



Adult Softball Rules
Revised 1/26/2024

City of Port St Lucie Adult Softball League Administrators

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I. ROSTERS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. ROSTERS: Each team must submit a completed roster form at registration. Registration will not be accepted without a roster. A roster must include: team name, captain's name, email address and phone numbers, and each player's name, email address and phone number. A player will be removed from the roster if the complete information is not given. Each player is required to sign a waiver of liability before participating in games. A team must have a minimum number of 12 eligible players (up to a maximum of 20) listed on the roster. Player names will be posted on the website under team rosters.

2. ROSTER ADDITIONS: Adult Monday & Wednesday Division - Rosters will freeze after your 6th game.
Coed Friday Division - Rosters will freeze after your 4th game.

3. AGE: All players must be eighteen years of age or older, on or before the day of registration.

4. ELIGIBILITY:

A player may not play for two teams in the same league (adult or co-ed). A player may move to a different team until the rosters are closed. However, (s)he must be removed from one roster before (s)he can be placed on another and may not play for two different teams in the same league during the same week. Once dropped from a roster, the same player may not be added again. The coach must initial all deletions to the rosters. The league reserves the right to restrict individual players to specified divisions for safety's sake and in the spirit of fair play.

Adult Monday & Wednesday Division – A player must play in at least 5 regular season games to qualify to play in the playoffs.

Coed Friday Division - A player must play in at least 4 regular season games to qualify to play in the playoffs.

5. EQUIPMENT:

a. Bats: Bats will be legal for USSSA sanctioned play only if the bat is manufactured by an approved USSSA bat manufacturer on the USSSA approved bat manufactured list (kept by USSSA and published and made available by means including, but limited to, the USSSA website) and has the new USSSA mark (kept by USSSA and published and made available by means including, but limited to, the USSSA website), on the taper of the bat.

1) Bat should be marked with a Bat Performance Factor (BPF) of 1.20 or less

2) No altered, titanium, or senior bats will be allowed.

3) Any bat not identifiable by the markings on the bat as an approved bat or with any visible cracks, shall be considered illegal.

- 4) Any bat barrel with a foreign substance such as spray glue, stick'em, pine tar, or any other substance that may help the bat grip the ball will be removed from the game at the umpire's discretion.
- 5) If the bat is clearly illegal (no testing needed), the player using the illegal bat and the owner of the bat will be ejected from the game. An out is called and all action is nullified.
- 6) If the bat is in question and is not clearly illegal, the umpire or city staff, has the right to request the inspection of the bat that is brought into the softball complex. The player will have two options:
 - Admit that the bat has been altered
 - o The player will be ejected from the game, an out is called, and all action is nullified. The game will be scored as a forfeit against the team whose player or players used the illegal bat. No suspensions will be issued.
 - Allow City Personnel to test the bat
 - o During testing, the game will proceed normally.
 - o If the bat passes compression testing, the bat will be returned immediately.
 - o If the bat fails compression testing, the game will be scored as a forfeit against the team whose player or players used the illegal bat. The player using the bat and the owner of the bat will be immediately suspended from all league play at the City of Port St Lucie for 1-year.
 - o Any refusal to allow us to test a bat will result in an immediate 1-year suspension for the player using the bat and the owner for the bat.
 - o Suspensions shall be binding on the person using the bat as well as the owner of the bat.
 - o Suspensions may not be appealed.

b. Balls: The city will provide all game balls. Each team is responsible for retrieving their foul balls or home run balls.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. DIVISION ASSIGNMENTS: Managers register for the division in which they want to play. Divisions are NOT re-organized during the season. Division champions (regular season and post season) must play in a higher division (if available) the next season in which they register. A returning team may NOT move down a division unless they finish in one of the bottom two places (regular season AND did not win the playoff championship) the previous season. (A returning team is defined as having four or more returning players.) Moving down is OPTIONAL, not required.

