



Revised 3-30-2020



SOUTH METRO RECREATION LEAGUES **YOUTH BASEBALL/SOFTBALL RULES**

Rules and Guidelines (Revised March 30, 2020)

All Rules Changes will be Highlighted in Yellow

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The following rules will govern the play in all South Metro Recreation League Games.

All rules and game situations not covered in this set of rules will defer to the official USSSA Baseball and Fast-Pitch Softball rules. USSSA rules can be found at www.ussa.com.

LEAGUE CONTACT INFORMATION:

CITY	CONTACT	E-MAIL	Rainout	League Websites
Belton	Kevin Goodman	Keving@beltonparks.org	(816) 892-0458	www.teamsideline.com/belton
Grandview	Morgan Tangen	mtangen@grandview.org	(816) 316-4990	www.teamsideline.com/grandview
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Peculiar	Grant Purkey	gpurkey@cityofpeculiar.com	(816) 779-2299	www.teamsideline.com/peculiar
Pleasant Hill	Justin Crutchfield	justinc@pleasanthill.com	(913) 791-2600	www.teamsideline.com/pleasanthill
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Section I:

General Rules

- Rain-out lines are posted on the first page of these rules. It is the responsibility of the coaches and parents to contact the rain-out line for the community where the game is being played. Rain-out lines are typically updated at 4:00pm each day.
- Delays due to lighting, rain, or inclement weather will be called by the umpire and league officials.
- Incomplete games called due to inclement weather, field conditions, time limits or park curfew by a league official or representative shall be rescheduled at the discretion of the league officials.
- No game will start 15 minutes after scheduled time unless the delay is caused by an umpire, field conflict or weather conditions. Any team not ready to start 15 minutes after scheduled time will forfeit the game.
- Official game time will start at the first warm-up pitch or when the umpire announces the game time. Games that finish due to time, rather than completed innings will still be considered a full and complete game.
- Only managers, coaches, and team members can request timeout.
- Both teams involved in the game will clean out their receptive dugout and place all trash in provided trash receptacles at the conclusion of their scheduled game.
- One out constitutes 1/3 of an inning.
- All bats should have a USSSA stamp. Umpires and league officials will determine if a bat is not legal. If an illegal bat is found in use, the bat will be removed from play and the game will continue.
- Any ball hit bouncing over, going through, around or going under the fence in fair territory is a ground rule double.
- Whenever a tag play is evident, runners must slide OR seek to avoid contact with the fielder. Malicious contact shall suspend all obstruction penalties. Malicious contact by the runner and obstruction by a fielder are both judgment calls to be made by the umpires.
- No player can be added to a team roster by a coach after teams are set. League officials must authorize the addition of any player to a team and they will notify all communities involved in share-play games.
- In all divisions, the batting order will consist of all players eligible for game play at the start of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the end of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the order.
- Any player not filling their spot in the batting order will constitute an out, unless the player has been permanently removed from the game due to injury.
- Pitchers will receive no less than 3 warm up pitches between innings for returning pitchers and 5 warm up pitches for new pitchers. More warm up pitches may be allowed at the umpire's discretion.
- A team may start and finish the game with 7 players.
- Teams who know that they will not be able to field 7 players to start a game may borrow players from other teams in the division, or in the immediate younger division. League officials, and the opposing coach must approve the borrowed players prior to the start of the game. The team is only allowed to borrow the number of players to fully field the defensive positions (9 or 10 total players depending on division). Borrowed players are not allowed to pitch or play catcher, and they must assume the last positions in the batting order. Borrowing players is not intended to strengthen a team, but rather avoid forfeits and late season rescheduled games.
- Borrowed players must wear the team uniform that has been assigned by the league. They are not to wear the uniform for the team that they are filling in for.
- Mercy Rule:

Run Differential	Inning
15	After 3 innings
12	After 4 innings
10	After 5 innings
8	After 6 innings

- Tie games: At the end of regulation play, if the game is tied, the game will end in a tie.
- All judgement rulings made by umpires are final. Coaches may ask for time to discuss a rule with an umpire or ask with speak with a league official or Umpire in Charge (UIC). All rulings by league officials and UIC's are also final.

Section II:

Heat Policy

The South Metro Sports Group has implemented the following guidelines to deal with extreme heat at youth baseball/softball games and practices. It is designed to provide participants with a standard for safe play in situations of extreme heat.

The two values that will be considered when modifying or canceling games or practices are air temperature and relative humidity. The combination of these two elements reflects the heat index. We will rely on the heat index reading that is updated hourly by the National Weather Service from Kansas City/Pleasant Hill, MO.

