

MEDFORD PARKS & RECREATION

Adult Softball League Rules, Regulations & Procedures

(As of January 2020)

Current Amateur Softball Association (USA) rules govern play except the variations denoted here. The Medford Parks and Recreation Department (MPRD) reserves the right to modify rules, regulations and policies whenever due cause warrants a change.

1.....LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

A. League Director has final authority to make decisions pertaining to all softball league rules, regulations, and schedules; to act in the best interest of the City of Medford; and to make decisions in the spirit of competitive balance and fair play.

B. Upon enrolling as a team in leagues sponsored by the City of Medford, each team and all participants agree to abide by MPRD rules and regulations.

C. MPRD officials and umpires may stop, postpone or cancel any game due to weather, darkness, unsafe conditions or other circumstances that may jeopardize participant safety in any way, including games in which player behavior is deemed out of control.

D. Requests for schedule changes are subject to approval by the League Director and are subject to a \$20 processing fee to reimburse staff time.

2.....ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

A. To be eligible, players must have personally signed the official team roster or a liability waiver prior to playing in any league games. Failure to comply subjects a team to forfeiture of games in which ineligible player(s) participated, and sanctions for the illegal participant and team captain.

- 1) An official City of Medford team roster must be submitted at USCCP prior to Game 1.
- 2) Rosters are not limited to a maximum number.
- 3) Rosters are available for additions and deletions at USCCP prior to each game.
- 4) Each team may make unlimited roster additions until the start of the team's final regular-season game. **Players must participate in at least one full regular-season game to be eligible for the team's playoff game(s).** Roster additions after the cutoff must be approved by the League Director.
- 5) Teams using an illegal player are subject to forfeiture(s) and sanctions determined by the League Director.
- 6) All participants must be prepared to present a picture ID, upon request, as proof of identity. Participants who refuse to produce a picture ID when requested are subject to ejection and additional sanctions.
- 7) Participants who misrepresent their identity for participation purposes and/or team captains who falsify player identities on their official lineup/batting order will be suspended from MPRD softball league play for up to one year.
- 8) Illegal participation/eligibility inquiries are to be brought to the attention of the site supervisor/scorekeeper by the team captain prior to the conclusion of the game.

B. Teams may have two players age 16 or 17 participate in a game if a parent/guardian signs the official roster prior to participation.

C. League Participation Guidelines

A player may not:

1. Compete on multiple teams in the same day-specific league.
2. Compete at multiple gender-specific skill levels during the same season.
 - a. Men's A players may not compete on Men's B or Men's C teams.
 - b. Men's B players may not compete on Men's A or Men's C teams.
 - c. Men's C players may not compete on Men's A or Men's B teams.
 - d. All Male players must swing a wood bat in Co-Ed C League (bats will be provided)

Players are classified by their participation at the highest skill level during the current season. For example, a player who competes on a Men's B team at any point during the season is considered a Men's B player for the remainder of that season.

3. A player may compete in gender-specific leagues on different days at the same skill level. Examples of this are:

- a. Monday Men's C players may play on a Thursday Men's C team, and vice-versa.
- b. Co-Ed players may compete at different levels, but all male players must swing a wood bat in Co-Ed C.

D. Players may switch teams prior to the roster cutoff deadline if:

- 1) Team captains (old and new) must agree to the switch and submit the proposal to the Field Supervisor prior to the switch.
- 2) In the event the old team captain does not grant permission, the player must sit out one game before being allowed to play for the new team.

E. A female player may compete on one men's league team per season. Only one female player may be on the field or in the lineup for a men's team per game.

3.**GAME PROTOCOL, FORFEITS, TIME LIMITS**

A. The home team is designated on the season schedule, or by higher seed in the postseason tournament.

B. A regulation game is seven innings or 65 minutes of play, whichever comes first.

C. No new innings begin after 65 minutes of elapsed game time. All new innings starting prior to the 65-minute limit are completed (unless weather or other unforeseen circumstances force a game to be called early). A new inning starts when the third out is recorded in the bottom half of the inning.

