

**2025**  
**LORAIN COUNTY HOT**  
**STOVE SOFTBALL**  
**LEAGUE**



**SUMMARY RULES AND REGULATIONS**

[www.loraincountyhottstove.com](http://www.loraincountyhottstove.com)

**Printed February 2025**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The following are new rules and rule modifications for 2025:

1. Playing age is now determined by age on August 31 of the previous calendar year. See [Rule 1.1](#).
2. Players that are also on a non-Hot Stove roster, in addition to a Hot Stove roster, must now play in 50% of the team's played games. This is a change from 60%. Also, players playing up or down within the same community in order to meet the minimum number of players may not be from a roster in the same Class. See [Rule 1.7](#).
3. In Class A and above, a player may continue to second base on a base on balls, provided they do not stop. See Rule 2.3 in the OFFICIAL RULES AND POLICIES publication.
4. Base coaches are permitted to use electronic scoring devices while on the field. See Rule 2.15 in the OFFICIAL RULES AND POLICIES publication.
5. Chin strap requirements have been removed. Chin straps are now optional for all Classes. See Rule 2.28 in the OFFICIAL RULES AND POLICIES publication, [Rule 4.11.5](#), and [Rule 9.7.L](#).
6. In Classes A and B, all starters are required to play 12 outs, 6 offensive and 6 defensive. 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. See [Rule 5.3.E](#).
7. No new inning in Farm Major may begin after 1 hour, 40 minutes of play. See [Rule 6.3.I](#).
8. In Farm Major, an inning ends when either: 3 outs are recorded, 5 runs scored, or 10 batters have an at-bat, whichever comes first. A team with 9 players can bat a maximum of 9 in an inning.
9. In Farm Major, protests are permitted.
10. In Farm Major, Bunting is now legal during the player pitch portion of the game. See [Rule 11.4.Q](#).
11. In Farm Major, during coach pitch, the coach that is pitching must be in contact with the pitcher's plate after June 1<sup>st</sup>. See [Rule 11.5.B](#).
12. Farm Major Penalty for coach that is pitching and giving instructions to baserunners: One (1) warning will be given to offending coach. Any subsequent violation(s) will result in the lead runner being called out. See [Rule 11.D](#).
13. Tournament Draw Tie Breakers were updated. See [Rule 14.6.K](#).

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 backcover.

# **Lorain County Hot Stove Softball**

## *Summary of Official Rules and Regulations*

### **Contents**

1	CHARTER, TEAM & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY.....	1
2	DEFINITIONS.....	3
3	THE PLAYING FIELD.....	3
4	EQUIPMENT.....	4
5	PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES .....	7
6	THE GAME.....	11
7	PITCHING REGULATIONS .....	14
8	BATTING.....	17
9	BASE RUNNING.....	22
10	DEAD BALL – BALL IN PLAY .....	31
11	FARM MAJOR RULES.....	33
12	UMPIRES.....	37
13	PROTESTS.....	38
14	TOURNAMENT PLAY .....	38
15	APPENDIX A Field Layout .....	47
16	INDEX.....	48

# 1 CHARTER, TEAM & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

## 1.1 LEAGUE CLASSIFICATIONS The cut-off date for a player's roster age is August 31<sup>st</sup> of the previous year. Whatever age a player is on August 31, 2024, 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

## 1.3 CHARTER DUES

## 1.4 TEAM FEES

## 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. A team may have a maximum of three (3) players residing outside of the team's areas as defined by the local charter (release forms must be submitted and accepted by a Charter official.) **Any exceptions must be accompanied by a letter of explanation.** The letter must be approved by a Charter Official and the Charter State Trustee and submitted to the State Secretary with the roster. Any player found not complying with this rule will be ineligible for participation in State sanctioned tournament play and the team and/or manager will be subject to disciplinary action by the State Executive Committee.
- C.
- D. Rosters must be prepared via the LCHS registration approved form published by LCHS.
- E.
- F.
- G. Any changes to team rosters must be approved by the Local Charter Holder prior to June 10<sup>th</sup>. 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.

