



CITY OF JANESVILLE
Wisconsin's Park Place
RECREATION DIVISION

2026

Adult Softball League Rules & Regulations

City of Janesville Recreation Division
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SECTION I

RULES & REGULATIONS

Current rules established by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) will govern play. The ASA rule book will serve as a basis for final determination of rules and protests which cannot be clearly defined in this manual, including the Travesty of the game rule.

REGISTRATION

- Registration information will be available prior to the organizational meeting until the deadline date.
- To be an officially registered team in a softball league, the following is needed: 1) all player/sponsor fees paid, 2) signed rosters of player participants.
- Previous season's teams will be given priority in league placement. New teams will be scheduled by date of entry.

ELIGIBILITY

- It is the team manager's responsibility to verify the eligibility of the team players. Identification may be required.
- If the opposing team believes an illegal player is being used during a game, they must notify the umpire and/or the supervisor on duty before the end of the game. If the umpire and/or the supervisor is notified after the completion of the game, no action will be taken on the illegal player.
- Teams discovered by umpires, supervisors, or opposing team utilizing any illegal player(s) will FORFEIT, at a minimum, the game at hand and any games played with illegal players on file.
- Players must be 18 years of age or older and not out for a high school WIAA sport to be eligible to participate.

ROSTERS

- Rosters are due upon registration deadline.
- **Rosters must be filled out completely including name, address, and phone number. Each player MUST sign the roster acknowledging the reading and understanding of the Player Code of Conduct. This is the manager's responsibility that rosters are filled out completely.**
- **Managers** are responsible for the eligibility of their players.
- Roster limits are a minimum of 10 and maximum of 20.
- To make an addition to a roster, player information must be submitted at Dawson Fields **prior to the game**. Roster additions can also be emailed to Nicole Yost at yostn@janesvillewi.gov.
- Teams can add players to their roster all season, however, to be eligible to play in playoff games a player must have played at least in 3 games to be eligible for the playoffs.
- Individuals may participate on numerous teams; however, they may only participate on **one team per night**.

FEES

- Fees are approved annually by City Council through the annual budget approval, according to a predetermined fee structure.
- All fees (player & sponsor) are due by the set deadline.
- Only registered teams with complete rosters and fees turned in are scheduled to participate.
- All fees must be paid at the Recreation Division office, except for player additions done at Dawson Field.
- The team manager is responsible for the collection and submission of all fees.
- Failure to submit required fees by the specified deadlines will result in the team being omitted from the schedule.

CONDUCT

- Participation in the softball leagues is a privilege, which may be denied or suspended for any violation of the league Rules & Regulations.
- The supervisory staff has the authority to enforce the rules and regulations of the Recreation Division and to assess any penalties and/or suspension described herein. In addition, the supervisor has the authority to make decisions on situations not specified in the Rules & Regulations.
- All Rules & Regulations governing participant or spectator behavior shall be in effect while the individual is in the playing facility or on the grounds, including the parking lot.
- In accordance with the ordinances of the City of Janesville and the Recreation Division's Rules & Regulations, the following shall be just cause for immediate ejection:
 1. Possession or use of any illegal substance while in the playing facility.
 2. Participating while intoxicated.
 3. Unsportsmanlike or disorderly conduct
- Participants ejected for the above conduct shall be suspended from the next scheduled game and shall receive written notice.
- Any participant found or reported to have engaged in the following shall be suspended for one year from the date the offense occurred:
 1. Physical assault/contact of an official, player, staff, or spectator
 2. Disorderly conduct.
 3. Physical threats of violence to players, family members, and officials.
- A second offense by an individual engaging in any of the above categories can result, as deemed necessary by staff, in up to a five-year suspension from all Recreation Division programs.
- If a physical altercation occurs between two teams both teams and all players will be suspended from the league for the entire season at the umpire's and supervisor's discretion.
- Individuals, players and/or spectators ejected must leave the playing facility/grounds, including parking lot immediately. Failure to do so in a timely manner will result in the forfeiture of the game and possible call to the Police.
- Individuals ejected from two games during the season will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
- Only managers or team captains (designated by the manager) may confer with officials, in an orderly manner, on rule interpretations but not judgment calls.
- **Each player MUST sign the roster acknowledging the reading and understanding of the Player Code of Conduct.**