1) If a game is called prior to the completion of seven innings, 65 minutes or the mercy rule, a game will be considered "official" upon completion of four full innings, or 3 ½ innings if the home team is leading. Unofficial games will be rescheduled and will start over with a 0-0 score.

2) If time has expired and the inning finishes with the score tied, the game is a tie.

3) In the event of a tie game:

a) If a game is tied after seven innings and if time remains on the clock, an additional inning(s) may be played. The inning in process will be completed if regulation time expires during the extra inning. Extra inning will be played with International Rules.

b) If a playoff game is tied at the conclusion of seven innings or upon expiration of regulation game time, extra inning(s) will be played until a winner is determined. Extra innings will be played using International Rules

D. The following considerations and procedures apply if a team is short-handed at game time:

- 1) If the short-handed team is the scheduled visiting team, the game may begin without a full team fielded. Upon conclusion of the top of the inning, the team shall be re-evaluated to determine if there are at least 8 players present.
- 2) If the short-handed team is listed as the home team, they give up their home team status and allow the other team to take the field in an effort to start the game on time.
- 3) Players arriving late must notify the scorekeeper and will be entered at the bottom of the lineup.
- 4) In the event of a forfeit, teams may play a practice game (without umpire/scorekeeper) lasting no longer than five innings or 50 minutes from the originally scheduled start time, whichever comes first. All players must follow eligibility guidelines to compete in a practice game. Umpires and supervisors may stop a practice game for reasons that represent the best interests of the league or MPRD.
- 5) After two forfeits, a team may be dismissed from the league for the remainder of the season.
- 6) A team must field eight players at all times, otherwise a forfeit is declared.

E. If a game is called before the end of an inning due to weather, time constraints or unforeseen circumstances, the final score will be taken from the last completed full inning, or if the home team is ahead when the game is called. The last full inning completed determines whether the game is considered "official" (4 innings).

F. Tie games will be recorded as a half-win/half-loss for both teams. An additional inning or innings may be attempted to break the tie only if time permits.

G. Mercy Rule. The game is considered complete and over when a team leads by at least 20 runs after five innings

H. Flip-Flop Rule. If the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs at the conclusion of six innings then the home team will be allowed to bat in the top of the seventh. If that team ties or goes ahead, then the visiting team will be allowed their final at bats in the bottom of the seventh.

I. Pre-game infield batting practice is not permitted.

4.INCLEMENT WEATHER

A. Always assume games will be played as scheduled. Decisions regarding weather-related postponements are not made until one hour prior to the first set of scheduled game times. Team captains are responsible for notifying their team members if games are postponed and rescheduled.

1) MPRD will announce postponements on the "Softball" page at sportsmedford.com. Every effort will be made to send electronic notification to affected team captains. All participants are encouraged to sign up for the Softball League text messaging service on the softball page at sportsmedford.com.

2) Games are played rain or shine unless there is a safety risk, such as lightning, icy conditions or dense fog. In the event of lightning, games may be delayed until the threat passes.

3) If a 6 p.m. game is postponed/cancelled, the 7:15 and 8:30 games may still be played.

5. SCOREKEEPING

A. The umpire will be provided for each game. His or her scorekeeping is final unless a discrepancy is brought to the attention of the umpire at or very near the time of occurrence. Captains should double-check with umpires regarding team score as the game progresses. **It is highly encouraged for teams to keep their own book during the game.** A scorekeeping

mistake is not subject to protest once the game concludes. Scorebooks are available upon request from the site supervisor.

- 1) The official lineup card (containing first and last names and jersey numbers of each participant) is due to the scorekeeper/umpire at least five minutes prior to scheduled game time. Failure to comply will result in an out assessed at the start of the game for the offending team. Lineup cards can be obtained from the site supervisor.

6.....UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

A. Umpires and supervisors are given full authority to take prudent actions necessary to maintain appropriate and safe playing conditions.