2. SCHEDULES/LINE-UPS: Changes to the schedule may be made after the schedule is posted on the league website. The second team listed on the schedule is designated as the **HOME** team. The home team is responsible for keeping the score in a score book. The visiting team is responsible to verify the score after each inning. Once a new inning begins, no changes will be made to the previous innings.

3. STANDINGS: Standings are available on the league website at www.leaguelineup.com/pslsoftball

4. RAINOUTS: Make up games will be played when fields are available. This may be a different night than your regularly scheduled league night. You must field a team or the game will be declared a forfeit. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

It is the captain's responsibility to check the website (www.leaguelineup.com/pslsoftball) for updates on rain outs. If there is no cancellation message, assume all games will be played, and the final decision will be made on site. Games will be postponed on a game-to-game basis. If a game in progress is called because of rain/lightning and the game has not progressed to the point of being official (4.5 innings if home team is winning, 5 innings if the visiting team is winning) the game will (in regular season and playoffs) be resumed from the point and time that the game was called.

5. LIGHTNING DELAYS: The City of Port St. Lucie Parks & Recreation Department utilize Thor Guard Lightning Prediction and Warning Systems. If the Thor Guard warning is active, all play will be suspended until the system gives the "all clear." Team managers of the first postponed games have the option to stay and wait to play later, IF the weather clears. Should both managers agree, the latest scheduled game would be the first game postponed. Should both managers not agree to wait for weather to clear, the first game would be postponed.

6. CITY ORDINANCES - ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES / DOMESTIC ANIMALS

- a. In accordance with the City Code Title IX, Section 96-80: **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND/OR DRUGS** whatsoever shall be permitted to be brought into or consumed in any park area of the City. Failure to comply will result in the discontinued use of the facility.
- b. City Code Title IX, Section 96-80 prohibits domestic animals in any park or park area unless clearly marked by signs bearing the words, "Domestic Animals Permitted in this Area" or for persons requiring sight-assisted animals.
- c. In compliance with the above rules, any team member not following these ordinances will serve a one game suspension. A second infraction will result in a two-game suspension. A third infraction will result in suspension from the league.

7. TRESSPASS WARNING

A trespass warning is issued to anyone in violation of Port St. Lucie City Ordinance Chapter 96 or any other illegal offense (crime) which occurs on City property. All trespass warnings are valid for one year from the date of issuance and are applied to the entirety of the property of the location of the incident. The Director of Parks & Recreation, Sherman Conrad, or his designees, may consider lifting the trespass warning only after the submission of a written request by the offender and after a minimum of a 90-day trespass period. Anyone in violation of the trespass warning has committed the crime of trespass as per Florida State Statute 810.09 (1)(a): Trespass on property other than structure or conveyance.-(1)(a) A person who, without being authorized, licensed, or invited, willfully enters upon or remains in any property other than a structure or Conveyance: 1. As to which notice against entering or remaining is given, either by actual communication to the offender or by posting, fencing, or cultivation as described in s.810.011.

8. PLAY-OFFS

- a. All teams qualify for the playoffs.
- b. Play-off position tiebreakers for the seeding in the playoffs, go in this order:
 - 1) *Head to head overall.*
 - 2) *Head to head run differential for the season.*
 - 3) *Total runs scored against for the season.*
 - 4) *Total runs scored for season.*

If there are more than two teams tied, then there must be a head to head game played by all teams and a clear cut or decisive advantage to one of the teams. If there is not one team with an advantage than the next tie breaker will be used to determine playoffs. It is up to the athletic staff's discretion as to whether or not there is a team with a clear-cut head to head advantage. If a team forfeits against another team during the regular season and those two teams end up tied in the regular season, the team that forfeited during the regular season will automatically receive the lower seed. Any forfeits incurred with more than 2 teams tied will not be used as a factor for section (3) Total runs scored against and (4) Total runs scored. Therefore, just the games that were played will be figured into the formula to determine seeding for the playoffs.