SCHEDULES & POSTPONEMENTS

- The Recreation Division shall determine all League organization and schedules including time, location, length of game, and length of season.
- **Leagues will be re-evaluated every year in order to make the most fair and fun leagues possible.**
- The Recreation Division has the authority to call the game because of inclement weather or poor playing conditions. After the office is closed, the decision rests with the supervisory staff and/or head official. In the event of lightning or thunder, teams must cease play and seek shelter. Games will be postponed approximately 30 minutes after the sound of the last thunder clap or lightning was seen.
- Postponed games due to weather will be posted on the Team Sideline website after 4:30 pm, or call the cancellation hotline number 608-447-4007 (option #4).
- Postponed or cancelled games due to weather shall be made up at the earliest possible date. Teams shall receive notice of rescheduled games via email and Team Sideline website.

- Should a team drop or be disqualified during the season, the vacancy created shall be filled by the first team on the waiting list. The team shall assume the win-loss record and the balance of the schedule of the original team.
- **The season MUST be completed (including playoffs) by August 21st, to fit weather cancelations in prior to the end date of the season. Make-up games may be scheduled on Tuesday and/or Wednesday nights to help make up for time if deemed necessary.**

FORFEITS

- A ten (10) minute grace period will be allowed from the **scheduled starting time**, not the end of the previous game, before a game is forfeited. This grace period will be a reduction in game time. Game time is 60 minutes from the scheduled start time.
- A forfeit shall be declared if a team fails to field the number of required eligible players ten (10) minutes after the scheduled starting time.
- The required number of eligible players to field a team for softball is eight (8). In Co-Rec the number of women may exceed the number of men; however, the number of men may not exceed the number of women.
- **If your team starts with 9 or 10 and a player is injured, ejected or must leave for any other reason an automatic out will be taken for their spot in the line-up. Unless you have an eligible sub to place in the line-up in the vacant players spot.**
- Unpaid fees will result in loss of returning team status.

PROTESTS

- A protest shall only be accepted on rule interpretation (not judgment calls) and use of an ineligible player.
- **The umpire must be notified of a protest before the NEXT PITCH.**
- A protest must be completed and filed with the protest fee (\$15) within 24 hours of the game to be considered.
- Arbitration of protest shall be conducted with representatives of both teams, umpires, supervisory staff and/or any other individuals deemed necessary by the Recreation Division.

SCOREKEEPING PROCEEDURE

- Softball leagues will not have scorekeepers. The home team is the designated “official scorekeeper”. Both teams are given scoresheets, and both may use, but the home team scoresheet is the official scoresheet that should be signed off by both team managers at the conclusion of the game and the home team manager is responsible for submitting to the site supervisor. Official lineups will still be necessary to ensure all players in the lineups are eligible players. **Players full names MUST be listed on the “official” submitted line up.**

PLAYOFFS TO DETERMINE LEAGUE CHAMPION

- Criteria used to determine league champions is as follows:
 - At the end of the season there will be a one-night playoff to determine the league champion.
There will be no time limit on playoff games.
- For leagues/divisions with 9 teams or less the top 4 teams qualify for a one-day single elimination tournament.
 - Game 1 - #2 seed vs. #3 seed (6:15P)
 - Game 2 - #1 seed vs. #4 seed (7:15P)
 - Game 3 - Winner of game 1 vs. Winner of game 2 (8:15P)

- For leagues with 10 teams, six (6) teams will qualify for a one-day single elimination tournament.
 - Game 1 - #3 seed vs. #6 seed (6:15P)
 - Game 2 - #4 seed vs. #5 seed (6:15P)
 - Game 3 - Winner of game 1 vs. #2 seed (7:15P)
 - Game 4 - Winner of game 2 vs. #1 seed (7:15P)
 - Game 5 - Winner of game 4 vs. Winner of game 3 (8:15P)

- For leagues with 12+ teams, eight (8) teams will qualify for a one-day single elimination tournament.
 - Championship Bracket
 - Game 1 - #2 seed vs. #3 seed (6:15P)
 - Game 2 - #1 seed vs. #4 seed (7:15P)
 - Game 3 - Winner of game 1 vs. Winner of game 2 (8:15P)
 - Consolation Bracket
 - Game 1 - #5 seed vs. #8 seed (6:15P)
 - Game 2 - #6 seed vs. #7 seed (7:15P)
 - Game 3 - Winner of game 1 vs. Winner of game 2 (8:15P)

- Ties for the top 4 teams will be determined by the following tie breakers in order:
 1. Winning Percentage
 2. Head to Head
 3. Head to Head Differential
 4. Common Opponents
 5. Strength of Schedule
 6. Total Runs Differential
 7. Lowest Number of Forfeits
 8. Coin Toss

AWARDS

- Awards to be given per league will be:
 - Choice of 1st place sponsor plaque or player t-shirts which is marked on the registration form at the time of registration.