The South Metro Sports Group will follow the same guidelines as the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA). These guidelines are followed by area school districts for their activities as well.

If the heat index is between 95 and 104 degrees, practices and game conditions will be altered. This can include, but is not limited to, at the discretion of league officials:

- Limiting players to not play the position of catcher more than 2 innings consecutively
- Shortening game times, or delaying the start of games
- Requiring longer breaks between innings to properly hydrate

If the heat index is 105 degrees or higher, practices and games will be postponed and/or rescheduled.

Please note that the heat index readings used can change or be different depending on the location of your game or practice in the South Metro Area. League officials will take into consideration travel time and projected game-time heat index values to make the best possible determination for safe playing conditions.

Protests

Officials' decisions in all matters are final. There shall be no protests except in cases of violation of the minimum playing requirements. Intent to protest must be noted in the scorebook by an umpire at the request of the coach within five minutes of the conclusion of the game. The protest must then be reported to league official in the community that the game was played by the next working day. Report must be made by phone or e-mail.

Uniforms and Equipment

- Required uniform consists of a baseball cap or softball visor (visor optional), team shirt/jersey with a number and baseball pants or softball pants/shorts.
- Batters and base runners are required to wear approved head protection. Helmets with ear covering must be worn at all practices and games. Softball helmets shall have face masks in all divisions of player pitch softball.
- Tennis shoes or athletic cleats should be worn by all players. Metal cleats are allowed in the 7th/8th grade divisions of baseball and softball only.
- All bats should have the USSSA stamp.
- Baseballs and softballs will be provided by the communities where games are being played.
- Catchers shall wear leg guards, chest protector, and a catching helmet. The catcher's helmet shall have a faceguard, extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, and shall fully cover both ears in divisions through 5th/6th grade. 7th/8th grade divisions may wear catchers' masks that do not fully cover both ears.
- All boys catching must wear a protective cup.
- All other personal protective gear should be provided by the players.

Section III:

Sportsmanship Policy

The South Metro Sports Leagues Sportsmanship Policy:

As a league, we encourage positive reinforcement from coaches, officials, parents and teammates for every player. Harassing, shouting or engaging in any sort of emotional or physical harm to an opposing coach, league official/umpire, or any player will not be permitted. Individuals who fail to comply with this policy will be asked to leave the game or, at the discretion of league officials, will be removed from the league. We thank you for your cooperation with this matter as we strive to provide a safe and fun environment for the children in our communities to learn the fundamentals of youth sports.

- A coach, player, parent or bench personnel shall not:
 - 1) Deliberately throw a bat, helmet or team equipment
 - 2) Call "Time" or use any command or commit any act for the purpose of trying to cause the opposing pitcher to balk or throw an illegal pitch
 - 3) Use words to act to incite or try to incite spectators to demonstrations, or use profanity or remarks which reflect upon opposing player, umpire or spectator
 - 4) Enter the area behind the catcher while the opposing pitcher and catcher are in their positions
 - 5) Use amplifiers, speakers or bull horns on the bench or on the field during the course of the game.
 - 6) Maliciously run into a fielder, even if the fielder is out of position
 - 7) Be outside the vicinity of the designated dugout or bull pen area if not a batter, runner, on deck batter, in the coach's box or one of the 9 or 10 players on defense
 - 8) Verbalize in any way with the opposing team for the purpose of intimidation
 - 9) Exhibit behavior that is not in accordance with the spirit of fair play
- Umpires and league officials have the right to restrict a coach to his/her dugout for the remainder of the game if they feel that the coach is not following the rules of the game or acting in accordance with the spirit of fair play. The coach will be able to continue to coach his/her team from the dugout as long as the coach follows the rules the rest of the game. A coach that has been restricted to the dugout will not take the field to coach a base, talk to a pitcher, or discuss any calls with an umpire or official. A dugout restriction will be treated the same as a warning, and the coach will not be suspended for any future games.
- If a coach, player, or spectator is ejected from a game, the offender will be suspended for a minimum of one additional game. The one game suspension will be served at the next scheduled league game. League officials reserve the right to suspend individuals for more than one game if the league official deems it necessary, or the offender has been suspended before.
- If any coach, player, or spectator threatens an official, umpire, opposing coach, spectator or player, that individual will be removed from the league.

Draft Rules

The South Metro Sports Recreation Leagues have draft rules set to ensure fair play between share-play communities. In divisions where the score and standings are kept, each coach will be allowed to "freeze" or keep a number of players. After all coaches have selected these players, the remaining players will be distributed equally at the discretion of league officials by age, grade and/or talent level. For all baseball and softball teams, coaches will be allowed to "freeze" 5 players. The 5 players include the son/daughter of all coaches and team sponsors.

