



City of Surprise Parks & Recreation Department

Rules and Guidelines for Adult *Slow-Pitch* Softball

The City of Surprise Adult Slow-Pitch Softball League will be played according to the 2021 ASA and City of Surprise rules. The following are rule points of emphasis and City of Surprise Community & Recreation Services' additions. Any rules not mentioned in the following pages will be covered by the Official ASA/USA Rules.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

LEAGUE FORMAT: Leagues will have a round-robin format. The Field Supervisor on site will keep current standings. If two teams are tied in the standings, a tie-breaker based on head-to-head play will determine the league winner. If they are still tied, fewest runs allowed between the two tied teams will determine the tie breaker. Any team that has forfeited a game at any time during the season will automatically take the lowest ranking.

AWARDS: Awards will be based on the number of teams registered in the league. Individual and team awards will be given to the League and Tournament Champions.

COMMUNICATIONS: Unavoidable game cancellations due to rain, irrigation, or unforeseen circumstances beyond our control will be canceled through the rainout hotline no later than 1 ½ hours before the first scheduled game of the day. In most cases, games will be made up at the end of the season. Decisions on rainout games can be obtained by calling 623.222.2238

GOOD OF THE LEAGUE RULE: The City of Surprise Community & Recreation Services Department reserves the right to change any rules or regulations during the season that is in the best interest of the City of Surprise. If a change is made, all team managers affected by the change will be notified. In addition, the Community & Recreation Services Department reserves the right to add additional rules and regulations when they will benefit the program.

LEAGUE POLICIES

ALCOHOL/SMOKING/VAPING: The consumption of alcoholic beverages during a city league game is strictly prohibited within any softball park, regardless of a permit being purchased, and players/spectators involved will be REMOVED from the complex by staff. All coolers and beverage containers are subject to search by city staff. Refusal of search is an automatic ejection of the player/spectator and/or manager. **Player/Manger suspended minimum of one game. Spectator banned minimum of one game.** There is no smoking/vaping allowed on complex grounds, this includes on the field of play/in the dugout area. You must go to the parking lot to smoke/vape.

CONDUCT: **The Field Supervisor and/or Umpire has the power to eject a player or spectator and forfeit a game without warning for any conduct deemed unbecoming or detrimental to the game.** Any player assaulting an official or city employee will be automatically suspended from all City of Surprise Adult Sports Programs, and legal action may be taken. When a player is listed on the team's roster, it is understood that the team manager will notify them of all rules and regulations as well as the conduct regulations.

EJECTIONS: Players ejected from the game must leave the playing grounds immediately and have no contact with the umpires, staff or participants. Any player ejected from a City of Surprise game faces a one-game suspension. Additional action also may be taken including, but not limited to, probation and total suspension. Each incident will be reviewed, and a decision on the length of the suspension will be made in a reasonable length of time.

FORFEITS: Game time is forfeit time. A team must have a minimum of eight players to begin (coed - 4 female*/4 male) and continue the game. A Co-Ed game can begin w/5 males and 3females ONLY if both managers agree. Players must be on the field of play at game time. After a team's second forfeit they will be notified by phone and given a warning. If they should forfeit again during the season, they may be dropped from the league. **Teams should contact the league director if they anticipate forfeiting their games.** No refund will be given to teams being dropped from the league. In the case of a tie in the league standings a team with a **forfeit** during the regular season will automatically take a lower tournament seed.

ILLEGAL PLAYER PROTEST: An illegal player protest is allowed at any time during a league or tournament game. Only the manager may ask the umpire for a roster check, city staff will check roster. The player in question must be listed on the official roster or COS add/drop form and must produce photo I.D. If determined illegal by the field supervisor player will be disqualified and be counted as an out each additional time their name appears in the batting order. The team will not be allowed to substitute another player for the illegal player.

Team manager will serve a minimum of a 1 game suspension if found using an illegal player.

INFIELD PRACTICE: There will be no infield practice between games. Soft toss against fences is prohibited due to the extensive damage it causes. Teams that do not adhere to this rule run the risk of being dropped from the league.

PLAYING TIMES: Teams must be able to play at any of the scheduled game times.

SCOREKEEPING: The scorebook shall be possessed by the offensive/batting team. At the conclusion of each ½ inning, the score book shall be turned over to the opposing team. All players must be listed for each game (first and last names). It is recommended that all teams keep a second scorebook during the game. The City will provide the above mentioned game scorebook. **Both teams are responsible for checking the score each ½ inning, and bringing any discrepancies to the attention of the umpire immediately. No protest allowed after first pitch of next ½ inning begins.**

Please initial the final score on the umpire score sheet at the end of each game.

