

(Updated 11/2024)

For all league schedules, standings and registration info visit: www.teamsideline.com/denton

1. **THIS LEAGUE IS DESIGNED FOR THE PLAYERS TO HAVE FUN but rules are needed!!**

2. **Age requirement:** All players must be at least 16 years of age at the time they participate.

3. **Denton “250” Adult Softball League Rules Only! All regular City of Denton rules apply with the following exceptions or points of emphasis.**

- Each team must provide your own game balls. **Each team must also provide a “ball-shagger/person” during each at bat.**
- **Any player that runs into or through the temporary fence when there is no possibility of making a play on a ball (UMPIRES DISCRETION) will be removed from the game for the remainder of the defensive inning in which the violation occurred.** NO SUBSTITUTION WILL BE ALLOWED) If the same player commits the same infraction a second time during the same game, he will be ejected from the remainder of the game and NO SUBSTITUTION WILL BE ALLOWED AND AN OUT WILL BE RECORDED WHEN THAT PLAYER WAS SCHEDULED TO BAT!) !
- HOME RUN RULE: Unlimited home runs over the 250’ fence. Two (2) homeruns will be allowed over the 300’ fence; anything else over the 300’ fence after the two (2) homerun limit will be an “out”. Any ball hit in the air over the 250’ fence, including if off a glove, is considered a home run. If a defensive player dives and catches a fly ball, with clear possession (**UMPIRES DISCRETION**), before landing on the other side of the fence; is considered an OUT! All home runs and four base awards are “hit and sit”.
- Any ball that goes under, through or bounces over the 250’ fence is a ground rule double. Any fair ball that rolls past the end of the fence in left-field or right-field is also a ground rule double.
- If a ball is hit FAIR over the 250’ fence then goes over the 300’ fence still in FAIR territory after the two (2) homerun limit, it is considered an OUT! If ball travels over both fences in fair territory before limit is reached, it’s a homerun. A ball that is FAIR at 250’ and goes over the 300’ fence in FOUL territory is a FOUL ball.
- Outfields may reach over, step on or lean on the short fence and make a legal catch. They also may catch the ball, then run/jump over or through the fence for a legal catch. When jumping the fence, if the outfielder makes contact with the ground **before** the catch, it is not an out. When jumping the fence, if the outfielder make contact with the ground **after** the catch, it is an out, a dead ball, and all runners advance one base.

• **Run Rules: 20 after 3, 15 after 4, and 10 after 5 innings.**

- **Uniforms:** Due to the cold weather conditions, we will not enforce the whole team being in the same jerseys/hoodies. Lineup cards are still required to be given to the scorekeepers, please put a way for the scorekeeper to recognize each player by their name (i.e. green hoodie, red hat, etc) as well as clarify their name when approaching batters box!

4. **Winning a division:** Once a team wins a division on a particular night, that team must move up to the next highest division offered the same night or another night. If there is not another division higher the night you play, you may stay in the same division the next season. After winning a division a team must move up for at least the following season. Any team that moves up by winning a division and is found to be playing in a lower division with more than (5) players who are the same, after moving up, will be disqualified from that game and forfeit ALL previous games played with the illegal roster. The offending team may not play again until the roster is made legal. A team that voluntarily moves up can move back down to the next lowest division offered.

Teams that blatantly try to lose a game during playoffs to avoid moving up will automatically be moved up the following season. If both teams in a game try to lose, then both teams will move up. "Blatantly trying to lose a game" will be up to the umpires' discretion and is not eligible for protest or appeal. The call made at the fields will stand.