- c. Format: The playoffs will be single elimination. A 60 minute time limit is in effect for all playoff games except for the championship game which will not have a time limit but will be played to its conclusion (7 innings). Run rules will be in effect for playoff and championship games. The 15-run rule is in effect after 5 innings (or 4 1/2 if the home team is ahead) for all Championship Games.
- d. Seeding for the playoffs will be determined by overall record. The highest seeded team is the home team.

9. AWARDS: Co-Ed & Adult Leagues - Team trophy and T-shirts for 1st place team. Runner-up team trophy for 2nd place team.

10. PROTEST: All protests must be made at the time of the incident to the plate umpire. The umpire will notify staff of the protest and will follow league guidelines as stated below. Any protest made after the final pitch of the game will not be considered. Protest time will be deducted from the game time. Only rule interpretations may be protested, judgment calls may not be protested. A protest must be submitted to the League Administrators, in writing within one business day of the incident, and accompanied by a \$50.00 protest fee. If the fee is not received in time the protest will not be considered. All

protests will be reviewed by the Recreation Manager. (*If a protest is made during a playoff game, the umpire must notify recreation staff immediately. Play should not resume until a decision is reached by League Administrator.)

a. The formal written protest must contain the following information:

- 1) *Date, time, and field*
- 2) *Name of umpires.*
- 3) *The rule and section of the official Rules, or local league rules adopted general rules under which the protest is being filed.*
- 4) *The decision and/or conditions surrounding the cause for the protest.*
- 5) *All essential facts involved in the matter of the protest.*

b. The decision made on a protest game may result in:

- 1) *The protest is found invalid and the score of the game stands as played. The \$50 protest fee is deposited into the City's general fund account.*
- 2) *If the protest is allowed, the game will resume at the point of protest, as a suspended game. A refund of \$50 will be returned to the protesting team.*

11. SANCTION FEE:

Payment for USSA sanction fee must be turned in to the league prior to the team's first game. All teams are required to be USSSA sanctioned. Note: Only those teams who have paid the USSSA sanction fee will be permitted to play. It is the team's responsibility to provide proof of payment before their first game. The USSSA eligibility year is from January 1, 2020 through following December 31, 2020. The USSSA fee may be included in the same check as the league fee.

12. REFUNDS:

No refunds of any kind will be issued after the start of league play.

III. GENERAL RULES

USSA Softball rules will be used with the exception of the following league rules:

1. NUMBER OF PLAYERS: No team may start a game with less than 9 players. If a team starts with 9 players, there will be no outs recorded when the vacant player's spot, the 10th position in the batting order comes up in the batting order. However, a team may not drop to nine players due to an injury or player ejection without taking an out in the vacant player's spot. When a team starts a game with 9 players, the team may add a tenth player at any time during the game. An added player shall bat in the 10th position order. In order to use an AH (Additional Hitter), a team must start with 11 or 12 players. There is a maximum of 10 players on the field at a time. (COED has a unique set of rules for rosters and batting order. Please see Section 21 for COED specific rules.)

2. UNIFORMS: Teams are to be in uniform by the **third game**. All players must wear the same color shirts, and each shirt must have a clearly visible number on it. Numbers must be **PRINTED** on the back or front of their jerseys. **Tape or marker** is not permitted. Each player must have a unique number (no two players should have the same number). Numbers that do NOT count listed on some shirts are phone numbers, year, or dates. Examples (2015, 2016, 561-367-7039, or August 6, 2017.) Metal spikes or cleats with metal tips are not permitted.

One player may play out of uniform at no penalty. For each additional player out of uniform, a run is awarded to the opposing team at the start of the game. Players that show up after the start of the game out of uniform (past the courtesy threshold) may be inserted into the game, but a run will be awarded to the opposing team.

3. GRACE PERIOD: The first game of each night will have a 5-minute grace period; subsequent games will not receive a grace period.