DUE PROCESS RULE

- If a player has been suspended from a softball league, he/she will receive written notice within 72 hours of the situation as viewed by staff.
- If the suspended participant feels he/she has been treated unfairly, the participant must prepare a written response.
- The written response must be turned in to the Recreation Division office within a week of receiving first written notice.
- There will then be an appropriate review of the situation to include all involved players and any witnesses.
- There will be a fair and impartial decision made and put in writing by the Recreation Division Administration regarding the matter.

STARTING/ENDING A GAME

- Teams must start a game with a minimum of 8 players.
- Teams may use a maximum of 10 players in the field and bat 11. Exception: Co-Rec (See Co-Rec rules)
- Teams which do not meet minimum player requirements to start a game will forfeit the contest.

- Teams starting with 8 players may add players arriving late into the line-up in the last position of the batting order. If the player does not arrive when it is his/her turn to bat, there will be an out recorded.
- **A game is considered complete after 5 full innings.**

GAME BALLS

- All Leagues will use a 12" .52 core ball.
- Each game will start with a new ball and a used ball.

BATS

- All leagues will adhere to the ASA banned bat list. Bats on this list cannot be used in league play.
- Co-Rec Leagues, Men must use a 28", 29", or 30" bat. **Bats cannot be altered in any manner.** Bat weight can only be a maximum of 3 ounces more than the length of the bat. Example: 29" bat=32 ounce max. Bats can be weighed in the press box. Bats must read the length that the bat was manufactured at or it will not be allowed.
- Any player found to be using an illegal bat will be ejected for the remainder of the game.
- A sticker will be placed on all bats and must remain for the entire season.
- **THROWING BATS:**
 - Throwing of bat will result in an automatic out.
 - Intentional Throwing of Bat will be ruled an automatic ejection. *This is a judgment call of the umpire. No Protests will be allowed.*
- If a bat is in question the umpire and supervisor will determine if it is legal or not. If it is deemed illegal then that bat will be taken out of play immediately and the team caught using the illegal bat will forfeit the game. In addition, both player and manager will be suspended from the next scheduled game.

BALLS & STRIKES

- Three (3) balls and two (2) strikes count limit will be utilized.
- The batter is out if he/she has:
 - Two swinging strikes
 - Two called strikes
 - Two foul balls, one if the first foul is caught
 - Any combination of the above that equals two
- Three balls constitute a walk.
- A rubber mat (strike mat) will be placed behind the plate and will be utilized to designate strikes.
- A legal pitched ball, which hits any part of the Plate and/or Mat, will be called a strike.

HOMERUNS

- There is a three (3) homerun maximum for each team during each game. Homeruns after the three (3) will be called an out.
- There will not be a need to run all bases on a homerun. The player who hits the homerun must touch first base and all other runners who are on base may leave the base path once the homerun has been signaled.

ILLEGAL PITCHES

- All City Leagues will adhere to the ASA rule concerning Minimum and Maximum arc requirements on pitched balls. The ASA rule reads: "The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc, and reach a height of at least 6' from the ground while not exceeding a maximum height of 10' from the ground."
- Pitched balls judged not to meet the minimum or exceeding the maximum arc limit will immediately be declared an illegal pitch by the umpire.

