

LORAIN COUNTY HOTSTOVE SOFTBALL LEAGUE



OFFICIAL RULES AND POLICIES 2026

www.loraincountyhotstove.com

EDITOR'S NOTE

1. Substitute rules for all Classes updated. See [Rule 5.3.D](#)
2. Required number of players updated. See [Rule 5.4](#)
3. Substitute announcement policy updated. [See Rule 5.5](#)
4. Complete game criteria updated. See [Rule 6.3.C](#)
5. Mercy (run) rules updated. See [Rule 6.3.D](#)
6. Time limits updated. See [Rule 6.3.I](#)
7. 7-run per inning rule for Class A updated. See [Rule 6.10.A](#)
8. Weather rule updated to remove thunder. See [Rule 6.11](#)
9. Farm Major Rules updated. See [Rule 11](#)
 - A. No hash marks between bases will be used.
10. Tournament time limits updated. See [Rule 14.9](#)

All managers and coaches are urged to know this rule book. Managers are the only individuals in direct contact with the players and are completely responsible for their behavior and knowledge of the rules. Managers must inform players of the rules; therefore, the manager must be responsible for informing and policing the players to maintain compliance with the Lorain County Hot Stove Softball Rules.

Any time you are dealing with rules you will encounter grey areas that will need to be interpreted by the official rules' interpreter, whose name and email address is on the back cover.

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BACKGROUND SCREENING

LCHS has made it mandatory that all managers, coaches, and charter affiliate officers have a background (check) screening. LCHS has partnered with the Nation Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) to provide the services that we need to accomplish the background screening in the fairest way possible while at the same time maintaining complete privacy of information submitted to obtain the most accurate information that is available. All rejected (FLAGGED) applicants will have the opportunity to resolve any issues with NCSI without getting the Charter or LCHS involved. A copy of the contract will be on file with OHSBL. Each charter will receive a copy of the OHSBL Volunteer Disqualifiers List.

A. All managers, coaches, charter officers and Executive Committee will be required to have a current background check prior to the start of each season. Background checks are valid for 2 seasons (not calendar years.)

B. It shall be the manager and charter's responsibility to ensure that the Background screenings are completed.

C. If a person is FLAGGED, they cannot participate in LCHS until the issues that caused the flagging have been resolved with NCSI.

D. Charter and LCHS will maintain a list of all screened participants that will have no detailed information except name, File Number, and the indication of a FLAGGED (means you were rejected) and a CLEARED (means you passed the screening.)

E. Any disputes that may arise by a person being FLAGGED disqualified will be handled by the person being disqualified and NCSI.

F. OHSBL will set up the accounts that will be necessary for payment and tracking purposes.

G. All background checks through NCSI are self-paid. The only acceptable background check is the LCHS program through NCSI. Check with your Charter for the proper procedure for doing your background check. Anyone that had a background check in in the first year will have a background recheck (2nd year) at no cost. If your CLEARED is reversed to a FLAGGED your charter will notify you that you can no longer Coach. The latest date for a new background check is June 1 of the current year. Charters should make sure that background checks are completed prior to the first practice.

Lorain County Hot Stove Softball

Official Rules and Regulations

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COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROCEDURES

While risk of one athlete infecting another with HIV/AIDS during competition is close too non-existent, there is a remote risk that other blood borne infectious diseases can be transmitted. For example, Hepatitis B can be present in blood as well as in other body fluids. Procedures for reducing the potential for transmission of these infectious agents should include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. The bleeding must be stopped, the open wound covered and if there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform it must be changed before the athlete may participate.
2. Routine use of gloves or other precautions to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids is anticipated.
3. Immediately wash hands and other skin surfaces if contaminated (in contact) with blood or other body fluids. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves.
4. Clean all contaminated surfaces and equipment with an appropriate disinfectant before competition resumes.
5. Practice proper disposal procedures to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels and other sharp instruments or devices.
6. Although saliva has not been implicated in HIV transmission, to minimize the need for emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, or other ventilation devices should be available for use.
7. Athletic trainers/coaches with bleeding or oozing skin conditions should refrain from all direct athletic care until the condition resolves.
8. Contaminated towels should be properly disposed of/disinfected.
9. Follow acceptable guidelines in the immediate control of bleeding and when handling bloody dressings, mouth guards.

1 CHARTER, TEAM & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1.1 **LEAGUE CLASSIFICATIONS** The cut-off date for a player's roster age is August 31st of the previous year. Whatever age a player is on August 31, 2025, is the roster age for the entire year.

- A. Class A is for players of 9 and 10 years of age.
- B. Class B is for players of 11 and 12 years of age.
- C. Class C is for players of 13 and 14 years of age.
- D. Class D is for players of 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 years of age.
- E. Players of age 19 must be a current year high school graduate.
- F. Any player that is under the specified ages for any League Classification may participate in the next higher classification if necessary. A player who plays in a League Classification over her specified age may play in her own age group in the following year.
- G. Team and League participation in LCHSS shall be for the youth of the State of Ohio only. There are no exceptions.

1.2 LEAGUES

- A. A League shall consist of at least four (4) teams in any League Classification of LCHSS which has a minimum of twelve (12) game season. **EXCEPTION:** Two or more Charter Holders may combine to form a League of at least four (4) teams in any League Classification in which either Charter is unable to form local league play.
- B. Charters that are unable to sponsor League Play in any League Classification may enter their team(s) in the League Classification that is sponsored by another Charter Holder. Approval must be obtained and agreed upon by the Charter Holders involved.
- C. Teams from Charter Holders that combine with another Charter Holder in order to form a League of at least four (4) teams in any League Classification and/or Teams from Charter Holders that enter in that League Classification sponsored by another Charter Holder shall be governed by all Rules and Regulations for Local Play as adopted by that Charter Holder sponsoring League Play in any League Classification. It is permissible for one Charter Holder with four (4) teams to join with another to form a larger League to provide more variety in the play schedule.
- D. Teams from Charter Holders that combine with another Charter Holder in order to form a League of at least four (4) Teams in any League Classification and/or Teams from a Charter Holder that enter in that League Classification sponsored by another Charter Holder must be from an area that is an authorized active Charter Holder of LCHSS and must be listed as being under the jurisdiction of that Charter Holder. All Leagues shall be under LCHSS in their entirety, with all teams registered with LCHSS and all their fee(s) paid.
 - 1. Teams from Charter Holders that combine with another Charter Holder in forming a League in any classification shall be governed as to the selection of their players as set forth by their own local Charter rules.
- E. Charters will assess penalties to any team that violates any rules or regulations as adopted by a Charter Holder that regulates the method of play for the current year.
- F. All Leagues in all Charters shall adhere to LCHSS Rules. Rules and Regulations during regular season play.
 - 1. Any Charter that wishes to deviate from LCHSS Rules and Regulations playing rules must have their playing rule changes approved at the February meeting by a majority vote of the Executive Committee in the year the charter holder wishes such rule changes to take place.

1.3 CHARTER DUES

- A. Each Charter Holder shall pay yearly Charter Dues of \$150.00 to Lorain County Hot Stove Softball. Such dues shall be paid and submitted to the LCHSS State Treasurer of Form LCHSS-1 prior to midnight, February 28th of the current year. Payment of dues entitles Charter Holder to vote in LCHSS.
 - 1. Any Charter Holder that fails to pay their dues by February 28th of the current year shall be assessed a penalty of \$25.00 (\$175.00 total) and such dues, along with penalty, must be paid prior to midnight, March 31st. Failure to pay such assessment shall make that Charter Holder and all of its team ineligible for any tournament play for the current year, and Charter Holders shall be declared inactive for the current year.
- B. Any Charter Holder that is declared inactive for two consecutive years shall lose their Charter. In such a case, the local organization shall make an application for reinstatement of the Charter as described in Article 4.
- C. The current operating year of LCHSS shall be from November 1st to October 31st, twelve months, with the annual meeting to be held during October of the current operating year.

1.4 TEAM FEES

- A. Each Charter Holder shall be assessed a State Team Fee of \$50.00 for each team playing under the Charter Holder. All required State Team Fees shall be paid and submitted to the LCHSS State Treasurer on form LCHSS-2 prior to midnight of May 10th of the current year except for Class D, which is due June 10th.
 - 1. If Team fees are paid and received seven (7) or more days after dues date, a \$50.00 late fee will be charged.
 - 2. State Team Fees that are not paid for all Teams listed by each Charter Holder on Form LCHSS-3 shall make the Team of that Charter Holder ineligible for any tournament play for the current year.
 - 3. The number of State Team Fees paid for the Teams of a Charter Holder shall govern each Charter Holder as to the exact number of Teams eligible in each League Classification to participate in District Tournament Play.
- B. State Team Fees for any Team of a Charter Holder that participates in/or with another Charter Holder to form a League must be paid and submitted by the Charter Holder that is responsible for organizing League Play in any League Classification. The required Team Fees shall also be governed by this rule.

1.5 TEAM ROSTERS

- A. A team shall consist of a maximum of eighteen (18) players in any one League Classification. **EXCEPTION:** Class D League shall carry a maximum of twenty (20) players.
- B. One copy of the Team Roster must be accompanied in typed form and submitted on Form LCHSS-4 to the LCHSS State Secretary. They must be in the LCHSS State Secretary's hands by midnight of May 10th of the current year (Class D is due June 10th.) The roster must include the Team Name, League Classification, City and Charter Holder under which the team plays. Full names, addresses and birth dates of all players must be included and must be in birth date order with the most senior player on the top. Names, addresses and phone numbers of the manager, assistant manager, and all coaches must be included. Any illegible copies **will not** be accepted. NOTE: There can only be four (4) adults (managers, coaches, etc.) listed per roster, five (5) for Farm Major. Scorekeepers, who are not coaches, may be in the dugout must have a valid OHSBL background check, and do not count toward the coach limits. The scorekeeper must be the same person throughout the game. A scorekeeper that does not enter the dugout at any time is not required to have a background check.
- C. This form must be made out in duplicate, exact copies, and shall list all players of the team. The first copy shall be forwarded to the LCHSS State Secretary, the second

copy is for the manager. Both copies of the roster must be properly signed by the team manager and a league official. Rosters not properly signed will not be accepted by the LCHSS State Secretary and will make the team ineligible for Tournament Play.

- D. All State Team Roster forms shall be completed, submitted, and so approved by each Charter Holder's Secretary or authorized League Official as to the eligibility of each player and team. Such forms shall be submitted at one time to the LCHSS State Secretary by each Charter Holder.
 - 1. No State Team Roster will be accepted separately by the LCHSS State Secretary or Charter Holder unless a letter accompanies said roster signed by an authorized Charter Official so stating a valid reason for said roster being submitted separately rather than with all state team rosters as required.
 - 2. No State Team Roster will be accepted unless signed by the Team Manager, as well as an Authorized League Official.
- E. A State Team Roster will be made for every team in every League Classification on form LCHSS-4 furnished by LCHSS.
 - 1. Any State Team Roster not submitted by any team listed on Form LCHSS-3 shall make that Team ineligible for any Local League or Tournament Play for the current year. State Team rosters must be submitted for every team that each Charter Holder pays State Team Fees for.
- F. Any changes to team rosters must be approved by the Local Charter Holder prior to May 15th. Roster changes not approved by the Local Charter Holder will not be accepted by the LCHSS State Secretary. There are no exceptions. No one can play until approved by their Local Charter Holder.
- G. Roster changes with explanations shall be forwarded by an authorized Local Charter Holder Official to the LCHSS State Secretary, who will attach them to the original roster. All rosters with changes in player personnel must be re-submitted to the LCHSS State Secretary and in his/ her hands prior to midnight of June 10th of the current year with revised marked and dated in red at the top of the roster.
- H. Any State Team Roster submitted and listing any player over the age restrictions for the League Classification shall make that player ineligible for any Tournament Play for the current year.
- I. It is the responsibility of each Charter Holder to check and verify all State Team Rosters prior to submitting them to LCHSS. This shall be done to correct any errors at that time and to stipulate that each Charter Holder has authorized its approval of all Teams and Players.
- J. The manager **must** bring their **original** State Team Roster to each tournament game. Rosters presented by the manager at the Tournaments that are not properly filled out will result in the team being disqualified from Tournament Play.
- K. Should a suspension expire prior to June 10th, a revised roster may be prepared and submitted to the LCHSS State Secretary.
 - 1. Should the suspension expire after June 10th, a revised roster bearing only the name of the suspended person may be submitted to the LCHSS State Secretary requesting he/ she add that player to the roster. The roster, with a suspended player whose suspension expires after June 10th, must be post-marked no later than two (2) working days after the suspension is completed.

1.6 MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The manager is responsible for the conduct of their team, their fans, and any other business of the team.
- B. Any manager using an ineligible player during their local play or in any tournament play will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year with reinstatement subject to the approval of the LCHSS Executive Committee.

1.7 PLAYER RESTRICTIONS

- A. A player must play on a team under the jurisdiction of the Charter Holder duly authorized and functioning as such and is governed by each Charter Holder as set forth in the Local Softball Fast-Pitch League Rules and Regulations which govern the selection of players as to zoning by school districts, player draft, or whatever means the teams are formed.
- B. An LCHSS League Player may:
 - 1. Play on only one (1) LCHSS team and in only one (1) LCHSS League during the current year. This includes Local and all Tournament Play.
 - 2. Play in only one (1) sanctioned LCHSS District, Regional and State Tournament during the current year. There are no exceptions to this rule.
 - 3. If a player plays on more than one softball team not associated with LCHSS, they must play in at least 50% of their LCHSS **played** scheduled games to be eligible to participate in LCHSS District and State Tournaments. A forfeited game is not considered a played game. For League Classifications C and D, players on a High School team may **not** participate in any LCHSS local play until the High School team has completed its season. These players must then play in a minimum of 50% of the LCHSS local team's games that are played after the High School season is completed. **Managers must identify players not meeting the 50% eligibility rule by either red-lining or highlighting their name on the roster at the time of check-in at District tournaments. Any exception must be presented to the LCHSS Executive Committee in writing two (2) weeks before the state tournament draw.**
 - 4. Violations by any Manager or Player of Section B items 1-2 shall cause them to be suspended from further participation in LCHSS during the current season and they shall be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year with reinstatement subject to approval of the LCHSS Executive Committee. Violations during any Tournament Play, when discovered, shall forfeit all games and the Team is disqualified from further competition. The last team that they defeated shall be placed in their position to continue Tournament Play or be declared State Champion if the Team has won the State Tournament.
- C. Any player can play on more than one LCHSS team providing they are from the same Charter and same community, for the sole purpose of having the minimum number of players to start a legal game:
 - 1. The rostered player that meets the proper age requirements can play down on a team during the regular season.
 - 2. Any player that plays up in an age classification must play on teams associated with their charter and community. Note: Manager must carry rosters of the player(s) playing up or down.
 - 3. All players must return to their original team roster for tournament play.
 - 4. Charters will have the right to monitor and approve the use of players being used for this purpose.
 - 5. Players being used for this purpose may not be on a roster in the same Hot Stove class.

1.8 INSURANCE

- A. All teams must carry insurance to actively affiliate with LCHSS. Form LCHSS-5 verifying that teams carry insurance must be submitted to the LCHSS State Secretary prior to midnight of April 1st of the current year.
- B. No Charter Holder shall be eligible for any District or State Tournament play unless this form has been submitted and is on file with LCHSS.
- C. The minimum insurance requirements are as follows:
 - 1. Sports Liability \$1,000,000 (Occurrence Liability Insurance)
 - 2. Medical Accidents Limits \$100,000 and:

3. Medical Expense Maximum (Excess,) \$15,000 accidental death, \$50,000 Accidental dismemberment & paralysis, \$5,000 dental maximum is the limit of the medical accident limits.
4. Sports Accident medical coverage to cover the personnel participating in a game should be \$100,000.

2 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **ALTERED BAT.** A bat is considered altered when the physical structure of a legal bat has been changed. Examples of altering a bat are replacing the handle of a metal bat with a wooden or other type of handle, inserting material inside the bat, applying excessive tape (more than two layers) to the bat grip, or painting a bat at the top or bottom for other than identification purposes. Replacing the grip with another legal grip is not considered altering the bat. (See Rule 8.1.d for penalty).
 - A. **PLAY** – *B1 gets a base hit with an aluminum bat containing a wooden handle.*
 - B. **RULING** – *The ball is dead, batter is out, and baserunners may not advance. The batter is ejected for using an altered bat.*
- 2.2 **APPEAL PLAY.** A play in which an umpire cannot decide until requested by a manager, coach, or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the defensive team has left the field. The defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly left their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout area.
 - A. **PLAY** – *With R1 on first B2 hits a double. R1 goes to third but fails to touch second. Umpire observes this but no appeal is made. B2 goes to second. Since no appeal was made, is the procedure the same as if R1 had touched second?*
 - B. **RULING** – *Yes.*
- 2.3 **BASE ON BALLS.** A base on balls permits a batter to gain first base without liability to be put out and is awarded to a batter by the umpire when four pitches are judged to be balls. In Class A and above, a player may continue to second base on a base on balls, provided they do not stop.
- 2.4 **BASE PATH.** An imaginary line three feet on either side of a direct line between the base runner and the base to which the base runner is attempting to reach. A base runner who attempts to avoid a tag by running more than three feet to either side of the fielder that has possession of the ball shall be declared out.
- 2.5 **BASERUNNER.** A player of the team at bat who has finished her turn at bat, reached first base, and has not yet been put out.
- 2.6 **BATTED BALL.** Any pitched ball that hits the bat or is hit by the bat and lands either in fair or foul territory. No intention to hit the ball is necessary.
- 2.7 **BATTER’S BOX.** The area to which the batter is restricted while in position with the intention of helping her team obtain runs. The lines are considered as being within the batter’s box. Prior to the pitch, the batter must have both feet entirely within the lines of the batter’s box.
- 2.8 **BATTER-BASERUNNER.** A player who has finished her turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.
- 2.9 **BATTING ORDER.** The official listing of offensive players in the order in which members of that team must come to bat. When the lineup card is submitted, it shall also include each player’s position.
- 2.10 **BLOCKED BALL.** A batted or thrown ball that is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches any object that is not part of the official equipment or official playing area.
 - A. **EFFECT:** *The ball is dead. For offensive equipment causing a blocked ball (and interference,) the player being played on is out. If no apparent play is obvious, no*

one is called out, but all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball declaration. See Rule 9.5. C. and 9.5. G. for enforcement.

B. **PLAY** – A blocked ball is called when (a) it hits the coach, (b) it strikes a spectator.

C. **RULING** – (a) No, (b) Yes.

2.11 BUNT. A legally tapped pitched ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly within the field of play.

A. **Attempted bunt** – An intentional bunt is any movement of the bat toward the ball when the ball is over or near the plate area. Holding the bat stationary over the plate is an attempted bunt.

B. **Drag Bunt** – A drag bunt is an attempt to bunt the ball by running forward in the batter's box, carrying the bat. The movement of the bat is in conjunction with the batter's forward movement.

2.12 CATCH. A legally caught ball which occurs when the fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with her hands or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arms or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body or clothing, the catch is not considered completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hands or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after she contacts the ball, collides with another player or wall, or falls to the ground and drops the ball because of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove she has complete control of the ball or that her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball after reaching into her glove to remove the ball or while in the act of throwing the ball, it is a valid catch.

A. **PLAY (1)** – A legal catch is when a fielder holds the ball in her (a) hand, (b) under her arm, (c) cap, (d) glove.

B. **RULING** – (a) Yes, (b) No, (c) No, (d) Yes.

C. **PLAY (2)** – B1 hits a line drive which, after passing F3, strikes the umpire while the ball is over fair ground. The ball ricochets and is fielded by F4 while still in flight.

D. **RULING** – This is not a catch. The ball which strikes anything other than a defensive player while it is in flight, is ruled the same as if it struck the ground. B1 would have to be thrown out or tagged out.

E. **PLAY (3)** – F2 and F4 both attempt to field a fly ball. Before touching the ground, the ball strikes F2 on the head and while still in the air (has not touched the ground,) is caught by F3.

F. **RULING** – This is a legally caught fly ball.

G. **PLAY (4)** – B1 hits fly to F8, F8 gets the ball in her hands but drops it (a) when she falls to the ground and rolls over, or (b) when she collides with a fielder or a wall or (c) when she starts to throw to the infield.

H. **RULING** – In (a) and (b) it is not a catch. In (c) it is a legal catch if ball was held long enough for F8 to regain her balance but then drops it in a motion associated with an intended throw.

2.13 CATCHER'S BOX. The area within which the catcher must stand while and until the pitch is released. The lines are to be considered within the catcher's box.

A. **NOTE:** For catcher's box dimensions see Rule 3.4.D.

2.14 CHARGED CONFERENCE. Takes place when:

A. (Defensive Conference) The defensive team requests a suspension of play for any reason.

1. A representative (not in the field) of the defensive team enters the playing field to talk to any defensive player, or

2. A defensive player approaches the dugout and receives instructions. Refer to Rule 7.11.

- B. Offensive Conference) The offensive team requests a suspension of play to allow the manager, coach, or other team representatives to confer with the batter or baserunner. Refer to Rule 6.10.
- 2.15 COACH.** A member of the team at bat who takes his or her place within the coach's box on the field to direct the player of his or her team in running the bases. Two coaches are allowed. One coach can have in his or her possession in a coach's box an electronic device, score book, pen or pencil, and an indicator, which shall be used for score keeping or record keeping purposes only.
- 2.16 DEAD BALL.** The ball is not in play and is not considered in play again until the pitcher has the ball in her possession, is within eight feet of the pitcher's plate and the plate umpire has called "play ball." A dead ball line is considered in play. Refer to Rule 2.54 for "Play Ball."
- 2.17 DEFENSIVE TEAM.** The team that is in the field.
- 2.18 DISLODGED BASE.** A base removed from its proper position.
- 2.19 DOUBLE PLAY.** A play by the defense resulting in two offensive players being legally put out because of continuous action.
- 2.20 FAIR BALL.** A batted ball that:
- A. Settles or is touched in fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
 - B. Bounds past first or third based on or over fair territory.
 - C. While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
 - D. Touches first, second or third base.
 - E. First falls or first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second or third base.
 - F. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
- NOTE: A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time, she touches the ball. It does not matter whether the ball first touches fair or foul territory if it does not touch anything foreign to the natural ground in foul territory and complies with all other aspects of a fair ball.
1. **PLAY (1)** – Batted ball settles on home plate.
 2. **RULING** – Fair Ball.
 3. **PLAY (2)** – Batted ball first hits foul ground and without touching any foreign object rolls into fair territory between first and home or third and home where it settles.
 4. **RULING** – Fair Ball.
- 2.21 FAIR TERRITORY.** That part of the playing field within and including the first and third base foul lines from home base to the bottom of the extreme playing fence and perpendicular upward.
- 2.22 FAKE TAG.** A form of obstruction which impedes the progress of a runner. The runner does not have to stop or slide, only slow down, to be considered a fake tag. **NOTE:** Under Rule 9.5.B(3), a player may be removed from the game for a fake tag infraction.
- 2.23 FIELDER.** Any player of the defensive team in the field.
- 2.24 FLY BALL.** Any ball batted into the air.
- 2.25 FORCE-OUT.** An out which can be made only when a baserunner loses the right to the base she is occupying because the batter becomes a batter-baserunner, and before the batter/ baserunner or a succeeding baserunner has been put out.
- A. **NOTE:** If the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason toward the base she had last occupied, the force play is reinstated, and she can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which she is forced.
 - B. **PLAY (1)** – R1 is on first base. B2 hits a sharp grounder to F3 who first touches first base then touches R1, who is still on first base.