4. COUNT: A batter will start each turn at bat with a 1 ball - 1 strike count.

5. COURTESY FOUL: A batter may foul off once (and continue their at bat) if they have two strikes in the count. Batters would be out on a second foul.

6. COURTESY RUNNERS: Each team is allowed one courtesy runner per inning unless the same player bats more than once that inning. If this is the case the same courtesy runner must be used. The courtesy runner can be any player on the team roster. If the courtesy runner comes to bat while on base, it is an out. (Co-ed must be the same gender).

7. BASERUNNER SAFETY ZONE: A baserunner on first or third base may stand in foul territory while their team is batting to reduce the risk of being struck by a ball. The baserunner must touch the base they are on (first or third) once the ball is hit into play before advancing to the next base. If the baserunner does not touch the base they are on prior to advancing to the next base, they will be ruled out. If the baserunner in foul territory interferes with the defense from making a play in foul territory, it will be ruled a dead-ball and the baserunner closest to home will be out.

8. HOME RUN RULE: Hitting a home run after limit has been met will result in an out. A home run is any ball batted fair that clears the fence untouched.

9. HOME RUN LIMIT:

- a. Coed league will have the following home run limits:
 - Social Division - 1 Home Run Maximum per team
 - Lower Division – 2 Home Run Maximum per team
 - Middle Division – 3 Home Run Maximum per team
 - Upper Division – 4 Home Run Maximum per team
- b. Adult M/W League will have the following home run limits:
 - Middle Division – 3 Home Run Maximum per team
 - Upper Division – 4 Home Run Maximum per team

10. RUN RULE: Games will be seven innings in length. The 20-run rule is in effect after 3 innings (or 2 ½ if the home team is ahead). The 15-run rule is in effect after 4 innings (or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead). The 10-run rule is in effect after 5 innings (or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead). Run rule is also in effect for playoff games.

11. TIME LIMIT: A 60 minute time limit is in effect for all regular season games. The umpire will keep track of the official time. There will be a digital timer on the field.

When the game clock expires:

- a. No new inning will start
- b. The bottom of the inning will not start if the home team is winning
- c. The bottom of the inning will end immediately if the home team is winning
- d. The bottom of the inning will end immediately if the home team takes the lead

Regular season games may end in a tie. Only post-season games (playoffs and championships) will play extra innings. The playoff games have a 60 minute time limit (so long as the game is not tied). The championship games will not have a time limit but will be played to their conclusion (7 innings).

12. DESIGNATED HITTER (DH): A Designated Hitter (DH) is optional, but if used, it must be made known prior to the start of the game and be listed in the regular batting order. The DH must be used the entire game. All 11 players must bat in the same order. Any 10 players can play defense.

13. DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

a. A physical or verbal threat to any league official or player or fighting (throwing a punch and /or making physical contact while engaged in any form of unsportsmanlike conduct) will result in at least an immediate suspension for anyone involved from the remainder of the team's games including playoffs or at a minimum of 10 games which could include games into the following season. If a suspended player is involved in more than one league, the suspension will carry over and ban those involved from every game in every league including playoffs. If a player is ejected during his/her last game of the season, the incident will be reviewed by league officials to determine if the player will serve a suspension for his/her next season.

b. When a player/coach is suspended or ejected from a league/game, that person is **NOT** permitted to be in the playing area (i.e. field, dugout) for the duration of the suspension/ejection.

c. Aggressive behavior or derogatory remarks towards participants, league officials, and/or City staff while in the park will result in at least removal from the game and possible suspension from the league for those involved. Anyone ejected from a game for any form of unsportsmanlike conduct (verbal/aggressive behavior, foul language, etc...) will be suspended for:

1. **First Ejection: game** ejected from and the team's next game played.
2. **Second Ejection: game** ejected from and teams next two games played.
3. **Third Ejection: suspension** from remainder of league including playoffs.