In rare occasions, additional "freezes" may be allowed at the discretion of league officials as long as it does not affect the competitive balance of the league. League officials also reserve the right to allow less than the 5 standard "freezes" to help with the competitive balance of the teams. Teams and individuals who would like to play with the same players and coaches each season should consider participating in the South Metro Competitive Leagues.

Section IV:

Beginners T-Ball

Inning Definition:	All present batters will bat each inning
Game Length:	1 hour
Field Dimensions:	50' or 60' base paths, 10' diameter pitching circle at 42', 10' safety arc, 30' fielding tabs or arc used

*No score or standings will be kept for this division

General Rules:

- T-Ball games will have umpires for training purposes only. In the event an umpire is not scheduled or does not arrive by game time, coaches will start and monitor the flow of the game. The home team will supply an inning/timekeeper to keep track of innings played and official game time.
- Two defensive coaches will be allowed on the field of play. Coaches will be positioned outside the 4-base dimensional square. The 4-base dimensional square is defined as follows: (The area inside the 4-base dimensional. Foul line to second base)

Offensive Rules:

- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted as the last batter.
- All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the order.
- Batters will continue to take turns at bat until all batters have hit.
- Batters will have three (3) swinging attempts to hit the ball off the Tee. The ball must go further than the 10' safety arc directly in front of the Tee or will otherwise be considered a "strike". Each unsuccessful swing or foul ball will be considered a "strike". After the 3rd strike, the coach will assist the batter in completing the at-bat by reminding the batter of proper mechanics.
- Base runners will be able to advance once the ball is hit and put in play. A base runner who leaves the base before the ball is hit will be put back on their current base. No stealing is allowed. Base runners will advance one base at a time in beginners t-ball.
- No Advancement will be allowed on an overthrow as all batters/runners only advance one base per at bat.
- Any attempt by a base runner to advance illegally after the ball has been returned inside the baselines will result in a "dead ball" situation with that runner, and they will be returned to their previous base.

Defensive Rules:

- All players will play in the field with 1 pitcher, 1 catcher, 4 infielders and the remainder of the players will be placed outside the 4-base dimensional square and be considered as outfielders.
- All outfielders must stay behind the baseline.
- The defensive player designated as pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.
- Defensive infield players must be placed behind the 30' tabs or safety arc before the ball is hit.
- The defensive catcher is required to wear a batting helmet with a facemask while in the catcher's position on the field.
- The defense will attempt to record three (3) outs to complete each respective defensive inning, but the offensive team will still complete the inning regardless of outs recorded.
- Any attempt by a base runner to advance illegally after the ball has been returned inside the baselines will result in a "dead ball" situation with that runner, and they will be returned to their previous base.
- The defensive team will start each play by performing a "fake pitch". At this time, the batter will swing at the ball on the tee.

Advanced T-Ball Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 4 runs scored
Game Length:	5 innings or 1 hour 15 minutes
Field Dimensions:	50' or 60' base paths, 10' diameter pitching circle at 42', 10' safety arc, 30' fielding tabs or arc used

*No score or standings will be kept for this division

The Advanced T-ball Rules are the same as the Beginners T-ball divisions except:

Offensive Rules:

- Batters will have three (3) swinging attempts to hit the ball off the Tee.
- The ball must go further than the arc directly in front of the Tee or will otherwise be considered a "foul."
- After the 3rd "strike, an out will be recorded & the batter will return to the dugout.
- Base runners will be able to advance once the ball is hit and put in play. Base runners will be able to continue to advance as long as the batted ball remains outside of the baselines as marked below. The baselines will be clearly marked
- Once the ball returns inside the baselines (whether controlled or not), all base runners may continue to the base for which they are heading but may not advance any further. Any attempt by a base runner to advance illegally after the ball has been returned inside the baselines will result in a "dead ball" situation with that runner and they will be returned to their previous base.
- Batters will continue to take turns at bat until 3 outs or 4 runs have been recorded.

Defensive Rules:

- The defense will attempt to record three (3) outs to complete each respective defensive inning.
- If a batted ball is hit outside the baselines, the defensive team may prevent further advancement by offensive baserunners by returning the baseball inside the baselines at which time the umpire or coach will raise his/her hands indicating no further advancement is allowed. Defensive players may still attempt to record outs on base runners attempting to advance to the next base at that time. Any attempt by a base runner to advance illegally after the ball has been returned inside the baselines will result in a "dead ball" situation with that runner and they will be returned to their previous base.