- C. **RULING** – Only B2 is out. F3's act eliminated the force thereby permitting R1 to remain on first.
- D. **PLAY (2)** – R1 on first base when B2 hits a short fly ball to left field. R1 goes approximately 5 feet off base waiting to see if the ball will be caught. B2 rounds first base and passes R1 and the umpire calls B2 out. The ball drops in for a base hit. R1 advances to second base and F4 with the ball tags second base before R1 slides into the base.
- E. **RULING** – The force out is removed when B2 passes R1 and therefore F4 had to tag R1. The runner is safe sliding into second base if she was not tagged.

2.26 FOUL BALL. A batted ball that:

- A. Settles in foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- B. Bounds past first or third base over foul territory.
- C. While in or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- D. First falls or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base.
- E. Touches the batter while the ball is within the batter's box.
- F. Rebounds up from the ground or home plate immediately and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.
 - 1. **NOTE:** A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time, she touches the ball.
 - 2. **PLAY (1)** – A fair ball is called when (a) the ball hits the bag and deflects into foul territory, (b) the ball bounds from the infield over the base and lands in foul territory, (c) the ball lands within the confines of the infield and rolls foul without being touched by a fielder.
 - 3. **RULING** – (a) Correct, (b) Correct, (c) False.
 - 4. **PLAY (2)** – Bat of B1 breaks into pieces because of hitting a pitch. The batted ball, bounding on foul territory in direction of third base, then hits the barrel of the bat causing the ball to roll into fair territory in front of third base. F5 fields the ball and throws it to F3, who tags first base before B1 reaches it.
 - 5. **RULING** – Foul ball, but B1 is not out for hitting ball a second time.

2.27 FOUL TIP. A batted ball which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher. **NOTE:** It is not a foul tip unless caught; and any foul tip that is caught, is a strike. The ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound unless the ball first touched the catcher's hand or glove.

- A. **PLAY (1)** – Ball goes directly from bat and rebounds from protector (a) of F2 after having touched her glove, (b) of F2 without having first touched her glove, (c) of umpire after having first touched glove of F2, (d) of umpire without first having touched glove of F2. In each case, the ball rebounds into glove of F2 and is held.
- B. **RULING** – In (a), it is a foul tip and a strike. In (b), (c) and (d), it is a foul with ball becoming dead when it touched F2 in (b) or umpire in (c) and (d).
- C. **PLAY (2)** – With R1 on second, B2 hits foul tip. May R1 advance without retouching second? Also, does it make any difference if the catcher drops the batted ball?
- D. **RULING** – A foul tip is the same as any strike, hence R1 may advance without retouching. If the batted ball is not caught, it is not a foul tip and is ruled a foul ball.

2.28 HELMET. A batting helmet with double ear flaps shall be the type which as safety features equal to or greater than those provided by the full plastic cap with padding on the inside. The liner type helmet does not meet the rules specification. All batter/runners shall wear an approved protective face mask/ guard. The helmet and face mask shall meet the NOCSAE standard (see RULE 4.9)

- 2.29 HOME TEAM.** The team on whose grounds the game is played. If the game is played on neutral ground, the home team shall be designated by the league officers, mutual agreement or by flip of a coin.
- 2.30 ILLEGAL BAT.** A bat that does not meet the requirements of Rule 4.1.
- A. **PLAY** – B1 hits a double to center field. Umpire notices bat has been tampered with, e.g., baseball bat honed down to softball size.
 - B. **RULING** – Dead ball and B1 is called out. Remove illegal pieces of equipment from the game. This is an illegal bat.
- 2.31 ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL.** An illegally batted ball occurs when:
- A. A batter’s entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when she hits a ball fair or foul.
 - B. Any part of the batter’s foot is touching home plate when she hits the ball.
 - C. The batter hits the ball with an illegal bat.
 1. **PLAY (1)** – Batter hits a pitched ball while her entire foot is completely out of the batter’s box, in contact with the ground, and the ball goes directly into the stand behind home plate.
 2. **RULING** – Ball is dead. Batter is declared out.
 3. **PLAY (2)** – F1 delivers ball to B1. B1 has one foot touching home plate as she swings and missed pitch completely.
 4. **RULING** – A strike is called. This is not an illegally batted ball. The ball must be hit (fair or foul) to enforce the illegally batted ball rule.
- 2.32 ILLEGALLY CAUGHT BALL.** An illegally caught ball occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with her cap, mask, glove, or any part of her uniform that is detached from its proper place.
- A. **PLAY** – REFER TO RULE 2.12
- 2.33 ILLEGAL PLAYER.** A player who is not legally a member of the league because the player does not meet the requirements as to age and/ or residence.
- 2.34 INELIGIBLE PLAYER.** A player is one who is legally a member of the league, but who is ineligible to play in a particular game or games because of the limitations set forth in these Rules and Regulations, or as the result of a previous rule.
- A. **PENALTY:** If at any time a player is found to be illegal or ineligible, that game and any others she participated in will be forfeited.
- 2.35 IN FLIGHT.** In flight describes any batted, thrown or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.
- 2.36 IN JEOPARDY.** In jeopardy is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.
- 2.37 INFIELD.** That portion of the field in fair territory includes areas normally covered by infielders.
- 2.38 INFIELD FLY.** A fair fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who positions herself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. **NOTE:** When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare “INFIELD FLY – THE BATTER IS OUT” for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the foul lines, the umpire shall declare “INFIELD FLY – THE BATTER IS OUT IF FAIR.” The ball is alive, and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught or retouched and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes foul, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the foul lines and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.

- A. **PLAY (1)** – R1 and R2 are on second and first base respectively, with none out. B3 hits a high pop foul between home and first base which F4 loses sight of in the sun. The ball lands on foul ground without being touched and rolls into fair territory halfway between home and first base. F1 picks up the ball and throws to F4, covering first, who touches R2 with the ball while R2 is off base.
- B. **RULING** – Infield fly. B3 and R2 are both out.
- C. **PLAY (2)** – R1 and R2 are on second and first base respectively, with one out. B3 hits a high fly ball which, in the judgement of the umpire, can be handled by the second baseman with reasonable effort. The “infield fly” rule is declared by the umpire. The second baseman intentionally drops the fly ball. R1, seeing the ball dropped, runs to third base but is thrown out.
- D. **RULING** – B3 is out on the “infield fly.” The ball remains alive. R1 is also out since the infield fly takes precedence over the “intentionally dropped fly ball.”
- 2.39 INITIAL PLAY ON A FAIR BATTED BALL.** When the fielder has a reasonable chance to catch or gain control of the ball that no other fielder (except the pitcher) has touched. The fielder is still considered to be making the initial play if she fails to gain control of the batted ball and is within a step and reach (in any direction) of the ball.
- 2.40 INNING.** That portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three outs for each team. A new inning begins immediately AFTER the final out of the previous inning.
- 2.41 INTERFERENCE.** The act of an offensive player or team member which impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.
- 2.42 LEGAL PLAYER.** A player on the bench that has not previously been inserted into the game.
- 2.43 LEGAL SUBSTITUTE.** A player on the bench that has been previously inserted into the game.
- 2.44 LEGAL TOUCH.** A legal touch occurs when a runner or batter-baserunner who is not touching a base is touched by the ball while the ball is securely held in a fielder’s hand. The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched with the hand or glove which holds the ball.
- A. **PLAY (1)** – B1 hits ground ball to first baseman who gathers in the ball, runs over to first baseline, tags the runner, then juggles, bobbles, and drops the ball.
- B. **RULING** – Illegal touch. Runner is safe.
- C. **PLAY (2)** – The catcher has the ball in her glove when she tags runner with glove. Ball does not come in contact with the runner.
- D. **RULING** – Touching with the glove or hand which holds the ball the same as touching with the ball; the runner is out.
- E. **PLAY (3)** – First baseman, while lying on the ground with the ball in right hand tags first base with left hand prior to batter-baserunner reaching first base.
- F. **RULING** – Batter-baserunner is out. Legal touch.
- 2.45 LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL.** Occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball, provided it is not caught in the fielder’s hat, cap, mask, protector, pocket, or other part of her uniform. It must be caught and firmly held with a hand or hands.
- 2.46 LINE DRIVE.** A fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.
- 2.47 OBSTRUCTION.** Obstruction is the act of:
- A. A defensive player or team member which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
- B. A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, or in the act of fielding a batted ball, which impedes the progress of a baserunner who is legally running the bases.
- 2.48 OFFENSIVE TEAM.** The team at bat.

- 2.49 OUTFIELD.** That portion of the field which is outside the diamond formed by the baselines, or the area not normally covered by an infielder and within the foul lines beyond first and third bases and boundaries of the grounds.
- 2.50 OVERSLIDE.** The act of an offensive player when, as a baserunner, she over slides a base she is attempting to reach. It is usually caused when her momentum causes her to lose contact with the base which then causes her to be in jeopardy. The batter-baserunner may over slide first base without being in jeopardy.
- A. **PLAY** – Baserunner over slides first base (a) during advance from home plate, or (b) on return to first base after attempt to advance to second base. In either case, she is tagged with the ball while off base.
- B. **RULING** – (a) Safe, (b) Out.
- 2.51 OVERTHROW.** A play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another to retire a runner and which goes into foul territory or goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field (dead ball territory.) Should the overthrow be ruled a blocked ball (Rule 2.10) the ball is dead.
- 2.52 PASSED BALL.** A legally pitched ball that should have been held or controlled by the catcher with ordinary effort.
- 2.53 PIVOT FOOT.** That foot which must remain in contact with the pitcher’s plate. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher’s plate is illegal.
- 2.54 PLAY BALL.** The term used by the plate umpire to indicate that the play shall begin or be resumed when the pitcher has the ball in her possession and is within eight feet of the pitcher’s plate. All defensive players, except the catcher who must be in her box, must be anywhere in fair ground to put the ball in play. NOTE: See Rule 7.7 for penalty.
- 2.55 QUICK RETURN PITCH.** A pitch made by the pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance. This would be before the batter takes her desired position in the batter’s box or while she is still off balance because of the previous pitch.
- 2.56 RUNNER.** The term “runner” means “batter-runner or baserunner.”
- 2.57 SACRIFICE FLY.** A sacrifice fly is scored when, with less than two outs, the batter scores a runner with a fly ball which is caught.
- 2.58 SLIDE: LEGAL, ILLEGAL.**
- A. **LEGAL SLIDE:** May be either feet first or headfirst. If a runner slides feet first, at least one leg and buttock shall be on the ground. If a runner slides, the runner shall be within reach of the base with either hand or a foot when the slide is completed.
- B. **ILLEGAL SLIDE:** A slide is illegal if:
1. The runner uses a rolling pin or cross-body slide into the fielder.
 2. The runner’s raised leg is higher than the fielder’s knee when the fielder is in a standing position.
 3. The runner goes beyond the base and makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder.
 4. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg.
 5. The runner tries to injure the fielder.
- 2.59 STARTING PITCHER.** The player is listed as a pitcher on the lineup card or official score book.
- 2.60 STEALING.** The act of a baserunner attempting to advance during a pitch to the batter.
- 2.61 STRIKE ZONE.** That space over any part of home plate between the batter’s arm pits to the top of her knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance.
- 2.62 TIME.** The term used by the umpire to order the suspension of play.
- 2.63 TRIPLE PLAY.** A continuous action play by the defense in which three offensive players are put out.
- 2.64 TURN AT BAT.** A turn at bat begins when a player first enters the batter’s box and continues until she is put out or becomes a baserunner.
- 2.65 WILD PITCH.** A legally pitched ball so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that the catcher cannot, or does not, stop and control it with ordinary effort.

3 THE PLAYING FIELD

- 3.1 **THE PLAYING FIELD** is the area within which the ball may be legally played and fielded. The playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area within the radius of the prescribed fence distances from home plate between the foul lines.

DISTANCES

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Class A (10-Under)</i>	150 ft.	175 ft.
<i>Class B (12-Under)</i>	175 ft.	200ft.
<i>Class C (14-Under)</i>	175 ft.	200ft.
<i>Class D (18-Under)</i>	175 ft.	200ft.

- 3.2 **GROUND OR SPECIAL RULES** establishing the limits of the playing field may be agreed upon by leagues or opposing teams whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions are within the prescribed area. Any obstruction on fairground less than the prescribed fence distances from home plate (as outlined in [Rule 3.1](#)) should be clearly marked for the umpire's information.

- 3.3 **THE OFFICIAL DIAMOND.** The diamond shall have base lines as follows: All Classes – 60 ft.

A. The official diamond shall have pitching distances as follows:

1. *Farm Major (8-Under)* 28 ft.
2. *Class A (10-Under)* 35 ft.
3. *Class B (12-Under)* 40 ft.
4. *Class C (14-Under)* 43 ft.
5. *Class D (18-Under)* 43 ft.

B. When the pitching rubber or base distance is found to be incorrect the game shall be stopped and the pitching rubber and/ or base set to required distances.

- 3.4 **FOR THE LAYOUT OF THE DIAMOND,** refer to drawing showing official dimensions of softball diamond. This section is an example for laying out a diamond with 60-foot bases and a 40-foot pitching distance.

A. To determine the position of home plate, draw a line in the direction it is desired to lay the diamond. Drive a stake at the corner of home plate nearest the catcher.

Fasten a cord to this stake and tie knots or otherwise mark the cord at 40 feet, 60 feet, 84 feet 10 ¼ inches and at 120 feet.

B. Place the cord (without stretching) along the direction line and place a stake at the 40-foot marker – this will be the front line at the middle of the pitcher's plate. Along the same line, drive a stake at the 84 foot 10 ¼ inch marker. This will be the center of second base.

C. Place the 120-foot marker at the center of second base and, taking hold of the cord at the 60-foot marker, walk to the right of the direction line until the cord is taut and drive a stake at the 60-foot marker. This will be the outside corner of first base and the cord will now form the lines to first and second bases. Again, holding the cord at the 60-foot marker, walk across the field and in line manner, mark the outside corner of third base. Home plate, first and third bases are wholly inside the diamond.

D. To check the diamond, place the home plate end of the cord at the first base stake and the 120-foot marker at third base. The 60-foot marker should now check at home plate and second base.

- 3.5 Check all distances with steel tape whenever possible.

A. **THE THREE-FOOT LINE** is drawn parallel to and three feet from the baseline starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base.

- B. **THE BATTER'S ON-DECK CIRCLE** is a five-foot circle 2 ½ foot radius placed adjacent to the end of the player's bench or dugout area closest to home plate.
- C. **THE BATTER'S BOX**, one on each side of home plate, shall measure three feet by seven feet. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be six inches from home plate. The front line of the box shall be four feet in front of a line drawn through the center of home plate. The lines are considered as being within the batter's box.
- D. **THE CATCHER'S BOX** shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter's boxes and shall be eight feet five inches wide.
- E. **THE COACH'S BOX IS BEHIND A LINE 15 FEET LONG DRAWN OUTSIDE THE DIAMOND.** The line is parallel to and eight feet from the first and third baselines, extended from the bases toward home plate.
- F. **THE PITCHER'S PLATE** shall be permanently attached to the ground at distances indicated in Rule 3.3. There shall be a 16-foot circle drawn from the pitcher's plate, eight feet in radius. The lines drawn around the pitcher's plate are considered inside the circle.
- G. See Appendix A for field layout.

4 EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 **THE OFFICIAL BAT.** The official bat made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel, and end cap shall be free of burs, dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.25 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The Official bat must bear the appropriate certification mark as shown below and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks.



Allowed in all games

- A. Must be included on a list of approved bat models published by USA Softball; or must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with the USA Softball Bat Performance Standard. This includes wooden bats.
 - B. Safety grip or cord, tape (no smooth plastic tape) or composition material may not exceed two layers of tape and must be continuously spiral. Any resin or pine tar is permissible on this part of the bat. Tape must be at least 10 inches long and not more than 15 inches.
 - C. Any bat that is less than 30 inches in length does not need the ASA approved certification mark. For bats less than 30 inches in length, the thickest part of the bat must be 2 ¼ inch in diameter or less.
 - D. Choke-up knobs are illegal for all classifications.
- 4.2 **WARM-UP BATS.** No more than two official softball bats may be used by the on-deck batter in the on-deck circle. The WARM-UP BAT should meet the following requirements to be approved:
- A. Stamped with one-fourth inch letters WB on either end of the bat or marked in 1" letter the words "Warm-Up Bat Only" on the barrel end of the bat.
 - B. A minimum weight of 48 ounces.
 - C. A minimum barrel diameter of 2 ½ inches.
 - D. Have a safety grip of at least 10 inches and no more than 15 inches extended from the knob; and/ or
 - E. Be of one-piece construction or a one-piece permanently assembled bat approved by the LCHSS Executive Committee.

4.3 THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

- A. Shall be a regular, smooth-seamed, concealed stitched or flat surfaced ball.
- B. Shall have a center core made of either No. 1 quality, long fiber kapok, a mixture of cork and rubber or a polyurethane mixture.
- C. May be hand or machine wound, with a superior quality twisted yarn, and covered with latex or rubber cement.
- D. Shall have a cover cemented to the ball by application of cement to the underside of the cover, and sewn with waxed thread of cotton or linen, or shall have a molded cover bonded to the core with an authentic facsimile of stitching.
- E. Shall have a cover of chrome tanned top grain horsehide or cowhide or synthetic material.
- F. The 12-inch ball shall be used for Class B, C and D, and be between 11 ⁷/₈ inches and 12 ¹/₈ inches in circumference and shall weigh between 6¼ ounces and 7 ounces. The smooth-seam style shall not have less than 88 stitches in each cover sewn by two-needle method.
- G. The 11-inch ball shall be between 10 ⁷/₈ inches and 11 ¹/₈ inches in circumference and shall weigh between 5 ⁷/₈ ounces and 6 ¹/₈ ounces. The smooth-seam style shall not have less than 88 stitches on each cover, sewn by the two-needle system.
- H. An optic yellow ball with a maximum ball compression of 375 lbs. and a maximum COR of .47 shall be used in all LCHSS games for Class A, Class B, Class C and Class D.
- I. LCHSS logo balls must be used for all regular season, district, and state tournament games. No exceptions.

4.4 **THE HOME PLATE** shall be made of rubber or other suitable materials. It shall be a five-sided figure, 17 inches wide across the edge facing the pitcher. The sides shall be parallel to the inside lines of the batter's box and shall be eight and one-half inches long. The sides of the point facing the catcher shall be 12 inches long.

4.5 **PITCHER'S PLATE** shall be of wood or rubber, 24 inches long and six inches wide. The top of the plate shall be level with the ground. The front line of the plate shall be the prescribed pitching distances from the outside corner of home plate. (Refer to PITCHING DISTANCES Chart in [Rule 3.3.](#))

4.6 **THE BASES.** Other than home plate, shall be 15 inches square, made of canvas or other suitable materials, and not more than five inches in thickness. The bases should be securely fastened in position.

- A. The double base may be used at first base. This base is 15 by 30 inches, made of canvas or other suitable material half the base is white (secured in fair territory) and half is colored (secured in foul territory.) It should not be more than five inches in thickness.

***NOTE:** The following rules apply to the double base:*

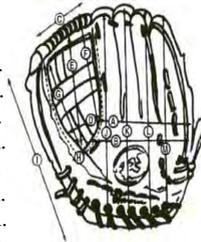
- B. A batted ball hitting or bounding over the white portion is declared fair, and a batted ball hitting or bounding over the colored portion is declared foul.
- C. The defense must use the white portion and the batter-runner the colored portion when a play is being made on the batter-runner.
 - 1. The batter-runner is out when there is a play being made at first base and the batter-runner touches only the white portion provided the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to touch the white or colored base.
 - 2. The batter-runner is out for interference when there is a force play and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white portion of the base. (See [Rule 9.7. G](#) penalty.)
 - 3. Obstruction is called on the defense when there is a force play on the batter-runner, who touches only the colored portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball, while also on the colored portion. (See [Rule 9.5. B](#) penalty.)
- D. The defense and the batter-runner may use either the white or colored portion:

1. On any force out from the foul side of first base.
 2. On an errant throw pulling the defense off the base into foul territory.
 3. When the defensive player uses the colored portion of the double base, the batter-runner can run in fair territory when the throw is coming from the foul side of first base, and is hit by the thrown ball, it is not interference. If intentional interference is called, the batter-runner is out.
- E. The batter-runner or runner may touch the white or colored portion of the base:
1. When advancing on balls hit to the outfield with no play being attempted or when returning to first base.
 2. When tagging up on a fly ball.
 3. When returning on attempted pick-off play.

4.7 GLOVES OR MITTS may be worn by any player. No top lacing, webbing or other device between the thumb and body of the glove or mitt shall be more than five inches in length. Gloves with an optic yellow circle on the outside, giving the appearance of a ball, are illegal for all players. Pitchers' gloves or sleeve cannot match the color of balls. Multicolored gloves are acceptable for all other players.

A. SOFTBALL GLOVE SPECIFICATIONS

1. Palm width 8 in.
2. Palm width 8 ½ in.
3. Top opening of web 5 in.
4. Bottom of web opening 4 ½ in.
5. Web top to bottom 7 ¼ in.
6. First finger crotch seam 7 ½ in.
7. Thumb crotch seam 7 ½ in.
8. Crotch seam 17 ¼ in.
9. Thumb top to bottom edge 9 ¼ in.
10. First finger top to bottom edge. 14 in.
11. Second finger top to bottom edge. 13 ¼ in.
12. Third finger top to bottom edge. 12 ¼ in.
13. Fourth finger to bottom edge ... 11 in.