d. All ejections will be reviewed by the Athletic staff and based on the severity of the incident the ejection/suspension may be set for a "finite period" exceeding the listed penalties above.

e. Players ejected from a game for rule violations (throwing bat, etc.) will be ejected from the game being played but will **not** serve additional game suspensions.

f. **Bat Throwing:** Any player that deliberately throws a bat will be ejected from the game. In the case of an accidental bat throwing the umpire will issue a warning. This will be a judgment call by the umpire. Bat throwing is a safety hazard.

g. Suspension of more than three games will be reported to the head of USSSA for review and possible suspension from USSSA. Any player suspended by USSSA will not be eligible to participate in any USSSA League or tournament. If suspended by USSSA, all other associations (ASA, NSA, etc..) shall be notified, and suspension from those organizations shall also be enforced.

h. If an individual receives a trespass warning during a season, they are automatically suspended from all league activities, at any facility that league activities are held, for the duration of the season OR the duration of the trespass warning, whichever is longer. No suspension letter will be issued.

14. INELIGIBLE PLAYER: Any suspected ineligible player should be brought to the attention of the umpire and City staff. The City staff has the right to compare team line-ups to a team's roster or intervene at any time if an ineligible player is suspected. If a player is found to be ineligible, then that team will forfeit their game.

a. **Regular Season:** The questioned player's identity will be confirmed by the official roster and the player's photo ID. If a player's name appears on the roster but the player in question does not have a photo ID on hand, the questioned player has 24 hours to present a photo ID to the Recreation Manager and the game will be completed under protest. An ineligible player will result in a forfeit of the game in question. In addition, the team's manager and the illegal player will be suspended from coaching and/or playing in that league for their team's next three games (may include playoffs).

b. **Playoffs: There will be a mandatory roster check** conducted by the City staff throughout the playoffs in which each player must present a photo ID. If a player cannot produce a photo ID and if the photo ID cannot be verified with the roster/waiver form, that player may not play in the game. If an unapproved/unvalidated/illegal player subsequently enters the game, the game will be declared a forfeit. In addition, the team's manager and the illegal player will be suspended from coaching and/or playing in that league for their team's next three games (may extend into following season).

15. BLOOD RULE: When a player is bleeding, or has an open wound, the bleeding must be stopped, and the open wound covered with a bandage/dressing; strong/sturdy enough to withstand the rigors of competition. This treatment must be immediate and a suspension of play for a reasonable amount of time (determined by Home Plate Umpire-no more than 5 minutes) will be awarded to the team. Should the treatment of this wound exceed a reasonable amount of time, the affected player must be substituted for. Return to play will be determined by appropriate medical personnel or the Home Plate Umpire. Any player whose uniform is saturated with blood, regardless of the source, must follow the same guidelines as stated above for a person bleeding and must have the uniform changed, if determined necessary before returning to the game.

16. FORFEITS:

A team failing to field a team at the scheduled game time will automatically forfeit the game. If neither team has enough players to start (nine players), a double forfeit shall be declared. If a team forfeits because they do not have enough players to start a game:

1st forfeit game - no penalty;

2nd forfeit game - lose one position in final playoff standings;

3rd forfeit game - will be dropped from the league (no refund).

If a team is aware they will not be able to field a team and must forfeit a game and notifies the league administrators at least 24 hours in advance **IN WRITING** (email), they will be charged a loss, but will not be penalized for a forfeit.

Teams should exchange line-ups 10 minutes prior to game time to avoid delays. Umpires may call forfeits for the teams who are not ready to play at game time. The visiting team must ensure that the line-ups are correct in the official book.

