

West Windsor Little League/Cranbury Plainsboro Little League

2015 Softball Rules of Play

AAA Division

All teams are provided with the Little League Softball Official Regulations and Playing Rules. All Managers and coaches should get to know the important rules that the league is required to abide by. As a guide, some of the rules and regulations are summarized and/or have been adopted by the WWLL/CPLL to govern play this year. The Official Regulations and Playing Rules apply in all cases unless superseded below.

The AAA softball leagues will follow 8U tournament rules. However, mid-way through the season (week of May 11), kid-pitch will be introduced (see rules below). Note that these rules apply for play within the WWLL/CPLL league. Rules may vary for games with out of town teams (this will need to be discussed before each game with an out of town team).

General rules:

1. **Defensive Players:** There will be a maximum of 9 defensive players on the field at any one time with no more than 6 infielders. The outfielders must be positioned beyond the infield dirt.
2. **Pitching:** For the first half of the season, coaches will pitch to their own team.
 - a. Each batter will receive seven (7) pitches or three (3) swings to constitute an out. No walks. Foul balls after two (2) strikes earn is not a strikeout; foul balls after the 7th pitch earns another pitch.
 - b. Beginning the week of May 11, kid pitch will be introduced (see below for pitching rules that will go into effect at that point)
3. **Minimum Play:** Each player must play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield. No player may play more than two innings at any one position during the game.
4. **Duration of Play:** Games will be a maximum of six (6) innings and have a drop dead time limit of 60 minutes.
5. **Maximum Number of Runs per Inning:** The maximum number of runs scored by a team in an inning is 5. Unlimited runs in the top and bottom half of the 6th inning of game.
6. **Bunting:** No bunting
7. **Infield fly rule:** No infield fly rule
8. **Baserunning:** Runners may take lead after pitched ball passes plate. Runners are in jeopardy of being put out. No stealing.
9. **End of Play:** Play is stopped when a defensive player has control of the ball in the circle.

- a. If a runner is less than halfway to next base when play is stopped, the runner must return to prior base. Each team will receive one warning per time at bat (each inning), each incident after the one warning will result in the runner being called out. Umpires discretion. Player must complete attempt at next base. If player returns to previous base on her own accord, no warning will be given. Remember, player is in jeopardy of being put out when not on base.
10. **Interference:** If coach-pitcher is hit by batted ball or interferes with the fielding of batted ball, the play is dead and batter remains at bat. Pitch does not count against batter and runners remain at base.
11. **On-Deck:** There is no on-deck position. A bat should not be touched until the batter is ready to come to the plate.

Pitching Rules

1. Each batter will be pitched to by a pitcher who is a player on the opposing team.
2. Upon ball 4 the count is retained and the hitting team's coach will throw anywhere from 1 to 6 additional pitches to the batter who will either strike out or put the ball in play. The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes. A batter can strike out looking or swinging on a coach pitch, but she cannot walk. If the third strike occurs, the batter will be called out on strikes. If the batter puts the ball in play, the at bat ends with the result of the play. If the ball is not put in play after the 6th additional pitch, the batter will be called out. NOTE: When the batter gets to the point where it is the final pitch of her at bat, the coaches should encourage her to swing at the pitch no matter where the ball is located. No extra pitches awarded due to a bad last pitch. This rule is in place to keep the game moving and not cause the game to be delayed.
3. A foul ball on the 6th coach's pitch will not count and the coach will continue to pitch until the ball is hit fairly, not swung at or missed.
4. Coach pitchers must make an attempt to get out of the pitching circle after a ball is put in play. In addition, the coach pitcher must make every reasonable attempt to avoid interfering with a defensive play.
5. A ball accidentally fielded by the coach pitcher shall be considered a "do-over".
6. No coaching from the pitching circle.
7. If three batters are hit by a pitch thrown by the same pitcher during a game, that pitcher must leave the mound for the remainder of the inning once the third batter is hit. A new pitcher will come in to complete the inning. Once the inning is complete, the previous pitcher may come back to pitch at any time. Once any pitcher hits a maximum of five batters in a game, she may no longer pitch during that game. This includes pitches that bounce before crossing the plate. Batters must attempt to avoid being hit by pitched balls at all times in accordance with reasonable standards interpreted by the umpire. If, in the sole opinion of the umpire a batter purposely is hit by a pitch or fails to avoid being hit by a pitch, then that will not count against the pitcher's hit batsmen limit. Unless the umpire determines otherwise, if the batter is hit by a pitch, the batter is to take first base.

