat will not be granted.

## **END OF 8U (COACH PITCH) RULES**

### **5:00 10U & 12U PLAYING RULES**

5:01 **REGULATION GAME**

- 6 innings (unless shortened by time, weather).
- Time limit (90 minutes).
- 10 run rule after 4 innings.
- No inning will begin after 10:00 p.m.

5:02 **Field dimensions:**

- 35 ft pitching distance (10U)
- 40 ft pitching distance (12U)
- 60 feet bases

5:03 THE BATTER (refer to 3:02)

5:04 THE RUNNER

10U: Runner may not leave base until the pitch has been batted or reaches the batter.

12U: Runner may not leave base until the pitch has been released.

**Penalty** – runner is out.

5:05 THE PITCHER (12U)

If a player pitches in more than 1 inning, 1 calendar day of rest is mandatory. A player may pitch in a maximum of 9 innings in a game. A player may pitch in a maximum of 18 innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

THE PITCHER (10U)

If a player pitches in more than 1 inning, 1 calendar day of rest is mandatory. A player may pitch in a maximum of 6 innings in a game. A player may pitch in a maximum of 6 innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

**Local League addendum for 10U:**

After four (4) batters have walked in an inning, the offensive team manager or coach comes in to pitch for the rest of the inning. (Note: A hit batter does count as a walk). Refer to 8U coach-pitch rules 4:01 to 4:09 that governs play when there is a coach pitcher used. NOTE: A pitcher removed from the mound under this rule may return to the mound in the next inning and may continue to pitch until such time her coach removes her for circumstances other than what is covered in this rule. Once the adult pitcher takes the mound, no base stealing will be allowed.

## **END 10U & 12U PLAYING RULES**

### **6:00 14U & 17U PLAYING RULES**

6:01 REGULATION GAME

- 7 innings (unless shortened by time, weather, 10 run rule).
- Time limit (90 minutes).
- 10 run rule after 5 innings.
- No inning will begin after 10:00 p.m.

6:02 Field dimensions:

- 43 feet pitching distance
- 60 feet bases

6:03 THE BATTER

- Batting order shall be the standard 1 – 9.

6:04 THE RUNNER

Runner may not leave base until the pitch has been released by the pitcher.

**Penalty** – runner is out.

6:05 THE PITCHER

If a player pitches in less than 5 innings, no rest is required. If a player pitches in 5 or more innings, 1 calendar day of rest must be observed. A player may pitch in a maximum of 10 innings in a day, and a maximum of 30 innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

6:06 **RE-ENTRY / SUBSTITUTION**

Any starter may withdraw and re-enter 1 time, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the line-up. A substitute who is withdrawn cannot re-enter. Re-entry of already used players will be allowed if all substitutes have been used and an **injury** occurs. Selection of the substitute must be made by the opposing manager. This type of re-entry can only take place when an **injury** prevents a player from continuing in the game. The injured player, once removed from the game, cannot re-enter. This rule does not apply to ejected players.

**END 14U & 17U PLAYING RULES**

**LIGHTNING & THUNDER POLICY**

All athletic activities conducted on Fayetteville - Cumberland Parks and Recreation facilities or any of its affiliated facilities or programs will follow the lightning policy as written below.

1. **It shall be the responsibility of the umpire to suspend the game once lightning or thunder is noticed.**
2. **However, if in the opinion of the field supervisor and/or center staff the umpire is not using good judgment they have the authority and the responsibility to suspend the game and clear the area.**
3. **Once lightning or thunder is noticed the game shall stop immediately and the area cleared.**
4. **The activity shall be suspended immediately for a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 20 minutes.**
5. **This delay will only be allowed if safe cover for all of the participants and players is available**
6. **Once the game has reached the delay time limit the field supervisor and the umpires shall confer to make a decision to continue the game or to cancel the remainder of the game. If the 1<sup>st</sup> game of the day is cancelled, all remaining games for that site will also be cancelled.**
7. **Under no circumstances will players be allowed to remain in the dugout during this delay.**
8. **All participants must have a safe and protected area available for their use.**
9. **Examples of safe and protected areas include permanent enclosed structures and automobiles.**
10. **If one participant does not have a safe and protected area available for their use the event is to be cancelled.**
11. **If a permanent site does not exist automobiles may be used.**
12. **Do not let pressure from the coaches influence your judgment.**
13. **Remember, Safety First. A game can always be rescheduled.**