4.8 SHOES MUST BE WORN BY ALL PLAYERS AND COACHES A shoe should be considered official if it is made with either canvas or leather uppers or similar materials. The soles may be either smooth or have soft or firm rubber cleats. Metal spikes are allowed in Class C and D. No rigid plastic or polyurethane spikes similar to metal sole and heel plate are allowed in Farm, Class A and Class B. No shoes with detachable cleats that screw ON are allowed. Metal toe plates will be allowed. Coaches are not permitted to wear sandals or flip-flops.

4.9 HELMETS, MASKS, BODY PROTECTORS AND SHIN GUARDS

A. Catchers must wear a protective helmet and a protective mask with throat protector that is part of or attached to the mask. The catcher's helmet and mask combination shall meet the NOCSAE standard and have full ear protection (dual ear flaps.)

NOTE: The catcher's head, face and throat protection may be a one-piece design or a multi-piece design.

B. Catchers must wear shin guards.

PLAY – Catcher refuses to wear her mask after being ordered to wear a mask by the umpire.

RULING – Forfeited game shall be declared by the umpire if no one else will wear mask and catch.

4.10 NO EQUIPMENT SHALL BE LEFT LYING ON THE FIELD, either in fair or foul territory. (See [Rule 9.5.G Play 4.](#)) All non-player equipment, including wheelchairs, crutches, and other related items, shall be confined to out-of-play areas.

4.11 UNIFORM. All players on a team should wear uniforms alike in color, trim, and style. The Manager and Coaches when not in a softball uniform are requested to dress

“appropriately recognizing that the attention should be on the players and not the adults. If short pants are worn, they must be “walking shorts” or shorts designed for softball competition. Uniforms required in tournament play include a shirt, pants, or shorts, and shall be worn by all players. No tank tops are permitted. A tank top is a shirt without sleeves less than 1 ½ inch wide shoulder strap. Players shall wear/ utilize uniforms/ equipment properly as designed by the manufacturer.

A. **NOTE:** In tournament play, players may wear their individual league uniform.

1. **HEADWEAR.** Ball caps, visors and headbands are optional for players. If worn, they can be mixed, but must be worn properly. If one type or more than one type, they all must be same in color. Handkerchiefs do not qualify as headbands and cannot be worn, either around the head or around the neck.

NOTE: Plastic visors are not allowed as head wear.

2. **PANTS.** Players may wear long or short pants or a combination of and should be the same color.

3. **UNDERSHIRTS.** Players may wear a uniform, solid colored undershirt (it may be white.) It is not mandatory that all players wear an undershirt if one player wears one, but those that are worn must be alike. No player may wear ragged, frayed, or slit sleeves on exposed undershirts.

4. **NUMBERS.** An Arabic number of contrasting colors, at least two inches high, must be worn on the back of all uniform shirts. (Number 3 and 03 are examples of legal numbers.) Players without numbers will not be permitted to play. If duplicate numbers exist, one will not be permitted to play in the game.

5. **HELMETS.** All offensive players must wear properly fitted non-glare batting helmets with double ear flaps, and protective face mask/ guard that have been approved by the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE.) It is the umpire’s responsibility to see that the batter has protective headgear.

PENALTY: Failure to wear a batting helmet when ordered to do so by the umpire shall cause said player to be declared out immediately. The ball remains alive. Batting helmets that are broken, cracked, dented or that have been illegally altered are prohibited from use.

NOTE: Calling a runner out for removing a helmet does not remove force play situations. Umpires should use discretion as to the intent of the rule concerning player safety.

6. **CASTS.** Plaster or other hard substance in their final form may not be worn during the game. Any exposed metal may be considered legal if covered by soft material and taped.

7. **JEWELRY.** Jewelry shall be permitted unless an item is deemed to be unsafe, unsportsmanlike, or distracting by the umpire.

8. **SUNGLASSES.** Mirror sunglasses are not allowed on the field.

NOTE: if the eyes are visible through the lens, they are not mirrored sunglasses.

PLAY (1) – A team has three players wearing caps and the remaining players do not wear anything on their heads.

RULING – Legal, if the three hats are alike. All female players do not have to wear hats but can mix headbands and hats.

PLAY (2) – Two players wear caps, and the remaining players wear same-colored headbands.

RULING – Legal, caps and headbands may be worn.

PLAY (3) – Player F1 wear (a) uniform number 6 on the back of her jersey, (b) uniform number 00 on the back of her jersey, (c) no uniform number on the jersey, but number 5 on the pants, (d) no uniform number on the back of the jersey, but a two inch number on the front, (e) no uniform number at all.

***RULING** – Legal in (a) and (b), not legal in (c), (d) or (e)*

***PLAY (A)** – Player F1 (Jones) was listed in the score book with the wrong number and (a) had her name on the jersey, (b) no name on jersey.*

***RULING** – Correct the number in the score book in either case and resume play. There is no penalty.*

9. **DEFENSIVE PROTECTIVE FACE MASKS.** It is recommended that all defensive infielders, including the pitcher, should wear protective face masks. **CLASS A ONLY:** It is mandatory that the pitcher, first and third base players wear defensive facemasks while in the field.

10. **ALL EQUIPMENT** will be checked by an umpire prior to the start of the game play.

5 PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES

5.1 TEAM SHALL CONSIST OF:

A. Nine (9) Players for Classes A, B, C and D. Nine (9) or Ten (10) Players for Farm Major.

B. Rosters shall include only female players.

5.2 PLAYERS – POSITIONS; SHALL BE DESIGNATED AS FOLLOWS:

A. Pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, shortstop, left fielder, center fielder and right fielder. **NOTE:** *Players of the team in the field may be stationed anywhere in fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position at the start of each pitch. When a pitch is delivered without all defensive players in fair territory, an illegal pitch shall be declared.*

5.3 SUBSTITUTING/ RE-ENTRY.

A. A player who is not listed as an eligible substitute on the line-up card shall not be prohibited from playing.

B. A substitute may replace a player, including the pitcher, when a ball is dead, or time has been called. The substitute or coach shall report, only at the time of the change, to the umpire by stating name and shirt number of the player entering the game for the first time or the player re-entering, the name of the player entering the game as a courtesy runner or being replaced in the batting order and the position occupied in the field if the player is not a courtesy runner.

NOTE: *The pitcher is not required to pitch until the first batter facing her has completed her turn at bat or the side has been retired.*

NOTE: *A pitcher may be removed as a pitcher, move to a different defensive position, and return as a pitcher only once per inning provided the return as pitcher does not violate either the substitution or charged conference rule.*

C. A substitute shall not enter the contest unreported.

D. In Classes A and B, all starters are required to play 12 outs, 6 offensive and 6 defensive. These outs do not need to be consecutive but must be played prior to the conclusion of the game. An un-played half inning, such as the bottom of 6th for A and 7th for B does not count as part of the player's time in the game.

E. In Classes A and B, all substitutes must play 12 consecutive outs. It is strongly recommended that all substitutes be entered into each game at the top of the 3rd inning.

1. **NOTE:** After meeting requirements of D and E, managers may re-enter all players as many times as they want as long as the batting order remains the same.

F. In Classes C and D, any player (Starter or substitute) who has been removed from the game due to a substitute, can reenter the game once, provided such player occupies the same batting position in the batting order that he or she originally occupied.

1. There are no minimum playing requirements for these Classes.

G. **CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER OPTION:** All classes (A-D) have the option of a continuous batting order. The coach must state that they are using the continuous batting order at ground rules. The coach must still report all pitching changes to the umpire and must use the continuous batting order for the entire game.

1. If the manager chooses a continuous batting order and a player becomes ill or injured during the game and is removed from play, the player's spot in the batting order will be recorded as an out for the remainder of the game.

2. If the manager chooses to bat a continuous batting order and the game is suspended, any player that played in the original game and is unable to play in the makeup game will be removed from the lineup without penalty. The name will be crossed out in the scorebook and that player will be skipped.

3. If the manager chooses to bat a continuous batting order and the game is suspended, any player that did not play in the original game and is able to play in the makeup game will be added to the bottom of the lineup without penalty.

4. When using a continuous batting order, if any player arrives late to the game, may be added to the bottom of the lineup at any time.

H. **Matching EXCEPTIONS (CLASS A and B ONLY):**

1. If one team has more players than the other at the start of the game, then the team with more players needs to match only the other team in substitution i.e.: one team has fourteen (14) players while the other team has eleven (11), the fourteen (14) player team must play only (11) players. All players that must meet the two-inning rule and must be placed on the score sheet so that managers know who must play two innings.

2. Nonstarters who are not required to play as per exception (a) can be inserted into the game at any time at the discretion of the manager. These players are not bound by the mandatory playing time. When these players are inserted into the lineup/batting order, they must maintain that position in the batting order.

3. Player matching may not be used by a team utilizing a continuous batting order.

5.4 **TEAM MUST HAVE THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF PLAYERS** present to start or continue a game. Requirements are:

A. Nine (9) Players for Classes A, B, C and D; Nine (9) or Ten (10) Players for Farm Major

1. In the event the game is suspended, the team may substitute players that may not be present without penalty however the batting order cannot be changed when the game is resumed. Farm Major teams may add additional players as they arrive to the bottom of the batting order as well as defensively.

B. If for any reason, after play has begun, a team does not have an eligible substitute for a player who is withdrawn from the lineup, the team may continue to play with eight players, but an automatic out shall be recorded each time the player who was withdrawn and not replaced in the lineup would have appeared in the batting rotation. If an eligible player becomes available, the team may return to nine (9) or ten (10) players. In a game started with 8 players, the team may not continue with seven players.

PENALTY: Game is forfeited. (See [Rule 6.3.F](#))

NOTE: *Players listed on the starting lineup and not available at game time may be substituted for and re-entered under Re-Entry Rule.*

C. If all players have been inserted in a ball game and one (1) player becomes injured or ill, a player from the bench may be reinserted in the game again. The player to be inserted shall be selected by the opposing team's manager. The ill or injured player may not return to the game.

1. EXCEPTION: If a player is ejected, the game must finish with eight (8) players. If the game was started with the minimum number of players, the game may not be finished with seven players.

D. Any player rendered unconscious may not resume playing that day unless authorized in writing by a physician.

5.5 SUBSTITUTES: UNREPROTED / INELIGIBLE PLAYERS.

A. Announcement of Substitutions: If no announcement of a substitution during league play is made, the substitute shall be considered to have entered the game when:

5.6 EXCEPTION: During LCHS tournament play you must report all substitutions to the official tournament scorekeeper.

A. Substitute players will be considered in the game after one pitch has been thrown and:

1. A batter when she is in the batter's box
2. A fielder when she is in a defensive position
3. A runner, when on the base she is holding
4. A pitcher when she is near the pitcher's plate

B. Any player may be removed from the game during any dead ball.

PLAY (1) – Jones is the starting pitcher. In the top of the third inning Smith hits for Jones. In the bottom of the third Jones returns to pitch.

RULING – Legal

PLAY (2) – Pitcher Jones walks B3 and is replaced by Smith. The offensive substitute #11 for B4 and before Smith throws one pitch (a) Jones the starting pitcher re-enters (b) Brown is substituted for Smith.

RULING – Legal in both situations. The pitcher no longer must pitch until the first batter facing her has completed her turn at bat, the side has been retired or she has been removed from the game.

C. A player removed from the game by rule, shall not participate in the game again, except as a coach.

EFFECT: 5.5.d: The game shall be forfeited to the offended team.

D. **Blood Rule:** (Refer to Communicable Disease Procedures) A player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment is administered. If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of the time that is reasonable is left to the umpire's judgement.

1. Stop the game and immediately call a coach, trainer or other authorized person to the injured player and allow treatment.

2. Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution and re-entry if necessary.

5.7 Ejections: No manager, coach, or player, shall at any time, whether from the bench, playing field or elsewhere:

A. Incite, or try to incite, by word or sign, a demonstration by spectators.

B. Use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire, or spectators.

C. Call "Time," or employ any word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher balk.

D. Make intentional contact with an umpire in any manner. Before, during or after a game.

E. Take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in any way to distract the batter. Penalty: The offender shall be removed from the game and shall leave the playing field. If a balk is committed, it shall be nullified. Note: If the offender is a base runner, he shall be called out, as well as being removed from the game.

- F. When a manager, coach, player, or any team personnel is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. If a player is a minor, an adult will accompany the player. They may not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. Penalty: (1) If the ejection occurs during a tournament game the ejected person shall be suspended from all games for the remainder of the day and any game played on the next tournament day for any team which the person is listed as a staff member (manager, coach, assistant manager, scorekeeper, etc.). If a team staff member is ejected the second time during the tournament, the suspension shall be for the remainder of the tournament, and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the LCHSS Executive Committee. Ejected person or persons cannot participate in any pre or post game activities during their suspension. (2) If the ejection occurs during a league game the ejected person shall be suspended for the remainder of the game and the next played LCHSS game. Any person ejected cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.
- G. When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues the following penalty shall be applied: PENALTY: The umpire shall order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. If a bench is cleared, one of the adult coaches must accompany the team. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

6 THE GAME

- 6.1 THE VISITING TEAM SHALL ASSUME THE FIRST AT BAT** for regular season games. For tournament games, the choice of the first or last at bat shall be decided by a toss of a coin.
- 6.2 THE FITNESS OF THE GROUND FOR A GAME** shall be decided by the home team until the home plate umpire has declared play ball. From that point forward, the home plate umpire shall determine the fitness of the ground, in cooperation with facility maintenance team.
- 6.3 REGULATION LEAGUE AND TOURNAMENT GAMES SHALL CONSIST OF SIX OR SEVEN INNINGS.**
- A. A regulation game consists of seven innings except Farm Major and Class A, which are 6 innings, unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the 7 or (6 for Major and A) inning or only a fraction of it; or (2) because the umpire calls the game.
- B. A game that is tied at the end of regulation shall be continued by playing additional innings; or until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning; or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
- C. A game called by the umpire shall be considered regulation if 4½ or 5 or more complete innings for Classes B, C and D, 3½ or 4 innings for Farm Major and Class A, have been played or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in four or more innings than the other team has scored in four/ five or more innings. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which places the patrons or players in peril. For games called prior to four/five innings, see 6.3.H.

***PLAY** - At the end of the fourth inning, the score is H (1) and V (2). There is no score in the top half of the fifth, but in the bottom half H scores: (a) 1 run; (b) two runs. In either case, game is called for rain with only one or two outs.*

RULING – In either case, it is a regulation game. In (a), it is a suspended game in (b), H is the winner.

- D. If a game is called, it is a regulation game:
1. If 4½ or 5 innings have been completed in Classes B, C and D, 3½ or 4 innings for Farm Major and Class A or;
 2. If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half innings than the visiting team has scored in five completed innings or;
 3. A two-hour time limit is placed on all games when a team has a ten-run lead regardless of what inning you are in. The home team must complete their half of the inning if the visitors are leading or.
 4. If after 5 or more innings, 4½ innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. **NOTE:** If the visiting team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
 5. In Classes B, C, and D only, if after 4 or more innings, 3½ innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of 15 runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. **NOTE:** If the visiting team has a lead of 15 runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning. **NOTE:** In Class B, the unplayed bottom half of the 4th inning will not result in a substitution penalty.
- E. These provisions do not apply to any acts on the part of players or spectators which might call for forfeiture of the game. The umpire may forfeit the game if attacked physically by any team member or spectator.
- F. A forfeited game shall be decided by the umpire in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases:
1. If a team fails to appear on the field or, being on the field, refuses to begin a game for which it is scheduled or assigned at the time scheduled or within a time set for forfeitures by the organization in which the team is playing.
 2. If after the game has begun, one side refuses to continue to play, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire.
PLAY – A game is called after six/ seven complete innings of play because the manager of the visiting team no longer wishes to play.
RULING – If weather permits the game shall not be terminated. The umpire shall forfeit the game to the home team by a score of 7-0, or 6-0 in Farm Major and Class A.
 3. If, after play has been suspended by the umpire, one side fails to resume playing within two minutes after the umpire has called “play ball.”
 4. If a team employs tactics noticeably designed to delay or to hasten the game.
 5. If, after warning by the umpire, any one of the rules of the game is willfully violated.
 6. If the order for the removal of a player to the dugout is not obeyed within one minute.
 7. If, because of the removal of the players from the game by the umpire for any cause, there are less than eight players on either team.
- G. A game may end at any time if both team’s managers agree to end the game.
- H. If after one pitch has been made, a game shall be declared suspended if is called because of darkness, rain, fire, panic, or other causes which places the patrons or players in peril. All records count, and the game shall be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped. The player lineup when the game is resumed shall be the same as it appears in the score book when the game was stopped. If any player(s) listed in the lineup are not present when the game is resumed, substitute player(s) can be inserted per rules [5.3.B](#) and [5.3.D](#). If no substitute is available per rules [5.3.B](#) and [5.3.D](#), the player to be inserted shall be selected by the opposing team’s manager. If

after five (5) innings in Classes B, C, and D, four (4) innings in Farm Major and Class A, the visiting team ties or goes ahead and the home team does not have an opportunity to bat in their half of the inning due to weather or darkness, the game shall be suspended.

- I. During regular season play and preliminary tournament rounds, from time the umpire declares "Play Ball" to begin the game, no new inning shall be started if the following time limits have been reached, which is the sole responsibility of the umpire crew chief to keep and enforce, not a coach or scorekeeper:

1. Farm Major, and Class A may not start a new inning after 2 hours (120 minutes.)
2. Class B, Class C, and Class D may not start a new inning after 2 hours 15 minutes (135 minutes.)

3. For tournaments, the same time limits will be in effect for all preliminary games.

NOTE: A preliminary game is defined as any tournament game that is not a regional semi-final, regional final, state semi-final or state final.

- 6.4 THE WINNER OF THE GAME SHALL BE** the team that scores the most runs in a regulation game.

A. The score of a called regulation game shall be the score at the end of the last completed inning, unless the team, second at bat has scored more runs than the first team at bat in the incomplete inning. In this case, the score shall be that of the incomplete inning.

B. The score of a regulation tie game shall be the score when the game was terminated.

C. The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favor of the team not at fault.

- 6.5 ONE RUN SHALL BE SCORED** each time a baserunner legally touches first, second, third bases and home plate before the third out of the inning.

- 6.6 A RUN SHALL NOT BE SCORED** if the third out of the inning is a result of:

A. The batter being put out before legally touching first base.

B. A baserunner being forced out due to the batter becoming a baserunner.

PLAY (1) – *R1 is on third base and R2 is on first base with two outs. Batter hits a ground ball to F4, who chases R2 back toward first base and tags her (a) before R1 scores, (b) after R1 scores.*

RULING – *Run does not count in (a) or (b) since the third out was a force-out.*

PLAY (2) – *With one out and runners on second base and third base, the batter flies out for the second out. The runner on third tags up after the catch, but the runner on second base does not. The runner on third base crosses the plate before an appeal is made at second base.*

RULING – *The run will count, as this is a time play and not a force out. If the runner crosses home plate after the appeal, the run would not count.*

C. A baserunner leaving base before the pitcher releases the ball to the batter.

- 6.7 NO SUCCEEDING RUNNER SHALL SCORE A RUN** when a preceding runner has been declared the third out of an inning.

PLAY (1) – *One out, R1, on third base and R2 on second base. Batter hits a fly ball which is caught by F7. R1 tags up and leaves her base before the fly ball is touched by F7. R2 tags up and legally leaves her base and scores. Appeal is made at third base and umpire declares R1 out.*

RULING – *Three outs, no runs score.*

PLAY (2) – *Two outs, R1 on third base, R2 on second base and R3 on first base. Batter hits ball over the fence for a home run. R1 fails to touch home plate but R2, R3 and the batter-baserunner touch all bases in regular order, including home plate. An appeal is made on R1 at home plate. Umpire declares R1 out.*

RULING – *No runs score.*

- 6.8 A BASERUNNER SHALL NOT SCORE A RUN** ahead of the baserunner preceding her in the batting order if the preceding runner has not been put out.

6.9 THERE SHALL BE ONLY ONE OFFENSIVE CONFERENCE between the manager or other team representative and the batter or baserunner in an inning. Umpires shall not PERMIT any such conferences more than one in an inning.

A. **PENALTY:** A manager or coach who insists on another charged conference will be confined to the bench.

6.10 MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING

A. Class A 7 run per inning rule. 7 run per inning per team limit until the 6 or last inning. When a team scores seven (7) runs with two or less outs, the half inning is considered completed. Once an inning is determined to be the last inning the seven (7) run per inning limit no longer applies, and for the remainder of the game, each half inning continues until the team at bat records three outs. For the purposes of the “seven run per inning” limit, an inning is considered the “last inning” If:

1. At any point during the 5th inning or 6th inning the visiting team has a lead of ten (10) or more runs if the home team achieves a ten-run lead, the game is over.

2. After two hours of play, at any point during any inning either team has a lead of (10) or more runs.

3. No new inning shall be started if the following time limits have been reached

4. The crew Chief declares the 5th or 6th to be the last inning due to impending darkness or weather conditions, that is the last inning and game is over once that inning has been completed.

a. **INTERPRETATION 1:** While the seven - run limit is in effect, if a batter reaches first base due to a hit or fielding error with runners on base, only the runners that score up to the seven (7) run limit are counted, and the half inning is completed.

b. **INTERPRETATION 2:** If any runner that scores up to the seven run limit results in the inning being considered the “last inning as defined above,” then all runners that score are counted, and the inning continues until the team at bat record three outs.

6.11 WEATHER: – The game shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized.. It is mandatory to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play. Any subsequent lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.

6.12 INTERNATIONAL TIE BREAKER: If the game is tied at the conclusion of the seventh inning in Classes B, C and D, and the conclusion of the 6th inning in Farm Major and Class A, the game will go into extra innings and the International Tie Breaker will be used. **The player in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter or a pinch-runner will be placed on 2nd base with 0 outs.** The next individual in the lineup will be placed at bat and play will continue from that point. This will continue so forth and so on until a winner is determined. Both Away and Home teams will have the same opportunity.

7 PITCHING REGULATIONS

7.1 PRELIMINARIES. Before starting the delivery (pitch,) the pitcher shall comply with the following:

A. She shall take a position with her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher’s plate and non-pivot foot on or behind the pitcher’s plate. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher’s plate. Her shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases. The hands shall be separated. The ball can be in the glove or pitching hand.

B. While in the position described above, she shall take or simulate taking the signal from the catcher.

- C. After completing "b" above, the pitcher shall bring the hands together in front of the body for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball. The hands may be motionless or moving. The ball may be in or touching the outside of the glove.
- D. The pitcher shall not be considered in pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive a pitch.
- E. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in her possession.

NOTE: *To indicate to the pitcher that she may not start the pitch, the umpire should raise one hand with the palm facing the pitcher. "NO PITCH" shall be declared if the pitcher pitches while the umpire has his/ her hand in said position.*

- F. The pitcher may remove themselves from the pitching position as follows:
 1. Before the hands come together, the pitcher may legally step back from the pitcher's plate with both feet;
 2. When the hands are together and no part of the windup motion has been made, the pitcher may legally step back from the pitcher's plate with both feet;
 3. Either foot may be removed first.