TEAM ROSTERS: All players must be at least 18 years of age prior to participating. The team roster must contain no more than 18 players. The roster must be submitted at the time of registration. Players must be added and/or deleted from the original roster **prior to the start of the leagues 9th game**. Changes made to the original roster must be written on the appropriate drop/add form before the new player participates in a game.

TEAM ROSTER MOVEMENT: A player **MAY NOT** appear on 2 rosters and/or play for 2 teams in the same division. (Ex. 1 player playing for 2 teams in the Men's "C" division is not allowed).

BORROWED PLAYERS (REGULAR SEASON ONLY. NO BORROWED PLAYERS ALLOWED IN TOURNAMENT)

- ❖ The field supervisor and umpire must be notified prior to utilizing the borrowed player(s). Furthermore, all borrowed players must be approved by the opposing team manager.
- ❖ A maximum of 2 players may be borrowed to bring the line-up to a maximum of 8-10 players. However, the team may only borrow player(s) to bring their line-up to an equal or lesser number than the team they are playing against.
- ❖ A borrowed player DOES NOT have to fill out an add/drop form as long as they are on a current team roster. If they are not on any other rosters they must be added via add/drop form. (please see illegal player protest rule above)
- ❖ The borrowed player(s) must bat in the last one/two places in the line-up. Failure to bat a borrowed player(s) in the last 2 spots will result in an automatic out each time their name appears in the line-up. The opposing team is responsible for notifying the umpire of this error. If the borrowed player(s) has already completed their at bat, the penalty will go into effect the next at-bat. The borrowed player may still play defense.
- ❖ The borrowed player(s) must play catcher and/or right field. The opposing team must notify the umpire if the borrowed player(s) play a defensive position other than catcher or right field. The umpire shall call time out and move the player(s) into the assigned position(s) and play will continue.
- ❖ When the team's actual roster player(s) arrive, the team must immediately substitute their roster player(s) for the borrowed player(s).



LEAGUE RULES

SOFTBALL: In all Surprise leagues, women will hit an 11” ball and men will hit a 12” ball. Upon conclusion of the game, the home team will receive the 12” game ball. The 11” game ball will only be given to the home team during the final game of the night on each field. **The offensive team is responsible for retrieving any ball hit out-of-play that cannot be quickly retrieved by the home team.**

PITCHING DISTANCE – 53ft.

BASE PATHS – 70ft.

BAT USE: Bats that are approved by Amateur Softball Association (ASA) are the ONLY bats that will be permitted in league and tournament play. Penalty for using a bat not approved by the A.S.A. will be ejection from the game. If a player is ejected for this reason they cannot be substituted for in the line-up and it is an automatic out each time their name appears in the line-up. View the listing of non-approved bats provided at the coaches meeting or at www.asasoftball.com.

BATTING LINE-UP: Team Managers have the option to bat their entire roster. Teams must have a minimum of eight players to start and complete a game, in coed league players must consist of a minimum of four males and four females. For coed, teams have the option of batting up to nine men and nine women in the batting order. Any player arriving late to the game may be added to the bottom of the lineup.

FOR COED: The lineup will be a continuous alternating order, male/female or female/male, throughout the entire game. At NO time will two players of the same sex bat next to each other.

If a player leaves a game due to injury or illness and does not return, his/her spot on the official scorebook can be taken by a bench substitute. If a substitute is not available, all subsequent batters will move up in the lineup, and an automatic out will be recorded during that players next at bat only. If a player is ejected from the game and a substitute is not available, that position in the lineup is an automatic out each time it appears throughout the game.

WALK RULE: If a male player is walked during his turn at bat, he automatically goes to second base. With less than two outs, the female batter must bat. If there are two outs, the female batter has the option of batting or being awarded first base.

BLOOD RULE: A player, manager or umpire who is bleeding or has blood on his/her uniform shall be prohibited from further participation in a game. Bleeding must be completely stopped before an individual can resume play. If a player’s clothing is blood soaked, it must be changed.

COURTESY RUNNERS: One courtesy runner is allowed per gender/per inning. Exception: If a courtesy runner was used for a particular individual and that individual comes to bat a second time the same inning, he/she may use a courtesy runner again. In coed, the runner must be of the same sex. A courtesy runner may be used at any time during the game. The courtesy runner must be the last out, the last player to cross the plate, or a player not in the defensive line-up.

DEFENSIVE POSITIONS (COED): The outfield must consist of two males and two females, and the infield must consist of two males and two females. The catcher and pitcher must be opposite sex. There must always be an equal number of men and women or a majority of women in all combinations. Female infielders on defense have the option of playing in the dirt or the grass.

