

CITY OF GRAPEVINE

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Revised 3/5/2021

All League Games will be played in accordance with the current Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Official Guide and the current Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF) Cavalcade of Sports, with the addition of the following:

** DENOTES ANY RULE REVISIONS WITHIN THIS PAST YEAR

I. Eligibility

1. No residency or employment requirements.
2. Players in all Adult Leagues must be sixteen (16) years of age or older prior to the start of league play.
3. Coaches/team managers **are responsible for their rosters to match the players' identity. All players must carry a current picture identification with them at all times during all league games.**
 - If the illegal player is found before the game, he/she will not be allowed to play and the game will begin, dependent upon the number of players left over.
 - If the illegal player is found during or after the game once rosters are final, the game will automatically be deemed a forfeit.
4. Players will be allowed to play on more than one team during a season, but cannot play on more than one team in the same league. No team may pick up a player that is on another roster in the same division/night.
5. In the interest of equalizing league play, after a demonstration of dominance in a division, the Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to promote a team into a more competitive division, at the PARD discretion.

II. Rosters

1. Each team will be allowed a maximum of twenty (20) players, including playing coaches.
2. Each team may add up to 20 players during the season. Once a team adds 20 players, then coaches will have to add/drop players. You may do so with the department's Athletics Coordinator. No team may exceed 20 players at a time.
3. **Rosters are final after the sixth (6) game. No team may add any players after their sixth (6) game. Your roster will be frozen after six (6) games and that is what you will play with for the remainder of the season including the post-season tournament if the team qualifies. If a team has not submitted their roster, games will result in forfeits.**
3. All team members must submit a roster form using the online roster link provided by the department. This is a requirement of all teams as we use this as a waiver to play with the City of Grapevine.
4. **Free Agents** – If teams needs extra players, contact the Athletics Coordinator for the free agent list.

III. Equipment/Uniforms

1. All players on each team must wear jerseys that are matching in the base color and which have a permanently affixed, non-duplicated number on the back. Officials will be strict on the word "base" color. Example: Baby blue and navy blue are not the same color.
 - a. Jerseys without numbers or jerseys with taped, pinned, or handwritten numerals will NOT be allowed. There will be a two game grace period for all teams to obtain their jerseys. After this grace period, players not attired as described above will NOT be allowed to participate.
2. Steel cleats are not allowed.
3. Umpires may ban any equipment that they deem as unsafe or illegal.
4. **Jewelry** – Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, may not be worn during the game. NOTE: Players **MUST** remove jewelry if judged to be dangerous. If they fail to do so, the player is ejected from the game.
5. **Bat Policy** – Umpires and staff reserve the right to question, inspect, or remove any bat deemed suspicious of being altered or tampered with.
6. **Game Balls** – The league balls consist of an ASA/USA Stamp/TAAF approved core .52 12" ball across all divisions. Game balls are available for purchase on site from athletics staff for \$7.

IV. Playing Rules

1. Each team manager should initial the umpire's scorecard after each game. This will ensure that all records are correct and have been accepted by BOTH team managers. Failure to initial the game report will be an indication that the team manager has ACCEPTED the game report and has forfeited his/her right to a review. While umpires keep official score, fans from either team are responsible for running the score clock for the score board. League standings will be based on game and staff reports.
2. **All batters will begin with a 1 ball, 1 strike count. The first 3rd strike foul will NOT be an out, but the second 3rd strike foul will be an out.**
3. An official game will consist of fifty-five (55) minutes, seven (7) innings, or the "Run Rule" whichever comes first. For rainout procedures on official game time, refer to Article VIII, Section 1.
4. **Run Rule:**
20 after 2 innings; 15 after 3 innings; 12 after 4 innings ; 10 after 5 innings (4 1/2 innings if home team is ahead).
 - The "flip/flop" rule is in effect: When beginning an inning in which the visiting team is ahead by a run rule amount, the home team remains at bat and becomes the visiting team. If the new visiting team does not score enough runs to reduce the run difference below the run rule, the game is over. If they reduce the run difference to below the run rule, then the new home team will bat. If the new home team subsequently scores enough runs to achieve a run rule, the game is over. If they do not, the game continues under the "flip/flop" format. If the situations reverse, the teams would flip/flop again.
5. No new inning will begin after fifty-five (55) minutes for men's or fifty (50) minutes for Co-Ed. **Regular season games can end in a tie.** If time expires at the start or middle of an inning, the inning will be play out in its full completion with the normal bat count. View post-season tie-breaker procedures in section VIII. During post-season play, if the time limit expires or game goes into extra innings due to a tied score, the game reverts to a 3 ball, 2-strike conclusion (first foul is an out).
6. **Home Run Limits:** Any batter hitting a home run in excess of the home run limit is ruled as a walk.
 - "Class D" Leagues – 3** home runs will be allowed.
 - "Church" League – 2** home runs will be allowed.
 - "Class D/E" Leagues – 2** home runs will be allowed.
 - "Co-ed" Leagues – 0** home runs will be allowed.
 - "Class E" League – 0** home runs will be allowed.