7.2 THE PITCH The hands separating after coming together constitutes the start of a pitch.

- A. Once the hands are brought together, the pitcher is permitted to step backward with the non-pivot foot at any time prior to start of the pitch.
- B. While pushing off from the pitcher's plate, both feet may be disengaged from the playing surface as long as they remain within or partially within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate and do not create a replant of the pivot foot resulting in the pitcher being farther away from the pitcher's plate. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate resulting in the non-pivot foot becoming closer to home plate is illegal.

NOTE: *It is not a step if the pitcher slides her foot across the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the pitcher's plate.*

PLAY (1) – *The pitcher stands on the right side of the pitcher's plate with both feet in legal contact. She takes a step with her non-pivot foot toward third base so that the entire foot lands to the right of the outside of the pitcher's plate.*

RULING – *Illegal pitch.*

PLAY (2) – *The pitcher stands with two feet on the pitching rubber and takes the signal. She then steps or slides back with the non-pivot (a) while her hands are separated (b) while her hands are together.*

RULING – *(a) legal and (b) legal. Because her step must be forward with the non-pivot foot a step back must be completed prior to the start of the pitch as described in [Rule 7.2](#).*

NOTE: *The umpire should hold up the pitch until the batter is within the lines.*

7.3 A LEGAL DELIVERY shall be a ball which is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

- A. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward, past the straight line of the body.
- B. The hand shall be below the hip, and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- C. The pitch is completed with a step toward the batter.
- D. The catcher must be within the lines of the catcher's box when the pitch is released.

PLAY: *A pitch is delivered with the catcher outside the boundaries of the catcher's box.*

RULING – *Illegal pitch*

- E. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, exception a strikeout or putout made by the catcher.

EXCEPTION: 7.3.e. does not apply when (a) a batter becomes a baserunner, (b) there are runners on base, or (c) a foul ball is fielded close to the foul line by the catcher who throws to first base for a possible out.

- F. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball from the catcher.

PLAY – Bases are empty, and the batter has a count of one strike and no balls. On the next pitch, the batter hits a foul ball which the catcher retrieves and throws to third baseman.

RULING – A ball is awarded to the batter and the count becomes two strikes and one ball.

7.4 THE PITCHER MAY USE ANY WINDUP DESIRED, PROVIDING:

- A. She does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- B. She does not use a rocker action in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, she removed one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- C. She does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- D. She does not make two revolutions of the arm in the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop her arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion.
- E. She does not continue to wind up after taking the forward step, which is simultaneous with the release of the ball.
- F. Techniques such as the “crow hop,” the replant of the pivot foot prior to delivering of the pitch, is illegal.

7.5 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT DELIBERATELY DROP, ROLL OR BOUNCE THE BALL while in the pitching position to prevent the batter from striking it. A pitch out for the purpose of intentionally walking a batter is not considered an illegal pitch. (Refer to note following [Rule 9.2.C](#).)

7.6 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT, at any time during the game, be allowed to use tape or any foreign substances upon the ball, the pitching hand, or fingers, shall not allow any other player to apply a foreign substance to the ball. Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands. Applying resin into the glove and then placing the ball in the glove is an illegal act. Resin must be kept on the ground behind the pitcher’s plate. A pitcher who licks her fingers must wipe the fingers off before bringing them in contact with the ball. A pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, forearm, elbow, or thighs, which may, in the umpire’s judgement, be distracting to the batter. Batting gloves may not be worn on the pitching hand.

EFFECT: An illegal pitch shall be called on the first offense. If any defensive player continues to place foreign substance on the ball, the player shall be ejected from the game.

7.7 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT DELIVER A PITCH unless all defensive players, except the catcher who must be in the catcher’s box, are positioned in fair territory.

NOTE 1: It is an illegal pitch if a fielder takes up a position in the batter’s line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter. A pitch does not have to be released. The offending player shall be ejected from the game and an illegal pitch shall be declared.

EFFECT: 7.1 to 7.7: Any infraction of [Rules 7.1](#) to [7.7](#) is an illegal pitch, with the exception of [Rule 7.3.E](#), which is covered separately. The ball is a delayed dead ball, a ball is called on the batter and the illegal pitch is called a ball. If an illegal pitch hits the batter, the batter is awarded first base.

EXCEPTION: If the batter does not reach first base safely or if any base runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the team at bat shall have the option of the result of the play or the penalty of the illegal pitch.

EXCEPTION: If the pitcher completes the delivery of the ball to the batter; and, if the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely; and if all baserunners advance at least,

one based on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play stands and the illegal pitch nullified. A delayed dead ball will be signified by the umpire extending his left arm horizontally.

NOTE 2: An illegal pitch shall be called immediately when it becomes illegal. If called by the plate umpire, it shall be calling in a voice so that the catcher and the batter will hear it. The plate umpire will also give the delayed dead ball signal. If called by the base umpire, it shall be called so that the nearest fielder shall hear it. The base umpire shall also give the delayed dead ball signal. Failure of players to hear the call shall not void the call.

- 7.8 NOT MORE THAN ONE MINUTE MAY BE USED TO DELIVER NO MORE THAN FIVE PITCHES** to the catcher or other teammate at the beginning of each half inning or when a pitcher relieves another. Play shall be suspended during this time. Umpires are urged to follow the 60 second time limit for getting teams on and off the field. If a team is taking too much time and a warning has been issued, the umpire can call a ball on the first batter for each 20 seconds late. Teams that repeatedly take more than one minute to be ready to play, the manager will be warned and if the team continues to delay play the umpire may eject the manager for the remainder of the game. A replacement pitcher either at the beginning or during an inning will be allowed five (5) pitches. If she has previously been inserted as a pitcher, she will be allowed five (5) pitches.

PLAY – S1 replaces F1. How many throws are permitted for her warm-up?

RULING – Five; however, the umpire is authorized to allow more throws when the weather is inclement of F1 was removed because of an injury and S1 did not have time to warm-up before entering.

- 7.9 THE PITCHER SHALL NOT THROW TO A BASE** during a live ball while her foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate after she has taken the pitching position.

EFFECT: 7.9: Illegal pitch, the ball is dead, a ball is called on the batter. If the throw from the pitcher's plate is during a live ball appeal play, the appeal is canceled.

NOTE: The pitcher can remove herself from the pitching position by stepping backwards off the pitcher's plate. Stepping forward or sideways constitutes an illegal pitch.

- 7.10 NO PITCH SHALL BE DECLARED WHEN:**

- A. The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- B. The pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken position or is off balance as a result of a previous pitch.
- C. The runner is called out for leaving the base prior to the pitcher releasing the pitch.
- D. The pitcher pitches before a baserunner have retouched her base after a foul ball has been declared and the ball is dead.

EFFECT: 7.10.a to 7.10.d: The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

- E. NO PLAYER, MANAGER OR COACH SHALL CALL "TIME," EMPLOY ANY OTHER WORD OR PHRASE, OR COMMIT ANY ACT WHILE THE BALL IS ALIVE AND IN PLAY FOR THE OBVIOUS PURPOSE OF TRYING TO MAKE THE PITCHER COMMIT AN ILLEGAL PITCH.**

EFFECT: 7.10.e: No pitch shall be declared, and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this type of act by the team warned shall result in the offender being removed from the game.

PLAY – Pitcher is in her wind-up when the batter, in an attempt to have the pitcher commit an illegal pitch, raises her hand as if to request "time." Pitcher stops her wind-up.

RULING – No pitch shall be declared.

- 7.11 THERE SHALL BE ONLY THREE CONFERENCES** between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with any defensive player(s) in a regulation game. For every inning beyond regulation, there shall be one charged conference per inning between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with any defensive

player(s). **NOTE:** The fourth, and each additional charged conference in a regulation game, or for any charged conference more than one per inning in an extra inning game, shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The removed pitcher can play another position on defense but cannot pitch again.

- 7.12 **IF THE BALL SLIPS FROM THE PITCHER'S HAND** during her windup or during the back swing, a ball is declared on the batter, the ball will be in play, and the runners may advance at their own risk.
- 7.13 **ANY PLAYER** serving as a catcher to warm up a pitcher shall wear a mask, helmet, and throat protector whether the pitcher is warming up from the mound, in the bullpen or elsewhere.
- 7.14 **CLASS A ONLY** A pitcher is permitted to pitch up to **FOUR INNINGS MAXIMUM** (12 defensive outs) per game.

8 BATTING

8.1 THE BATTER SHALL TAKE HER POSITION WITHIN THE LINES OF THE BATTER'S BOX.

- A. The batter shall not have her entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box or touching home plate when the ball is hit.
- B. The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other batter's box while the pitcher is in position, ready to pitch.
- C. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an illegal bat.

PLAY – batter hits ball for a single with (a) a bat 35 inches long, or (b) a baseball bat.

RULING – In both cases, the bats are illegal. The batter is called out and all runners are returned to the base they were at, at the start of the pitch.

EFFECT: 8.1.a to 8.1.c: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may **NOT** advance.

- D. The batter shall not enter the batter's box with an altered bat.
- EFFECT: 8.1.d:** The ball is dead; the batter is out and, without warning, is removed from further participation in the game; and the baserunners may not advance.
- PLAY** – Refer to [Rule 2.1](#).

- E. The batter must take her position within 10 seconds after the umpire has called "play ball."

Effect: 8.1.e: the ball is dead. A strike shall be called on the batter for each 10 seconds the batter's box is not occupied after the umpire has called "play ball."

- F. The batter must have both feet completely within the lines of the batter's box prior to the start of the pitch. She may touch the lines, but no part of her foot may be outside of the lines prior to the pitch.

NOTE: The umpire should hold up the pitch until the batter is within the lines.

- G. Team representatives, personnel and players shall not intentionally remove, or cover with infield material, any required lines on the field nor intentionally cover the pitcher's plate or home plate.

Effect 8.1.g: The ball is dead. A strike shall be called on the batter if the offense violates the rule, and a ball shall be awarded to the batter if the defense violates the rule. In addition, the umpire shall issue a warning to the offending team. Subsequent violation by the same team shall result in an ejection for the offender and the manager.

- 8.2 **EACH PLAYER OF THE SIDE AT BAT** shall become a batter in the order in which her name appears on the lineup card.

- A. The batting order of each team must be on the lineup card and must be delivered before the game by the manager or captain to the plate umpire.
- B. The batting order delivered to the umpire must be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted. When this occurs, the substitute must take the place of the removed player in the batting order.
- C. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed their turn at bat in the preceding inning.

EFFECT: 8.2.b to 8.2.c: *Batting out of order is in an appeal play which may be made by the manager, player, or coach of the defensive team only. The defensive team forfeits its right to appeal batting out of order when all infielders (including the pitcher) have left their normal positions (crossed the foul line.)*

If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take her place and legally assume any balls and strikes. Any runs scored or bases run while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.

- D. If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed her turn at bat and before there has been a pitch to another batter, the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, or base on balls or a hit batter shall be nullified. Any out that is made prior to discovering this infraction, remains an out. *The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat.*

1. If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal, and the next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out have lost their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

- E. No baserunner shall be removed from the base she is occupying. (Except the batter-baserunner who has been taken off base by the umpire as in (2) above to bat in her proper place). She merely misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following her in the batting order becomes the eligible batter.

PLAY – *With R1 on first base B7 is next on the batting list but B8 erroneously takes her place. The error is discovered by the opposite team personnel and reported to the umpire or official scorekeeper (a) after B8 has received two strikes, (b) after B8 has received based on balls, (c) after B8 has hit a foul which is caught or has made a safe hit to advance R1, (d) R1 is forced out at 2B and B8, is on first base, (e) after a pitch has been delivered to B9.*

RULING – *In (a) B8, is replaced by B7 who assumes the no ball, two strike count; also, any advancement R1 on first base is legal. In (b) and (c), B7 is out. B8 is removed from base and bats again with no balls or strikes. R1 must return to first. In (d) B7 and R1 are out, remove B8 from first base and B8 bats again with no balls and strikes. In (e) no correction is made, and B7 and B8, do not bat again until the regular time.*

- F. When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed her turn at bat, she shall be the first batter in the next inning, and the ball and strike count on her shall be canceled.

- 8.3 THE BATTER SHALL NOT HINDER THE CATCHER** from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box or intentionally hinder the catcher while standing in the batter's box.

EFFECT: *The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners must return to the last base that, in the judgement of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference.*

- 8.4 MEMBERS OF THE TEAM AT BAT SHALL NOT INTERFERE** with a player attempting to field a foul ball.

EFFECT: The ball is dead; the batter is out, and baserunners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch.

- 8.5 **THE BATTER SHALL NOT HIT A FAIR BALL** with a bat a second time in fair territory.

NOTE: If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgement, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out, and the ball is alive and in play.

EFFECT: The ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.

- 8.6 **A STRIKE IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- A. For each legally pitched ball entering the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing.

EFFECT 8.6.a: The ball is in play and the baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.

- B. For each legally pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.

EFFECT 8.6.b: The ball is in play and the baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.

- C. For each foul tip held by the catcher.

EFFECT 8.6.c: The ball is in play and baserunners may advance with liability to be put out. The batter is out if it is the third strike.

- D. For each foul ball not legally caught on the fly when the batter has less than two strikes. Also reference [Rule 8.9.F \(2\)](#).

- E. For each pitched ball struck and missed which touches any part of the batter.

PLAY – On third strike B3 strikes at and misses a pitch. Ball strikes her arm or person.

RULING – B3 is out. Ball becomes dead.

- F. When any part of the batter's person is hit with her own batted ball when she is in the batter's box, and she has less than two strikes.

- G. When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.

EFFECT 8.6.d to 8.6.g: The ball is dead, and baserunners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.

- 8.7 **A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- A. For each legally pitched ball which does not enter the strike zone, touches the ground before reaching home plate, or touches home plate and at which the batter does not swing.

EFFECT 8.7.a: The ball is in play and the baserunners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out.

- B. For each illegally pitched ball.

EFFECT 8.7.b: The ball is dead, and baserunners are entitled to advance one base without liability to be put out. The offensive coach has a choice of the play or the penalty.

- C. When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in [Rule 7.3.E](#).

- D. When the pitcher fails to pitch the ball within 20 seconds.

- E. For each excessive warm-up pitch.

EFFECT 8.7.c to 8.7.e: The ball is dead. Base runners may not advance.

- 8.8 **A FAIR BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- A. Settles or is touched on fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.

PLAY – Batted ball first hits home plate and, without touching any foreign object, settles on fair ground between the pitcher's plate and home plate.

RULING – Fair Ball.

- B. Bounds past first or third base in or over fair territory.

- C. While in or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
- D. Touches first, second or third base.
- E. First falls or is first touched in or over fair territory beyond first, second or third base.
EFFECT 8.8.a to 8.8.e: *The ball is in play and baserunners are entitled to advance any number of bases with liability to be put out. The batter becomes a baserunner unless the infield fly rule applies.*
- F. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
NOTE: *If the ball hits the foul line pole above the fence level, it shall be a home run.*

8.9 A FOUL BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:

- A. Settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- B. Bounds past first or third based on or over foul territory.
- C. While in or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or umpire or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- D. First falls or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base.
- E. Touches the batter while the ball is within the batter's box.
- F. Rebounds up from the ground or home plate immediately and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.
 1. **EFFECT 8.9.a to 8.9.f:**
 2. The ball is dead unless it is a legally caught foul fly. If a foul fly is caught, the batter is out.
 3. A strike is called on the batter unless she already has two strikes.
 4. Base runners must return to their bases without liability to be put out, unless a foul fly is caught. In this case, the baserunner may advance with liability to be put out after the ball has been touched.

8.10 A FOUL TIP is a batted ball which goes directly from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught by the catcher.

NOTE: *It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike. The ball is in play.*

EFFECT: *A strike is called; the ball remains in play and baserunners may advance with liability of being put out.*

8.11 THE BATTER IS OUT:

- A. When the third strike is struck at, missed and the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- B. When the batter appears in the batter's box with or is discovered using an altered bat. The batter is also ejected from the game.
- C. When the batter enters the batter's box with an illegal bat or is discovered using an illegal bat.
PLAY: *REFERS TO PLAYS FOLLOWING; [RULE 2.1](#) and [2.30](#).*
- D. When a batter's entire foot is completely out of the box on the ground when she hits a ball fair or foul.
- E. When any part of the batter's foot is touching home plate when she hits the ball.
- F. When a fly ball is legally caught.
- G. Immediately when she hits an infield fly, as declared by the umpire, with runners on first and second or on first, second and third with less than two outs. This is called the INFIELD FLY RULE.

PLAY (1) – *Umpire calls “infield fly” but ball curves to foul area.*

RULING – *Announcement is reversed. It is not an infield fly but ordinary foul. Batter is not out unless foul is caught. If caught runner must retouch her base before advancing.*

PLAY (2) – *REFER TO [RULE 2.38](#).*

- H. If a fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball, including a line drive or a bunt, which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort with first, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases occupied with less than two outs.

EFFECT 8.11.h: *The ball is dead, and baserunners must return to the last based touched at the time of the pitch.*

PLAY – *With one out and R1 on first, B3 hits fly. F4 gets the ball in her hands but intentionally drops it for an attempted double play.*

RULING – *Umpire should immediately announce that B3 is out. Ball is dead. Base runners may not advance.*

NOTE: *A trapped ball shall not be considered as having been intentionally dropped.*

- I. If a preceding runner who is not yet out, in the umpire's judgement, intentionally interferes with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or throw a ball in an attempt to complete the play. The runner shall also be called out and interference called.
- J. When a called or swinging third strike is caught by the catcher.
- K. When she bunts foul after the second strike. If the ball is caught in the air, it remains alive and in play.

8.12 THE BATTER OR BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT if a fielder making a play on her uses an illegal glove. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the batter bat again and assuming the ball and strike count she had prior to the pitch she hit or taking the result of the play.

PLAY - *B1 hits a fly ball to F9. Umpire is notified that F9 caught the ball with an illegal glove.*

RULING – *Remove the illegal piece of equipment from the game. Manager of the offended team is given the option of having the entire play nullified and batter bat over assuming the ball and strike count before the pitch she hit or accepting the play and disregarding the illegal catch.*

8.13 ON DECK BATTER.

- A. The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order. One on deck batter is permitted in live ball territory.
- B. The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of the on-deck circle nearest her bench.
- C. The on-deck batter may loosen up with no more than two official softball bats, an approved warm-up bat, or a combination of the two, not to exceed two. Warm-up attachments may be used. All warm-up bats and attachments shall meet ASA equipment standards.
- D. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle: (1) when she becomes the batter. (2) To direct baserunners advancing from third to home plate.
- E. When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.

F. The provision of [Rule 8.4](#), shall apply to the on-deck batter.

8.14 DESIGNATED PLAYER/ FLEX PLAYER. The following may be used. DP/Flex may not be used if the manager chooses to use the continuous batting order option.

- A. **C and D League Only:** A designated player (DP) may be used for any player provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and the player's name is indicated on the lineup as one of the nine hitters in the batting order.
- B. The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (Flex Player) will be placed in the tenth position in the lineup.
- C. The starting player listed as the DP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game. The DP and DP's substitute, or the substitute's replacement, may never play offense at the same time.

- D. The DP may be substituted for at any time, either by a pinch-hitter, pinch runner, or the Flex Player. If the starting DP is replaced on offense by the Flex Player, the DP will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the DP position remains in the lineup. A starting DP may reenter one time, as long as the DP returns to the original position in the batting order.
 - 1. If replaced by the Flex Player, this reduces the number of players from ten to nine. If the DP does not re-enter, the game may legally end with nine players.
 - 2. If the DP re-enters and the Flex Player was batting in the DP's spot, the Flex Player can return to the number ten position and play defense only or leave the game.
- E. The DP may play defense at any position. Should the DP play defense for a player other than the one for whom the DP is batting (Flex Player,) that player will continue to bat but not play defense and is not considered to have left the game. The DP may play defense for the Flex Player and the Flex Player is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players from ten to nine. The Flex Player may re-enter the game under the re-entry rule.
- F. The person being batted for (Flex Player) may be substituted for at any time, with by legal substitution for the DP for whom the Flex Player is play defense. The Flex Player may re-enter the game under the re-entry rule either in the number ten position or in the DP's position in the batting order.
- G. If returning to the number ten position, the Flex Player will play defense only; there will be only nine players in the batting order.
- H. If the Flex Player returns to the DP's position, the Flex Player will play offense and defense; there will only be nine players in the batting order.
- I. Placing the Flex Player into one of the first nine positions for someone other than the original DP or the original DP's substitute is considered an ineligible player. The ineligible player shall be removed from the game. The Flex Player replacing the DP is not considered a substitution for the Flex Player. The DP, who has left the game, may re-enter the game under the re-entry rule.

9 BASE RUNNING

9.1 THE BASERUNNERS MUST TOUCH BASES IN LEGAL ORDER (i.e., first, second, third and home plate.)

- A. When a baserunner must return to bases while the ball is in play, she must touch the bases in reverse order.
 - EFFECT: 9.1.a:** *The ball is in play and base runners must return with liability to be put out.*
- B. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, she is entitled to hold the base until she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding baserunner.
- C. When a baserunner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither she nor the succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position.
 - EFFECT: 9.1.b and 9.1.c:** *The ball is in play and baserunners may advance with liability to be put out.*
- D. A baserunner shall not run bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
 - EFFECT: 9.1.d:** *The ball is dead, and the baserunner is out.*
- E. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
 - EFFECT: 9.1.e:** *The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it. The other baserunner may be put out by being touched with the ball.*
- F. Failure of PRECEDING runner to touch a base or to leave a base too soon on a caught fly ball and who is declared out does not affect the status of a SUCCEEDING

baserunner who touches bases in proper order. However, if the failure to touch a base in regular order to leave a base too soon on a caught fly ball is the third out of the inning, NO SUCCEEDING runner may score a run.

PLAY – REFER TO [RULE 6.7](#).

- G. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one she had left illegally after a following runner has scored.
- H. No runner may return to touch a missed base or a base left too soon if she advanced, touched, and remains on a base beyond the missed base or the base left too soon, when the ball becomes dead.
- I. No runner may return to touch a missed base or one she had left illegally once she enters her team dugout or bench area.
- J. When a walk is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order.

PLAY – *In the last of the seventh inning with the score tied, two outs, and bases full, B6 receives a walk to force R1 to home plate. Because B6 assumes the game is over, she fails to go to first and leaves the field. If properly appealed B6 is out.*

RULING – *B6 is out, R1 does not count, since the third out was by B6 not reaching first base safely.*

- K. Bases left too soon on a caught fly ball must be retouched prior to advancing to awarded bases.
- L. Awarded bases must also be touched in proper order.