DEFENSIVE POSITIONS (COED and MEN’S): Female defensive players ALWAYS have the option of starting in the dirt/grass. Male defensive players must ALWAYS start with their heels clearly in the infield dirt until the ball is pitched/delivered/released to the catcher.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF GAME PLAYERS: Teams must have a minimum of eight players to begin and continue a game; for coed, of these eight players, there must be a minimum of four women.*

Example:

8 players- 4 men, 4 women / 9 players- 4 men, 5 women / 10 players- 4 men, 6 women / 10 player- 5 men, 5 women

MINIMUM NUMBER OF GAME PLAYERS Continued:

*A Co-Ed game can begin w/5 males and 3 females **ONLY** if both managers agree. No females are allowed in the outfield in this 5Male/3Female player scenario.

Example for 5M/3F - P(M1) C(F1) 1(F2) 2(F3) 3(M2) SS(M3) LCF(M4) RCF(M5)

You cannot switch to a 5 male/4 female lineup if/when your 4th female arrives. Once your 4th female arrives you must remove your extra male from the lineup and play 4Male and 4Female until/if your 5th female player arrives.

ONE AND ONE COUNT: All batters will begin their turn at bat with one ball and one strike. There will be one foul ball to waste after a player receives their second strike.

RUN AHEAD RULE: If a team is ahead by 20 runs or more at the end of three innings, 15 runs at the end of four innings or 12 runs at the end of five innings, the game will be over.

HOME RUNS

Coed Fri. D & Sun. Divisions - 1 UP RULE: No team may hit more than 1 up (home run) than the other team at any time. For example; visiting team hits a homerun, the home team then may hit 2, one to tie and 1 to go 1 up.

Men's Tuesday, Coed Fri. C & Men's Thurs. Division – 2 UP RULE: No team may hit more than 2 up (home runs) than the other team at any time. For example; visiting team hits 2 homeruns, the home team then may hit 4, 2 to tie and 2 to go up. If a batter hits more than their teams allotted home runs in any given inning that batter will be called out and any runners may not advance.

STEEL CLEATS: Steel cleats are not permitted in any City of Surprise League.

STRIKE ZONE: PITCHING ARC: 6 – 12 ft. Any pitched ball with an arc at least 6ft. above the ground and not to exceed a maximum of 12ft with the ball touching any part of the plate or strike mat it will be considered a strike.

SUBSTITUTIONS: All offensive substitutes must be reported to the official scorekeeper in order to acknowledge a player legally entering the game. ASA rules for re-entry will apply. Please refer to Batting Order section of the rules.

TIE GAMES: If the game ends in a tie, it will count as a tie in the standings. If there is a tie in the Final League Standings between 2 or more teams the following order will be followed for seeding purposes.

1. Head to Head play
2. Run Allowed
3. Runs Scored

TIME LIMIT: Umpire will be the official timekeeper. It is the responsibility of the Team Managers to confirm the start time for their games. City of Surprise Adult Slow Pitch games will have a 7 inning or 55-minute time limit, no new inning can begin after 55 minutes. **The next inning starts as soon as the last out in the previous inning is made.** Additional time may be added for games delayed by rain, injury or unforeseen circumstances. During regular season and tournament play the 55 minute time limit will be enforced, however if an inning starts before the 55 minute time limit that inning will be completed. Teams will play **7 full innings** for the **TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME ONLY**. The 55 minute time limit will NOT be enforced for the Tournament Championship game. However, the Run Ahead Rule will still be in effect in all situations.

HIT BALL AT PITCHER: Any player batting a ball in the air that passes in the vertical plane of the pitching area will be considered an illegal hit. The pitching area is defined as the width of the pitcher's box and within 2 feet above the pitcher's head. This is a judgment call and may not be argued. If this is deemed by the umpire to be **intentional** that player will be ejected from the game and may face further suspension. If a player hits a ball back at the pitcher and it's deemed **unintentional** under the above guidelines an automatic out will be called by the umpire.

All Leagues will be giving a warning at the plate meeting. The first hit "Up the Middle" will result in an out.

PITCHER PROTECTION RULE: This rule allows pitchers to pitch from behind the pitching rubber. This area will be a 4ft. x 8ft. box that will start 1ft. in front of the rubber. Pitcher's have the option to pitch from the rubber if they choose and may pitch from any spot within the box from pitch to pitch.

SAFETY/COMMITMENT LINE - For COED ONLY: A line will be chalked from the left front edge of home plate towards the backstop. This line will act as a scoring line to avoid collisions at home. There will also be a commitment line chalked 20ft. from home plate, once a base runner passes this line they must continue home.

*For all other rules related to the City of Surprise's Adult Softball League, consult an ASA "Official Rules of Softball 2020" rule book.

