

LLGSL Middle School Softball FAQs

Why a Middle School Softball Program?

While Loudoun County has a number of recreation, travel softball, and high school softball programs providing opportunities for female athletes, it does not have a middle school program like those in neighboring counties and the boys' baseball program currently in place in Loudoun. Additionally, youth sports organizations sponsor other middle school programs (basketball, volleyball, wrestling, etc.). Both parents and players alike have consistently shown an interest for a middle school softball program.

What is the benefit of the Middle School Softball Program?

The middle school program provides young ladies at participating middle schools the opportunity to represent their school, enhance school spirit, develop camaraderie, encourage teamwork, and to further develop their softball skills while developing relationships with the girls they will play with in high school. The program will also provide an opportunity to encourage participation from the high school programs as the middle school players practice and play together before they try out for their respective high school teams.

What Leagues/Schools are participating in the Program?

Ashburn Girls Softball League schools – Belmont Ridge, Eagle Ridge, Farmwell Station, Trailside

Leesburg Girls Softball League schools – Harper Park, Simpson, Smarts Mill

Loudoun Girls Little League Softball schools – Brambleton, Lunsford, Mercer, Stone Hill, Willard

Lower Loudoun Girls Softball League – River Bend, Seneca Ridge, Sterling Middle

Western Loudoun Girls Softball League – Blue Ridge, Harmony,

How does the Middle School Softball Program differ from House League and Travel Team Softball?

The middle school softball program provides interested players an opportunity to play a more competitive level of softball than house league, but not with the full commitment of a travel softball program. It also provides the opportunity to represent their school, enhance school spirit, develop camaraderie, encourage teamwork, and to further develop their softball skills while developing relationships with the girls they will play with in high school.

How will the Middle School Softball Program work?

Registration for House and Middle School Teams will occur congruently. House League Registration will continue after Middle School Registration has closed. Middle School Registration will open before the end of December 2019. Middle School Registration is scheduled to end January 20. Middle School tryouts will be held in February. Announcements will be made at each participating school and on league websites. Flyers will be distributed as well. The season will run from last week of March through late May with playoffs to be held in the last week of May.

- The goal is to have a ten-game season with single elimination playoffs or possible tournament style playoff (pool play and championships). This greatly depends on the number of teams we will have.
- The season will most likely have 1 game per week (Friday) and Initially 1 practice per week (Monday).

All middle school female athletes (grades 6th – 8th) are eligible to tryout. One team will be formed for each participating middle school. The teams will be formed from players that attend that school. Homeschooled and girls who attend private school, but live in Loudoun County are eligible to play for the school, whose attendance boundary zones they reside in. Schools may be combined if numbers do not support adequate team size. Each participating league will be responsible for managing tryouts, field allocations, coach selection, team selection, practice schedules, and uniforms for the middle schools in their jurisdiction. Games will be officiated using USA (formerly ASA) Softball rules, with a few predetermined variations.

What are the expectations of the Middle School Program?

This is to be competitive league. Most of the players are expected to have extensive playing experience. The coaches will expect players to be highly motivated to play. Lineups will have strict limitations, unlike house leagues, there is no full roster batting. Due to the competitive nature of this league expect teams to have as many as 14 or 15 rostered players, (Note this will diminish playing time for some.) It is conceivable that we may have to contract down to one or two teams, should we not get enough players to form three teams (one from each school)

What is the anticipated cost to play in the Middle School Softball Program?

For those already on a travel team the cost is \$135 (non-refundable) which must be paid when registering for tryouts. For those registering for both Middle School and House Leagues the cost is \$135 for the Middle School program and \$150 for the House League. While the Middle School league has no early bird discount, nor late fees, the House League Early Bird discount of \$25 will be given for registrations made for and paid before the end of January 20th. Late fees will be assessed to registrations that occur after January 20th till registration end February 15th. If your player does not make it onto the Middle School team a refund will be given (\$135 for travel players and \$135 for House players)

This fee covers the player jersey and socks, along with coach's equipment and field fees. Middle school players must provide their own gear and black softball pants.

Can a player only register for Middle School Softball?

No, a player must either be a rostered Travel Team player or registered to play on an LLGSL House League Team in order to qualify to be on a Middle School Softball team.

How can a player simultaneously play in both Middle School Softball and other Softball programs?

Games will only be scheduled on Fridays with make-ups scheduled on Mondays. The individual leagues schedules will be drafted to avoid major conflicts, i.e. games will not be scheduled on same days. Since no Middle School games will be scheduled on the weekends, there should be no Travel Ball conflicts. House league games are usually scheduled on Wednesdays and Saturdays for both 12U and Seniors 13+ division, therefore there should be no conflicts with Middle School games. It will be very important that each player discuss her individual situation with her coaches to set expectations.

Will a separate registration be required for House League team?

Yes, unless your daughter is a Travel Team player, she will need to be on an LLGSL team. If your player is not selected for the Middle School team, she will enter the player pool for the appropriate LLGSL age division. There will be no late fee assessed for the house league registration as long as the player was registered prior to the Middle School registration deadline. Both payments for House and Middle School teams will be due before Middle School tryouts.

How will team selection be determined?

Player selection and team size will be determined by individual coaches and the process established by participating leagues.

Who can I contact if I have questions not answered here?

For our first year of participation in the Middle School Alliance, Max Hechter will be the LLGSL Middle School Softball Coordinator: Please contact Max at maxhechterllgsl@gmail.com, if you would like to volunteer to be a team helper.

IMPORTANT DATES to remember:

Middle School Softball Registration:

- Open date late December 2019
- Close date January 20, 2020

House League Registration:

- Open date late December 2019
- Early Bird registration end date January 15
- Regular Registration end date January 31
- Late Registration end date February 14

While these dates all seem rather early the county now requires our registration numbers earlier in order to allocate us practice and game space for the season that should open in the middle of March.