5. **Free agents:** Team coordinators are encouraged to acquire new players from the free agent list, which can be found at www.teamsideline.com/denton
6. **Player eligibility.** Players may only play on one team per night. Exception: A player may play on a co-ed and a men's team, or a co-ed and a women's on the same night. Players must be on all rosters of all teams that they are playing on (see #6). If a player is caught playing on two teams on the same night it will result in a forfeit for both teams he/she is playing on and the protested player caught playing illegally will be suspended from ALL games in ALL leagues for the remainder of that season. The opposing team may protest eligibility (see #12). Also, Umpires, scorekeepers and Parks and Recreation staff have the authority to verify eligibility. Players must be at least age 16 and have completed a child waiver prior to playing in their first game. All players are responsible for bringing their DL in case of a roster protest. If they do not have their DL and there is a protest, they will be disqualified from that game.
7. **Rosters:** Rosters will be limited to 20 players. **All rosters will be frozen after the last league game.** Line-ups are due to the scorekeeper prior to the start of your game. **All players written on your lineup card, including substitutes, should be on your roster by the start of the game. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure added players accept the roster invite.** No additions will be allowed in the playoffs. Male team rosters shall include only male players and female rosters shall include only female players. Players may not change from one roster to another within the same division on the same night during the season.
8. **Uniforms:** Starting with the first game, all players must have a legal number on the back of their jersey. A "legal" number is a permanent Arabic whole number (0-99) of contrasting color or outlined in contrasting color, at least 6 inches high and must be worn on the back of all uniforms. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers. All players must have jerseys that have legal numbers and jerseys that are of alike or similar/dominant color. **Any discrepancies regarding uniforms need to be addressed with the umpires at the pregame plate meeting. The umpires will then decide if a jersey is legal or not. If a player is deemed to have a jersey without legal numbers or alike or similar/dominant color as their team, that player will not be permitted to play.** Due to player's safety, no jewelry of any kind is allowed to be worn during play
9. **Field Rentals*:** Practice fields can be reserved online. Please visit www.dentonparks.com for more information.
 - a. ***Per city ordinance #2003-070 you are subject to a fine by the Denton Police Department up to \$500 if you occupy a field marked "Field Use By Reservation Only" without making a reservation!***
10. **Rainouts:** The field condition line is (940) 349-8276, and will be updated by 4pm during the week and 9am on weekends if field conditions are questionable. If games are called due to weather, no one is allowed on the fields for practice or scrimmage. League discretion means that at 4pm the fields are playable, and if games were to be canceled it would not be until the umpires make the call at the fields. Please do not call the Athletics' Office to find out game status. If games are called at the fields, then everyone is to exit the complex immediately. One week of rainouts will be rescheduled and played at the end of the regular season schedule and before the playoffs are set to begin in your division. **Excessive rainouts: if more than one week is rained out, games will be made up on a Tuesday or Friday during the season before playoffs. Partial credits or refunds will not be given if your team is unable to attend the makeup games. The Athletics Office reserves the right to schedule 30-minute "speed" games if the makeup games that have already been scheduled are again rained out. Speed games will allow two (2) weeks to be played in one. Speed games will have a 30-minute time limit and each batter will start with a 2 – 2 count. Partial credits or refunds will not be given for the scheduling of speed games.** It is your responsibility to contact the Athletics' Office or check the league website to find out the playoff seeds or rainout rescheduled dates, time and field.
- 11.
12. **Equipment:**
 - Softballs - All teams will furnish their own USA SOFTBALL approved yellow ball with red stitch

- Male Ball: 12” ball with a 52 COR and 300 compression
- Female Ball: 11” ball with a 52 COR and 300 compression
 - a. Balls do not have to be new but must be in good condition. The USA SOFTBALL seal must be legible and able to be viewed by the umpire. Softballs will be sold at the North Lakes concession stand for \$5 while supplies last. If the ball has begun to fade, it may be declared unusable at umpire discretion.
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- Bats - **All Bats including 2013 and newer are legal, plus any gender is allowed to use them rather they are USSSA, ASA or NSA.** All bats that are on the banned bat list from ASA, USSSA, or NSA will be illegal for league play. The bats on the illegal list must have the exact name and any numbers on the bats to be illegal. All approved bats must not be on any banned bat list.
 - Any player who enters the box with unapproved, illegal, or altered bat is out and ejected. Please check the following links for questions regarding the status of a specific bat(s).
 - USA - <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-usa-softball/certified-usa-softball-equipment>
 - USSSA – <http://ussa.com/slowpitch/slowpitch-withdrawn-andor-non-compliant-softball-bat-models>
 - NSA - <https://www.playnsa.com/uploads/NSA-Non-Approved-Bats-Updated-3-16-2018.pdf>
- Warm up bats and devices - **Players may use 2 approved regular bats to warm up, or they may use an official 'warm-up" bat which will be marked WB. For participant safety, no other warm up devices may be swung on the field, in the dugout, or behind the dugout. The only legal bat attachments for warm up are the Swing Sock and the PowR Wrap.**
- Players may not use “senior” bats to adhere to safety rules that a ball should not come off the bat more than 98mph.