- An illegal pitch call **only** protects the batter from a called strike. An illegal pitch will be called a ball **unless** the batter attempts (legally swings) to hit the **called illegal pitch**.
- Most common illegal pitch judgments:
 - Pitched ball does not meet legal arc requirements.
 - Pitched ball is not delivered in an underhand motion.
 - Pitch delivered with excessive speed.
- *An illegal pitch call, is a judgment decision of the umpire. No Protests will be allowed.*

OBSTRUCTION

- ASA definition: A fielder who is not: (1) in possession of the ball, (2) in the act of fielding a batted ball, or (3) about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases.
- When obstruction occurs (*in the judgment of the umpire*), the umpire will signal **delayed dead ball** and let play come to a “live” natural conclusion. At the conclusion of play, the umpire will assess the play and judge if the base runner or runners have safely reached the bases **they normally should have reached**. If the umpire feels they have, the obstruction **will be waived**. If not, the umpire will signal dead ball, and award the appropriate base advancements.
- In cases of obstruction, the base runner or runners are not entitled to deliberately run into the fielder. In such cases, the guilty base runner would be subject to a game ejection.
- When there is a play at home plate, the catcher must have the ball to block the plate.
 - Baserunners must either slide or avoid contact with the catcher or fielder, charging or intentionally running into the catcher or fielder will be ejected from the game. *This is a judgment call of the umpire. No Protests will be allowed.*

INTERFERENCE

- ASA definition: The act of an **offensive** player or **team member** which impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball **anywhere** on the playing field.
- Most common types of interference:
 - Base running
 - Batter
 - On deck batters
 - Coaches
- When interference occurs, the ball is dead, **someone must be called out** and all baserunners return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
- Interference calls are the judgment of the umpire, *no protests will be allowed*.
- The coaches, batter’s and on-deck batter’s box areas (even if not marked) are not “sanctuary” areas. Players/coaches must make room for plays to be made.

APPEAL PLAY

- ASA definition: An appeal play is a play on which an umpire may not make a decision until requested by a manager, coach, or player. The appeal may not be made after any one of the following has occurred: (1) a legal or illegal pitch, (2) the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory, (3) the umpires have left the field of play.
- Most common types of appeals:
 - Missing a base
 - Leaving a base on a caught fly ball before the ball is touched
 - Batting out of order

- An appeal can be made **during a “live” ball** by touching the base missed or left too soon on a fly ball, or by tagging the runner committing the violation (if he/she is still on the playing field). The umpire should then make a decision on the play (out or safe). Runners **may** advance during a “live” ball appeal.
- A **“dead ball” appeal** can be made once a time-out has been granted. Any infielder, with or without the ball, can make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a fly ball. The umpire should then make a decision on the play (out or safe). Runners **may not** advance during a “dead ball” appeal.
- Batting out of order:
 - May be appealed by the defensive team while the batter is at the plate.
 - The offensive team may correct a wrong batter at the plate with no penalty.
 - Once a batter has completed his/her turn at bat and before the next pitch, an appeal may be made by the defensive team only. The proper batter will be declared out.

INFIELD FLY

- ASA definition: A fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with **ordinary effort** when first and second or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out. Any outfielder who positions him/herself in the infield on the play shall be considered an infielder.
- When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare **“infield fly-the batter is out”** (if near the foul lines...the batter is out if fair).
- The ball is “live” and runners may advance at their own risk.

SUBSTITUTION

- Any player, may be substituted or replaced and re-entered once, providing players occupy the same batting positions whenever in the lineup.
- Players may not re-enter a second time. The starting player and their substitute may not be in the lineup at the same time.
- Only a starting player may re-enter once per game. Players entering in any inning after the 1st cannot re-enter the game if taken out.

EXTRA PLAYER

- An extra player (EP) is optional, but if one is used, it must be made known prior to the start of the game and be listed on the scoring sheet in the regular batting order. If the EP is used, the EP must be used the entire game.
- The EP must remain in the same position in the batting order for the entire game.
- If an EP is used, all 11 on the starting lineup must bat and any 10 of those 11 may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed, but the batting order must remain the same.
- The EP may be substituted for at any time. The substitute must be a player who has not yet been in the game. The starting EP may re-enter.
- If the EP is used in co-rec, all 12 must bat and any 10, (five male and five female), may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed as long as the co-rec positioning is followed. The batting order must remain the same throughout the game.

RUN LIMIT

A game will be called when there is a fifteen (15) run difference at the end of four (4) innings or any full inning thereafter, or a twelve (12) run difference after five (5) innings. Four (4) full innings **MUST** be played regardless of the score.