Adult Sports Covid-19 FAQ for Fall 2020

As we reopen City of Surprise recreation sports following the Covid-19 cancellations, there will be several changes made in adherence to CDC and AZ Health Department recommendations in an effort to make our leagues as safe as possible for our players, spectators, officials, and staff. Below you will find a rudimentary list of these changes, which may be amended, removed, or added to should the need arise during the course of the season. There will be additional SPECIFIC changes to each sport. As we get closer to the season we will inform team managers and participants of these additional policies and/or rule changes. The City of Surprise thanks you for working with us to make sure we can continue to offer adult sports during this unprecedented time. Below you will find a FAQ of the changes being made for the safety of our participants and spectators.

What will be done to limit exposure? We will be limiting sharable equipment, if equipment is shared participants will be responsible for sanitizing equipment before the next player uses it. (gloves, bats, etc.) Staff will be sanitizing high touch areas and equipment before and after each event.

Will we be allowed to use bleachers or can we bring our own chairs? We recommend bringing your own chairs and sitting 6 feet apart from other participants.

What happens if a player or manager is sick on my team? If you are sick, please stay home. Inform the Parks and Recreation Department if you do not have enough players for an official team. If any players or their families inform you that they are sick, please ask them to stay home.

Will everyone be required to wear masks? Participants attending organized recreational activities should follow appropriate CDC guidance for physical distancing and are required to wear face masks. Following CDC guidelines, participants will not be required to wear masks during physical activity.

Will you be limiting the amount of spectators during an event? At this time, we are allowing one spectator per participant at adult sports games. We also recommend that those who are at higher risk of severe illness avoid participating at this time.

Will there be handshakes at the end of each game? There will be no handshake line at the conclusion of the game. Instead we recommend each team comes up with a chant or salute to give their opponents on a job well done to demonstrate their sportsmanship at the end of each game.

How will you control the amount of people entering and exiting the facilities? When possible, we will have a separate entrance and exit point. We will allocate time prior to each game to sanitize. We ask that all teams show up no earlier than 10 minutes before and stay no longer than 10 minutes after each game to ensure the staff has enough time to clean and sanitize the area until before next group comes in.

Will the City still offer water at each site? No, the City of Surprise will no longer be able to offer water jugs and cups at game sites. Players must provide their own water and should not share with others.

Will the City do temperature checks before each game? No, we are asking each participant to self temperature check before each game. If they have a fever of 100 degrees or more, we ask that they stay home and report it to the team manager or Parks and Recreation staff.

Are you requiring handwashing before each practice or game? We ask that each team manager be in charge of monitoring to ensure all participants on their team either wash their hands (20 seconds) or use hand sanitizer before each game.

For more questions, please contact Ian Wallace in the Adult Sports Division at 623.222.2271.



CODE OF CONDUCT:

1. When registering your team, it is understood that you are participating in a RECREATION program. The intent of City of Surprise recreation leagues is for players to have fun and enjoy themselves. Participants are expected to demonstrate sportsmanship before, during and after all activities sponsored by the Surprise Community & Recreation Services Department.

Should an official feel that player(s) are demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct or their conduct is detrimental to others around them, they will be penalized for their misconduct. At no time shall any player verbally or physically abuse a City of Surprise staff, which included the officials. An official at any time may require a player(s) to sit out a designated number of innings. An official may issue a warning to the player(s), or eject player(s) right away depending on their discretion.

2. The officials will penalize unsportsmanlike conduct by a player, coach, substitute or team spectator. If there is a flagrant conduct violation, the officials will penalize the team by removing the offending player(s) from the game, and they will be ejected from the park. Any spectator or team follower may also be removed from the park. Failure to comply with official's direction to leave the field can result in forfeiture of the game. A player or team can also be dropped from the league if they become a problem. Coaches and players will be responsible for their team followers and must make every effort to control them.

3. The Code of Conduct attached to the end of these rules should be understood by all coaches/managers and players. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure that their players fully understand the consequences they will suffer if these rules are violated. When a player is listed on the roster, it will be understood that they will be informed, by the manager, of all rules and regulations as well as the Code of Conduct.

4. Players ejected from a game must leave the park immediately. Any player ejected faces a one-game suspension. Additional action may also be taken, including but not limited to, probation or total suspension. The Community & Recreation Services Department reserves the right to determine the length of the probation and/or suspension. Each incident will be reviewed, and a decision on the length of the suspension will be made in a reasonable amount of time.

5. Profanity will not be tolerated (this includes casual profanity). Guilty parties are subject to one warning, or possible immediate ejection from the game.

6. Any player ejected two times during a season may be suspended for the remainder of the season. Participants must control their actions at all times.

Manager's Name (Print) _____

Manager's Signature _____ Date _____