11. **Forfeiture Policy**

1. As a courtesy to the team you are playing, please call 940-349-PARK by noon on your game day to let us know if you are forfeiting. This will give us enough time to contact the team you’re playing and make umpire’s and score keepers aware of the forfeit.
2. If both teams do not have enough players at their scheduled game time, that game will be declared a double forfeit. Each team will receive a loss in the standings.
3. Teams receiving wins by forfeits, will not be given credit of any kind to their account for games not played. However, teams may use the field for practice if there is a forfeit up until 10 minutes before the next scheduled game. If there is a forfeit of the last game on a field, teams may only practice until the last scheduled game is complete (on all other fields). Example: if there is a forfeit of the only 10:00 p.m. game scheduled, then lights will be turned off at the time of forfeit.

12. **Protests:** - All protests must be in accordance with USA SOFTBALL procedures, **unless otherwise noted here:**

Player Eligibility Protests - Player eligibility must be protested by the offended team manager by the end of the 3rd inning or by the end of an inning in which the ineligible player participates. (Player eligibility protests will not be accepted once the game ends.) You must alert the home plate umpire you would like to verify eligibility of a particular player. At that time, the scorekeeper will verify the roster to determine eligibility of the player in question. If the player in question is not on the official team roster, the game will be declared a forfeit at that time, and a win will be awarded to the protesting team. Players must present identification to verify eligibility if asked. If a player does not have identification with them, then they are unable to prove their eligibility and will be declared ineligible. Any protested player caught playing illegally will be suspended from ALL games in ALL leagues for the remainder of that season. If both teams protest eligibility, and both are upheld, the game will be declared a double forfeit, and both teams will receive a loss.

For all other protests - You must alert the umpire that you wish to play under protest and the scorekeeper will record it in the book. The protesting coach must submit a written protest along with a \$50.00 protest fee to the Civic Center within 24 hours of the game. Protests will not be reviewed until the fee is paid. Both team managers will be contacted after the protest review. The decision of the Athletics staff is final. Fee will be refunded if ruled in favor of protesting team.

Protests will not be accepted on judgment calls, ejections or suspensions. Ejections are the decision of the umpires on the field at the time of the ejection. Ejections will not be overturned, nor are they subject to protest. Suspensions imposed from ejections are the final decision of the Athletics Office and are non-negotiable.

13. **Refund Policy:** Once registration ends, refunds will not be given for any reason unless we are unable to make a division.
14. **Alcoholic Beverages: NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ALLOWED IN THE PARK, DUGOUTS OR PARKING LOTS ACCORDING TO CITY ORDINANCE.**
 - any team found to have alcohol in the dugout before, during, or after a game will have that game declared a forfeit
 - Police may be called if alcohol is being consumed the North Lakes parking lots or within the park.
15. **Trash pick up:** Teams will be responsible for picking up their own trash in and around the dugouts after each game.
16. **Animals:** Animals are allowed at the park only if they are on a leash. It is against City Ordinance to leave an animal tied up.

PLAYING RULES

17. The 2023 USA Softball Rulebook shall govern all playing rules not specifically covered in the City Rules.
 18. Time limit is 55 minutes. Players enter the batter's box with a one and one count. No courtesy foul is given. Any game tied after time limit will be played to completion. However, all batters will come to the plate with a 3-ball/2-strike count in any inning beginning after time has expired. No extra foul.
 19. Line-up cards are due to the scorekeeper at least five minutes prior to the scheduled game time. It is the responsibility of the team manager (not the scorekeeper) to have blank lineup cards prior to each game.
 20. Any team that is not ready at game time (but has a minimum of 8 players ready) automatically loses their first at-bat. If the clock reaches 49 minutes after that and the team still does not have enough players then the game will be declared a forfeit. Players must be in the dugout or on the field when the 49 minute mark is reached. Each team needs ten players. However, teams may start with 9 players. In Co-ed play, a team may have 5 males/4 females or 4 males/5 females to start. The tenth lineup spot will be an automatic out until a player arrives. If a team drops below 9 players (when starting with 10), below 10 players (when starting with 11) or below 11 players (when starting with 12) the game will be declared a forfeit.
 21. Co-ed only: Batting order must alternate gender. Defense must have equal number of each gender at pitcher/catcher, infield and outfield.
 22. Run Rule is as follows:
 - 15 runs after 2 ½ or 3 innings
 - 12 runs after 3 ½ or 4 innings
 - 10 runs after 4 ½ or 5 innings
 23. All players must wear athletic type shoes. **No sandals, metal spikes, boots, open toe shoes.**
 24. ALL exposed jewelry (including leather jewelry) will be deemed dangerous and must be removed or the player will not be allowed to play until it is removed. Smooth wedding bands and medical alert tags are acceptable.
 25. Home Run Rule limits are as follows:

Men's Competitive - 8	Men's C-5	Men's D - 2	Men's Church - 0
Coed Competitive - 3	Coed Rec - 2	Coed For Fun - 0	Women's - 2
- In leagues with a home run limit greater than zero (0): For any in excess, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and no runners can advance. In leagues with a home run limit of zero (0): Any home run will result in the batter being called out and no runners can advance. If two leagues are combined, then the home run limit of the lower league will be used.
26. Stealing will be allowed in Men's and Women's divisions only. This may only occur once the ball has reached the plate. Stealing will not be allowed in any of the Coed divisions.
 27. Any team discovered using the batter's box prior to 7pm will be assessed a one out penalty at the start of their game.
 28. Home team will be the team listed as "home" on the schedule. During playoffs the higher seed is home team. There will be no coin flip.

29. "Halo Rule"

- a. The halo zone is an imaginary box measuring **three feet on each side** of the pitching plate and from the ground to **three feet above** the pitcher's head. Fly balls AND **one-hopper** ground balls are both violations.
- b. For the first violation, the ball is live. **If the ball is caught**, the batter is out and runners may advance at their own risk. When all apparent play has ceased, the umpire will then call "time" and issue a warning to the offending team.
- c. For the first violation, the ball is live. **If the ball is not caught**, play continues. When all apparent play has ceased, the umpire will then call "time" and issue a warning to the offending team.
- d. For any subsequent violation, the umpire will immediately call "Dead Ball." The ball is dead, the batter is out and no runners may advance.
- e. **If the ball hits the ground one time before entering the halo zone, it is still a violation.**
- f. The halo zone never moves, even if the pitcher moves to one side or the other.
 - NOTE 1: The width of the zone is 8 feet. The height of the zone is approximately 9 feet, depending on how tall the pitcher is. If the pitcher can reach up and make contact with the ball, it is a violation of the zone.
 - NOTE 2 **The batted ball must ENTER the zone. If the pitcher chooses to move in front of the pitcher's plate after the pitch and gets hit, it is not a violation. If the ball misses him and enters the zone, then it IS a violation. The zone begins at the pitcher's plate and extends back from there. Not forward.**
 - NOTE 3: WHERE the pitcher is standing is not relevant. Only thing relevant: was the ball batted into the zone, line drive or one-hopper?
 - NOTE 4: It does not matter if the pitcher is HIT or NOT.
 - NOTE 5: Umpire mechanic on the first violation is: wait until all apparent play has ceased, then call "time." Point to the offending team's dugout and say "Halo Warning. First base dugout."
 - NOTE 6: Umpire mechanic on the second and subsequent violations is: Immediately call "Dead Ball. Halo rule. Batter is out." If there were any runners on base, they return to their base.

RULES OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION

30. **Responsibility for a team's conduct lies with the team manager.** Unsportsmanlike conduct, such as profanity, fighting, language of a sexual or racial nature, or otherwise abusive or dangerous behavior will **NOT BE TOLERATED**. Any person who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior will be ejected from the game. There will be no warnings given.
31. When a person is ejected, that person must **IMMEDIATELY** (within 1 minute) leave North Lakes Park and not return anytime on that date. Failure to leave immediately and/or returning to the park will result in a forfeit of any game(s) his/her team is playing, has played, or will play that night. North Lakes Park includes the area from Hinkle to Bonnie Brae and Windsor to the soccer fields. Depending upon the circumstances, the ejected player may also be referred to the USA SOFTBALL District Commissioner for further disciplinary action.
32. Once ejected, the umpire will notify the team manager. If the ejected person is the manager, the umpire will notify any one player on the team. The Athletics Office will follow up with the manager before the team's next week of games. **IT IS THE TEAM MANAGER OR PERSON WHO DOES THE PLATE MEETING TO BE AWARE IF A PLAYER HAS BEEN EJECTED AND NOTIFY THE EJECTED PLAYER NOT TO RETURN.** Ejected persons will be suspended from all City of Denton sponsored softball for one-week worth of games (7 days). (For example, if ejected on Monday, the player may not return until the following Wednesday.) However, in the event of rain the Monday following the ejection, the player will then be required to sit out the team's next game that is actually played (non-rain out) for the Monday league. Upon the second ejection for any one person in a season will result in suspension from all games in all leagues (sports) for the remainder of the season. Upon the third ejection for any one person in a season will result in a suspension from all games in all leagues (sports) for the remainder of that season and for the next season.