## 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.
- 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

## 2 DEFINITIONS

(All definitions in Rule 2.00 are listed alphabetically in the OFFICIAL RULES AND POLICIES publication.)

## 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.

### 3.2

- 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

## 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 2.250 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.



- 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.

## 4.2 WARM-UP BATS.

## 4.3 THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

- A.  
B.  
C.  
D.  
E.
- F. The 12-inch ball shall be used for Class B, C and D, and be between 11 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches and 12 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches in circumference and shall weight between 6¾ 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 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches and 11 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches in circumference and shall weigh between 5 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> ounces and 6 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> 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

4.5

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 shall 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

**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 a 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

#### 4.11

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

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

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 substances 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.** Exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, earrings and neck chains, or any other item judged dangerous by the umpire, may not be worn during the game. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry, but if worn, they must be taped to the body.

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

9. **DEFENSIVE PROTECTIVE FACE MASKS.** It is recommended that all defensive infielders, including the pitcher, should wear protective face masks. **Farm Major and 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.

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. Any player withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided the player occupies the same batting position whenever in the line-up. A violation results in an illegal substitution. A substitute who is withdrawn may re-enter.

**PLAY** – *In the top half of the first inning with two outs, R1 on first base, B4 (Smith) is announced on the PA system. Just then the manager decides to substitute Jones. Jones strikes out. In the third inning, Smith, who was announced in the first inning, pinch-hits for Jones.*

**RULING** – *Legal. All players may be withdrawn and re-entered one time, provided they occupy the same batting position they held when originally in the lineup.*

- E. In Classes A and B, all starters are required to play 12 outs, 6 offensive and 6 defensive. All substitutes must play 12 consecutive outs. It is strongly recommended that all substitutes be entered into each game at the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning.
- F. **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.

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

A. Nine (9) Players.

1. A **Farm Minor or Farm Major** team may start with eight (8) players but an out will be recorded in the ninth batting position for the entire time the game is played with 8 players. If a farm major team starts with 8 players, they may not add additional players to the batting or defensive lineup. In the event the game is suspended, the team may not add additional players when the game is resumed. Farm minor 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 line-up, 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 line-up would have appeared in the batting rotation. If an eligible player becomes available, the team may return to nine (9) 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 eight 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 substitute may take the place of a player whose name is in her team's batting order. The following regulations govern substitution of players:

- A. The manager or team representative of the team making the substitution shall immediately notify the umpire at the time a substitute enters. If the manager in violation informs the umpire prior to the offended team's protest, there is no violation, and the unreported substitute shall be declared legal. A substitute is not officially in the game until a pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown or a play made. If the "DP" replaces the "FLEX PLAYER" or the "FLEX PLAYER" replaces the "DP," this change must be reported to the umpire.

**EFFECT:** *If not reported it is a team warning for the 1<sup>st</sup> offense. The 2<sup>nd</sup> offense the player and the coach are bench suspended.*

- B. 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.

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

- D. 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.*

- E. **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.

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

- A.  
B.  
C.  
D.  
E.

- 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 game the ejected person shall be suspended from:

1. Farm Minor, Farm Major, and Class A – the ejected game plus a four (4) game suspension.
2. Class B, C and D – the ejected game plus a two (2) game suspension.
3. If a team staff member is ejected the second time during the regular season, the suspension shall be indefinite, and additional disciplinary action may be taken by the LCHS Executive Committee.
4. 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 OHSBL Executive Committee.
5. Ejected person or persons cannot participate in any pre or post-game activities during their suspension. Any person ejected cannot play or be part of the team until the suspension is fulfilled.

## **6 THE GAME**

### **6.1**

### **6.2**

### **6.3 REGULATION LEAGUE AND TOURNAMENT GAMES SHALL CONSIST OF SEVEN INNINGS.**

- A. A full seven innings need not be played if the team second at bat scores more runs in six innings or before the third out in the last of the seventh inning.
- B. A game that is tied at the end of seven innings 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 regulation if five or more complete innings 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 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 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. An official game shall be declared if after a full two (2) hours playing time a team is ten (10) or more runs ahead (see [Rule 6.4.](#)) Full innings must be played unless the home team is leading at this time. Either the five (5) inning rule or the two (2) hour playing time limit shall end a game determined by the ten (10) run rule (See [Rule 6.4.](#))
- 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 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.
  - 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 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. In regular season play, no new inning may begin after two (2) full hours of play in Class A and above and 1 hour, 40 minutes in Farm Major. This rule does not apply to tournament play.