9.2 THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER – BASERUNNER:

- A. As soon as she hits a fair ball
- B. When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are less than two outs, and first base is unoccupied or anytime there are two outs. This is called the third strike rule.

NOTE: *A League Only. There is not a drop third strike rule. The batter is out on a third strike even if the catcher drops the ball.*

PLAY – *B1 has two strikes. The next pitch touches the ground in front of home plate and bounces through the strike zone. B1 swings at the pitch and F2 secures the ball in her mitt after the first bounce. B1 advances to first base while F2 holds the ball.*

RULING – *This is the dropped third strike rule. The batter is not out and, if she beats the throw to first, she is also safe.*

EFFECT: 9.2.a and 9.2.b: *The ball is in play and the batter becomes a batter-baserunner with liability to be put out.*

- C. When four balls have been called by the umpire.

EFFECT: 9.2.c: *The ball is in play unless it has been blocked. The batter is entitled to one base. NOTE: If the pitcher desires to walk the batter intentionally, all defensive players, except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box, must be positioned in fair territory. If the defense does not position themselves in fair territory, the umpire should call an illegal pitch when the pitch is thrown. See [Rule 5.2 Note](#).*

- D. When the catcher obstructs, or any other fielder interferes with or prevents her from striking at a pitched ball.

EFFECT: 9.2.d: *The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base. Base runners may not advance unless forced. (1) The umpire shall give the "delayed dead ball signal." (2) If all runners including the batter-runner do not advance at least one base, the manager of the batting team has the option to take the result of the play, or have the obstruction enforced by awarding the batter first base and advancing all other runners only if forced. (3) If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, catcher obstruction is canceled. All actions as a result of the batted ball stand. No option is given.*

PLAY – R1 on first base. The catcher touches the batter's bat prior to or during the swing. Batted ball is grounded to F6, who forces R1 at second base. B2 reaches first base safely.

RULING – Since R1 did not advance at least one base, obstruction is called, and the play is canceled. R1 is awarded second base and B2 is awarded first base.

- E. When a fair ball strikes the person or clothing of the umpire or a baserunner on fair ground.

EFFECT: 9.2.e: If the ball hits the umpire or baserunner (a) after touching an infielder, the ball is in play; (b) after passing an infielder other than the pitcher, the ball is in play; or (c) before passing an infielder without being touched, the ball is dead. If the baserunner is hit, she is out, and the batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out. Base runners not forced by the batter-baserunner must return to the base they had reached prior to the interference.

- F. When a baserunner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgement of the umpire no other fielder has a chance to make an out.

PLAY – With R1 on third and R2 on first, a ball batted by B3 strikes umpire who is (a) on fair territory behind third baseman, or (b) behind the pitcher but in front of a baseman.

RULING – In (a), ball remains alive since it has passed a fielder. In (b.) unless ball touches F1, it becomes dead and each runner is sent to the base she occupied or to which she was being forced when the ball became dead (i.e., R1 remains on third, and R2 and B3 forced to second and first.)

When a pitched ball, not struck at or not called a strike, touches any part of the batter's person or clothing while she is in the batter's box. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting her. The batter's hands are not considered as a part of the bat.

EFFECT: 9.2.f: The ball is dead, and the batter is entitled to one base without liability to be put out unless she did not make an effort to avoid being hit. In this case, the umpire calls either a ball or a strike.

9.3 BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITH LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:

- A. On the pitcher's delivery, when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
- B. When the ball is thrown into fair or foul territory and is not blocked.
- C. When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- D. When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- E. If a fair ball strikes the umpire or a baserunner after having passed an infielder, other than the pitcher, or having been touched by an infielder, including the pitcher, the ball shall be considered in play.

EFFECT: 9.3.a to 9.3.e: The ball is alive and in play.

9.4 A PLAYER FORFEITS HER EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:

- A. If, while the ball is in play, she fails to touch the base to which she was entitled before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-baserunner at first base or any other baserunner is forced to advance because the batter became a baserunner, the out is a force-out.
- B. If, after overrunning first base, the batter-baserunner attempts to continue to second base.
- C. If, after dislodging the base, the batter-baserunner tries to continue to the next base.

9.5 BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:

- A. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.

EFFECT: 9.5.a: *The ball remains in play unless it is blocked. Baserunners affected are entitled to one base and may advance further at her own risk if the ball is in play.*

- B. After a fielder has had an opportunity to make an initial play on a batted ball, the responsibility for contact changes. Once a fielder, excluding the pitcher, misplay a batted ball, that fielder should not be protected, and therefore, should not be permitted to obstruct the advancement of the runner. When a fielder obstructs the baserunner from making a base unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready to touch the baserunner.

EFFECT: 9.5.b: *When any obstruction occurs, the umpire will signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain alive.*

1. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called, and the obstructed runner (and all other runners) will always be awarded the base they would have received, in the umpire's judgement, had there not been obstruction. An obstructed runner may never be called out between the two bases in which she was obstructed. The baserunner would either be advanced or returned to the last touched base.

2. If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base, she would have reached had there not been obstruction, the obstructed runner will be called out. The ball remains live.

3. When a runner is obstructed while advancing or returning to a base by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted ball, or a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have reached, in his judgement, had there been no obstruction. If the umpire feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be removed from the game.

4. **NOTE:** *Obstructed baserunners are still required to touch all bases in proper order or could be called out on a proper appeal by the defensive team.*

5. Catcher obstruction is covered under [Rule 9.2. D.](#)

PLAY (1) – *With R1 on third and R2 on second, R1 is caught between third and home. As R1 is attempting to regain third, F5 obstructs R1.*

RULING – *The umpire should call “obstruction.” R1 should be awarded third. R2 is permitted to return to second base.*

PLAY (2) – *The ball is hit to F9. As R1 passes first base, she is obstructed while no play is being made on her, she is thrown out by a wide margin at home plate.*

RULING – *If, in the judgement of the umpire, R1 advanced beyond the base she would have made had she not been obstructed, she is out.*

- C. When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over, through or lodges in the backstop.

EFFECT: 9.5.c: *The ball is dead. All baserunners are awarded one base only. The batter is awarded first base only on the fourth ball.*

- D. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base.

1. For being hit by a pitched ball.

2. For being obstructed by the catcher when striking at a pitched ball.

EFFECT: 9.5.d (1-2): *The ball is dead, and baserunners may not advance farther than the base to which they are forced.*

3. If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on or in front of home plate without possession of the ball or touches the batter or her bat, the pitcher shall be charged with an illegal pitch, the batter shall be awarded first base on the obstruction and the ball is dead.

PLAY – *R1 is on third base. A squeeze play is in progress as the batter attempts to bunt the pitched ball and is interfered with by the catcher.*

RULING – *Illegal pitch and obstruction is declared. R1 is awarded home plate and batter is awarded first base.*

- E. When a pitcher makes an illegal pitch.

EFFECT: 9.5.e: *The ball is dead, and baserunners may advance to the base to which they are entitled without liability to be put out.*

- F. When a fielder contacts or catches a fair batted or thrown ball with her cap, mask, glove, or any part of her uniform while it is detached from its proper place on her person.

EFFECT: 9.5.f: *The baserunners would be entitled to three bases if a batted ball or two bases if a thrown ball; and in either case, the baserunners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair hit ball, which in the judgement of the umpire, would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, the batter shall be awarded a home run.*

PLAY – *R1 is on second and R2 is on first when B3 hits ground ball to F6. F6 fields the ball, steps on second for a force on R2, advancing from first, then throws wildly to F3. F3 tosses her mitt into the air striking the ball. The ball bounces into the dugout.*

RULING – *R2 is out. Both R1 and B3 are awarded two bases each from their position when the detached mitt of F3 touched the thrown ball. In this situation where detached glove or mitt touches a ball, prior to the ball becoming dead because of going into a dead ball area, the rule which applies to detached player equipment prevails. If the detached glove or mitt touches the ball after the ball has become dead by going into a dead ball area, the ruling governing detached player equipment has no bearing.*

- G. When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.

EFFECT: 9.5.g: *All runners will be awarded two bases and the award will be governed by the position of the runners when the ball left any fielder's hand.*

EFFECT: *When a fielder loses possession of the ball, such as on an attempted tag, and the ball enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked, all runners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to her original base, the original base she left is considered the "last base touched" for purposes of an overthrow award.*

PLAY (1) – *R1 and R2 are on second and first bases, respectively. B3 hits the ball to F6, who muffs the ball, recovers it, then throws late to F3 in an attempt to retire B3. R1 and R2 reach third and second base, respectively. R1 attempts to advance to home, thereby drawing a throw from F3 which goes into the dugout.*

RULING – *R1 and R2 are awarded home and B3 is awarded third.*

PLAY (2) – *R1 on first. B2 hits ground ball to F6. F6 flips the ball to F4 for a force out on R1. Relay to F3 from F4 goes into the dugout area. B2 has already passed first base before relay is made.*

RULING – *B2 is awarded third base. Award of bases is governed by the position of each runner at the last base she has touched at the time of the throw.*

PLAY (3) – *No runners on base. B1 hits ball to F10, who throws ball to F4 to force out B1. B1 is already past first base when ball is released by F10. The ball bounces past F3 into the stands.*

RULING – *B1 is awarded third base.*

PLAY (4) – *A thrown ball hits a bat or glove lying on the ground (other than the bat discarded by the batter.)*

RULING – *(1) If the bat or glove belongs to the team at bat, it is ruled interference and the player being played on shall be declared out. The ball is dead, and all baserunners must return to the last base touched prior to the thrown ball hitting the bat or glove. (2) If the bat or glove belongs to the team in the field, it becomes*

a blocked ball and the overthrow rule applied. (3) If no apparent play is obvious, all runners will return to the last base touched at the time the ball hits equipment of the offensive team.

- H. When a fair batted fly ball leaves the playing field in fair territory, without touching the ground or going through the fence, it shall entitle the batter to a home run, unless it passes out of grounds at a distance less than prescribed fence distances from home plate (as outlined in [Rule 3.1.](#)) in which case, the batter would be entitled to only two bases. The batter must touch the bases in regular order. The point at which the fence or stand is less than the distances listed ([Rule 3.1.](#)) from home plate shall be clearly marked for the umpire's information.

PLAY – *A fair batted ball touches (a) F9's glove and goes over the fence in fair territory. (b) F9's glove and goes over the fence in foul territory, (c) the top of the fence railing and goes over, (d) the top of the fence railing bounding to F9's glove and then over the fence in fair territory.*

RULING – *A home run in (a), (c) and (d), and a two-base hit in (b).*

- I. When a fair ball that bounds or rolls over, under or through a fence; bounds out of play unintentionally off a defensive player; or a fair ball that bounds over, under or through any other obstruction marking boundaries of the playing field.

EFFECT: 9.5.i: *The ball is dead, and all baserunners are awarded two bases from the time of pitch.*

1. When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead. All baserunners are awarded one base from the last base touched at the time the "fielder" enters dead ball territory. **NOTE:** A fielder carrying a live ball into the dugout or team area to tag a player is considered to have unintentionally carried it there.

2. If, in the judgement of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries a live ball from playable territory into dead ball territory, the ball becomes dead, and all baserunners are awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time she entered dead ball territory. **NOTE:** A dead ball line is considered in play.

9.6 A BASERUNNER MUST RETURN TO HER BASE:

- A. When a foul ball is illegally caught and so declared by the umpire.
B. When an illegally batted ball is declared by the umpire.
C. When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference. Other baserunners shall return to the last base which was, in the judgement of the umpire, legally touched by her at the time of the interference.

- D. When the plate umpire or his clothing interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw.

PLAY – *With R1 attempting to steal, umpire interferes with catcher's throw.*

RULING – *Umpire signals delayed dead ball. If R1 is not put out, umpire declares dead ball and R1 must return to the base she occupied before the interference.*

- E. When any part of the batter's person is touched by a pitched ball that is swung at and missed.

- F. When a batter is hit by a pitched ball, unless forced.

- G. When a foul ball is not caught.

EFFECT: 9.6.a to 9.6.g:

1. The ball is dead.

2. The baserunners must return to base without liability to be put out, except when forced to go to the next base because the batter became a baserunner.

3. No runs shall score unless all bases are occupied.

4. Baserunners need not touch the intervening bases in returning to base, but must return promptly; however, they must be allowed sufficient time to return.

- H. When a caught fair fly ball, including a line drive or bunt which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort is intentionally dropped with less than two outs and a runner on first base, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases.

PLAY – Refer to [Rule 8.11.H EFFECT](#)

9.7 BATTER – BASERUNNER IS OUT:

- A. When the catcher drops the third strike, and she is legally touched with the ball by a fielder before touching first base.

EXCEPTION: In Farm Major and Class A, the batter is out.

- B. When the catcher drops the third strike, and the ball is held on first base before the batter-baserunner reaches first base.
C. When, after a fair ball is hit, she is legally touched with the ball before she touches first base.
D. When, after a fair ball is hit, the ball is held by a fielder touching first base with any part of her person before the batter-baserunner touches first base.

PLAY – The first baseman has the ball in her right hand while lying on the ground. She touches first base with her left hand prior to the batter-baserunner reaching first base.

RULING – The batter-baserunner is out.

- E. When, after a fly ball is hit, the ball is caught by a fielder before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
F. When, after a fair ball is hit, a base on balls is issued, or the batter legally advances to first base on a dropped third strike, she fails to advance to first base and enters her team area.

EFFECT: 9.7.a to 9.7.f: The ball is in play and the batter-baserunner is out.

PLAY (1) – Batter hits ground ball to pitcher. Pitcher hesitates in throwing ball to first. Batter, assuming she is an “easy out,” enters her team area (bench, dugout, etc.) Pitcher finally throws to first base, but ball is not caught by first baseman and rolls into the dugout. Batter then leaves her team area and runs to first base.

RULING – Batter is out.

- G. When she runs outside the three-foot line, and in the judgement of the umpire, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base. However, she may run outside the three-foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
H. When she interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball, intentionally interferes with a thrown ball or interferes with a dropped third strike. If this interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play, the baserunner closest to home plate shall also be called out.
I. When a batter-baserunner interferes with a play at home plate to prevent an obvious out at home plate. The runner is also out.

PLAY – No outs. R1 on third base. Batter hits a ground ball to the first baseman then interferes with the first baseman’s throw to home plate for a play on R1.

RULING – Batter and R1 are both declared out.

- J. When she moves back toward home plate to avoid or delay a tag by a fielder.
K. When she is discovered using an altered or illegal bat.

EFFECT: 9.7.g to 9.7.k: The ball is dead, and the batter-baserunner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of or before the illegal action.

- L. All offensive players must wear properly fitted batting helmets with double ear flaps that have been approved by the National Operating Committee on Standard for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE.)

PENALTY: Failure to wear a batting helmet when ordered to do so by the umpire shall cause said player to be declared out. Deliberately wearing the helmet

improperly or removing it during play, shall cause the violator to be declared out immediately. The ball remains alive.

NOTE: *In the case of an altered bat, the player is also ejected from the game.*

9.8 THE BASERUNNER IS OUT:

- A. When, in running to any base, she runs more than three feet from a direct line between that base and the next one in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder.
- B. When, while the ball is in play, she is legally touched with the ball in the hand of the fielder while not in contact with a base.
- C. When, on a force-out, a fielder tags her with the ball or holds the ball on the base to which the baserunner is forced to advance before the runner reaches base.
- D. When the baserunner fails to return to touch the base, she previously occupied when the play is resumed after suspension of play.
- E. When a baserunner physically passes a preceding baserunner before the runner has been put out.

EFFECT: 9.8.a to 9.8.e: *The ball is in play and the baserunner is out.*

PLAY – *With R1 on first, B2 hits a double. A throw to third drives R1 back to second. B2 has rounded second and discovers she has passed R1. She runs back and finally reaches first without being tagged out.*

RULING – *B2 is out as soon as she passes R1.*

- F. When a baserunner leaves her base to advance to another base before a caught fly ball has touched a fielder, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and properly appealed.

PLAY – *No outs. R1 on third base. B2 hits a fly ball to F7. F7 misjudges flight of the ball, and it hits her on the shoulder, deflects into the air to F8 and is legally caught by F8 before it hits the ground. R1 tags up at third base as soon as ball hits F7 on the shoulder but before F8 holds ball securely in glove.*

RULING – *Legal advance. Run counts, R1 may leave base as soon as ball is touched.*

- G. When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is in play and legally held on that base; or the baserunner is legally touched while off the base she missed.

PLAY (1) – *With R1 on first, B2 hits safely to right field. An overthrow at first; (a) goes into the stand, (b) strikes the enclosing wall and rebounds to the catcher. In going to third base, R1 misses second base and has passed second or is approaching second when the ball leaves the hand of F9. The ball is then thrown to second for an appeal.*

RULING – *In (a), if R1 has reached second base by the time the throw leaves the hand of F9, R1 is awarded home plate. If the appeal is properly made when the ball becomes alive, it should be allowed, and the run scored by R1 is canceled. If R1 has not reached second by the time the throw leaves the hand of F9, she is awarded third base. A proper appeal should be allowed and enforced. In (b), R1 is out on the appeal since the ball is not blocked, and no bases awarded.*

PLAY (2) – *Refer to [Rule 2.2](#).*

- H. When the batter-baserunner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base and is legally touched while off base.

PLAY – *B1 reaches first safely but, in her overrun, she breaks for second then “gives up” while far away from the base line.*

RULING – *If B1 is attempting to reach a base, she must be tagged, but the fielder is not expected to chase her into the outfield. In the outlined case, she is out for being out of the base line.*

- I. In running or sliding for home plate, she fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to the base when a fielder holds the ball in her hand while touching home plate and appeals to the umpire for a decision. **EFFECT: 9.8.f to 9.8.i:**

1. These are appeal plays and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next legal or illegal pitch.
2. The ball is in play and the baserunner is out.

NOTE: *On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the defensive team has left the field. The defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all infielders have clearly left their normal fielding positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout.*

3. Base runners may leave their base on live ball appeal plays when the ball leaves the eight-foot radius around the pitcher’s plate; or when the ball leaves the pitcher’s possession; or when the pitcher makes a throwing motion indicating a play or fake throw.

4. Once the ball has been returned to the infield and time has been called, a manager, coach, or player with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon. The administering umpire should acknowledge the appeal, and then decide on the play. Base runners cannot leave their base during this period, as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

NOTE: *(a) If the pitcher has possession of the ball and is in contact with the pitching plate when making a verbal appeal, no illegal pitch is called. (b) If the umpire has indicated “play ball” and the pitcher now requests an appeal, the umpire would again call “time out” and allow the appeal process.*

PLAY (1) – *Runner R2 leaves second base too soon on a fly ball caught by F7. The ball is thrown directly into the infield with an appeal made by F4 at second base.*

RULING – *The ball remained alive and when properly appealed, R2 is called out.*

PLAY (2) – *Runner R1 on second base and R2 on first base. Batter B3 hits a fly ball to F7. Both runners advance however, R1 leaves too soon. Time is called. The pitcher has the ball and after the umpire recognizes the appeal, (a) the pitcher announces to the umpire she wants to appeal R1 leaving too soon, (b) the pitcher carries the ball over and touches R1 standing on third base, (c) the pitcher throws the ball to F4 who touches second base, or (d) the pitcher fakes a throw toward third base and the runner steps off the base.*

RULING – *In all cases the ball is dead, and baserunners cannot leave their base. (a) is the proper appeal; however (b) and (c) are acceptable. In (d), with the ball dead, there is no penalty for the runner stepping off the base.*

- J. A runner must avoid contact with any fielder that has a chance to make an initial play on a batted ball. Failure to do this will result in interference being called on the runner. When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball. If this interference, in the judgement of the umpire, is an obvious attempt to prevent a double play and occurs before the baserunner is put out, the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.

PLAY – *With R1 on first, B1 hits the ball on the ground between first and second. R1 is struck by the batted ball before it passes a fielder, or she hinders F4 in her throw to first.*

RULING – *R1 is out, and the ball becomes dead when the interference occurs. If the interference clearly prevented B2 from being put out at first, she is also out.*

- K. When a baserunner is struck with a fair batted ball in fair territory while off base and before it passes an infielder, excluding the pitcher.

NOTE: 9.8.j and 9.8.k: When baserunners are called out for interference the batter-baserunner is awarded first base and credited with a base hit.

PLAY - R1 is: (a) between second and third; or (b) touching second. She is struck by ball batted by B3 before it passes a fielder.

RULING – Ball is dead in (a), and the ball is live in (b). R1 is out in (a). She is not out in (b). The batter is entitled to first base in both cases.

L. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which an infielder has missed.

M. When anyone, other than another baserunner physically assists a baserunner while the ball is in play. The ball remains alive.

EXCEPTION: After a runner has scored and missed home plate and is physically assisted back to home, the ball is dead, the runner is out, and the run is nullified.

N. When the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The baserunner nearest to third base shall be called out.

O. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders, and adding to the difficulty of making the play.

P. When the baserunner runs the bases in reverse order to confuse the defensive team, or to make a farce out of the game. (See [Rule 9.7. J](#))

Q. If a coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball while in the coaches' box or interferes with the defensive team's opportunity to make an out while outside the coach's box.

R. When a runner, after being declared out or after scoring, interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. The runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall also be declared out.

EFFECT: 9.8.j to 9.8.r: The ball is dead, and the baserunner is out. Other baserunners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of or before the illegal action.

PLAY - R1 on third base and R2 on first base. Batter hits a sharp grounder to second baseman who tags R2 out. In an attempt to throw to first base to retire the batter, R2 interferes with the second baseman.

RULING – Ball becomes dead and R1 is also called out. Batter is awarded first base.

S. When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains on her feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player, the runner is to be declared out.

NOTE: The runner does not legally slide and causes illegal contact and/ or illegally alters the actions of the fielder in the immediate act of making a play on her. Runners are never required to slide but, if the runner elects to slide, the slide shall be legal.

EFFECT: 9.8.s: The runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision, unless [Rule 9.8.J](#) or [Rule 9.8.R](#) applies.

NOTE: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.

PLAY – The catcher has received the ball and is waiting to tag the runner attempting to score. The runner deliberately runs into the catcher with great force, causing her to drop the ball.

RULING – The runner is out. She is also ejected if the act is flagrant.

T. Look Back Rule – The "Look Back" rule will be in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession and control of the ball in the eight-foot radius of the pitcher's plate. The

pitcher is considered to be in the eight-foot radius of the pitcher's plate when both feet are on or within the lines. When the baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, the baserunner will be declared out. When a baserunner is legitimately off her base after a pitch or the result of a batter completing her turn at bat while the pitcher has the ball within an eight foot radius on the pitcher's plate, the runner may stop once, but then she must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to her base.