33. Suspended persons are not allowed at North Lakes Park during the suspension period. Failure to comply with this policy results in a forfeit of any game(s) scheduled that night for the team(s) they are playing with at that time, AND the person shall be suspended from all city-sponsored softball for the remainder of that season.
34. Any player, coach, manager or fan, threatening or handling an umpire, scorekeeper or other city officials, will be liable to criminal charges and expulsion from all future city and state athletics for an indefinite period of time. Status will be reviewed after one year.
35. Harassment, physical or verbal abuse, or threatening of umpires, scorekeepers, or league officials will NOT BE TOLERATED at any time including before, during, or after a game, on or off the field, or during the season or the off-season. Any coach, manager, player, or fan that does so may be disqualified from City-sponsored softball. A review of any such incident(s) will be conducted by the Athletics Manager, whom will have the final say in these matters.
36. If a player(s) is ejected from the game for any reason, the ejected player(s) team must have a substitute available to replace the ejected player(s) or that team will forfeit the game if they fall below the required number of players.
37. Ejections are the decision of the umpires on the field at the time of the ejection. Ejections will not be overturned, nor are they subject to protest. Suspensions imposed from ejections are the final decision of the Athletics Office and are non-negotiable.
38. If a player is suspended at the end of one season, that suspension will carry over into the following season.

PLAYER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

All Participants are required to abide by the Player's Code of Conduct; this is located on the reverse of the roster form. By signing the team roster, each player is acknowledging that he/she has read the Player's Code of Conduct and that he/she will abide by these rules. **It is the manager's responsibility to ensure all players have signed the roster or the team is subject to dismissal from the league.**

1. **No Player May:** Refuse to abide by an official's decision, threaten an official, or at any time lay a hand upon, push, shove, or strike an official. (The following applies to all sections): "Player" means any participant, i.e., player, team member, coach, manager, scorekeeper, or fan. "Official" means any umpire/scorekeeper or Denton Parks and Rec. staff.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Sec. 3 for full definition). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

2. **No Player May:** Demonstrate objection to an official's decision by throwing any object, and no object shall be thrown in any manner, for any reason, that an official judges to be dangerous.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

3. **No Player May:** Be guilty of using unnecessarily rough tactics in the play of the game against the body and person of any opposing player.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

4. **No Player May:** Be guilty of an abusive verbal attack upon any player, official, or spectator. Any use of profanity, obscene or vulgar language in any manner, at any time, will not be tolerated.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

5. **No Player May:** Be responsible for the presence of intoxicating substances in the team area, or use any intoxicating substances within North Lakes Park, or appear to be in an intoxicated condition. When non-participants are known to have intoxicating substances, players shall remain on the field or in their team area.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

6. **No Player May:** Smoke on the field of play or in the dugout. Smoking is only allowed in the marked designated areas, which are 200 feet from the field of play.

Penalty: Officials are required to warn players guilty of infractions of this rule, and failure of such players to comply will result in their immediate ejection from the game.

7. **No Player May:** Permit anyone to remain in the team area during the game that is not a roster member of the team. Managers, scorekeepers, batboys and batgirls are allowed in the area.

Penalty: Officials will notify a team's manager if this rule is not complied with. Thereafter, failure to cooperate with officials in enforcing this rule shall result in forfeiture of the game. The Athletics Office has the power and full discretion of imposing penalties on all violations of Player's Code of Conduct. For any violation not explicitly stated in the code, the penalty will be at the discretion of the Athletics Office.

Game Officials (Umpires/Scorekeepers) have general authority to handle unsportsmanlike conduct in accordance with USA SOFTBALL Rule 10.