#### **6.4 TEN RUN RULE.**

- A. An official game shall be declared if at the end of five (5) or more full innings the visiting team is ahead by ten (10) or more runs, or if at the end of four and one-half (4 ½) innings or more the home team is ahead by ten (10) runs or more.

#### **6.5 FIFTEEN RUN RULE**

- A. An official game shall be declared if at the end of four (4) or more full innings the visiting team is ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs, or if at the end of three and one-half (3 ½) innings or more the home team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more.

6.6

6.7

6.8

6.9

6.10

#### **6.11 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.

#### **6.12 MAXIMUM RUNS PER INNING**

- A. **Class A Only** - There is a five (5) run per inning per team limit until the 6<sup>th</sup> or last inning. When a team scores five (5) runs with less than two outs, the half-inning is considered completed. Once an inning is determined to be the last inning, the "Five 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 purpose of the "Five Run per Inning" rule, and inning is considered the last "inning" if:

1. At the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning either team has a lead of fifteen (15) or more runs.
2. After two hours of play, at any point during any inning either team has a lead of ten (10) or more runs.
3. The home plate umpire declares the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> inning to be the last inning due to impending darkness or weather conditions.

**NOTE 1:** *While the five-run limit is in effect, if a batter reaches first base due to a hit or fielding error with runners on base, only runners that score up to five (5) run limit are counted, and the half-inning is complete.*

**NOTE 2:** *If any runner that scores up to the five-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 records three outs.*

**6.13 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.**

**6.14 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 6<sup>th</sup> inning in Farm Major and Class A, the game will go into extra innings and the International Tie Breaker will be used. **The last batter who made an out in the previous inning will be placed on second 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 both hands together for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball. 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.

**7.2 THE PITCH** starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind-up after the hands have been brought together.

- A. Once the hands are brought together, the pitcher is permitted to step backward with the non-pivot foot at any time prior to the start of the pitch.
- B. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag away from the pitching plate to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher’s plate is illegal.

**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.
- E. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except when a strikeout or putout is made by the catcher.
- F. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball from the catcher.

**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 removes 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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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**

**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.
- 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.
- E. 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.

F.

**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.

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

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

**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.
- B. For each legally pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.
- C. For each foul tip held by the catcher.
- 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.

- 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.

**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.
- B. For each illegally pitched ball.
- 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.

**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.
- 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.
- F. While over fair territory, passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.

**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.

**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.

**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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

### **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. **Class C and D 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.
- 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.
- D. A baserunner shall not run bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or to make a travesty of the game.
- E. Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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.

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

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.

## **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.

## **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.
- 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, misplays 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.
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.](#)
- C. When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over, through or lodges in the backstop.
- 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.
  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.

- E. When a pitcher makes an illegal pitch.
- 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.
- G. When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.
- 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.
- 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.
  - 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.
- 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.

## **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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
  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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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

## **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.

- 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.
- B. When the batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- C. When a ball is pitched illegally.
- 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.
- 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, or 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- X. When a fielder carries a live ball into dead ball territory.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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. The 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. with a chalk line between each base at 30 ft. except for first and home.

## 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.



- 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. All regular season games will start at 6:15 P.M. unless mutually agreed upon by both coaches before game time.
- B. A full game is 6 innings. The first 3 innings are coach pitch. The last 3 innings are player pitch.
- C. A team may have up to five coaches in the dugout during a game.