17. PITCHING SCREENS:

- a. The pitching screen is MANDATORY for all teams.
- b. In softball, hitting up the middle is considered unsportsmanlike conduct. A batted ball that hits a portion of the pitching screen will be declared a foul ball and there will be no advance of the runners. A batter will be called out if they hit the screen twice during the same at bat.
- c. The pitching screen must remain no more than 2 feet in front of the pitching rubber and must protect 50% of the rubber.
- d. Any thrown ball that hits the pitching screen will remain a live ball.
- e. Any pop fly in the vicinity of the pitching screen, in the umpire's judgment, regardless of how many players are on base, will be treated as a dead ball out. There will be no advance of the runners.
- f. If the pitcher steps in front of the screen to play the ball and it hits the pitchers' glove or body then hits the pitching screen, the ball is LIVE.

18. WAIVER OF LIABILITY/INSURANCE:

Each player is required to sign a waiver form before participating in games. The City of Port St. Lucie is not responsible for any injuries that may occur as a result of participation in league play. Players who participate in the City of Port St Lucie Parks & Recreation leagues do so at their own risk. The City of Port St Lucie Parks & Recreation Department does not carry insurance covering any injuries received while participating in this program.

19. DIVISIONS

City of Port St Lucie Staff and Management reserve the right to place any team in a higher or lower division.

20. HEADGEAR/JEWELRY:

- a. Wearing of a catcher's mask is optional.
- b. Wearing of baseball hats is optional. Any hat that displays offensive language or pictures cannot be worn.
- c. All exposed jewelry items that are judged as hazardous or potentially dangerous by the umpire, such as neck chains, watches, bracelets or earrings that extend below the earlobes, may not be worn during the game. Umpires may ask players to remove such items.

21. CO-ED LEAGUE ONLY:

- a. There must be five males and five females in the line-up always, and six males and six females if "Additional Hitter" (AH) is used. Note: Any player may play any position on the field.
 - i. A game can begin with nine players if five of those players are women, with an "out" declared at the point the absent male ballplayer would have batted. If the absent player arrives during the game, he is to be inserted into the batting order.
 - ii. A game can begin with nine players if five of those players are men, with an "out" declared at the point the absent female ballplayer would have batted. If the absent player arrives during the game, she is to be inserted into the batting order. A team may begin a game under this scenario for a

maximum 2 games during the regular season. A team may NOT begin a game under this scenario in the playoffs.

- iii. A game can begin with 10 players if four (or less) of those players are men, with a woman batting in the order for the man. All normal batting rules for women would be followed (such as outfield line, using a girl's ball, only taking one base when walked). There will not be "outs" declared for absent players as the team will be playing with 10. A team may begin a game under this scenario for a maximum 2 games during the regular season. A team may NOT begin a game under this scenario in the playoffs.
- b. The batting order must alternate sexes (man/woman or woman/man). You cannot have two men/two women hitting back-to-back. Athletes with special needs requiring accommodations (regardless of sex) may bat in place of either male or female batters in the order.
- c. If a male batter is walked, he automatically advances to second base the following female batter has the option to walk or hit.
- d. Two sized balls shall be used - 11" for women and 12" for men. First base coach shall be responsible for giving the correct ball to the pitcher. If wrong ball is used, refer to rule section 2 in the USSSA rule book.
- e. If your team only has 9 players to start the game, the out goes in the 9th position if you are missing a female. If the player missing is a male, the out goes in the 10th position. A team may play with 6 girls and 4 guys without any outs given.
- f. Courtesy runners – one male and one female per inning.
- g. When a female player bats, no outfielder may cross inside the outfield line until the ball is put in play.
- h. If a player is subbed out, and there is a subsequent injury to a player (of the same gender), the subbed out player may re-enter the game for the injured player. The injured player may not re-enter the game at any point.
- i. Defensive teams are required to have four players on the infield, with at least two infielders completely on either side of second base.
- j. **All other rules apply, as per the USSSA rule book.**

The City of Port St Lucie will determine any situation not covered in these rules. In addition, the City of Port St Lucie reserves the right to interpret any and all rules, situation, and further reserves the right to insert, delete, or change rules at any time and make decisions retroactive should it be deemed necessary for the benefit of the league.