Section V:

Machine Pitch Baseball Division Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 5 runs scored
Game Length:	6 innings or time limit reached.
Time Limit:	No new inning will start after 1 hour 15 minutes.
Field Dimensions:	60' bases, 10' diameter pitching circle (front of circle at 42'), 20' batting arc and 30' fielding tabs or arc
Pitching Machine:	The Middle of the pitching machine will be placed at 42 feet with a pitching speed of 35 MPH

*Score will be kept by the umpires to keep track on innings only, no standings will be kept for this division.

- Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not be allowed to assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines.
- Defensive players must line up behind the 30' fielding tabs or arc prior to the ball being batted.
- All players present will bat each inning until 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- A batter shall receive a maximum of five (5) hittable pitches. A hittable pitch will be determined by the umpire. The batter will receive an additional pitch for a foul ball batted on the 5th hittable pitch. Subsequent pitches will be provided for subsequent foul balls.
- A batted ball must travel past the 20' batting arc to be a fair ball. This also applies to legally bunted balls.
- Home team will supply the official bookkeeper and will keep track of innings played. Umpires will keep track of official game time.
- A base runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate. Stealing is not allowed.
- When a batted ball hits the pitching machine the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners advance one (1) base.
- A batted or thrown ball striking a pitcher, coach, or player(s) off the field or striking a player in the "On Deck" area shall be called a dead ball.
- Umpires will call "time" after every play and declare the ball dead.
- Overthrows - An overthrow is a ball that is thrown to an infielder covering a base in the infield area that is not cleanly caught. If an overthrow occurs at first base, the runner must remain at first base (no advancement). For all other overthrows follow the rule here: Only one base advancement will be permitted on an overthrow that occurs at second base (2nd) or third base (3rd), even if the ball remains in play. If a second overthrow occurs, the play will be called dead by the umpire, and all runners will return to the base they occupied following the first overthrow. EXAMPLE: Batter is advancing to 2nd base on a long hit to the outfield. The defense overthrows 2nd base and the runner attempt to advance to 3rd base. If the defense overthrows 3rd base, the batter/runner may not advance home and must stay at 3rd base.
- Except for the above rule on overthrows, the ball will remain live until controlled by the pitcher inside the pitcher's circle.
- Teams may use free substitution for position players between innings for defense, but the batting order must remain the same.
- The infield fly rule is not in effect for this division.
- The catcher must receive the pitch lined up behind home plate in a normal manner.
- The player in the pitcher position is to stand to one side of the machine and must have one foot inside of the pitching circle until ball is played by batter.
- One defensive coach will be allowed on the field of play but must position him/herself in the outfield behind the players.
- If the pitching machine is not able to be used due to safety with weather, or there is an electrical issue that prohibits the use of the machine, the game will continue with the offensive coach pitching. The coaches will pitch at the front of the circle (42') to be consistent with the pitching distance of the pitching machine. Hittables will continue to be called by the umpire.

Other Notes:

- Standard baseballs will be fed into the pitching machine by the Coaches, in a consistent manner.
- The pitching machine will only be adjusted between innings or if they machine has become inconsistent in throwing hittable pitches at the sole discretion of the umpire. The machine will not be adjusted in speed or placement of the ball for individual batters.
- If the game time reaches 1 hour 15 minutes while the visitors are batting, the home team will be given the opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning as well. We do not keep score or standings in this division, so all innings will be fully completed.
- Coaches are required to encourage players to hustle on and off the field between innings to complete more innings each game.
- A double first base may be used when available. If a double first base is provided, the batter/runner will use the orange base when advancing to first base and all defensive plays will be made on the white base.
- If deemed appropriate by the umpire, a second defensive coach may be permitted to stand at the backstop to help return past baseballs to the umpire feeding the pitching machine. This coach is to stay at the backstop while the ball is in play. The umpire will only allow this when it is safe for a coach and to speed up the game.
- If one umpire is present, he/she will call the game from behind the pitching machine. A two-umpire crew will call the game in the same positions as a standard game of baseball with the field umpire feeding the balls into the machine.

For all rulings and game situations not listed, please refer to Section I of the South Metro Sports Leagues Youth Baseball/Softball Rules. For all other rulings and game situations not addressed in Section V or Section I, refer to USSSA Baseball rules at www.ussa.org.

Section VI:

Coach Pitch Softball Division Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 5 runs scored
Game Length:	6 innings or time limit reached
Time Limit:	No new inning will start after 1 hour 15 minutes
Field Dimensions:	60' bases, 35' pitching plate with a 16' diameter circle, 10' batting arc and 30' fielding tabs or arc

*Score will be kept by the umpires to keep track on innings only, no standings will be kept for this division.

- Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not be allowed to assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines.
- Defensive players must line up behind the 30' fielding tabs or arc prior to the ball being batted.
- All players present will bat each inning until 3 outs are made or 5 runs have been scored.
- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- A batter shall receive a maximum of five (5) hittable pitches. A hittable pitch will be determined by the umpire. The batter will receive an additional pitch for a foul ball batted on the 5th hittable pitch. Subsequent pitches will be provided for subsequent foul balls.
- Home team will supply the official bookkeeper and will keep track of innings played. Umpires will keep track of official game time.
- A base runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate. Stealing is not allowed.
- When a batted ball hits the coach, who is pitching the ball is dead, the batter is awarded first (1st) base and all runners advance one (1) base. The coach will try his/her best to avoid getting hit by a batted ball.
- A batted or thrown ball striking a pitcher, coach, or player(s) off the field or striking a player in the "On Deck" area shall be called a dead ball.
- Umpires will call "time" after every play and declare the ball dead.
- Overthrows - An overthrow is a ball that is thrown to an infielder covering a base in the infield area that is not cleanly caught. If an overthrow occurs at first base, the runner must remain at first base (no advancement). For all other overthrows follow the rule here: Only one base advancement will be permitted on an overthrow that occurs at second base (2nd) or third base (3rd), even if the ball remains in play. If a second overthrow occurs, the play will be called dead by the umpire, and all runners will return to the base they occupied following the first overthrow. EXAMPLE: Batter is advancing to 2nd base on a long hit to the outfield. The defense overthrows 2nd base and the runner attempt to advance to 3rd base. If the defense overthrows 3rd base, the batter/runner may not advance home and must stay at 3rd base.
- Except for the above rule on overthrows, the ball will remain live until controlled by the pitcher inside the pitcher's circle.
- Teams may use free substitution for position players between innings for defense, but the batting order must remain the same.
- The infield fly rule is not in effect for this division.
- The catcher must receive the pitch behind home plate in a normal manner. A catcher's box may not be drawn for this division.
- The player in the pitcher position is to stand to one side of the coach who is pitching and must have one foot inside of the pitching circle until ball is played by batter.
- One defensive coach will be allowed on the field of play but must position him/herself in the outfield behind the players.
- The coach pitching should pitch from the pitching plate to provide consistency for the batter. The coach is allowed to move up to the front of the pitching circle if they feel they batter requires them to do so to be successful in putting the ball in play.

Other Notes:

- Standard 11" USSSA softballs will be used in the coach pitch softball division.
- If the game time reaches 1 hour 15 minutes while the visitors are batting, the home team will be given the opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning as well. We do not keep score or standings in this division, so all innings will be fully completed.
- Coaches are required to encourage players to hustle on and off the field between innings to complete more innings each game.
- A double first base may be used when available. If a double first base is provided, the batter/runner will use the orange base when advancing to first base and all defensive plays will be made on the white base.
- If one umpire is present, he/she will call the game from behind home plate. A two-umpire crew will call the game in the same positions as a standard game of softball.

For all rulings and game situations not listed, please refer to Section I of the South Metro Sports Leagues Youth Baseball/Softball Rules. For all other rulings and game situations not addressed in Section VI or Section I, refer to USSSA Fast-Pitch Softball rules at www.ussa.org.

Section VII:

3rd/4th Player Pitch Baseball Division Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 5 runs scored
Game Length:	6 innings (3.5 inning minimum for complete game)
Time Limit:	No new inning after 1 hour 30 minutes
Field Dimensions:	60' bases, pitching mound used with pitcher's plate set a 40'

- Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not be allowed to assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines in the grass area of the outfield.
- All players present will bat each inning until 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- The home team will supply the official bookkeeper and will keep track of the official score and number of innings played. Umpires will keep track of official game time.
- Teams may use free substitution for position players between innings for defense, but the batting order must remain the same.
- Dropped third strike will be an automatic out.
- No Leading off.
- Base Running - When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached home plate. Once the catcher has secured the ball and the runner has stopped his forward progress, the runner must immediately return to the base.
- A runner may not advance from 3rd base to home unless done so in a live ball situation created by the batter hitting the ball, or by being forced to advance home with a balk or walk. A throw from the catcher to 3rd base does not allow the runner to advance home unless the catcher is fielding a ball that has been put into play by the batter.
- The catcher must receive the pitch lined up behind home plate in a normal manner.
- Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- The Infield Fly Rule is in effect – runners may advance at their own risk.
- A courtesy runner for catcher of the previous inning only may be used. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out. If no outs have been recorded the courtesy runner will be the previous batter not on base.
- Pitching Limitations: The pitcher is only allowed to throw a maximum of 55 pitches, or 3 innings in one game. (A pitch is defined as a ball delivered to a batter), or 9 innings in 1 week. (A week will be defined as 12:01 am on Monday through 12:00 pm on Sunday.) Pitchers that pitch two consecutive days will have to rest the third day regardless of innings or pitches pitched.
- Pitching rules take effect after the 1st official pitch of the game is thrown.
- It is the responsibility of the team coach and parents to make sure that players are not pitching more than allowed.
- Players may not switch fielding positions when the Coach comes onto pitch to the Batter. (Example: Player/ pitcher may not move to short stop position, during the coach pitching to the batter, if the pitcher / player does, then he / she will not be allowed to return to pitch in the game. Player will be allowed to play any other fielding position except pitcher.)
- At Bat Scenarios:
 - Batter strikes out (strike zone will be larger for this division at the umpire's discretion)
 - Batter hits fair ball.
 - Batter is hit by the player-pitcher and is awarded first base.
 - If the player-pitcher walks the batter, there will be no walk issued, instead one of the batter's on-field Coaches will pitch a maximum of 3 additional pitches regardless of count to give the batter an opportunity to put the ball into play. Foul balls are included in 3 coach-pitches (NO ADDITIONAL PITCHES WILL BE AWARDED FOR FOUL BALLS OFF COACH-PITCHING). The at-bat is over after the 3 coach-pitches regardless of balls or strikes.
- Coach visits to the Mound: When a team is charged with its second visit to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.

Other Notes:

- Standard USSSA stamped baseballs will be used in this division.
- If the game time reaches 1 hour 30 minutes while the visitors are batting, and the visiting team is unable to score enough runs to at least tie the game in the current inning then the game will be over. If the game time reaches 1 hour and 30 minutes and the visiting team is winning the game, the home team will be afforded the opportunity to complete their at-bats in the bottom of the inning, regardless of the score of the game.
- Coaches are required to encourage players to hustle on and off the field between innings to complete more innings each game.

For all rulings and game situations not listed, please refer to Section I of the South Metro Sports Leagues Youth Baseball/Softball Rules. For all other rulings and game situations not addressed in Section VII or Section I, refer to USSSA Baseball rules at www.ussa.org.

Section VIII:

3rd/4th Player Pitch Softball Division Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 5 runs scored
Game Length:	6 innings (3.5 inning minimum for complete game)
Time Limit:	No new inning after 1 hour 30 minutes
Field Dimensions:	60' bases, pitching plate set at 35' with a 16' diameter pitching circle.

- Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not be allowed to assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines in the grass area of the outfield.
- All players present will bat each inning until 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- The home team will supply the official bookkeeper and will keep track of the official score and number of innings played. Umpires will keep track of official game time.
- Teams may use free substitution for position players between innings for defense, but the batting order must remain the same.
- Dropped third strike will be an automatic out.
- A runner may not advance from 3rd base to home unless done so in a live ball situation created by the batter hitting the ball, or by being forced to advance home with a balk or walk. A throw from the catcher to 3rd base does not allow the runner to advance home unless the catcher is fielding a ball that has been put into play by the batter.
- The catcher must receive the pitch lined up behind home plate in a normal manner.
- Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- The Infield Fly Rule is in effect for this division – runners may advance at their own risk.
- Stealing: Players may steal one base per pitch. An overthrow from the catcher on a stolen base will result in a dead ball. Runners may not steal home.
- A runner will be called out for leaving the base before the ball is pitched.
- A courtesy runner for the catcher of the previous inning only may be used. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out. If no outs have been recorded the courtesy runner will be the previous batter not on base.
- Pitching Limitations: A pitcher can only appear in 5 innings per game.
- The pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh that the umpires deems distracting to the batter.
- It is the responsibility of the team coach and parents to make sure that players are not pitching more than allowed.
- Players may not switch fielding positions when the Coach comes onto pitch to the Batter. (Example: Player/ pitcher may not move to short stop position, during the coach pitching to the batter, if the pitcher / player does, then he / she will not be allowed to return to pitch in the game. Player will be allowed to play any other fielding position except pitcher.)
- At Bat Scenarios:
 - Batter strikes out (strike zone will be larger for this division at the umpire's discretion)
 - Batter hits fair ball.
 - Batter is hit by the player-pitcher and is awarded first base.
 - If the player-pitcher walks the batter, there will be no walk issued, instead one of the batter's on-field Coaches will pitch a maximum of 3 additional pitches (regardless of count) to give the batter an opportunity to put the ball into play. Foul balls are included in 3 coach-pitches (NO ADDITIONAL PITCHES WILL BE AWARDED FOR FOUL BALLS OFF COACH-PITCHING). The at-bat is over after the 3 coach-pitches regardless of balls or strikes.
- Coach visits to the Mound: When a team is charged with its second visit to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.
- Pitching rules take effect after the 1st official pitch of the game is thrown.
- Illegal pitches will be called at the discretion of the umpires. Umpires will be encouraged to give warnings and correct the pitcher when an illegal pitch occurs.