- D. The mercy rule is in effect. The slaughter rule is 15 runs after 4 innings or 15 runs after 3 ½ innings provided that the home team is ahead by 15 runs or 10 runs after 5 innings or 10 runs after 4 ½ innings provided that the home team is ahead by 10 runs.
- E. A 1-hour, 40-minute time limit is used in regular season play. No new inning is to start after the 2-hour mark and the current inning must be finished. The 1 hour 40-minute time limit is NOT used during tournament play.
- F. Ties are allowed. For tournament purposes, if a tie occurs, each team will receive 2 points to count towards standings.
- G. The game must be started with 9 players on each team but, may end with 8 because of injury. In this case, the injured player will be an automatic out when her turn comes to bat.
- H. A tenth player may be used in the field as a fourth outfielder. ALL outfielders must play **BEHIND** the **BASELINE**.
- I. All infielders must play **BEHIND** the pitcher.
- J. Each team will bat their complete roster, meaning that all girls present at the game will bat in the order designated by that team's coach before the game. Once a batting lineup is set, it cannot be changed. If there are late arrivals to the game, they will be placed at the bottom of the batting order. If there are more than nine players present and an injury occurs, the injured player's spot is crossed out for future at bats and **IS NOT AN OUT**. Any runs made by that player, before her injury, **DO** count.
- K. If a player is unable to take her turn at bat due to injury or refusal to play, she is considered to be injured for the game and is unable to return to the game at any time. Bathroom breaks are permitted during the game. Coaches should permit players to use the restroom in a manner that keeps the game moving. In the event of an emergency, the player will be permitted to use the bathroom without penalty. The players at bat will be skipped and the game will continue.
- L. An inning ends when either: 3 outs are recorded, 5 runs scored, or 10 batters have an at-bat, whichever comes first, except for the 6<sup>th</sup> or final declared inning. The 6<sup>th</sup> inning or final declared inning will be unlimited runs. A team with 9 players can bat a maximum of 9 in an inning.
- M. Each player must be played a minimum of two innings defensively or six outs in the field.
- N. Open substitutions-defensive subs do not need to be reported to the umpire. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure each girl gets her required playing time.
- O. No running on a drop third strike.

- P. No infield fly rule is in effect.
- Q. No bunting allowed during coach pitch portion of the game. A full swing with the ball landing short and in front of the plate is not considered a bunt and is to be played by the defensive team. Bunting is legal during the player pitch portion of the game.
- R. Sliding is permitted but is not mandatory.
- S. No leadoffs or stealing allowed. The runners can NOT run until the ball is hit. Leaving the base before a hit will result in an out.
- T. The ball is considered dead when an infielder, who is inside the baselines, attempts to throw the ball back to the pitcher. The umpire will use logical conclusion to determine when the ball is dead. At the time the ball is declared dead, any runner that has crossed the hash mark between the bases will be granted the base in which she is heading to. Any runner that has not crossed the hash mark, is sent back to the base she is coming from.
- U. 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.
- V. There are two coaches allowed in the field for the offensive and defensive teams during game play. The offensive team may designate a third coach to "set" the batter but, that coach is to vacate the playing field before the batter starts her at bat. The only exception to this rule is a coach from the defensive team may be on the field of play near the backstop to retrieve past balls for the catcher. This coach is not allowed to coach or cheer in any way for their team. The coach may NOT stand directly behind the umpire and must be off to either the right or left of the catcher. This is intended only to speed up the game for innings 4-6. A defensive coach MAY NOT sit/stand/kneel behind the pitcher and defensive coaches must be outside the baselines of second and short.
- W. On fielded ground balls, an out at a base must be made by a throw in the air. Bowling a ball cannot make the out. An underhand flip is allowed provided it is not rolled on the ground. If a throw is attempted but does not make it to the base in the air and finishes rolling to the base, it is still considered a throw, as there was an attempt by the fielder. Penalty for this action is the runner is safe and all other runners advance one base. In the case of the tenth batter and third is occupied the runner is safe and the runner at third scores ending the inning.
- X. On a fielded ball that is thrown to first base by an infielder, pitcher or catcher and becomes a passed ball, the ball is considered dead, and baserunners CAN NOT advance to the next base.
- Y. Missed base appeals can be made by the defensive coach instead of a player as written in OHSAA rules.

