

ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES AND REGULATIONS

League Overview

The City of Brooklyn Park adult softball leagues are played according to the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) rules, with a few expectations which are covered in these local rules.

All teams are responsible for understanding and following the City of Brooklyn Park's softball league policies and rules in addition to the USSSA rules of play.

All teams registered for Brooklyn Park softball leagues are subject to transfer at the discretion of the League Director. A mandated transfer by the League Director may occur due to (but is not limited to) level of competition, previous league results, balancing number of teams per league, or team classification.

Registration is on a first come first served basis.

Team Roster Eligibility

- All players must be at least 18 years of age by the first game of the playing season.
- No more than 20 players may be on the team roster.
- Any protest regarding the legality of an opposing player must be done prior to the end of the 3rd inning. If a player in question enters the game after the 3rd inning, the protest must be done immediately, or the protest will not be allowed.
- **CHANGE:** In the men's program females will be allowed to play. They are subject to playing by the men's program rules and using the certified 12-inch blue stitched ball when batting. Up to two females can play on the field at any one time.

Schedules

League schedules are created based on the following guidelines:

- Game times are balanced so that a team will not have more than one more or one less game at a particular time than the league average. Example: If the league average is 2 games at 6:15 p.m., a team may have 1, 2, or 3 games scheduled for 6:15 p.m.
- Head-to-head games are balanced so that a team will not have more than one more or one less game against a particular opponent than the league average.
- In even numbered doubleheader leagues, one team shall remain on each field to play the second game of the doubleheader and that team shall be the game's home team.
- The team that is scheduled to retain the field into the second game should occupy the first base dugout for both games.
- Following all the above guidelines, when possible, teams shall not play the same opponent in consecutive weeks.

Team/Player Conduct

- Abusing officials will not be tolerated. There is a line between normal banter and asking for rules interpretations/clarifications vs. verbal abuse. Players must be aware of this and err on the side of caution.
- Casual profanity should be limited to oneself, as other patrons are in the park vary in age. The first offense, umpires will issue a warning to both teams. Subsequent offenses will result in ejection from the field and noted as unsportsmanlike conduct. The use of the "F" word is an automatic ejection.
- Any player ejected from a game will receive a minimum of a one (1) game suspension (exceptions: ejection for illegal equipment, casual profanity). The League Director, official of the game in question, and Umpire in Chief (UIC) will review all game ejections to determine if further action should be taken. Players and team managers will be notified via email regarding any altercations and course of action taken. Repeated offenses during a season will result in suspension for the remainder of the season and possible lifetime ban.
- If a player is ejected for any reason the player must leave the premises immediately. The ejected player's team will take an out in the batting order every time that player would have come to bat if they do not have a substitute to put in the game. If a team has less than 8 players because of ejections that team will forfeit the game.
- Physical altercations will result in immediate suspension from league play for the individuals that were involved, as determined by the League Director. Verbal confrontations will be reviewed, and appropriate disciplinary action will be issued on an incident-by-incident basis. Letters will be sent regarding any altercations and course of action taken to document an incident.
- If a threat/verbal intent to harm a player is witnessed by the umpire, a warning shall be issued to both teams. After a warning is issued, if a pitcher is hit by an untouched batted ball, the batter will be declared out. Repeated behavior will result in further discipline.
- Per City Ordinance and USSSA Rule Book & By-Laws, loud music is "NOT" allowed in the city parks. As a result, speakers are highly discouraged on the benches or near the dugout area during games. If you do play music, it must be appropriate for all ages as the facility is family friendly and must be kept to a minimum level to not be heard on the field. If staff or the umpire, ask that the music be turned off please comply without argument.
- All players should wear a uniform during play. Jersey numbers are highly recommended as if you intend to play in any USSSA tournament during the year jersey numbers are required.
- Each manager/scorekeeper is responsible to check their score with the umpire and other team after each inning to assure accuracy. The home team will keep the official score book, but both teams are highly encouraged to keep book.
- Alcoholic beverages are allowed inside the complex BUT NOT in the dugout or on the field. No hard alcohol or glass is allowed in the park. To maintain this privilege, clean up cans and trash after yourselves when done. Quite simply, if we don't abuse it, we won't lose it.
- During a game, the team bench area is to be occupied by players only. All adult fans and children are not allowed on the bench and must be behind the fenced area of the field. This USSSA rule is the result of a lawsuit, when a team "batboy" was hit in the head by a bat thrown by a player on the team.