B. The umpire/supervisor may inspect team equipment for safety prior to each game.

C. MPRD provides one game ball for each contest. Additional softballs are provided only if available.

- 1) Teams must retrieve their own softballs, and the game clock will not stop.
- 2) Game balls issued by MPRD remain City property upon conclusion of the game.
- 3) **Teams must have a game-legal ball available for use in the event City-supplied softballs are not or cannot be retrieved.**

D. Teams supply their own equipment except the starting game ball and bases. Wood bats will be supplied per field for Wood Bat Leagues

E. Metal or ceramic cleats are not permitted at any time. Turf shoes are recommended. Umpires will determine if a shoe is a potential safety hazard.

F. It is recommended by MPRD that pitchers wear safety masks during the game. Any player may wear a safety mask/helmet to prevent injury if they are so inclined.

G. Each player must have a legible number on the back of his or her shirt/uniform. In the event of cold or inclement weather, players may wear jackets or sweaters over their uniforms but are requested to notify the scorekeeper of their uniform number prior to stepping into the batter box.

Rule 2-C-3-2

1) Exception: One person on each team may assume the number "00" or no number. Co-ed teams are allowed one player per gender without a number.

2) If more than one player does not have a legible number, he or she will automatically be considered out each time at bat.

3) Duplicate numbers are not allowed.

4) T-shirts with marker-drawn or taped numbers are permitted.

7.....BATS/CONFISCATION POLICY

A. All bats must conform to USA softball standards. Any bat with physical characteristics and/or properties that have been intentionally altered or modified for the purpose of enhancing performance is prohibited at U.S. Cellular Community Park.

- 1) All participants must use USA-legal equipment.
- 2) Umpires and City staff may inspect bats and player equipment at any time.
- 3) The bat shall be free of dents and visible cracks. MPRD may take a damaged bat out of play at any time.
- 4) All bats must have a safety grip.
- 5) Donuts are not allowed, except for warm-up.

- 6) The USA Non-Approved Bat list can be found at <http://usa.USAsoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>
- 7) Other information on USA Softball Equipment can be found at <https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-asa/certified-asa-equipment>
- 8) Bat warming sleeves are permitted.
- 9) All Male players must swing a wood bat in Co-Ed C Leagues**
- 10) A wood bat will be provided for each field during league play
- 11) Any USA Softball approved wood bat may be used for Co-Ed C leagues

B. All bats are subject to random bat testing by City staff using USA-certified bat-testing equipment.

- 1) If a bat fails a pre-game bat test as well as a secondary test administered by City staff, the bat is deemed illegal for use at USCCP and may be impounded for further analysis.
- 2) If an illegal bat is discovered during a game, staff will refer to USA Softball Rulebook. Rule 7 Sec. 6 (parts B-E).
- 3) The bat owner and City staff reserve the right to submit the presumed illegal bat to the USA National Equipment Testing Center for verification at the bat owner's expense. If the USA determines the bat is legal, it will be returned to its owner. If the USA determines the bat is illegal, the bat owner and participants who used the bat are subject to a one-year suspension from USCCP softball league and softball tournament participation.
- 4) Those who refuse to cooperate with bat-testing protocols or attempt to conceal bats from inspection will be ejected and subject to sanctions outlined in Section 7-C.
- 5) Participants are encouraged to have their bat tested before competing in a game. Individuals whose bat fails a pre-game test are not subject to sanctions, but the illegal bat may not be taken into the team area or used in a game.

C. Any participant(s) or team who conspire to introduce illegal, altered or non-approved equipment into a game(s) shall be suspended from Medford Parks and Recreation softball league and U.S. Cellular Community Park softball tournament participation for up to three (3) years.