Other Notes:

- Standard 11" USSSA stamped optic yellow softballs will be used in this division.
- If the game time reaches 1 hour 30 minutes while the visitors are batting, and the visiting team is unable to score enough runs to at least tie the game in the current inning then the game will be over. If the game time reaches 1 hour and 30 minutes and the visiting team is winning the game, the home team will be afforded the opportunity to complete their at-bats in the bottom of the inning, regardless of the score of the game.
- Coaches are required to encourage players to hustle on and off the field between innings to complete more innings each game.
- A catcher's box is not required to be drawn for play in this division.

For all rulings and game situations not listed, please refer to Section I of the South Metro Sports Leagues Youth Baseball/Softball Rules. For all other rulings and game situations not addressed in Section VIII or Section I, refer to USSSA Softball rules at www.ussa.org.

Section IX: 5th/6th and 7th/8th Player Pitch Baseball Divisions Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 5 runs scored
Game Length (5th/6th):	6 innings (3.5 inning minimum for complete game)
Game Length (7th/8th):	7 innings (4.5 inning minimum for complete game)
Time Limit:	No new inning after 1 hour 45 minutes
Field Dimensions (5th/6th):	65' bases, pitching mound used with pitchers plate set at 46'
Field Dimensions (7th/8th):	70' bases, pitching mound used with pitchers plate set at 50'

- Nine (9) defensive players will play in the field with three (3) outfielders. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines in the grass area of the outfield.
- All players present will bat each inning until 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- The home team will supply the official bookkeeper and will keep track of the official score and number of innings played. Umpires will keep track of official game time.
- Teams may use free substitution for position players between innings for defense, but the batting order must remain the same.
- The batter/runner may try to advance on a dropped 3rd strike.
- The catcher must receive the pitch lined up behind home plate in a normal manner.
- Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- The Infield Fly Rule is in effect – runners may advance at their own risk.
- Stealing:
 - 5th-6th Grade: Players may lead off but may not steal until the ball crosses home plate. Stealing Base Runners may only still (1) one base at a time, no advancement will be allowed on an overthrow on a steal at 2nd base or 3rd base. Runner at 3rd base will not be allowed to come home unless the ball is hit into the field of play, or forced home by a walk.
 - 7th/8th Grade: Players may lead off and stealing is allowed, including home.
- A courtesy runner for the catcher of the previous inning only may be used. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out. If no outs have been recorded the courtesy runner will be the previous batter not on base.
- Pitching Limitations: (5th/6th Grade) - The pitcher is only allowed to throw a maximum of 65 pitches, or 3 innings in one game. (A pitch is defined as a ball delivered to a batter), or 9 innings in 1 week. (A week will be defined as 12:01 am on Monday through 12:00 pm on Sunday.) Pitchers that pitch two consecutive days will have to rest the third day regardless of innings or pitches pitched.
- (7th-8th Grade) - The pitcher is only allowed to throw a maximum of 75 pitches, or 3 innings in one game. (A pitch is defined as a ball delivered to a batter), or 9 innings in 1 week. (A week will be defined as 12:01 am on Monday through 12:00 pm on Sunday.) Pitchers that pitch two consecutive days will have to rest the third day regardless of innings or pitches pitched.
- Pitching rules take effect after the 1st official pitch of the game is thrown.
- It is the responsibility of the team coach and parents to make sure that players are not pitching more than allowed.
- **Balks:** Pitchers will be called for balks. NO WARNINGS will be given.
- **Penalty for a balk:** The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk. When a balk is called, and the pitch is delivered it will be considered neither a ball nor strike unless the pitch is ball four (4) awarding the batter first base and forcing all runners on base to advance.