1. Failure to immediately proceed to the next base or return to her base once the pitcher has the ball within the eight-foot radius of the pitcher's plate will result in the baserunner being declared out.

2. Once the runner returns to a base for any reason, she will be declared out if she leaves said base, unless a play is made on her or another runner (a fake throw is considered a play); the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball in the eight foot radius; or the pitcher releases the ball by a pitch to the batter.

NOTE: *A base on balls or dropped third strike, on which the runner is entitled to run, is treated the same as a batted ball. The batter-baserunner may continue past first base and is entitled to run toward second base as long as she does not stop at first base. If she stops after she rounds first, she then must comply with 9.8.t. (1).*

PLAY – *With R1 on third, B2 receives ball four and moves toward first base with a walk; meanwhile, R1 leads off third base after delivery to the plate. Catcher returns the ball to the pitcher, who has the ball in the eight-foot radius of the pitcher's plate. The runner at this moment makes no attempt to move either way.*

RULING – *The runner does not have to return to third or immediately advance to the next base until the batter-runner reaches first base. Failure to proceed to the next base or return to her base once the pitcher has the ball in the eight-foot radius of the pitcher's plate and the batter-runner reaches first base, will result in the baserunner being declared out.*

EFFECT: 9.8.t: *The ball is dead, "NO PITCH" is declared and the baserunner is out.*

U. When she abandons a base, does not attempt to advance to the next base, and enters the team area or leaves the field of play. The baserunner shall be declared out immediately when she enters the team area or leaves the field of play.

V. When the baserunner positions herself behind and not in contact with the base to get a running start on any fly ball, the runner is out, and the ball remains live.

9.9 BASERUNNER IS NOT OUT:

A. When a baserunner runs behind or in front of the fielder and outside the base line to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.

B. When a baserunner does not run in a direct line to the base, providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in her possession.

C. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the baserunner comes in contact with the one who, in the judgement of the umpire, was not entitled to field the ball.

D. When a baserunner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the judgement of the umpire no other fielder has a chance to make an out.

PLAY (1) – *With R1 on second, B2 hits ball behind F6 who is playing in. Batted ball touches R1 and is deflected to foul ground.*

RULING – *If the touching of R1 is accidental, it is ignored because batted ball has passed a fielder. If R1 intentionally deflected batted ball, umpire will rule interference, with ball becoming dead and R1 being declared out.*

PLAY (2) – A batted ball strikes third base and then caroms to foul territory where it strikes R1, who is leading off third.

RULING – R1 is not out, and ball is in play since the ball was going away from the fielder.

- E. When a baserunner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- F. When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- G. When a batter-baserunner overruns first base after touching it and returns directly to the base.
- H. When the baserunner is given sufficient time to return to a base, she will not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball. No pitch will be called by the umpire ([Rule 7.10. D](#)).
- I. When a runner, who has legally started to advance, cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate by stepping on the plate with the ball in her possession.
- J. When a baserunner holds her base until a fly ball touches a fielder, then attempts to advance.
- K. When hit by a batted ball when touching her base unless she intentionally interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play.

PLAY (1) – With R1 on second, R2 on first and no outs, B3 hits a ground ball or infield fly. Ball strikes R1 who is: (a) near second, (b) standing on second. In both cases, ball has not passed an infielder.

RULING – In (a), R1 is out on either type of hit. In (b), R1 is not out on either type of hit, but ball becomes dead and all runners, if forced, advance one base without liability to be put out. In both (a) and (b), B3 is out on any infield fly. If it is a ground ball, batter-baserunner is awarded first base.

PLAY (2) – Refer to [Rule 9.8. K](#).

- L. When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position. The base is considered to have followed the runner.

EFFECT: 9.9.1: A baserunner reaching a base safely will not be out for being off that base. She may return to that base without liability of being put out when the base has been replaced. A runner forfeits exemption if she attempts to advance beyond the dislodged base before it is again in proper position.

PLAY – R1 slides into second base. After she touches the base, she loses contact (a) because the base breaks loose from its fastening, (b) her foot slides off the base. F4 touches her while her foot is off the base.

RULING – In (a), R1 is not out. In (b), R1 is out.

- M. When a fielder makes a play on a batter or baserunner while using an illegal glove. The manager of the offended team has the option of having the entire play, including the batter's turn at bat, nullified with the batter batting over, assuming the ball and strike count she had before she hit the ball, and runners returned to the original bases they held prior to the batted ball, or taking the result of the play.

- N. When the baserunner is hit by a fair batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder, including the pitcher.

PLAY – With R1 on second, B2 hits to F6 who is playing deep. Batted ball is touched by her and dropped so that it rebounds into R1.

RULING – Touching of R1 is ignored since the ball has been touched by a fielder.

9.10 COURTESY RUNNER

- A. Courtesy runners are allowed in all classes. The team at bat may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/ or catcher at any time. The same runner may not be used for both positions in the same inning. During the entire game, neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances. Any player

that is not currently in the game can be a courtesy runner for the catcher or pitcher providing the catcher or pitcher has played on defense. If a catcher or pitcher for the away team bats in the 1st inning, a courtesy runner can be used without playing defense. If a player gets on base that will be the catcher or pitcher the next half inning, a courtesy runner may also be used for that player.

PENALTY: If the player that a courtesy runner was inserted for does not assume the catcher or pitcher position the next half-inning, the manager is bench restricted.

- B. Courtesy runners must be a player on the bench that is not currently in the line-up. Exception: If a team only has 9 players, the player that made the last out can be used as the courtesy runner. If playing with ten (10) players, the flex player will be the first courtesy runner. If using a continuous batting order, all players are considered to be in the lineup.

1. In Classes C and D, if using the flex, the flex player shall be used as the first courtesy runner.

10 DEAD BALL – BALL IN PLAY

10.1 THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY:

- A. When the ball is batted illegally.

PLAY – *R1 is on first base. B2 illegally bats the ball towards F6 and F4 obstructs R1, advancing to second base.*

RULING – *Ball becomes dead when B2 illegally batted the ball. B2 is out and R1 must return to first base.*

- B. When the batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.

- C. When a ball is pitched illegally.

EXCEPTION: 10.1.c: *If the pitcher completes delivery of the ball to the batter, the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and all baserunners advance at least one base, then the play stand and the pitch is no longer illegal.*

- D. When “No Pitch” is declared.

- E. When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter’s person or clothing whether the ball is struck or not.

PLAY – *B1 swings at a pitched ball and the ball hits her hand while holding the bat.*

RULING – *Strike shall be called, and the ball is dead. The hand is not considered part of the bat.*

- F. When a foul ball is not caught.

- G. When the offensive team causes interference.

1. When a batter intentionally strikes the ball a second time, strikes it with a thrown bat or deflects its course in any way while running to first base.

2. When a thrown ball is intentionally touched by a coach or on-deck batter.

3. When a fair ball strikes a baserunner or umpire before touching an infielder, including the pitcher, of before passing an infielder, other than a pitcher.

4. When the batter interferes with the catcher or other defensive player at home plate.

5. When a member of the offensive team intentionally interferes with a live ball.

6. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which a fielder has missed.

- H. When the ball is outside the established playing limits of the playing area. A ball is considered “outside the playing field” when it touches the ground, person on the ground or object outside the playing area.

PLAY – *R1 is on third. B3, at bat with one out, hits a fly ball which F5 catches in the field of play. F5’s momentum causes her to go into a dead ball area, such as a bench, dugout, stands or beyond the chalk lines or pre-game determined imaginary line.*

RULING – Ball is dead as soon as F5 enters the dead ball area with the ball. R1 is awarded one base and B3 is out.

- I. If an accident to a runner prevents her from proceeding to a base which she is awarded. A substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player.

PLAY – Batter hits ball over fence for a home run and falls as she attempts to advance to first base. Batter is injured and unable to continue play.

RULING – Substitute runner will be permitted for batter and will be allowed to circle the bases so that the home run can be allowed.

- J. In case of interference with the batter or fielder.
K. When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over or through the backstop.
L. When time is called by the umpire.
M. When any part of the batter's person is hit with her own batted ball when she is in the batter's box.
N. When a baserunner runs bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
O. When the batter is hit by a pitched ball.
P. When in the judgement of the umpire, the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line while the fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate.
Q. When the plate umpire's clothing interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw.
R. When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders, and adding to the difficulty of making a play.
S. When the baserunner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until the ball leaves pitcher's hand.
T. When a blocked ball is declared.
U. When a batter enters the batter's box with or uses an altered bat.
V. When a batter enters the batter's box with or uses an illegal bat.
W. When a caught fair fly ball, including a line drive or bunt which can be handled by an infielder with ordinary effort, is intentionally dropped with less than two outs and a runner on first base, first and second, first and third, second and third bases.

PLAY – Refer to [Rule 8.11.H](#).

- X. When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
EFFECT: 10.1.a to 10.1.x: The batter or baserunners may not advance on a dead ball unless awarded a base or bases by rule.
Y. When time has been called and an appeal is being made by the defense during the dead ball.

10.2 THE BALL IS IN PLAY:

- A. At the start of the game and each half inning when the pitcher has the ball while standing in her pitching position and the plate umpire has called "play ball."
B. When the infield fly rule is enforced.
PLAY – With one out, R1 is on second and R2 is on first when B4 hits an infield fly. Baserunners are of the opinion two were out and they start running as soon as the ball is hit. F4 fails to catch the infield fly and both runners cross home plate.
RULING – B4 is out for hitting infield fly but runs count since the runners may advance at their own risk.
C. When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.
D. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching an infielder.
E. When a fair ball strikes an umpire in foul ground.

- F. When the baserunners have reached the bases to which they are entitled if the fielder fields a batted or thrown ball with illegal equipment.
- G. When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- H. When no play is being made on an obstructed runner. The ball shall remain alive until the play is over.
- I. When a fair ball is legally batted.
- J. When a baserunner must return in reverse order while the ball is in play.
- K. When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out.
- L. When a base is dislodged while baserunners are progressing around the bases.
- M. When a baserunner runs more than three feet from a direct line between the base and the next one in regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand of a fielder.
- N. When a baserunner is tagged or forced out.
- O. When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return and touch the base when play is resumed after a suspension of play.
- P. When a live ball appeal play is legally being made.
- Q. When the batter hits the ball.
- R. When a fly ball has been legally caught.
- S. When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
- T. If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the judgement of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball. The batter is not out, and the ball is alive and in play.
- U. When a thrown ball strikes an umpire.
- V. Whenever the ball is not dead, as provided in [Rule 10.1](#).
- W. When a thrown ball strikes a coach.
- X. When a ball has been called on the batter. When four balls have been called, the batter may not be put out before she reaches first base.
- Y. When a strike has been called on the batter.
- Z. When a foul tip has been legally caught.

PLAY – Does the ball become dead after a foul tip, and can there be a foul tip which is not caught?

RULING – The ball does not become dead for a foul tip and a runner may advance or be put out the same as after any strike. To be a foul tip, the ball must be caught by the catcher.

- AA. If the ball slips from a pitcher's hand during her wind-up or the back swing.

10.3 THE BALL REMAINS ALIVE until the umpire calls "time," which should be done when the ball is held by a player in the infield area and, in the judgement of the umpire, all play has ceased.

11 FARM MAJOR RULES

11.1 Field Dimensions

- A. Pitching distance is set at 28 ft. A circle that has an eight-foot radius is to be made around and centered on the 28 ft. pitching rubber.
- B. Bases are set at 60 ft.

11.2 Equipment

- A. Ball - the ball to be used is an 11" Incrediball or ball by AD Starr (county issued) supplied by the home team. Two new softballs or one new and one gently used softball (quality determined by the umpire).
- B. Catchers must wear full protective gear including a throat protector.
- C. The pitcher, first and third base players **MUST WEAR** a defensive fielder's mask while on defense. No exception to this rule is to be made.

11.3 THE OFFICIAL BAT. The official bat made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel, and end cap shall be free of burs, dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The Official bat must bear the appropriate certification mark as shown below and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks.

A. Must be included on a list of approved bat models published by USA Softball; or must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with the USA Softball Bat Performance Standard. This includes wooden bats.



Allowed in all games

B. Safety grip or cord, tape (no smooth plastic tape) or composition material may not exceed two layers of tape and must be continuously spiral. Any resin or pine tar is permissible on this part of the bat. The tape must be at least 10 inches long and not more than 15 inches.

C. Any bat that is less than 30 inches in length does not need the ASA approved certification mark. For bats less than 30 inches in length, the thickest part of the bat must be 2 ¼ inch in diameter or less.

11.4 Playing Rules:

A. On Defense, A team can field 10 players consisting of 6 infielders and 4 out fielders.

1. Teams may use 9 or 10 defensive players to start the game.

2. If starting with 9, may not go up to 10. A team may finish with 8 players, regardless of how many defensive players start the game.

3. A tenth player may be used in the field as a fourth outfielder. ALL outfielders must play **BEHIND** the **BASELINE**.

4. All infielders must play **BEHIND** the pitcher.

B. 5 coaches are allowed on the roster. At most 2 coaches may be on the field for defensive instructions. They must be positioned in the outfield.

C. Each team will use continuous batting order. Players arriving late can be added to the end of the lineup. If a player becomes sick or injured, no out is taken until the team drops below the required number of 10 players.

D. All players must play 6 defensive outs.

E. A full game is 6 innings. The first 3 innings are coach pitch. The last 3 innings are player pitch.

F. Maximum of 10 batters per inning. (Except the 6th inning and beyond)

G. An at bat will be 10 batters, 5 runs or 3 outs whichever occurs first.

H. 6th inning or extra innings a team can score unlimited number of runs.

I. The 10-run rule will apply. May not start a new inning after 2 hours (120 minutes.)

J. All plays will come to an end when a logical conclusion of play has occurred.

K. Ties are allowed in regular season play. If a tie occurs, each team will receive 1.5 points to count towards standings.

L. Infield Fly will not apply.

M. No dropped 3rd strike rule: batter is out.

N. No leading off or stealing. **PENALTY:** Ball is immediately dead, runner is out.

O. The ball is dead from catcher to pitcher.

1. The ball is not dead if a pitcher having full control of the ball runs through the circle in an attempt to make a play or is standing in the circle attempting to make a play on a runner.

P. Sliding is permitted but is not mandatory.

- Q. The ball is not dead if a pitcher having full control of the ball runs through the circle in an attempt to make a play or is standing in the circle attempting to make a play on a runner.
- R. A pitched ball that rolls into the batter does NOT constitute a dead ball and the batter receiving first base. It is a ball on the batter and the at bat continues.

11.5 Coach Pitch Rules:

- A. The defensive pitcher will stand alongside the coach that is pitching, opposite the side of the batter, no more than 3 feet from the side and 3 feet behind, the adult pitcher, at the umpire's discretion. The player may not leave that spot until the ball crosses the plate. Umpire must not allow a pitch to be delivered until the player in the pitcher's position is in a legal location. Once the ball is pitched, it is agreed that the player was in the proper position. **PENALTY:** If player leaves spot before ball is put in play it will be a delayed dead ball and team at bat can choose (1) the result of the play or (2) batter goes to first and all forced runners advance 1 base. If all runners advance 1 base safely then there is no penalty. There is also no penalty if the ball is not put into play.
- B. Each batter will receive, at most, six pitches. If the batter fails to hit the ball in fair territory by the sixth pitch, it will be recorded as an out.
- C. The coach can move anywhere between the mound and the plate to make a pitch, while remaining, at least, 20' from the plate until June 1st. After June 1st, coach that is pitching must be in contact with the pitcher's plate. The ball MUST be delivered in an UNDERHAND motion.
- D. If a batted ball hits the coach pitching, it will be a live ball unless it is caught out of reflex. In this case the ball is dead, and the batter will receive first base and forced runners will advance one base.
- E. The coach that is pitching MAY NOT give instructions to base runners.
PENALTY: One (1) warning will be given to offending coach. Any subsequent violation(s) will result in the lead runner being called out.
- F. Bunting is NOT permitted.

11.6 Player Pitch Rules

- A. Player pitch will begin after the first three innings of coach pitch and continue from the 4th inning to the end of the game.
 - 1. A player pitcher cannot pitch more than two innings per calendar day.
 - 2. Pitchers are limited to two innings per game (6 outs.)
- B. Bunting is permitted.

11.7 Umpires:

- A. Can use two 13–17-year-olds or one adult umpire.
- B. Umpires will allow coaches to explain mistakes during the game. (This cannot be used as a stall tactic by a coach and if it is ruled as such, this time will no longer be given).

12 UMPIRES

NOTE: Failure of umpires to adhere to [Rule 12.00](#) shall not be grounds for protest. These are guidelines for umpires.

12.1 POWERS AND DUTIES. The umpires are representatives of the league or organization by which they have been assigned to a particular game; and, as such, are authorized and required to enforce each section of these rules. They have the power to order a player, coach, captain, or manager to do or to omit and act which, in their judgement, is necessary to give force and effect to one or all these rules; and to inflict penalties as herein prescribed. The plate umpire shall have the authority to make decisions on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The following is the general information for umpires:

- A. The umpire will not be a member of either team (i.e., player, coach, manager, officer, scorer, or sponsor.)
- B. The umpire should be sure of the date, time and place of the game and should arrive at the playing field 20-30 minutes ahead of time, start the game on time and leave the field when the game is over. His authority begins when he enters the field to check the bats and ends when he leaves the field following the third out of the last inning.
- C. It is recommended that male or female umpire shall wear a navy short sleeved shirt, gray slacks and a black or dark blue cap. All members of the crew must wear the same color trousers, shirt, and caps. All other paraphernalia (i.e., socks, ball bag, jacket and/ or sweater) should also be dark, navy blue, and the shoes and belt should be black for both male and female umpires. The plate umpire, whether male or female, **MUST** wear a mask with a throat protector. Body protectors are recommended for umpires. Beginning in the 2020 season, all umpires who are umpiring in **tournament** games will wear a Major League replica black short sleeved shirt.
- D. The umpire should inspect the playing field boundaries, equipment and clarify all ground rules to both teams and their coaches.
- E. Each umpire will have the power to make decisions on violations committed anytime during playing time or during suspension of play until the game is over.
- F. No umpire has the authority to set aside, or question decisions made by another umpire within the limits of his respective duties, as outlined in these rules.
- G. An umpire may consult his associate at any time. However, the final decision will rest with the umpire whose exclusive authority it is to make the decision and who requests the opinion of the other umpire.
- H. In order to define "respective duties," the umpire judging balls and strikes will be designated as the **PLATE UMPIRE**, the umpire judging base decisions will be designated as the **BASE UMPIRE**.
- I. The plate umpire and base umpire will have equal authority to:
 - 1. Call a runner out for leaving a base too soon.
 - 2. Call "TIME" for suspension of play.
 - 3. Eject a player, coach, or manager from the game for violation of rules.
 - 4. Call all illegal pitches.
- J. The umpire will declare the batter or baserunner out, without waiting for an appeal for such decision, in all cases where such player is retired in accordance with these rules.

***NOTE:** Unless appealed to, the umpire will not call a player out for having failed to touch a base, leaving a base too soon on a fly ball, batting out of order or making an attempt to go to second after reaching first base, as provided in these rules.*
- K. The umpire will not penalize a team for an infraction of a rule when imposing the penalty would be to the advantage of the offending team.
- L. All umpires officiating in National Tournament play shall have attained the age of majority in the state in which the tournament is being played.

12.2 THE PLATE UMPIRE SHOULD:

- A. Take a position behind the catcher. He or she will have full charge of and be responsible for the proper conduct of the game.
- B. Call all balls and strikes.
- C. By agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire, call plays, fair or foul balls. Legally or illegally caught balls. On plays which would necessitate the base umpire leaving the infield, the plate umpire will assume the duties normally required of the base umpire.
- D. Determine and declare whether:

1. A batter bunts or chops a ball.
 2. A batted ball touches the person or clothing of the batter.
 3. A fly ball is an infield or an outfield fly.
- E. Render base decisions.
- F. Determine when a game is forfeited.
- G. Assume all duties when assigned as a single umpire to a game.

12.3 THE BASE UMPIRE SHOULD:

- A. Assist the plate umpire in every way to enforce the rules of the game.

12.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SINGLE UMPIRE. If only one umpire is assigned, his/ her duties and authority will extend to all points.

12.5 CHANGE OF UMPIRES. Umpires cannot be changed during a game by the consent of the opposing teams unless an umpire is incapacitated by injury or illness.

12.6 UMPIRE'S JUDGEMENT. There will be no appeal from any decision of any umpire on the grounds that he/ she was not correct in his/ her conclusion as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a baserunner is safe or out, a pitched ball a strike or ball, or on any play involving accuracy of judgement; and no decision rendered by any umpire will be reversed, except when he/ she is convinced it is in violation of one of these rules. In case the manager, captain or either team does not seek reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire, whose decision is in question, will, if in doubt, confer with his/ her associate before acting. But under no circumstances will any player or person, other than the manager or captain of either team, have any legal right to protest any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it conflicts with these rules.

- A. Under no circumstances will any umpire seek to reverse a decision made by his or her associates; nor will any umpire criticize or interfere with the duties of his or her associates, unless asked to do so.
- B. The umpire-in-chief may rectify any situation in which the reversal of an umpire's decision or a delayed call by the umpire places a batter-runner, a baserunner, or the defensive team in jeopardy. This correction is not possible after one pitch has been thrown.

***PLAY** – With R1 on first base and less than two outs, the runner steals with the pitch. The catcher throws to second base as the plate umpire calls ball four. The throw is in time and the base umpire calls the runner out. As the runner (R1) leaves toward the dugout, the base umpire realizes B2 has four balls and R1 is entitled to second base. The defense tags R1 when she leaves the base. Had the umpire not called R1 out, she would have not left the base.*

***RULING** – Place R1 on second base and B2 on first base.*

12.7 SIGNALS:

- A. **SAFE** – Body upright, eyes on the ball and arms extended straight out with the palms down. A verbal call of "Safe" is made as the arms are snapped to this position from the upper chest.
- B. **OUT** – Body upright, eyes on the ball and right arm extended straight up as an extension of the shoulder. As we come to the "HAMMER" position, the elbow is bent at a 90-degree angle and the fist closed with the fingers facing the right ear. The left arm should be brought to the mid-section of the body. A verbal call of "OUT" is made as the right arm is extended high in the air and continued as the arm drops into the "HAMMER" position.
- C. **STRIKE** – Body upright, eyes on the ball and right arm extended straight up as an extension of the shoulder. As we come to the "HAMMER" position, the elbow is bent at a 90-degree angle and the fist is closed with the fingers facing the right ear. The left arm should be brought to the mid-section of the body. A verbal call of "STRIKE" is made as the right arm is extended high in the air and continued as the arm drops into the "HAMMER" position.