- 1) Whenever a batted ball injures a participant, the bat will be impounded for inspection by MPRD staff. The site supervisor shall provide the bat owner with a property tag that serves as proof of ownership. Failure of any participant to fully and immediately cooperate with the umpire and City staff will result in the ejection of the player and team captain and forfeiture of the game.
- 2) The site supervisor will deliver the confiscated bat, the accident report and the property tag to the League Director within 24 hours. The League Director will examine the confiscated bat, review the accident report and discuss the incident with the umpire, City staff and the injured participant to determine whether the confiscated equipment will be submitted to the USA National Equipment Testing Center. This process shall be completed within 14 days of the incident.
- 3) If the equipment is submitted to the USA National Equipment Testing Center and the bat is determined to be legal, MPRD will return the bat to its owner. If the bat is determined to be legal but is destroyed during the testing process, MPRD shall reimburse the bat owner for the cost of a reasonable replacement bat, as determined by the League Director. If the bat is determined to be illegal, altered or non-approved, the participant(s)

shall be suspended as outlined above and the results shall be shared with the injured participant and his or her legal representative.

8.BATting ORDER/BATting

A. Prior to the start of the game each team may elect to use the USA batting order rules or it may elect to use a modified free-substitution rule that mandates each team member in uniform be placed in the batting lineup in whatever sequence the team captain chooses. Players using the modified rule may be substituted freely and are not bound to the USA re-entry rule.

1) Teams must report their choice of play prior to the start of the game to the umpire, scorekeeper and opposing team captain. Once a decision is made, it must play the entire game under the batting rule they chose.

2) Captains do not have to agree to utilize the same rule.

3) In case of free substitution, players arriving late may be included on the bottom of the batting. Players may leave early and be removed from the batting order or base path without penalty.

B. If a player is injured during the game or has to leave the facility prior to the completion of the game, he or she may be removed from the batting order without penalty (unless the team drops below the 8-player minimum). An able-bodied player removed from the lineup for strategic purposes will be considered an out at the discretion of the scorekeeper, umpire or site supervisor.

C. Under the free substitution option, players not in uniform must sit in the stands or identify themselves as non-players at the start of the game to the scorekeeper.

D. STRIKE ZONE and COUNT.

1) A strike zone mat is used to determine called balls and strikes.

a. A pitch landing on any portion of the mat is a strike.

2) Each batter begins an at-bat with a 1-and-1 count.

3) No courtesy foul will be given

E. If batter hits an over-the-fence home run the batter and runners are not required to touch the bases or home plate.

F. HOME RUN RULE. Neither team shall have more than two over-the-fence home runs greater than the opposing team at any time during the game. If an over-the-fence home run puts a team three home runs ahead of the opposing team's home run count, the at-bat is considered a dead-ball out, and baserunners may not advance. (Exception: Senior Softball League)

G. When a team is on offense, only the batter, the on-deck batter and base coaches are permitted outside the team area ("dugout"). Only one 1st or 3rd base coach is permitted. **Teams in violation of this rule may be issued a "team-out" per violation.**

9.PITCHING

A. Pitching arc is 6 feet (minimum) and 12 feet (maximum) for all leagues.

B. Minimum pitching distance is 50 feet for all leagues, which is the front of a six-foot x two foot pitching area. One foot must be inside the pitching area when the throwing motion is initiated.

C. Pitchers must use the 11-inch softball for female leagues and the 12-inch softball for male leagues. If the batter hits the wrong size ball and the mistake is immediately discovered, the batter may choose to re-do the at-bat.

D. If permitted by the umpire due to time considerations, a pitcher may throw a maximum of three warm-up pitches each inning or 5 warm-up pitches upon entering the game in relief.

E. If a pitcher decides to intentionally walk a batter, he or she should notify the umpire. In order to save time, the batter is automatically awarded first base.

F. Underhand fastpitch-style warm-up pitches are prohibited.

10..... BASERUNNING/COURTESY RUNNERS

A. Teams may request a courtesy runner for one batter per inning. If said batter acquires another at-bat in the same inning he/she will be granted a courtesy runner for each additional at bat. The same courtesy runner may run for the batter each time but is not required to. (Co-ed teams are allowed one courtesy runner per gender per inning).

B. A courtesy runner must be requested at the completion of the batter's at bat, and before the first pitch to the following batter. The first person to acquire the base vacated by the batter requesting a courtesy runner will be the courtesy runner for that at bat.