Forfeits/Player Requirement

- Teams are expected to show up on time; there is no grace period. A minimum of 8 players is required to start and finish a game. The "Shorthanded Rule" will be used if a team does not have a legal number of players to begin the game. One team must have a minimum of 8 players for the shorthanded rule to be instituted. If not, a double forfeit will be declared. The shorthanded team will be designated the visiting team and the first inning will begin. If the team does not have a legal number of players by the end of the top of the first inning is complete, the game will be declared a forfeit. The team that is shorthanded must have a minimum of 6 players as to not create a void in the batting order (i.e. a player on base when it is his/her turn to bat). Co Rec teams must have three males and three females to begin under the shorthanded rule.

- If neither team has a minimum of 8 players at game time, the game will be declared a double forfeit.
- If there is a need to forfeit, that team must contact the League Director and any opposing teams by 3:00 p.m. on the day of the game. Umpires will not officiate forfeited games.
- The second game of the double header is not considered a forfeit until the second game is scheduled to start.

Game Details

- Games will be 7 innings in length, with a **55-minute time limit**, so hustle in and out of the dugout. No new inning will begin after 55 minutes.
- In the event a game in progress is cancelled by the umpire or staff due to weather it shall be considered a complete game and will not be continued after 4 innings of play or 3 ½ if the home team is leading. Games which are not considered completed will be rescheduled and restarted as a new game at a later date.
- HOME and VISITOR will be determined by a pregame coin flip where the winner of the coin flip has the option to be HOME or VISITOR team. The VISITOR Team will be awarded 0.5 (1/2) run at the start of the game to alleviate the possibilities of a tie. All games have a 55-minute time limit; no new inning will start after 55 minutes of play. Games that reach the time limit are considered a completed game. Tie Breaker Rule: the VISITOR team will begin the game with a half a run (0.5) lead. The half a run is only to be counted in the final score should the game end in a tie whether the game ends after the completion of the 7th inning or earlier due to time limit constrictions. If the "Shorthanded Rule" is used to begin the game the team that started the game with a legal team will begin the game with the half a run (0.5) lead.

Equipment

- **Softballs:** Brooklyn Park Recreation and Parks will provide new and used balls at the field.
 - When a male is batting – Certified 12-inch blue stitched ball
 - When a female is batting – Certified 11-inch blue stitched ball
- **Bats:** **UPDATED RULE:** 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 manufacturer list and has the 2020 USSSA Certification Mark. The previous 2014 USSSA Certification Mark as of January 1, 2023, is ineligible for USSSA Sanctioned events, but is eligible for use in USSSA league play (pictured below). Brooklyn Park and its umpires will allow the 2014 USSSA Certification Mark in league play during the 2023 and 2024 seasons to allow for teams and players to transition equipment. Starting in 2025 only the 2020 USSSA Certification Mark on a bat from an approved USSSA bat manufacturer will be legal.



2014 USSSA
Certification Mark



2020 USSSA
Certification Mark

- Illegal or altered bats noticed will be removed from the game and an out will be declared.
 - Each team will be responsible for providing their own bats to hit with.
- Metal spikes are not allowed. Anyone wearing metal spikes will be asked to remove the illegal shoes. If there is no suitable replacement the player will be ejected for the game for an equipment violation.
- Recommended equipment includes masks for pitchers and catchers used during play and a team first aid kit to use in case of injuries.

Umpires

Umpires will enforce all USSSA and local rules and will be supported 100% by the Recreation and Parks Department. All on-field decisions by an umpire involving the exercise of his/her judgment are final.

Local Playing Rules

- All rule interpretation protests must be lodged with the umpire before the next pitch. It is encouraged that the team manager discusses all protests.
- The ball/strike count will be 3/2 with no courtesy foul ball allowed. A foul ball caught on the second strike will be declared an OUT and is LIVE BALL.
- Each team is allowed 3 home runs total per game. In 2021, in the men's program we installed the one-up homerun rule, which is as follows: once both teams have reached their home run limits, either team may hit an additional home run. No team may ever go more than one home run up on the other team after their team has hit their limit. Any additional home runs above the "one-up" will be declared an OUT. If in the last inning of play and the number of homeruns is tied the home team, can one up for a walk off win.
- Each team will be allowed 1 Courtesy Runner per inning. Any player on the team's official active line-up may be used as a Courtesy Runner. A Courtesy Runner whose turn at bat comes while they are on base will be called OUT, removed from the base, and take their turn at bat. The runner called out will NOT be replaced by another runner.
- Starting and relieve pitchers will be allowed 3 warmup pitches to start the game and one warmup pitch between innings.
- **NEW RULE:** The pitcher must have one foot in contact with the pitching rubber and deliver the pitch from the pitcher's plate.
- If additional players arrive at the field, they can immediately enter the game and will assume the last spot(s) in the batting order. To be eligible under this rule, a Co-Rec team must have 4 men and 4 women. In Co-Rec with 8 players (4 & 4) – NO AUTOMATIC OUTS, PLAY AS NORMAL.
- A men's team may bat 10 players, or 11 or 12 players using the Additional Hitter rule, or its entire roster. If a team uses a 10, 11, or 12-player line-up, any applicable re-entry rules will be in effect. If a team uses a 10, 11 or 12-player line-up, any 10 players may take the field defensively. If a team bats its entire roster, free substitution is permitted. However, defensive changes during an inning will only be allowed due to injury or a pitching change. Any player arriving after the start of the game must be reported to the umpire, scorekeeper, and opposing manager and will be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
- A team which is leading by 20 or more runs after 3 complete innings, 15 or more runs after 4 complete innings, or 10 or more runs after 5 complete innings will be declared the winner. If the visiting team goes ahead by the specified runs, the home team will bat at the bottom of the inning.
- USSSA uses the "FLIP FLOP" rule across the board for all programs. The rule is as follows: In the inning when the run rule is exceeded, and the home team is losing, the home team will remain at bat and become the visiting team. If the team (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 they subsequently score enough runs to exceed the run rule, the game will be over; if they do not, the game will continue under that format. If the situation reverses, the teams would flip/flop again.
- Infield/Outfield warm up balls are not allowed after the first inning.