8. All player pitchers and coach pitchers will pitch from a rubber that is the regulation minors' distance of 35 feet.
9. For in-house games a pitcher may pitch a maximum of 2 innings
 - a. Delivery of one pitch is considered as pitching one inning.

Other Rules and Guidelines

1. Obscenities and/or poor sportsmanship by players, coaches, managers, or parents will not be tolerated. Do not make disparaging comments about the other team, umpires, or anyone else. Managers, coaches or players using obscenities will be promptly removed from the game. Your coordinators will promptly resolve any and all issues brought to our attention.
2. Abuse of umpires will not be tolerated. We will at all times have either an adult umpire or another adult in charge of the game who will work with our youth umpires to ensure that the games are umpired in a professional manner. Any coach or manager ejected from a game for abusing the umpire will be automatically suspended from the following game, will have to leave the complex at which the game is being played and will not be allowed at the complex at which the next game is being played. Additionally, any manager or coach that is ejected must meet with the VP of Softball, the appropriate League Coordinator and the Player Agent prior to resuming managerial duties for games or practices. The umpire will notify the Umpire Coordinator of the ejection promptly. If a manager wishes to confer with an umpire about a rule, he or she must request a time-out from the umpire and may not go on the field unless or until a time-out is granted. **No coach may join the manager in such discussion. No comments or discussions whatsoever regarding a judgment call of an umpire are permitted under any circumstances.** Any conversation with an umpire shall be conducted calmly and respectfully and in no event should any parent or player be able to hear such a conversation. Do NOT undermine the authority of our umpires at ANY time. Demonstrating good sportsmanship is more important than an umpire making a correct call. Any concerns a manager may have regarding an umpire should be directed to the League Coordinator following the game.
3. Wearing jewelry of any kind, with the exception of a medic alert bracelet, is not permitted.
4. Food of any kind – including sunflower seeds -- is not permitted in the dugout.
5. Only water is permitted. Each team MUST clean the dugout area prior to leaving the area.
6. The home team will take the first base dugout and is responsible to supply two game balls to the umpire.
7. The away team will take the third base dugout.
8. Game balls will be provided by the Softball Equipment Coordinator.
9. The home team must rake the infield, line the base lines and the 8-foot pitching circle before each game. The visiting team must rake the infield (prior to covering with the tarp, if appropriate) and clean out both dugouts after each game. However, in the spirit of sportsmanship, it is preferred that both teams work together before and after the

game to ensure that all field maintenance is completed as quickly as possible to allow the next game to begin or to allow everyone to go home as soon as possible.

10. Only the league coordinator can cancel a game due to weather conditions prior to the game's start. Once the game begins, it is the umpire's decision whether or not to cancel or delay the game.
11. In the event of poor weather on days prior to a game, it is the responsibility of both managers or their delegates to review the conditions of their scheduled field well ahead of the game time and to complete any maintenance to the field to ensure that their game can be played and can be started on a timely basis. This is NOT the job of the league coordinator or the VP of Softball. The need for field maintenance is not a reason to cancel or postpone a game.
12. It is the responsibility of the home team "Team Parent" to either select an adult volunteer to fulfill / directly supervise the announcer booth and scoreboard duties or to complete this responsibility themselves. If the "booth" duties are not supervised properly, the entire league can potentially lose the privilege of the use of the booth and the scoreboard.