C. Teams are not required to designate a player in need of a courtesy runner.

D. The last out is not required to be the courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is on base and his/her spot in the batting order comes up, the at-bat is considered an out.

E. Stealing is not permitted.

F. Players are required to slide or give themselves up in order to avoid contact with a defensive player or interfering with an attempt with or on the ball. Violations are subject to umpire discretion.

G. In the event of cold weather or slick conditions, the umpire may announce to both teams, that baserunners are permitted to step over, and cut the inside corner of a base. Baserunners must be in contact with a base when the pitch is thrown.

11..... DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

A. The captain is the official representative of his/her team unless another player designates him/herself as team captain to the umpire and/or scorekeeper prior to the game. The captain is responsible for his or her team (and spectators associated with the team) abiding by rules, procedures and regulations.

1) The team captain is defined as:

- a. The individual who registered the team.
- b. The individual who submitted the lineup to the scorekeeper/umpire.
- c. The individual who represented the team during the pre-game plate conference with the umpire.

B. All players are expected to know Medford city-league rules, regulations and expectations.

C. The following are examples of unacceptable conduct that are subject to individual or team sanctions including suspension and up to expulsion from all leagues:

- 1) Verbal abuse, profanity, sarcasm directed toward the umpire, City staff or the opposing team, racist remarks and belligerent/unsporting behavior.
- 2) Unnecessary rough tactics with the intent or potential to do bodily harm.
- 3) Throwing a bat or other equipment out of anger or disgust.
- 4) Refusing to abide by an umpire's decision.
- 5) Not having control of his/her faculties to the extent that there is a chance of physical harm to the player or others.
- 6) Violations of facility rules and municipal codes.
- 7) Destruction of property.

D. Any player physically attacking or striking an umpire, scorekeeper/supervisor, player or spectator before, during or after games shall face expulsion from the league and criminal charges.

E. Destruction of property, theft or assault before, during or after activity will be handled by law enforcement. Individuals and teams will be held responsible for any damage or theft stemming from their use of the facility.

F. If ejected, participants or spectators must depart the softball complex within three minutes, or the team associated with the offending individual will forfeit the game. The game will not resume until the ejected player has departed the complex, and the countdown clock will not stop unless the umpire or scorekeeper deems the ejection is a delay tactic.

- 1) Any person ejected must divulge his or her name and phone number prior to departing.
- 2) Ejected individuals receive a 14-day suspension (minimum 2-game suspension) from all softball leagues. The League Director may choose to also prohibit the individual from visiting the softball facility during league play throughout the suspension.
- 3) In order to be reinstated to the active roster, the ejected player must submit proof of two hours of community service or pay a \$25 fine. Payments must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation office at the Santo Community Center, 701 N. Columbus, Medford, during normal business hours.
- 4) In order to be reinstated to the active roster, the ejected player must submit proof of two hours of community service or pay a \$25 fine. Payments must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation office at the Santo Community Center, 701 N. Columbus, Medford, during normal business hours.
- 5) Multiple ejections may result in extended suspension from all league.
- 6) Ejections are reviewed by City Staff and are subject to change depending on severity of the incident.
- 7) A player or team expelled from a league will not receive a refund.

12.....GAME PROTESTS

A. Game protests are to help clarify and interpret rules, not to question the judgment of officials. Protests are to help prevent similar occurrences and to better the league.

B. Protests must be stated at the point of contention and comply with USA Rule 9. The umpire, opposing team captain, site supervisor and/or UIC must be notified regarding the rule/procedure being protested.

C. If the protest is deemed valid, the game and time clock will be stopped until the protest is resolved.

D. If the protest is deemed invalid, extraneous, or as a delay tactic, then the protesting team may be assessed one out during the current inning if protesting team is on offense, or the next ½ inning if protesting team is on defense.

If protest cannot be resolved at the point of contention, team may submit protests in writing, accompanied by a \$20 filing fee, to the League Director within 24 hours upon conclusion of the game.