- D. **FAIR BALL** – Body upright, eyes on the ball, point toward fair territory with the arm that is toward the infield. There is no verbal call on a fair ball and if the umpire is wearing a mask it should be in the left hand.
- E. **FOUL BALL** – On foul balls, except a caught foul fly ball, the ball is DEAD, and the DEAD BALL signal should be given preceding the foul ball signals. For the FOUL BALL signal, body should be upright, eyes on the ball extending the arm straight out from the shoulder toward foul territory away from the playing field. A verbal call of “FOUL BALL” should be made as the arm motion is made.
- F. **TIME OUT/ DEAD BALL** – Body upright, the arms are both extended high in the air with the palms of the hands open and facing away from the umpire’s body. A verbal call of “Time” or “Dead Ball” is made at the same time the arms are going up.
- G. **PLAY BALL** - Body upright, eyes on the ball, the umpire makes a motion toward the pitcher with the right hand. A verbal call of “Play” or “Play Ball” is made as the umpire motions toward the pitcher.
- H. **HOLD UP PLAY** - (No Pitch) – Body upright, raise either hand with the palm facing the pitcher. On a right-handed batter use the right hand, and on a left-handed batter, use the left hand. “NO PITCH” shall be declared if the pitcher pitches while the umpire has a hand in said position.
- I. **DELAYED DEAD BALL** – Body upright, the left hand is extended straight out to the side of the body as an extension of the shoulder and the left hand is in a fist. This position is held long enough for the players to see that the umpire has observed the act that pre-empted this call.
- J. **INFIELD FLY** – Body upright, eyes on the ball, extend the right arm, high in the air with a close fist. Make a verbal of “infield fly.” If the batted ball is near the foul line call “infield fly if fair.”
- K. **TRAPPED BALL** – Same as a safe signal. The umpire makes a verbal call of “safe.”
- L. **FOUL TIP** – Body upright, eyes on the ball, the fingers of both hands are touches together than the umpire gives the strike signal with no verbal call. This indicates that the bat tipped the ball and was caught by the catcher.
- M. **COUNT** – Body upright, have eye contact with the pitcher, both hands are extended high above the head and use the fingers to indicate the ball and strike count on the batter. Use the fingers on the left hand for “Balls” and the fingers on the right hand for “Strikes.” A verbal description of the count on the batter is given while the hands are overhead, and the “Balls” are always mentioned first and “Strikes” second.
- N. **DOUBLE** – Body upright, raise the right hand high above the head, indicating with two fingers, the number of bases awarded. A verbal call of “Two Bases” is made while the hand remains overhead.
- O. **HOME RUN** – Body upright, raise the right hand above the head with a closed fist and make a counter-clockwise circling motion with a raised hand. A verbal call of “Four Bases” is made at the same time the hand is overhead.
- P. See Appendix B for LCHSS Umpire’s Signals.

12.8 SUSPENSION OF PLAY:

- A. An umpire may suspend play when, in his/ her judgement, conditions justify such action.
- B. Play will be suspended whenever the plate umpire leaves his/ her position to brush the plate or to perform other duties not directly connected with calling of plays.
- C. The umpire will suspend play whenever a batter or pitcher steps out of position for a legitimate reason.
- D. An umpire will not call “time” after a pitcher has started her windup.
- E. An umpire will not call “time” while any play is in progress.
- F. In case of injury, “time” will not be called until all plays in progress have been completed or runners’ progress have been completed.

- G. Umpires will not suspend play at the request of players, coaches, or managers until all action in progress by either team has been completed.

PLAY – Bases are full, B4 hits a long fly to center, F7 and F8 collide in trying to make the catch and both are injured. All runners cross home plate.

RULING – Ball does not become dead when a player is injured during a batted or thrown ball. Umpire will not call “time” until no further play is possible. All four runs count.

12.9 VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

- A. Players, coaches and managers or other team members will not make disparaging or insulting remarks to or about opposing players, officials, or spectators, or commit acts that could be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- B. There will be no more than two coaches for each team to give words of assistance and direction to the members of their team while at bat. One coach should be stationed near first base and the other near third base. They must remain in their coach’s box.
- C. The penalty for violations by a player is immediate removal of the offender from the game and grounds. For the first offense, the coach or manager may be warned; but for the second offense, the coach or manager is removed from the game. The offender should go directly to the dressing room for the remainder of the game or leave the grounds. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game.

13 PROTESTS

13.1 PROTESTS WILL NOT BE RECEIVED OR CONSIDERED if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of a judgement on the part of an umpire. Examples of protest which will not be considered are:

- A. Whether a batted ball was fair or foul.
- B. Whether a baserunner was safe or out.
- C. Whether a pitched ball was a strike or a ball.
- D. Whether a pitch was legal or illegal.
- E. Whether a baserunner did or did not touch a base.
- F. Whether a baserunner left her base too soon on a caught fly ball.
- G. Whether a fly ball was or was not caught legally.
- H. Whether it was or was not an infield fly.
- I. Whether there was or was not interference or obstruction.
- J. Whether the field is fit to continue or resume play.
- K. Whether there is sufficient light to continue play.
- L. Any other matter involving only the accuracy of the umpire’s judgement.

13.2 PROTESTS THAT SHALL BE RECEIVED AND CONSIDERED concern matters of the following types:

- A. Misinterpretation of a playing rule.
- B. Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation. Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.

13.3 PROTEST MAY INVOLVE BOTH A MATTER OF JUDGEMENT AND THE INTERPRETATION OF A RULE.

- A. **EXAMPLE:** With one out and runners on second and third, the batter flies out. The runner on third tags up after the catch and the runner on second does not. The runner on third crosses the plate before the ball is played at second base for the third out. The umpire does not allow the run to score. The questions as to whether the runners left their bases before the catch and whether the play at second base was made before the catch and whether the play at second base was made before the runner on third base crossed the plate, are solely matters of judgement and are not protestable. It is a misinterpretation of a playing rule when the umpire failed to allow the run to score and is a proper subject for protest.

13.4 THE NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PROTEST must be made immediately before the next pitch. (EXCEPTION: Player ineligibility)

PLAY (1) – *R1 is obstructed in a rundown between first and second bases by F4 while being played on. Umpire rules obstruction and awards the runner one base. Offensive team protests game (a) before first pitch to B2, (b) after first pitch to B2, (c) after game is over.*

RULING – *(a) Protest is valid. In (b) and (c), protest is denied since it was not made before the next pitch.*

PLAY (2) – *Bases loaded, bottom of the seventh inning, two outs, and the score if visitors 4, home 4. Home team (offensive) coach calls a second conference with a batter in that half inning. The plate umpire calls the batter out and the game is called. Both teams are off the playing field and preparing to leave when the home manager protests to the umpire in the parking lot that the ruling was incorrect.*

RULING – *The game is over. When both teams have left the playing field, no protest can be accepted.*

- A. The manager or acting manager of the protesting team shall immediately notify the plate umpire that the game is being conducted under protest. The plate umpire shall in turn notify the opposing manager and official scorekeeper.
- B. All interested parties shall take notice of the conditions surrounding the making of the decision which will aid in the correct determination of the issue.

NOTE: *On appeal plays, the appeal must be made before the next pitch, legal or illegal, or before the defensive team has left the field. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on the way to the bench or dugout area.*

- C. Once the game is completed and both teams have left the field, no protest can be filed.
 - 1. **EXCEPTION:** Player eligibility.

13.5 THE OFFICIAL WRITTEN PROTEST MUST BE FILED WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME:

- A. In the absence of a league or tournament rule fixing the time limit for filing a protest, a protest should be considered if filed within a reasonable time, depending upon the nature of the case and the difficulty for obtaining the information on which to base the protest.
- B. Within 48 hours after the scheduled time of the contest is considered a reasonable time.
- C. Charter protest fee of \$200 (cash or check made out Lorain County Hot Stove) shall accompany the written protest, which must be filed according to established charter procedures.

13.6 THE FORMAL WRITTEN PROTEST should contain the following information:

- A. The date, time, and place of the game.
- B. The names of the umpires and scorers.
- C. The rule and section of the Official Rules or local rules under which the protest is made.
- D. The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
- E. All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

13.7 THE DECISION MADE ON A PROTESTED GAME MUST RESULT IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A. The protest is found invalid, and the game score stands as played.
- B. When a protest is allowed for misinterpretation of a playing rule, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made, with the decision corrected.
- C. When a protest for ineligibility is allowed, the team shall forfeit the game being played or the game last played to the offending team.

14 TOURNAMENT PLAY

14.1 DISTRICT TOURNAMENT PLAY

- A. All district Play shall be sanctioned and governed by the State Organization of LCHSS as set forth in all its Rules and Regulations.
- B. Participation shall be governed by the LCHSS Executive Committee as to which of the approved District Tournament site each Charter Holder shall participate in for the current year. The number of teams each Charter Holder may send to District Tournament Play shall be governed by the Rules and Regulations as set forth under [Rule 14.9](#) Tournament Drawings.
- C. All District and State Tournament dates and sites shall be at the discretion of the LCHSS Executive Committee.

14.2 STATE TOURNAMENT DATES AND SITES

- A. Shall be sanctioned and governed by LCHSS as set forth under all its Rules and Regulations.

14.3 TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION

- A. Any Charter Holder that desires to participate in District Tournament Play to qualify for State Tournament Play may do so if they are actively affiliated with LCHSS and have complied with all Rules and Regulations.
- B. The LCHSS Executive Committee shall make final approval of all Charter Holders that desire to participate in District Tournament Play.

14.4 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- A. A player must have complied with all State League Rules and Regulations and be of legal ages, or under, of the League Classification in which she participates.
- B. All Charter Holders must have a certified record of proof of birth for each player that participates in LCHSS. Such approved certified records shall be listed and in the order of their acceptance and verification.
- C. A certified or photo static copy of Birth Certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics, State Department of Health, or any other political subdivision, or...
 - 1. A hospital or baptismal record, or...
 - 2. Adoption records, or...
 - 3. A school record of birth signed by the Superintendent or authorized school official, accompanied by a notarized affidavit signed by the parents or legal guardians, or...
 - 4. A copy of a driver's license or passport.
- D. Proof of birth records shall be submitted each year only for any new player(s) who were not affiliated with LCHSS in previous years. Once a player's birth record has been submitted to the Charter Holder and is recorded, it is no longer required unless any questions arise relating to further proof of birth for any player. All birth records must be submitted to the Charter Holder prior to midnight of June 10th of the current year. No birth records will be accepted after this date regardless of what the situation is. Birth records not submitted for any new player(s) as listed on a State Team Roster will make that player(s) ineligible regardless of whether a record with the Charter Holder of proof of birth has been recorded. It is the responsibility of the Charter Holder and Team Manager to assure all State Team Rosters have been properly completed prior to submitting them to LCHSS.
- E. Any Charter Holder, Manager, Assistant Manager, Coach or Player found to have falsified a birth record as submitted to the Charter Holder or to have falsified a birth date or player's residence listed on a State Team Roster, shall be suspended for life with reinstatement subject to the approval of the LCHSS Executive Committee.

14.5 TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEES

- A. Team entry fees for the State Tournament shall be \$70.00 and submitted on LCHSS-6 and must be paid to the State Treasurer prior to or at the State Tournament Draw.
- B. Failure to comply with these requirements shall make a team ineligible for any tournament play for the current year.

- C. Tournament Officials shall not hold any tournament drawing or authorize any tournament drawing for a team or Charter Holder unless the regulations governing Entry Fees and/ or required representation to scheduled Tournament Drawings have been complied with.
- D. There will be no refund of any Entry Fee if a team withdraws from District or State Tournament Play.

14.6 TOURNAMENT DRAWINGS

- A. District Tournament Drawings shall be held within two (2) weeks prior to the first scheduled District Tournament game and shall be held in the city or area of which the Charter Holder awarded a District Tournament. Notification shall be sent to all Charter Holders that are eligible for Tournament play and such notices shall be forwarded to each District Tournament Director. Drawings shall be held for all League Classifications that each District Tournament site will be conducting play in. No drawings will be arranged by the LCHSS Executive Committee, but drawings will be setup to enter the annual Tournament Director's Meeting. Each team wishing to enter the District Tournament must notify the Tournament Director one week before the date set for the Tournament Draw.
- B. State Tournament Brackets will be determined by the LCHSS Executive Committee. All District Tournament drawings are final upon completion of all drawing on the scheduled dates as approved.
 - 1. All District Tournament Drawings shall be under the supervision and approval of the LCHSS Executive Committee. All drawings are final upon completion of all drawing on the scheduled dates approved.
 - 2. District Tournaments must start 2 weeks prior to the State Tournament and must be finished 1 week before State Tournament.
 - 3. The online LCHSS tournament brackets must be updated with team names and scheduled game times within 72 hour of the completed District Tournament draw. Game results must be reported no later than 24 hours after the end of a completed game.
- C. For District Tournament Play, all teams of a Charter Holder shall be eligible to participate in District Tournament Play subject to approval of local Charter Holders.
- D. For State Tournament only, the District finalists of each League Classification, determined by the process of elimination in a District Tournament, are eligible to participate. If for any reason a District finalist is unable to participate in the State Tournament, the last team they defeated shall be reinstated and placed in its position in the State Tournament bracket. If neither team can participate in the State Tournament, the LCHSS Executive Committee shall select a team to fill the State Tournament bracket.
- E. District Tournament draw shall be made at a pre-tournament drawing so that no Charter may eliminate itself in any bracket except quarterfinals, semi-finals, or finals. **EXCEPTION:** In the event any League Classification is over-balanced by one or more Charter Holders as to the number of teams they are entering, the Tournament Director has the authority to fill all brackets regardless of whether teams from the same Charter Holder are scheduled to meet in the first round of play.
- F. District drawings shall be such that when two (2) teams from the same Charter Holder are entered, one (1) team shall participate in the upper bracket and one (1) team in the lower bracket. **EXCEPTION:** If any League Classification is over-balanced by one (1) or more Charter Holders as to the number of teams they are entering, the Tournament Director has the authority to fill all brackets regardless of whether teams from the same Charter Holder are scheduled to meet in the first round of play. (Clarification: No seeded teams can go into the same bracket – No Exceptions. Two teams from the same community cannot go into the same bracket.)

- G. All Charter Holders shall be governed by the rules as to District and State Tournament participation as to the number of teams they may enter and any Charter Holder violating these rules shall be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year subject to reinstatement by the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- H. All Charter Holders shall submit to LCHSS State Secretary prior to midnight of June 10th of the current year, a list of the number of teams in each League Classification that they will enter in District Tournament Play.
- I. The District Tournament Draw shall be determined by the final point total standings as of midnight, 48 hours prior to the draw date. The point system to be used is as follows:
 - 1. Win: 3 points
 - 2. Loss: 1 Point
 - 3. Forfeit: -1 point
 - 4. Game Not Played: -2 points (at LCHSS Executive Committee discretion)
- J. Two points may be deducted for games not played.
- K. Tournament draw tiebreakers are as follows:
 - 1. Total Points
 - 2. Overall Winning Percentage
 - 3. Head-to-Head (if two teams are tied)
 - a. If three or more teams are tied then if one team has defeated all of the other teams involved, they win the tie breaker, and the remaining teams continue to #4. If not, go to #4)
 - 4. Best Divisional Winning Percentage
 - 5. Least Runs Allowed
 - 6. Coin Toss

14.7 TOURNAMENT PLAY

- A. All teams voluntarily enter Tournament Play, and by doing so agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations as adopted by LCHSS and, therefore, shall be governed accordingly. At no time will the LCHSS Executive Committee intervene in the operation of any Tournament unless such methods of operation are in direct violation of the adopted Rules and Regulations governing all Tournament Play.
 - 1. All appointed and approved Tournament Directors shall ONLY enforce the Rules and Regulations that deal directly with Tournament Play. Only regular LCHSS Rules and Regulations that have been violated or misinterpreted may be protestable. Each Charter Holder is responsible for making this known to the Managers, Teams, Players, and their local officials.
 - 2. The approved method of procedure that must be followed relating to any protest of LCHSS Rules and Regulations is outlined in [Rule 14.20](#).
- B. All Tournament Play shall be single elimination for District and State Tournament Play.
 - 1. Exception 1: In classes with less than six (6) teams, no district or state tournament will be held.
 - 2. Exception 2: In classes with between a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of twelve (12) teams, a double elimination tournament may be held, at the discretion of the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- C. In the event that weather conditions or darkness cause the postponement of any District or State Tournament game, or in the event that a game must be replayed due to a protest, the Tournament Director shall reschedule the playing of such game on a date at such a location and at such a time that is deemed necessary in order to complete Tournament Play as scheduled.

14.8 TIME SCHEDULE OF GAMES

- A. This schedule is set before the Pre-Tournament Drawing with at least a two and one half (2½) hour playing time allowed for each seven-inning game. NOTE: In the event

- any game is completed in a shorter time, the Tournament Director may start the next scheduled game before said scheduled time providing all teams have reported in and are ready to play.
- B. Team Managers, Assistant Managers, or Coaches shall report at least one (1) hour prior to scheduled time that his/her team is to play to the Tournament Headquarters to notify that they are on hand. Each Manager shall report on each day and before each game they are scheduled to play. This must be done in order that the Tournament Officials can supply each Team Manager with any notices regarding field changes, time changes, and his/her assuring of the team's eligibility (original roster forms must be presented at this time to the Tournament Official).
- C. No protest will be allowed regarding any field changes or time changes if any team official fails to report as required. **NOTE:** Failure to report one (1) hour prior to scheduled game time will result in forfeiture of coin toss to determine home and away teams.
1. When any scheduled game is postponed due to weather conditions or darkness, the game must be re-scheduled. **NOTE:** No games are to be called on account of rain without waiting a reasonable period to make sure the game is not playable. Minimum time is thirty (30) minutes. Team Managers must report to the Tournament Headquarters immediately upon notice that such game just be re-scheduled. This requirement is such so that there will be no misunderstanding, nor any misinformation being related to the Manager of the teams involved.
 2. Tournament Directors shall enforce this requirement and any manager that fails to report as required shall forfeit all rights to protest that they were not properly notified as to the re-scheduling of such game. No exception to this rule.
- D. The visiting team is allowed ten (10) minutes warm-up before the home team, and the home team is allowed ten (10) minutes warm-up immediately before the scheduled game time. The way this allowed time is used is left to the discretion of the Manager and/or Coaches. **NOTE:** All Managers and Coaches shall adhere to this rule, and no team shall be allowed to be on the playing fields the days of any scheduled Tournament games for any reason for warm-up until their allotted time as outlined above. The Field Director is responsible for enforcing this rule.
1. In the event that due to weather conditions games must be scheduled that do not allow for the allotted time of warm-up period to the Teams, the Field Director has the authority to waive all regulations under this requirement. This shall assist all Tournament Officials in having all fields playable by elimination of the allotted warm-up time for all Teams.
- E. Managers are cautioned to be sure all team players are given plenty of warm-up time.
- F. No team shall be scheduled to play more than two (2) games in one (1) day either in District or State Tournament Play. **NOTE:** Whenever a team must play more than one (1) game in either District or State Tournament Play, the next game shall be scheduled to allow the teams at least one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) hour rest between games. The fifteen (15) minute warm-up period that is allowed teams may be included in the required one half ($\frac{1}{2}$) hour rest period.
- G. Team Managers are urged to check their time for all scheduled games, and no formal protest will be allowed for failure to do so. In the event that due to travel conditions, if a team is unable to arrive in time to play their scheduled game, the team manager is responsible for notifying the Tournament Director regarding this situation. The Tournament Director will give all consideration to each team regarding this type of delay and has the authority to adjust the time regarding the playing of the game. Additional consideration must be given to the team that has reported and is ready to play. Final decision lies with the Tournament Director. No appeals to the LCHSS Executive Committee for decisions made covering this situation will be accepted.

1. Any Manager taking undue advantage of Section H shall be subject to any action deemed necessary by the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- H. Forfeit time for any Tournament games will be at the scheduled time of the games unless the Tournament Director has been notified of a delay due to travel conditions or some other extenuating circumstances. Time of delay not to exceed ten (10) minutes. No appeal will be allowed.
- I. No Tournament game shall be started after 7:00 PM unless the field is lighted and 9:00 PM on a lighted field.

14.9 LEGAL GAMES

- A. [Rule 6.3](#) shall govern all regulation games in all League Classifications for all District and State Tournament play.
- B. The following shall govern all incomplete games in all League Classifications for all District and State Tournament Play.
 1. In District and State Tournaments, any game started and suspended for rain or darkness will be restarted at the point of suspension prior to five (5) innings.
 2. If a tie is called due to weather conditions or darkness and it is an official game as stipulated under [Rule 6.3](#), it shall be declared a suspended game and shall be re-scheduled to be continued from the point of interruption.
 3. To complete a Tournament game, the game may be moved to another field at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- C. From time the umpire declares "Play Ball" to begin the game, no new inning shall be started if the following time limits have been reached, which is the sole responsibility of the umpire crew chief to keep and enforce, not a coach or scorekeeper:
 1. Farm Major and Class A may not start a new inning after 2 hours (120 minutes.)
 2. Class B, Class C, and Class D may not start a new inning after 2 hours 15 minutes (135 minutes.)
 3. For tournaments, the same time limits will be in effect for all preliminary games.
 4. A preliminary game is defined as any tournament game that is not a regional semi-final, regional final, state semi-final or state final.

14.10 HOME TEAM

- A. This is settled by the toss of a coin prior to the game time. In the event of rained-out or replay of the game, the home team remains the same.
- B. The home team's players' bench shall be located on the first base side of the playing field, and the visiting team's players' bench shall be located on the third base side of the playing field for all tournament play.

14.11 PLAYER LINE-UP

- A. One copy of the line-up shall be handed to the Field Director and/or Scorekeeper a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled game time. The final copy of the line-up shall be handed to the umpire-in-chief during the pre-game conference.

***EXCEPTION:** If a game is delayed by the Tournament Director as outlined in [Rule 14.17, Section H](#), the Tournament Director shall have the authority to allow additional time. When this is done, such player line-up shall be given to the Field Director/Scorekeeper ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the game.*
- B. At any time when it is discovered that a Manager/Coach is using an ineligible player, a Tournament Director or authorized Tournament Official shall cause the game to be stopped and forfeited to the opposing team. Reports of this nature must be submitted to the LCHSS Executive Committee for any further action that is deemed necessary as stipulated in LCHSS Rules and Regulations that pertain to a violation of this nature.