Co-Rec Playing Rules

- If a Co-Rec team has 9 players with 5 men and 4 women and they bat all 9 players, the 10th position in the batting order will be an automatic out every time up. If the team has 5 women and 4 men, they can bat the 2 women back-to-back with NO out between them. If a Co-Rec team has more than 10 players, and an odd number of men to women (example 6 and 5) they can rotate 2 of the men in and out for

each other, but not rotate all the men in and out of the game. If they have more women than men, they can bat more women than men with “NO OUT” between the women batters.

- Teams must have 5 players of one gender and four of the other to start and finish a legal game. To utilize the “shorthanded rule” as the visiting team they must have a minimum of three players of each gender.
- A walk to a male batter will result in a two-base award. The next female batter will bat. With two outs, the next female batter has the option to walk or bat. If a male is walked, he will be allowed to skip bases in the interest of time management. The male must ensure that the umpire sees them advance legally.
- A team utilizing courtesy runners must use the same gender player. Co-rec teams can have ONE Courtesy Runner per gender, per inning.
- Each team is allowed 3 home runs by males and 3 home runs by females. Any home run hit by any player after the allotted numbers will be declared an OUT. The one-up rule does not apply to the Co-Rec program.
- No excessive changing of player positions during an inning unless there is a substitution, a change of pitchers, or an injury.
- The third base coach may wear a fielder’s glove to catch the ball that is thrown to the base coach when switching the male and female balls during a time out on the field.

Injuries

- If a player leaves the game due to injury and no player is available to fill his/her spot in the line-up, no penalty will be assessed when his/her turn at bat arrives. His/her spot in the line-up will be skipped. If a player leaves the game for any other reason and no player is available to fill his/her spot in the line-up, an automatic out will be recorded when that player's turn at bat arrives.
- In the event a player leaves the game due to injury, and there are extra players available (i.e. a player who was in the game previously for another player) free substitution will be allowed to avoid a forfeit. A player that leaves a game due to injury will not be allowed to re-enter unless the team has enough players and can use the re-entry rule to put the player back in. Exception: a player who has left the game under the blood rule may return.
- Continued participation due to injury, bleeding, or open wound:
 - Teams should have in their possession a first aid kit containing bandages, tape, etc., to treat any player who may become injured and sustain an open wound.
 - Any person injured or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until the bleeding is stopped and the wound is covered.
 - If treatment can be administered within a reasonable amount of time, he/she will not be required to leave the game.
 - A reasonable amount of time is in the umpire's judgment.
 - If more time is involved, the reentry rule applies.
 - If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform or if a bandage becomes blood soaked, in the judgment of the umpire, the uniform/bandage must be changed before the individual may participate.

Playability of Fields

If there is a question about the playability of the fields due to inclement weather, the manager, and only the manager of each team, should call the Recreation and Parks Department at 763-493-8181 and press 1 after 4:00 p.m. If no recorded message is received, all teams will be expected to appear at their assigned field at their scheduled game time. After 4:00 p.m. and prior to the start of a game, playability of field conditions will be

determined by the Softball Supervisor on site. After the start of a game, playability of field conditions will, in the absence of the Softball Supervisor, be determined by the umpire assigned to the field. We will also try to send an e-mail and/or text alert to team managers involved if there is time prior to the 6:00 p.m. games.

Insurance

The Recreation and Parks Department does not provide accident insurance for participants in any programs. Participants assume all inherent risk of injury from their involvement in all programs or activities. This includes Covid-19.