13.....PARK RULES/FIELD USAGE

A. Teams using City of Medford park facilities must abide by City codes, ordinances and posted park rules, including:

1) No alcoholic beverages, drugs and controlled substances in, around or on fields, parking areas and spectator areas (also described in Medford Municipal Code 5.310). Individuals in violation of this rule will be ejected and suspended up to 14 days from the facility.

- 2) Smoking or tobacco products (including vapor cigarettes)
- 3) Sunflower seeds
- 4) Gum
- 5) Pets (except service animals)
- 6) Metal cleats
- 7) Parking in designated no-parking areas (e.g. along yellow curb paint)

14.....MISCELLANEOUS

A. Notify the League Director of any potential scheduling errors. MPRD will make every effort to resolve logistical issues.

B. Blood Rule. When blood is visible, the game will be stopped to allow for quick dressing of wounds. Wounds must be covered and no blood can be visible before player may return to play.

C. Wearing jewelry is discouraged for safety reasons.

- 1) Players must tape, cover or remove jewelry during active participation if the umpire identifies a safety hazard.
- 2) Casts (plaster, metal or other hard substance or any other item deemed dangerous by the umpire) may not be worn during the game.

D. Play at your own risk. All players are responsible for their own insurance coverage. The City of Medford does not provide accident insurance for league participants or spectators.

E. Tournament seeding is determined by regular-season win-loss records. Ties are broken using the following criteria:

- 1) Winning percentage
- 2) Head-to-head outcome
- 3) Fewest forfeit losses
- 4) Runs allowed
- 5) Coin flip

F. MPRD web site (www.sportsmedford.com) is the primary source for up-to-date league info including schedules, standings and rules.

G. Past team performance may be considered during league composition. The League Director reserves the right to make scheduling decisions in the best interests of competitive balance.

H. Teams that drop or are dropped from the league lose any right to reclaim any part of their entry fee once the schedules have been posted on the MPRD web site.

I. All MPRD league teams are automatically associate members of USA Softball, which allows teams to compete in sanctioned sectional, regional or national tournaments.

J. Warm-up drills involving striking the fence are prohibited (e.g. "soft toss").

K. One heater is allowed in the team area ("dugout") if:

- 1) The heater is in the far-back corner of the team area, farthest from the entrance.
- 2) The heater does not produce open flames.
- 3) Heater must not be near bats or other equipment.

L. Unsupervised children and their parents may be asked to leave the facility by the site supervisor. Children are permitted in team areas (dugouts) but must remain seated, be supervised at all times and may not enter the field of play.

Co-Ed Softball League Rules & Procedures

These softball rules are used for Medford Parks & Recreation adult co-ed softball leagues in conjunction with normal City-league and USA rules, regulations and procedures.

1. **BATTING ORDER.** The batting order must alternate male/female or vice-versa. If a team fails to alternate batting order, an out will be recorded.
 - a. Each team has the option of batting all available players or just those who play in a defensive position. The batting option must be determined at the start of the game and cannot be changed once the lineup has been submitted to the scorekeeper.
 - b. If teams choose to bat through its entire lineup, the captain must submit a list of female batters in priority batting order, and a list of male batters in priority batting order. The scorekeeper will then set the lineup to alternate male and female batters. Otherwise, teams must adhere to the USA batting line-up and re-entry rule.
2. Males and females may play any defensive position. With the exception of a pitching change or an injury, players may not switch defensive positions until the start of a new inning. Teams may substitute freely on defense.
 - a. Male outfielders positioned on green turf on the left half of the outfield are not permitted to throw out female batters running toward first base.
3. On defense, a team's male-to-female ratio may not be greater than 1 male (i.e. 5 Men, 4 Women). Teams may not have more than five males on defense. Teams must have a minimum of 4 male and 4 female players to be eligible.
4. **WALK RULE.** The USA co-ed walk rule is used in league play. If a male batter is walked, he is automatically awarded second base. If there are two outs, the next batter (a female) has the option to walk or hit.
5. **BATTING.** All male players in the Co-Ed C division must swing a wood bat at all times. Bats will be provided on each field by MPRD. Players may purchase USA Softball approved wooden bats if they choose.