- Z. 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. A coach from the offensive team will pitch their half of the inning. The defensive pitcher will stand alongside of the coach that is pitching. 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.
- B. 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 1<sup>st</sup>. After June 1<sup>st</sup>, coach that is pitching must be in contact with the pitcher's plate. The ball MUST be delivered in an UNDERHAND motion.
- C. If a batted ball hits the coach, it is a live ball, unless the coach catches the ball out of reflex. In this case, the batter is awarded first base and forced runners advance one base.
- D. 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.
- E. Bunting is NOT permitted.
- F. Runners may only advance on a hit ball. No stealing.

### **11.6 Weather:**

- A. 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 or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.

### **11.7 Umpires:**

- A. Class "C" and "D" girls and Class "F," "EE" and "E" boys or be at least 13 years of age, may be used as umpires provided, they are carded by Lorain County Hot Stove Softball. At least one carded umpire is required for each game. Adult carded umpires will be used during tournament play.
- 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**

*(All Umpire regulations in Rule 12.00 are listed in the OFFICIAL RULES AND POLICIES publication.)*



## **13 PROTESTS**

*(All Protest policies and processes in Rule 13.00 are listed in the OFFICAL RULES AND POLICIES publication.)*

## **14 TOURNAMENT PLAY**

### **14.1**

### **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**

### **14.4**

### **14.5**

### **14.6 TOURNAMENT DRAWINGS**

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.
- E.
- F.
- G.
- H. 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
- I. Two points may be deducted for games not played.
- J. 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.
- 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. NOTE: Due consideration must be given to the teams involved when scheduling or re-scheduling any game. All decisions made by the Tournament Director are final and are not subject to protest.

## 14.8 TIME SCHEDULE OF GAMES

- A.
- 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.
  - 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 rescheduling 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.
- 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.
- H. 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.
- I. 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.
- J. 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.

## **14.10 HOME TEAM**

- A. The higher seeded team gets the right to choose home or away.
- 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.
- 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 of 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.

#### **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.

14.15

14.16

14.17

#### **14.18 OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER**

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

14.19

#### **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 OHSA 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.

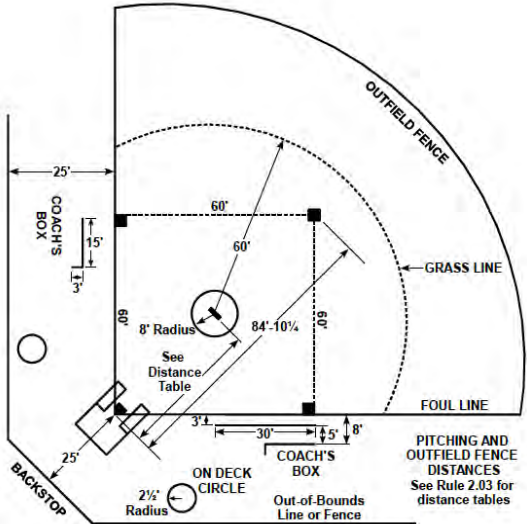
**14.22**

**14.23**

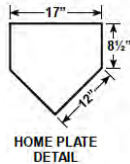
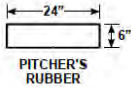
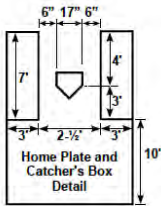
**14.24      INTERPRETATIONS**

- 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.