SECTION II

City of Janesville Softball League Modifications

The following modifications apply to all City of Janesville Adult Softball Leagues:

- Starting times are scheduled every sixty (60) minutes for all leagues
- Only one bat person per bench.
- A team using a player who is determined to be ineligible will forfeit that game and any preceding game(s) in which that person played. In addition, both player and manager will be suspended from the next scheduled game.
- **Courtesy step is not allowed.**
- **Profanity is not allowed.** Abusive language will lead to ejection from the game.
- No smoking allowed on the bench or in the field.
- Warm-up practice is restricted to the corridors. **The main entrance may not be used for warm-up practice.** The field (across the street) is available for warm-up.
- **No metal cleats or metal tipped cleats** are to be worn at Dawson Fields.
- Courtesy runner may be used in all leagues. Each team may use any pinch runner once per inning or as outlined. If the pinch runner is on base and their turn comes up to bat, they will be called out. The person selected to pinch run does not have to be the same person each time. See Co-Rec variation.
- Extra-inning games will be two balls and one strike count with a runner starting at 2nd base. That runner will be the last person in the batting order to make an out. A Courtesy runner will be allowed after there is 1 out in said inning. Foul ball rules remain the same. Games will not end in a tie.
- Music played by teams may not include any profanity, inappropriate language or be loud. If issues, teams will be told to turn off music.
- Warm up time prior to game play is to be done in between fields. All fields that remain vacant for the evening will remain locked.
- If by chance an umpire does not show up to the game both teams may agree to have another spectator, player, someone in attendance, etc. officiate the game. **BOTH TEAMS MUST AGREE TO THIS.** If they do not the game will be re-scheduled.
- Orange Safety Base:
 - Home Plate:
 - Runners should use the alternate orange base when running home as opposed to home plate or the black mat. If a player runs to home plate or black mat it is an out. This is used to avoid potential contact at home plate.
 - First Base:
 - The orange safety base is an extension of first base and should be use to avoid contact between the runner and fielder.

SECTION III

Individual League Modifications

CO-REC & MEN'S LEAGUES

- Starting times are scheduled every sixty (60) minutes. There is a **one (1) hour time limit.**
- The mat and plate will be a strike.
- The number of rostered players needed to start a game is Eight (8), the number of women may exceed the number of men, however, the number of men may not exceed the number of women on the field.
- Teams may have a maximum of ten (10) players in the field you may align you defense any way you like, but there has to be two males and two females in the infield and outfield. The pitcher and catcher must be one male and one female.

- The batting order must alternate sexes; teams can never have two men bat in consecutive order in the line-up.
- Men must use a 28", 29", or 30" bat.
- Batting Order options:
 - Standard ten (10) person order
 - Eleven (11) person order (Extra Player/EP), this batter must be a woman
 - Twelve (12) person order. Any ten (10) players play the field, but twelve (12) can bat.
 - The option chosen must be utilized throughout the entire game.
 - If a male batter is walked he will be awarded 2nd base. If there are 2 outs, the following female batter has the option of a walk. Base runners advance only one (1) base.
- One courtesy runner is allowed per inning per gender. The courtesy runners may be any player of the batting team's choice. If the pinch runner is on base and their turn at bat comes up they will be called out.
- A perpendicular line is placed 22' from third base toward home plate. Once a runner crosses this line he/she must continue home. Returning to third base will result in an automatic out. Plays at home plate are force-outs. No sliding allowed.

CHURCH LEAGUE

- Starting times are scheduled every sixty (60) minutes. There is a **one (1) hour time limit**.
- The mat and plate will be a strike.
- Up to six (6) church member players may play in the Church Leagues, as well as the open city men's leagues.
- Four (4) non-participating church members may play for a team.
- One courtesy runner is allowed per inning. The courtesy runner may be any player of the batting team's choice. If the pinch runner is on base and their turn at bat comes up they will be called out.
- A perpendicular line is placed 22' from third base toward home plate. Once a runner crosses this line they must continue home. Returning to third base will result in an automatic out. Plays at home plate are force-outs. No sliding allowed.
- Profanity is not allowed. Abusive language will lead to ejection from the game.
- Church league may bat 12 or more batters.
- Church league rosters are open to players of any gender and can be filled by manager as desired. Co-ed rules do not apply.

CITY ORDINANCE ON SMOKING

- The City of Janesville ordinance doesn't allow smoking in any city parks, this does include Dawson Field.