7. Teams must start and finish a game with at least nine (9) players. Teams with 8 or less players will result in a forfeit. A team with nine (9) players will receive an "Automatic Out" for the open tenth batter spot. However, once a team has ten (10) players officially in the game, they may not go back to nine (9) players
 - a. If team only has ten (10) players and one is injured and cannot continue in the game, an "Automatic Out" may be taken in the injured player's batting position. A team is limited to a maximum of one (1) "Automatic Out" in that player's spot.
 - b. If the injured player was himself/herself a substitute, he/she must be replaced by the starter that the injured player originally replaced or suffer an "Automatic Out" in that player's spot.
8. **Blood Rule:** A player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on his uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgement. Uniform rule violations will not be enforced if a uniform change is required. The umpire shall:
 - a. Stop the game and allow treatment if the injured person would affect the continuation of play.
 - b. Immediately call a coach, trainer, or other "authorized persons" to the injured player.
 - c. Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution, re-entry, and short-handed player if necessary.
9. Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-enter once provided such player occupies the same batting position, whenever he/she is in the line-up.
10. **Five (5) minute grace period! The clock will start at game time. The team that is awaiting their ninth (9th) player will automatically be the visitors and forfeit the top half of the first (1st) inning. If the teams' ninth (9th) player does not show within the five (5) minute grace period, the game is declared a forfeit.**
11. **A courtesy runner will be allowed to run for an injured batter/runner one time per game. We will allow the last person who made an out to replace the injured player. If batter A exercised this rule during the second inning, then for subsequent at bats, batter A has to run for him/her or be removed from the game. However, batter B may use this rule in another inning. Each player that uses this rule, may do it only once per and it can't happen in the same inning. In Coed, it would be the last player of that gender who made the last out to replace the injured runner. If the injured player is unable to re-enter the game, then they would have to be replaced. If there were no substitute, it would be an automatic out.**
12. **FORFEIT FEE: Any team that forfeits a game will be assessed a \$25 fee that must be paid in order to play the following week. The Athletics Coordinator must be notified 24 hours in advance of the game forfeit in order to wave the forfeit fee. Fees can be paid online through the team manager's account or at the REC of Grapevine front desk.**
13. If a team forfeits three (3) league games due to lack of players at the start of a regularly scheduled game, the team will be dropped from the league with no refund of the entry fee and all teams scheduled to play the offending team for the remainder of the season will receive a win by forfeit. Make-up games scheduled on days other than the original league night will not apply.
14. If a team receives a forfeit, they will have use of the field for practice (except for the last game of the night) until ten (10) minutes before the next scheduled game time. Umpires will NOT umpire during forfeits.
15. In the interest of safety for players and children, all teams are asked to keep the gate from the dug-out on to the playing field closed at all times. No person under the age of sixteen (16) will be allowed on the playing field at any time during the game.

16. **All Men's leagues (Church, D, D/E, E divisions) will observe the "steal rule." This includes games with a 3 ball 2 strike count. Please refer to the ASA rulebook (p 112, Rule 8, Section 6, G.).**
17. "Dig Out Rule" will be enforced – Umpires will go over this rule during per-game conference.
18. ** **The Halo rule will be enforced with all divisions: If a batter hits a ball up the middle directly at the pitcher and/or path – If in the judgment of the umpire to be dangerous (high risk of INJURY), the play will be ruled dead – runners will go back to the original base they started from, and the batter will be called out. Chalked lines will be marked down 1 foot on each side of the pitching rubber to assist in discretion.**

V. Co-ed Playing Rules

All playing rules (Section IV) and Co-ed Rules (Section V) will apply except for the following:

1. Co-ed "For Fun" league may start with nine (9) players, five (5) of one gender and four (4) of the other. The automatic out rule will apply for the tenth batting position (See rule IV. 7.).
2. Teams are allowed to play more females than males at any time during the game.
3. All regulations governing rosters will not apply to the Co-ed "For Fun" league. Players are not limited to one particular team. Teams are not limited as to their number of players on the team.
4. Teams at bat will be allowed to score a maximum of seven (7) runs per half inning depending on when the umpire signals "time".
5. **For Fun leagues will observe a 50 minute time limit. No new inning will start after 50 minutes; the home team WILL be able to finish their half of the inning.**
6. **Defensively, the pitcher and catcher must be of different gender. For the other positions, there must be an even amount of males and females in the infield and outfield. The five (5) male fielders and five (5) female fielders may play any position as long as genders are evenly distributed between the infield and outfield. For example, two (2) males and two (2) females must take any position in the outfield; two (2) males and two (2) females must take any position in the infield. For teams with only 9 players, five (5) males and four (4) females, the extra male must not take a fielding position since the defensive ratios must remain the same.**
7. **Offensively, teams must alternate the batting line-up according to gender. If a player leaves the game for any reason, their substitute must be of the same gender.**
8. Teams are allowed to play more females than males at any time during the game.
9. Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award. The next batter, a female, will bat.
Exception: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat.