Note: Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

 1. Straddling the pitcher's plate without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.
 2. With a runner on first base, and the runner attempting to steal second, the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.
- **Approved Ruling 1:** In cases where a pitcher balks and throws wild, either to a base or to home plate, a runner or runners may advance beyond the base to which he is entitled at his own risk.
- **Approved Ruling 2:** A runner who misses the first base to which that runner is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.
- **Note:** On any play on which a balk occurs, if action advances the batter-runner to first base and also advances all runners at least one base, the balk is nullified. Also note that if the pitch is delivered, it counts against pitch count, even if the balk is nullified.
- An intentional walk may take place by announcement from the catcher or pitcher.
- Coach visits to the Mound: When a team is charged with its second visit to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.

Other Notes:

- Standard USSSA stamped baseballs will be used in this division.
- If the game time reaches 1 hour 45 minutes while the visitors are batting, and the visiting team is unable to score enough runs to at least tie the game in the current inning then the game will be over. If the game time reaches 1 hour and 45 minutes and the visiting team is winning the game, the home team will be afforded the opportunity to complete their at-bats in the bottom of the inning, regardless of the score of the game.
- Coaches are required to encourage players to hustle on and off the field between innings to complete more innings each game.
- Metal cleats are only allowed to be worn in the 7th/8th grade division of baseball.

For all rulings and game situations not listed, please refer to Section I of the South Metro Sports Leagues Youth Baseball/Softball Rules. For all other rulings and game situations not addressed in Section IX or Section I, refer to USSSA Baseball rules at www.ussa.org.

Section X:

5th/6th and 7th/8th Player Pitch Softball Divisions Rules

Inning Definition:	3 outs or 5 runs scored
Game Length:	6 innings (3.5 inning minimum for complete game)
Time Limit:	No new inning after 1 hour 30 minutes
Field Dimensions (5th/6th):	60' bases, pitching plate set at 40' with a 16' diameter pitching circle.
Field Dimensions (7th/8th):	60' bases, pitching plate set at 40' with a 16' diameter pitching circle.
Ball Size (5th/6th):	11" Softball USSSA stamped optic yellow softballs
Ball Size (7th/8th):	12" Softball USSSA stamped optic yellow softballs

- Ten (10) defensive players will play in the field with four (4) outfielders in the 5th/6th grade division. The fourth (4th) outfielder may not be allowed to assume an infield position. All outfielders must stay behind the baselines in the grass area of the outfield. Nine (9) defensive players will play the field in the 7th/8th grade division.
- All players present will bat each inning until 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
- The batting order shall constitute all players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order.
- The home team will supply the official bookkeeper and will keep track of the official score and number of innings played. Umpires will keep track of official game time.
- Teams may use free substitution for position players between innings for defense, but the batting order must remain the same.
- The batter/runner may attempt to advance on a dropped 3rd strike.
- The catcher must receive the pitch lined up behind home plate in a normal manner.
- Defensive coaches are not allowed on the field of play and must coach from the dugout.
- The Infield Fly Rule is in effect for these divisions. Runners may advance at their own risk.
- Stealing:
 - 5th-6th Grade: Stealing Base Runners may only still (1) one base at a time, no advancement will be allowed on an overthrow on a steal at 2nd base or 3rd base. Runner at 3rd base will not be allowed to come home unless the ball is hit into the field of play, or forced home by a walk.
 - 7th-8th Grade: Players may steal, including home.
- A runner will be called out for leaving the base before the ball is pitched.
- A courtesy runner for catcher of the previous inning only may be used. The courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out. If no outs have been recorded the courtesy runner will be the previous batter not on base.
- Pitching Limitations: A pitcher can only appear in 5 innings per game.
- The pitcher shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, arm or thigh that the umpires deems distracting to the batter.
- It is the responsibility of the team coach and parents to make sure that players are not pitching more than allowed.
- Coach visits to the Mound: When a team is charged with its second visit to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position.
- Pitching rules take effect after the 1st official pitch of the game is thrown.
- Illegal pitches will be called at the discretion of the umpires. Umpires will be encouraged to give warnings and correct the pitcher when an illegal pitch occurs.

Other Notes:

- If the game time reaches 1 hour 30 minutes while the visitors are batting, and the visiting team is unable to score enough runs to at least tie the game in the current inning then the game will be over. If the game time reaches 1 hour and 30 minutes and the visiting team is winning the game, the home team will be afforded the opportunity to complete their at-bats in the bottom of the inning, regardless of the score of the game.
- Coaches are required to encourage players to hustle on and off the field between innings to complete more innings each game.
- A catcher's box is not required to be drawn for play in this division.
- Metal cleats may be worn by the 7th/8th grade division only.

For all rulings and game situations not listed, please refer to Section I of the South Metro Sports Leagues Youth Baseball/Softball Rules. For all other rulings and game situations not addressed in Section X or Section I, refer to USSSA Softball rules at www.ussa.org.