The Game Official in Charge may either suspend or declare forfeit any game where in his or her judgment there has been a violation of the code, making it unsafe to continue the contest.

By signing the team roster, each player is acknowledging that he/she has read the Player's Code of Conduct and that he/she will abide by these rules.

Concussion Policy

PURPOSE

The following policy and procedures are being implemented by the Denton Parks and Recreation Department, with the intent to reduce the potentially serious health risks associated with sports related concussions and head injuries.

POLICY

It is policy of the Denton Parks and Recreation Department to educate coaches, referees, staff, parents, and participants of the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with sports induced concussions. Participants suspected of a concussion or head injury, are required to be removed from the activity, must seek medical attention, and then follow the proper procedure for return to play. "When in doubt, sit them out!"

DEFINITION

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that is caused by a blow to the head or body that jars or shakes the brain inside the skull. It is important to note that an athlete does not have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion. Symptoms include but are not limited to the following below.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment
- Forgets an instruction
- Persistent vomiting
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Increasing sleepiness
- Shows mood, behavior, personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or is "feeling down"

ROLE OF COACHES AND STAFF

Coaches and staff will NOT be expected, nor will they be trained to "diagnose" a concussion. Diagnosis is the job of a qualified health care provider. Coaches and staff are being asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions. If coaches or staff observes questionable signs, symptoms, or behavior, he/she must remove the player from the sporting event for further evaluation and notify the player's parent/guardian and fill out the appropriate accident form. Coaches and staff are not permitted to allow a player to resume activity until the Denton Parks and Recreation receives a written statement from a qualified health care provider indicating that the player is cleared to resume participation in the sporting event.

ROLE OF OFFICIALS

Officials will NOT be expected to "diagnose" a concussion. Officials are being asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions. Officials will not be asked to give what could be perceived as a medical opinion. If an official observes questionable, signs, symptoms, or behavior, the official should notify the appropriate staff and the player should be removed from the sporting event. Officials are not responsible for the sideline evaluation or management of the player after he/she is removed from play.

ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Like coaches, staff and officials, parents/guardians will NOT be expected to “diagnose” a concussion. However, parents/guardians are being asked to become familiar with the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions. Parents/guardians will be expected to comply with this Policy and support the determination made by staff to remove a player from a sporting event.

It is the parent/guardian’s obligation to have the player evaluated by a qualified health care provider and to obtain from that provider a written statement that clears the player to resume participation in the sporting event.

MANDATED COURSE OF ACTION

1. Remove player from the sporting event.
2. Notify parent/guardian.
3. Any player suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by a qualified health care provider as soon as practicable.
4. Before a player will be allowed to resume participation in a sporting event, the parent/guardian of the player must obtain a written statement from a qualified health provider and return to the Denton Parks and Recreation Department indicating that the player is cleared to resume participation in the sporting event.

The signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with a concussion are not always apparent immediately after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body and may develop over a few hours or longer. An athlete should be closely watched following a suspected concussion and should never be left alone.

Athletes should never try to “tough out” a concussion. Teammates, parents/guardians and coaches should never encourage an athlete to “play through” the symptoms of a concussion. In addition, there should never be an attribution of bravery or courage to athletes who play despite having concussion signs and/or symptoms. The risks of such behavior must be emphasized to all members of the team, as well as coaches and parents.

If an athlete returns to activity before being fully healed from an initial concussion, the athlete is at greater risk for a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has a chance to recover from the first can slow recovery or increase the chance for long-term problems. In rare cases, a repeat concussion can result in severe swelling and bleeding in the brain that can be fatal.

Return to Play

After suffering a concussion, no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day. An athlete should never be allowed to resume play following a concussion until symptom free and given the approval to resume physical activity by an appropriate health-care professional. Documentation must be provided to the Denton Parks and Recreation athletic supervisor.

Once an athlete no longer has signs or symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to activity by an appropriate health-care professional, he/she should proceed in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exercise. In most cases, the athlete should progress no more than one step each day, and at times each step may take more than one day.

If symptoms of a concussion recur, or if concussion signs and/or behaviors are observed at any time during the return-to-activity program, the athlete must discontinue all activity immediately. Depending on previous instructions, the athlete may need to be re-evaluated by the health-care provider.