FREEZE OUT Winter League

1. Teams play 30 minute double headers and start each at bat with a full count.

VI. Field Conditions

1. In case of inclement weather, the playability of game fields will be determined at 3:30 p.m. each day. Updates on field conditions during inclement weather will be sent out to team managers via TeamSideline. **It is the team manager's responsibility to notify his/her players regarding field playability.**
2. **Rainout Hotline: 817-410-3475 -- updated after 3:30 p.m.**

VII. Rain-Out Procedure

1. Rainouts will be made up on regular league play nights. A game is considered official if it is called after 4 innings or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
2. All make-up games will be called in its entirety. **Exception: If a league has more than two games to make up, then all games will begin with a 3 ball, 2 strike count, and the third foul is not an out, fourth foul is an out.**

VIII. Tie-Breaker Procedure

In case of a tie for the top 2 teams at the conclusion of the season, the following tiebreaker procedure will be used to determine places:

1. Head-to-Head result(s) between teams tied.
2. If teams split in head-to-head games, point differential in those games will be used.
3. If teams are still tied, point differential in ALL league games for the teams tied will be used.
4. After the first place team has been determined, revert back to #1 above to determine second place from the remaining tied teams.

IX. Conduct/Discipline – Zero Tolerance

1. Grapevine City Ordinance Section #16-6 states, "It shall be unlawful for any person to possess or consume alcoholic beverages in the public park of the City."
2. Smoking will not be allowed on the fields.
3. **Zero Tolerance – If a player is ejected from the game, it is the coach's responsibility to get that player OFF of the field and OUT of the park immediately. If the player refuses to leave in a timely manner the game will be declared a FORFEIT by the game umpire.**
4. Any player, coach and manager ejected from any league game will be suspended for a (1) one game.
5. Players, coaches, managers, and spectators who have been ejected or suspended MAY NOT RETURN UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF THEIR SUSPENSION.
6. Each team manager will be held responsible for the conduct of his/her fans/spectators.
7. Suspensions will carry over from season to season. Example: A player suspended during the final game of one season will also be suspended for the first game of the next season.
8. Verbal or physical violence especially attacks on a game or tournament official immediately before, during or after a game, fight or confrontation between players/teams will result in a minimum of one (1) year loss of eligibility in ALL league play, subject to an annual review if requested.
9. Ejection/Suspension/Appeal Procedures: Once a player, coach or spectator is ejected from a game, then that person will be notified in writing that they will be suspended for one (1) game and/or one (1) year depending on the severity of the incident. When the suspended person receives that correspondence, then he/she has the right to appeal the ruling **in writing** within 5 days. In turn, the Grapevine Parks and Recreation athletic office, has up to 5 days to render a decision **in writing** regarding the appeal. This office has the right to uphold, reduce, waive or increase any suspension that has been granted, once the research has been conducted. All decisions are final and are considered closed.
10. The umpires have the authority to remove a player, coach or spectator from a game and/or forfeit the game due to unsportsmanlike conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include, but not be limited to, profanity, threats of any kind toward the umpires, staff member or official, fighting (before, during or after the game), any intoxicated condition detected by the umpire before or during the game or any flagrant foul as determined by the umpire.
11. No tobacco products or alcohol consumption on park property, field, or dugout area.

X. Park Rules

1. Alcohol is strictly prohibited by players and spectators at Oak Grove Park at all times.
2. If alcohol is found on the premises, an immediate ejection will be implemented.
3. Patrons must observe the city "Dog Leash Law" while at the game at Oak Grove Park. No dogs allowed on the fields or in the dugouts.
4. No in-line skates, skate boards, or scooters allowed.
5. For the courtesy of all patrons, please observe all bicycle safety rules within the ball field areas.

XI. Summaries:

1. Normal ASA rules will apply if not noted above
2. The Parks and Recreation Department reserve the right to add, delete or amend the rules and regulations or policies for the betterment of the program.
3. The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to approve/disapprove any team name, logo, language on uniform deemed lewd, vulgar, obscene or suggestive in order to maintain a wholesome environment conducive to providing quality leisure opportunities.

XII. Staff Information

1. Abby Sandy, Athletics Coordinator, 817-410-3460 or asandy@grapevinetexas.gov
2. The REC: 817-410-3450
3. Schedules and standings are posted on www.teamsideline.com/grapevine
4. **Forfeit Rule: Teams must notify the city of a forfeit 24 hours in advance. If a team does not give a proper notice, then a \$25 forfeit fee will be assessed to the team. If you need extra players, the city can provide a free agent list.**