**14.25**



PITCHING AND  
OUTFIELD FENCE  
DISTANCES  
See Rule 2.03 for  
distance tables



## 16 INDEX

Age Classifications .....	1	Defensive Use of Illegal	
Appeal Play		Glove .....	20
After Time Out.....	27	Dropped third strike .....	22
May not return.....	22	Enters batter's box .....	31
Runner .....	22	Fair Ball .....	18
Ball		Foul Ball.....	19
Called by umpire.....	18	Foul Tip .....	19
In Play (Live Ball).....	32	Hinders catcher.....	18
Intentionally carried.....	24	Hit by pitch.....	18, 30, 31
Official.....	4	Intentional base on balls..	22
Remains Live .....	33	Is out.....	19
Unintentionally Carried .....	23	On deck.....	20
Base Path		Batter-Baserunner	
Runner is out .....	26	Accidental contact .....	31
Runner not out.....	29	Is out.....	25
Baserunner		Outside 3-foot line .....	26
Advancing With Liability..	23	Overruns first base .....	27
Advancing Without Liability		Batting Order	
.....	23	For DP (designated player)	
Forfeits Exemption .....	23	.....	20
Must return.....	25	Out of order .....	17
Bases.....	5	Blood Rule.....	10
Double .....	5	Casts .....	7
Running in legal order .....	21	Catch	
Bat		Unintentionally carried out	
Farm Major .....	33	of play.....	23, 24
Hitting ball second time....	18	Charged Conference	
Official Bat Specifications...4		Defensive .....	17
Warm-Up Bat.....	4	Offensive.....	13
Batter.....	22	Continuous Batting Order.....	8
Altered bat .....	19	Courtesy Runner.....	30
Automatic out.....	9	Dead Ball .....	30
Base on balls .....	22	Designated Player/ Flex Player	
Becomes a baserunner .....	22	.....	20

Detached Equipment.....	24	Pitcher	
Ejection.....	10	Class A.....	17
Forfeiture.....	10	Crow hop, leap.....	<b>15</b>
Malicious Contact.....	28	Foreign Substance.....	16
<b>Farm Major Rules</b> .....	33	Legal Delivery.....	15
Ball.....	33	No Pitch.....	16
Bat Restrictions.....	33	Preliminaries.....	14
Batting Order.....	34	The Pitch.....	14
Coach Pitch Rules.....	36	Warmup Pitches.....	16
Facemasks.....	33	Windup.....	15
Field Dimensions.....	33	Pitching Distances.....	3
Overthrows.....	35	Player Restrictions.....	2
Playing Rules.....	34	Double Roster 60% Rule.....	2
Time Limit.....	34	<b>Protests</b> .....	37
Inning		Substitutes.....	7
Regulation Game.....	11	Unreported/ Ineligible.....	9
International Tie Breaker ...	14	Team Rosters.....	1
Manager Responsibility.....	2	<b>Tournament Play</b> .....	37
Max. Runs Per Inning		Home Team.....	40
Class A.....	13	Legal Games.....	40
Mercy Rule		Lineup.....	40
10-run Rule.....	13	Point System.....	38
15-run Rule.....	13	Weather	
Farm Major.....	34	Lightning Rule.....	14
Official Game.....	13		

**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.

### **2025 LCHSS Executive Committee**

President	Pat Anderson <a href="mailto:pat@ohsbl.com">pat@ohsbl.com</a>	216-225-8177
Vice President	Kelly Fortner <a href="mailto:kellyfortner@gmail.com">kellyfortner@gmail.com</a>	440-522-4770
Secretary	Jeannie Miscuda <a href="mailto:jeanniemiscuda@yahoo.com">jeanniemiscuda@yahoo.com</a>	440-281-7035
Treasurer	Donna Clapper <a href="mailto:donnac0821@aol.com">donnac0821@aol.com</a>	440-236-8342
Umpire-In-Chief	Jerry Clapper <a href="mailto:jerry@loraincountyhotstove.com">jerry@loraincountyhotstove.com</a>	440-567-2475
Rules Interpreter	Jerry Clapper <a href="mailto:jerry@loraincountyhotstove.com">jerry@loraincountyhotstove.com</a>	440-567-2475

### **2025 LCHSS Class Vice Presidents**

Farm Vice President	Stephanie Edwards <a href="mailto:stephanie7781@gmail.com">stephanie7781@gmail.com</a>	440-506-0714
Class A Vice President	Howard Rinehart <a href="mailto:howard@loraincountyhotstove.com">howard@loraincountyhotstove.com</a>	440-669-4321
Class B, C, D Vice President	Rob Savage <a href="mailto:robsavage1982@gmail.com">robsavage1982@gmail.com</a>	330-571-5401