14.12 COACHING

- A. In all League Classifications two (2) adult coaches may coach in the Coaches' Boxes or one (1) adult coach and one (1) team player may coach in the Coaches' Boxes. Adult

coaches must be affiliated with the team and listed on that team's roster as a Manager, Assistant Manager, or Coach.

- B. The Adult Coaches must complete the inning on whichever base line he/she starts the inning unless injured or ill.
- C. No Coach in the Coach's Box may have in his/her possession any material or equipment not related with the coaching of bases or keeping score.
- D. Managers and Coaches may wear shorts (no cut-offs and shorts above the mid-thigh). No muscle shirts will be permitted or shorts above mid-thigh. Jeans may be worn (at the discretion of the Tournament Director or Tournament Official). No torn or tattered jeans will be permitted.
- E. Any non-adult (age 17 and younger) base coach must wear a helmet.

14.13 **EQUIPMENT**

- A. See [Rule 4.00](#).
- B. No protest will be allowed on any of the sections of [Rule 4.00](#). When any of the sections are being violated, they shall be brought to the attention of the Umpire-In-Chief. In cases where they can be corrected, the Umpire-In-Chief shall so do. Violations regarding the number on the uniforms shall be brought to the attention of any Official and such reports shall be made to the LCHSS Executive Committee for any further action deemed necessary.

***PENALTY:** The team in violation will be allowed up to fifteen (15) minutes beyond the scheduled game time to comply with Rules 1 through 6. If the violation is not corrected in the allotted time, the game will be forfeited.*

14.14 **PLAYING FIELDS AND EQUIPMENT**

- A. Players and substitutes of both teams shall confine themselves to their team bench unless participating in the play or preparing to enter the game or coaching at first or third base.
- B. No one except players, substitutes, four (4) Adults (managers, coaches, team scorekeeper, trainers, etc.) and bat person shall occupy the team bench during a game.
- C. All team benches shall be located outside of the playing area and shall be so marked.

14.15 **GENERAL RULES OF CONDUCT**

- A. There will be no smoking on or in the playing area during the progress of the game.
PENALTY: Ejection from the game.
- B. Anyone indulging in liquor of any kind will not be permitted on or in the playing area. The Field Director shall see that anyone violating this rule will be removed from the playing area and park.
- C. No manager shall indulge in any intoxicating beverage during the game. Should he/she drink prior to the game and be judged by the Umpire or Field Director or any Tournament Official as unfit to manage, he/she shall leave the playing field and park.
- D. Profanity will not be allowed. **PENALTY:** Ejection from the game and park.
- E. Badgering of an Umpire by a Manager or anyone affiliated with the team will not be tolerated. They will be warned, and a second offense will initiate automatic ejection from the game and park.
- F. **NOTE:** *Definition of ejection: The person ejected must leave to the point where he/she is out of sight and hearing range of the playing field.*
- G. Taunting /Cheering: No player, manager, or adult personnel shall use any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others under circumstances including race, religion, gender, or national origin. This includes the use of names, position, or words batter, and swing. **PENALTY:** May result in a team warning and/or ejection at the umpire's discretion.

14.16 **TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The District and State Tournament Directors shall furnish a central location to which the teams may report and obtain any information.

- B. The District and State Tournament Directors shall furnish competent Adult Field Directors, Official Scorekeepers, softballs, and bases. Each team shall furnish its own practicing balls. **NOTE:** No State or District Tournament Game shall start or be played unless an Official Field Director is present.
- C. All assignments of competent Adult Umpires to all scheduled games shall be made by the LCHSS Umpire-In-Chief of the Charter Holder conducting District Tournament Play. For State Tournament Play such assignments may be made by the LCHSS Umpire-In-Chief as appointed by the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- D. The LCHSS Executive Committee shall furnish all District and State Tournament awards for presentation to all District Tournament Finalists and Runner-Ups, and State Tournament Winners and Runner-Ups.
- E. All District and State Tournament Directors shall furnish competent Adult Field Directors at all playing field locations in order that they can supervise each game and oversee all matters that are prescribed for them by the LCHSS Executive Committee. No Field Director may overrule any Umpire in any decision that relates to the duties of the Umpire which governs the actual playing of the game under LCHSS Rules and Regulations.
- F. In situations where District or State Tournament Directors or any Official member of a Tournament Staff are not carrying out their duties as prescribed by the LCHSS Executive Committee, such violations must be submitted to the LCHSS Executive Committee for their prompt attention to any action they deem necessary in order to correct any situation that may hinder the completion of any Tournament Play.

14.17 PROTEST COMMITTEE

- A. District and State Protest Committees shall consist of five (5) Adult LCHSS members and five (5) Adult alternate members who shall be appointed prior to District and State Tournament Play by the Tournament Directors subject to approval by the LCHSS Executive Committee.

14.18 OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER

- A. Shall score in the Official Score book and prepare box scores for newspapers, radio, publicity, etc.

14.19 UMPIRES

- A. For District Tournament – Charter Holders may submit a list of at least six (6) Qualified Umpires to be assigned for District Tournament by each District Tournament director. For State Tournament – each District Umpire-in-chief may submit a list of at least four (4) Qualified Adult umpires that shall be assigned for state tournament play. The balance of Qualified Adult Umpires needed to complete the required number of assignments in State Tournament Play shall be furnished by the State Umpire-in-Chief. All assignments for State Tournament Play shall be made by the Umpire-in-Chief as appointed by the LCHSS Executive Committee and may be assisted by the LCHSS Executive Committee or any person that he/she may desire to serve in the capacity. All lists must be submitted one week prior to the start of state tournament play will not be considered.
- B. 17-year-old umpires are allowed to do District Tournament games for A and B League Classification with a senior umpire behind the plate.
- C. No Adult Umpire involved in a protest shall be permitted to serve on a Protest Committee.
- D. In all tournament games, except for State Championship games, two (2) umpires shall be scheduled to work each game. For all State Championship games, three (3) umpires shall be scheduled to work.
 - 1. No District or State Tournament game shall be played unless the number of Qualified Adult Umpires of the Approved Tournament Umpires Staff scheduled to work the game are in attendance. Such games shall be rescheduled by the LCHSS Executive Committee, and at such time when he/she can furnish the required number

of Qualified Adult Umpires to work the game. A scheduled game shall be delayed until the requirements as stipulated above are adhered to and such time of delay shall be up to the discretion of the LCHSS Executive Committee. There are no exceptions to this rule.

- E. All umpires shall submit to the LCHSS Executive Committee a complete report of any ejection from a game of any manager, assistant manager, coach, or player.
- F. All umpire groups of each Charter Holder shall endeavor to be recognized as an approved association by being registered with LCHSS. Each Charter Holder should submit to the LCHSS Executive Committee an application to have their Umpires Organization approved, and on file so that in the future when tournament sites are approved and awarded, those Charter Holders who have approved Umpires Organizations will be eligible for a tournament site.
- G. Umpires Dress Uniform:
 - 1. **Black Shoes:** shined and with black laces. (Single white stripe on the side is permissible)
 - 2. **Socks:** black or dark blue.
 - 3. **Trousers:** gray with black belt. All members of the crew must wear the same color trousers. Trousers must be waist high (no hip-huggers).
 - 4. **Shirts:** black pull over must be worn by all members of the crew.
 - 5. **Cap:** regulation black or dark blue cap to be worn by all umpires with the bill of the cap always to the front. Exception: Plate umpires who elect to wear a hockey style helmet will not be required to wear a cap.
 - 6. Uniforms and equipment shall be clean and neat. Chest protector, mask with throat protector, shin guards, ball/strike and out indicator, protective cup and a short brush are necessary.
 - 7. Shin Guards must be worn underneath trousers.
 - 8. No jewelry shall be worn that can cause a reflection on the field.
- H. An umpire shall not fraternize with coaches, managers, players, spectators, or any field personnel. Finally, the success of LCHSS rests to a large degree on the quality of the Umpire Corps. Good umpiring will foster more interest from the players, more help and cooperation from the parents and more aid from the community in general. Bad umpiring will destroy anything built to date.

14.20

FILING PROTESTS

- A. Protests based on the misinterpretation of a published rule and regulation, or the misinterpretation of a playing rule governed by the OHSAA Official Softball Rules will be received and considered. The failure of a Field Director and/or Umpire to supply the proper penalty for a certain violation of prescribed rules and regulations would be protestable.
- B. Protests that relate to LCHSS Rules and Regulations must be made to the plate umpire at the time of the incident. In all cases, play shall not be resumed until the Umpire-In-Chief has notified the Field Director or authorized official and the official scorekeeper. In any of the mentioned situations, the teams must be notified by the Umpire-In-Chief or the Field Director or authorized official present, as to the nature of the protest.
 - 1. No manager shall be denied the right to protest provided they have followed the requirements as stipulated. It is the responsibility of that manager protesting to know the requirements relating to the filing of protests as well as to which rule and regulation that are protestable.
- C. All verbal and written accounts of protest must be related to the LCHSS Rules and Regulations that govern the actual playing the game. Such written accounts must be in detail and must quote the rule number and page number of the specific rule violation. All protests must be filed by the manager.

- D. During tournament play, a written account of the protest and a \$200 fee must be given to the Field Director or Tournament Director at the time of the actual protest. Game ending protests: **(a)** A verbal protest must be communicated to the tournament director within ten (10) minutes after the game has ended. **(b)** The written account of the protest must be in the hands of the Tournament Director within two (2) hours of the game ending play.
- E. If the protest is won, the game will be corrected and resumed from the point of protest, or the game is forfeited; the protest fee is returned to the manager filing the protest. If the protest is denied, the fee goes into the tournament fund.
- F. Umpires shall make note of the protest on the official score sheet and shall file a full account of the incident with the Tournament Director during tournaments and Local League Official during Local League Play. All umpires, field directors, scorekeepers, and managers (both teams) shall make themselves available for a protest meeting. The protest committee shall consist of at least five (5) persons. Chairperson and Secretary will agree upon. **IN TOURNAMENT PLAY, A PROTEST COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF FIVE (5) ALTERNATE PEOPLE MAY BE SET UP FOR EACH OF THE TOURNAMENT SITES.** Protest committee for the State finals will consist of five (5) members of the Executive Committee. The protest shall be read, all concerned parties shall be invited to speak and the committee shall complete its deliberations. During tournament games, a committee consisting of three (3) members may meet and decide a verbal protest with the game being held up until a decision is made. The protest fee must be paid at the time of the verbal protest. The protesting manager must write down exactly what is being protested. If a protest committee cannot be immediately formed, then the game shall be played under protest, and the preceding steps for filing a protest shall be followed. The Tournament Director shall notify all persons affected by the protest committee he/she has followed the requirements as stipulated. It is the responsibility of the manager protesting to know the requirements relating to the filing of the protest as well as to which rule can be protested. If a protest is won and not an automatic forfeit, the game must be resumed from the point of the violation regardless of whether the protest committee believes the protest had any bearing on the eventual outcome of the contest. LCHSS Executive Committee will not consider nor act upon an appeal regarding any decision that is rendered by any Local Charter, District or State Tournament protest committee, unless such decision is in direct violation of any adopted rule or regulation that governs all play. A protest must be filed properly to be acted upon. No appeal of any nature can be submitted to the Local or State organization for their consideration unless the procedure of filing a protest has been complied with. Protests can be acted upon only when properly presented. There are no exceptions. The Protest Committee shall have the exclusive right to determine whether all steps involved in a protest have been followed sufficiently well for it to resolve the protest in a just manner. **NOTE:** The time of the incident shall mean that exact point that any situation occurs to cause the manager to bring this to the attention of the Umpire-in-Chief, Field Director, or Authorized Official. Protest shall be denied if they are made after the next pitch, which follows the incident. In situations where no further pitch will follow due to the ending of the game by a run, the time allotted for a verbal protest shall not exceed ten (10) minutes after the completion of the game (Protest fee must be paid at this time). Written account of the protest must be submitted to the Tournament Director no later than two (2) hours after the end of the game. Protests shall be considered on the following: 1. Protests based on the misinterpretation of a playing rule will be received and considered. 2. The failure of an umpire to apply the proper rule to a given situation or to impose the proper penalty for a certain violation of rules would be protestable.

14.21 PENALTIES AND SUSPENSIONS

- A. All penalties listed above under any LCHSS Rule shall be enforced. Any additional penalties deemed necessary shall be determined by the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- B. Any Player, Manager, Assistant Manager, Coach, Sponsor, or Spectator directly and/or indirectly causing an attack or any harassment upon the person of any State Official, Commissioner, Trustee, Charter Holder Official, Umpire, Player, Tournament Official, and/or LCHSS Executive Committee member, or interfering with the efficient performance of their duties shall be subject to immediate suspension and any legal action deemed necessary by the LCHSS Executive Committee.
1. Any manager, assistant manager, coach, player, scorekeeper or bat-person who directly and/or indirectly causes an attack upon the person of a State Official, Commissioner, Trustee, Charter Holder Official, Umpire, Player, Tournament Official, and/or LCHSS Executive Committee member shall be immediately suspended from any participation in or as a part of a team in any local charter sanctioned by LCHSS following the incident. A hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible. Suspension will be lifetime. All decisions at the hearing by the Board/ Committee will be final. No appeals will be allowed.
 2. Any manager, assistant manager, coach, player, scorekeeper or bat-person who directly and/or indirectly causes any harassment upon the person of a State Official, Commissioner, Trustee, Charter Holder Official, Umpire, Player, Tournament Official, and/or LCHSS Executive Committee member will draw immediate probation or suspension if deemed necessary for a minimum of the next five (5) games in which the person would be eligible to participate if deemed appropriate by the Board or Committee having jurisdiction at the time of the offense. A hearing will be held. All decisions at the hearing by the Board/ Committee will be final. No appeals will be allowed.
 3. Reports of any suspension or probation must be forwarded to the LCHSS State Secretary by the Local Board or Tournament Committee. The report must be in written form.
- C. Any Manager, Assistant Manager, Coach, Player, or Charter Holder Official found guilty of violating any of the foregoing Rules and Regulations should be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year with reinstatement subject to the approval of the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- D. Any Manager, Assistant Manager, Coach, or Player who conducts herself/himself in a discourteous manner before or after a game shall be subject to suspension as determined by the Tournament Board with complete details and other necessary actions overseen by the LCHSS Executive Committee.
- E. All penalties that are prescribed by LCHSS League Rules and Regulations that govern State Affiliation can only be revised and acted upon by the LCHSS Executive Committee. The following procedure must be observed before any protest filed by a Charter Holder or Team can be acted upon. No exceptions will be allowed.
1. State League Rules and Regulations that govern Charter Affiliation can be used by a Charter Holder, Team Manager, Assistant Adult Personnel, or League Representative as their basis for any protest during Tournament Play.
 2. Protests regarding State League Rules and Regulations that govern Charter Affiliation must be submitted to the LCHSS Executive Committee or the State Organization and must be postmarked within forty-eight (48) from the time of the official protest. All protests submitted must have the approval of a Charter Holder's State Commissioner prior to the filing of such protest with the LCHSS Executive Committee.
 3. Protests of this nature must be filed with the LCHSS Executive Committee, in writing, and directed to the specific rule violation. All protests submitted must be

accompanied by a fee of two-hundred dollars (\$200.00) and made payable to LCHSS. If the protest is won, the protest fee shall be returned to the Charter Holder or Team filing the protest.

4. Protests of this nature will be reviewed by the LCHSS Executive Committee at any of their regularly scheduled meetings during the current year, unless a protest is for such nature that a special meeting must be called to immediately act upon such a protest. Special meeting shall be called by the President. NOTE: The above regulations do not in any way eliminate the possibility that the LCHSS Executive Committee could or will later rule against any Charter Holder, Team Manager, Assistant Adult Personnel, Team, or Player regarding any violation and, therefore, declare them ineligible even after all tournament play is completed.

14.22 PUBLIC ADDRESS

A. Recommended at all State Tournament Play.

14.23 PUBLICITY

A. This is managed by the District and State Tournament Directors, or a person designated by the Director.

14.24 INTERPRETATIONS

A. The foregoing Rules and Regulations governing all Tournament Play as adopted shall be interpreted only by the LCHSS Rules Interpreter as approved by the LCHSS Executive Committee. All interpretations are final.

B. Requests for interpretation of any nature must be directed to the State Rules Interpreter and such requests must be in writing. Replies to any requests for interpretation shall be forwarded by the Official Interpreter as published and shall be in writing.

C. **NOTE:** The word ADULT whenever shown shall refer to anyone whether male or female eighteen (18) years of age or older.

14.25 DEFINITIONS

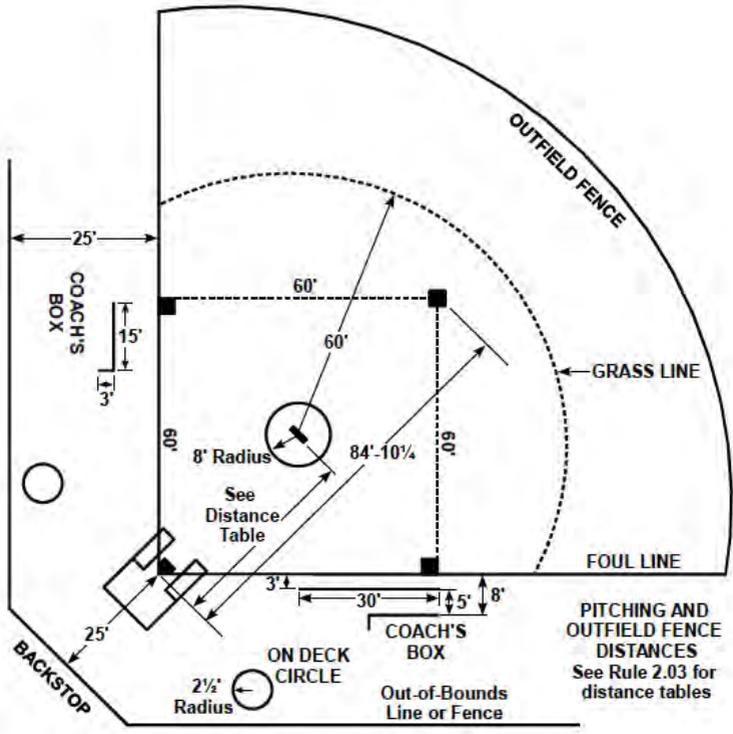
A. **Probation:** A manager, assistant manager, coach, player, or other team representative may be placed on probation for violation of any LCHSS Rule or Regulation as deemed necessary by the appropriate Board or Tournament Committee who has authority at the time of the offense. Persons placed on probation may participate in all team functions as long as they do not violate any LCHSS Rule or Regulation during the time of their probation. Periods of probation to be determined by the appropriate Board or Tournament Committee that has authority at the time of the offense, unless specifically set in the LCHSS Rules and Regulations. Any violation of LCHSS Rules and Regulations during the period of probation will be dealt with by the appropriate Board or Tournament Committee that has authority at the time of the offense. Violation of probation could draw a suspension.

B. **Suspension:** Any manager, assistant manager, coach, player, or other team representative that has been placed on suspension may not practice, play, or attend any scheduled team function or game in a team uniform during his/her period of suspension. A suspended individual may not be carried on the test roster during the period of suspension. Reinstatement of a suspended player is subject to LCHSS Rules and Regulations.

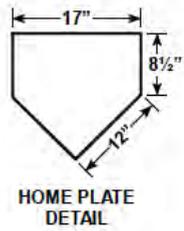
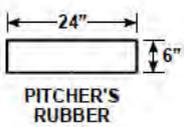
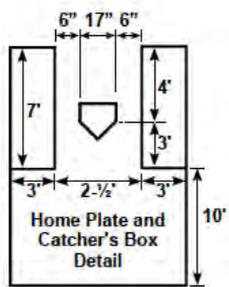
C. **Ejection:** Any person removed from a game by an Umpire for violation of any LCHSS Rule during a game must leave the area to a point where he/she is out of sight and hearing of the playing field. Any person refusing to leave the area will result in forfeiture of the game by the offending team whose person has been ejected.

D. **Ineligible Player:** Any person who may not participate as a member of an authorized team because he/she has been removed from a game by an Umpire, has been suspended by the appropriate Board or Tournament Committee, has not meet the 60% rule, or is signed up to play on more than one (1) team sanctioned by LCHSS.

APPENDIX A Field Layout



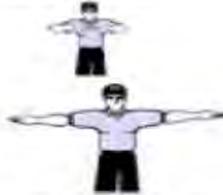
**PITCHING AND
OUTFIELD FENCE
DISTANCES**
See Rule 2.03 for
distance tables



APPENDIX B UMPIRE SIGNALS 1



OUT
Raise right arm straight up. Bring forearm slightly forward while clenching into fist. Verbalize "Out."



**SAFE/NO CATCH/NO TAG
NO INFRACTION**
Extend arms straight out with palms down. Verbalize the call.



STRIKE
Verbalize "Strike" while set. Stand, raise right arm up and forward into a fist.



**FOUL BALL/DEAD BALL
NO PITCH**
Raise both arms up, palms forward angled out from the body. Verbalize the call.



DOUBLE
Raise right arm above head showing two fingers. Verbally call "Two Bases".



PLAY BALL
Raise arm toward pitcher with palm facing body. Bring arm toward body while verbalizing "Play Ball."



FOUL TIP
Optional. Brush fingers with upward motion, chest high or higher. Follow with "Strike" signal. No verbal call.



FAIR BALL
Point towards fair ground with hand closest to infield. No verbal call.



INFIELD FLY
Raise right arm above head with first closed. Verbally call "Infield Fly."



HOME RUN
Raise right arm above head with index finger extended. Circle arm in clockwise motion.



TIME
Raise both arms above head, palms forward, with arms at a slight angle from body. Verbally call "Time."



DO NOT PITCH
With palm up, raise hand toward pitcher

APPENDIX B UMPIRE SIGNALS 2



DELAYED DEAD BALL
Extend left arm straight out—in a fist with fingers facing out.



COUNT
Raise both arms shoulder high or higher in front of the body. Indicate strikes with fingers on right hand and balls on the left hand.



POINT
Extend arm with index finger extended. Keep other arm close to body.



EJECTION
Hold up right arm with palm open and forward. Draw the hand back to the ear and redirect arm skyward at a 45-degree angle away from the body with the index finger extended.



THE RUN SCORES
Point at plate while emphatically verbalizing "The Run Scores."



THE RUN DOES NOT SCORE
Cross both arms back and forth above the head with palms forward. Verbalize "No Run."

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Local Officials, Managers, Coaches and Umpires, only, are invited to request, in writing, a rule interpretation at any time. Only the LCHSS Rule Interpreter can provide an official rule interpretation. If anyone other than the LCHSS rule interpreter provides an interpretation it is an opinion of the individual providing the information and as such is not an official interpretation.

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