



## City of Surprise Parks & Recreation Department

### Rules and Guidelines for Adult *Slow-Pitch* Softball

The City of Surprise Adult Slow-Pitch Softball League will be played according to the 2025 ASA and City of Surprise rules. The following are rule points of emphasis and City of Surprise Parks & Recreation Services' additions and deviations. Any rules not mentioned in the following pages will be covered by the Official ASA/USA Rules.

#### PROGRAM INFORMATION

**LEAGUE FORMAT:** Leagues will have a round-robin format. The Field Supervisor on site will keep current rosters. If two teams are tied in the standings, a tie-breaker based on head-to-head play will determine the league winner. If they are still tied, fewest runs allowed between the two tied teams will determine the tie breaker. Any team that has forfeited a game at any time during the season will automatically take the lowest ranking.

**AWARDS:** Awards will be based on the number of teams registered in the league. Individual awards will be given to the League and Tournament Champions.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Unavoidable game cancellations due to rain, irrigation, or unforeseen circumstances beyond our control will be canceled through the rainout hotline as quickly as possible. In most cases, games will be made up at the end of the season. Decisions on rainout games can be obtained by calling 623.222.RAIN (7246)

**GOOD OF THE LEAGUE RULE:** The City of Surprise Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to change any rules or regulations before/during/after the season that is in the best interest of the City of Surprise. If a change is made, all team managers affected by the change will be notified. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to add additional rules and regulations when we feel that they will benefit the league.

#### LEAGUE POLICIES

**ALCOHOL/SMOKING/VAPING:** The consumption of alcoholic beverages during a city league game is strictly prohibited within any softball park, regardless of a permit being purchased, and players/spectators involved will be REMOVED from the complex by staff. All coolers and beverage containers are subject to search by city staff. Refusal of search is an automatic ejection of the player/spectator and/or manager. **Player/Manager suspended minimum of one game. Spectator banned minimum of one game.** There is no smoking/vaping allowed on complex grounds, this includes on the field of play/in the dugout area. You must go to the parking lot to smoke/vape.

**CONDUCT:** **The Field Supervisor and/or Umpire has the power to eject a player or spectator and forfeit a game without warning for any conduct deemed unbecoming or detrimental to the game.** Any player assaulting an official or city employee will be automatically suspended from all City of Surprise Adult Sports Programs, and legal action may be taken. When a player is listed on the team's roster, it is understood that the team manager will notify them of all rules and regulations as well as the conduct regulations.

**EJECTIONS:** Players ejected from the game must leave the playing grounds immediately and have no contact with the umpires, staff or participants. Any player ejected from a City of Surprise game faces a one-game suspension. Additional action also may be taken including, but not limited to, probation and total suspension. Each incident will be reviewed, and a decision on the length of the suspension will be made in a reasonable length of time.

**FORFEITS:** Game time is forfeit time. A team must have a minimum of eight players to begin (coed - 4 female\*/4 male) and continue the game. A Co-Ed game can begin w/5 males and 3females ONLY if both managers agree. Players must be on the field of play at game time. After a team's second forfeit they will be notified by phone and given a warning. If they should forfeit again during the season, they may be dropped from the league. **Teams should contact the league director if they anticipate forfeiting their games.** No refund will be given to teams being dropped from the league. In the case of a tie in the league standings a team with a **forfeit** during the regular season will automatically take a lower tournament seed.

**ILLEGAL PLAYER PROTEST:** An illegal player protest is allowed at any time during a league or tournament game. Only the manager may ask the umpire for a roster check, city staff will check the roster of BOTH teams. The player(s) in question must be listed on the official roster or an add/drop form and must produce photo I.D. If determined illegal by the field supervisor player will be disqualified and be counted as an out each additional time their name appears in the batting order. The offending team(s) will not be allowed to substitute another player for the illegal player.

**Team manager may be served w/a 1 game suspension if found using an illegal player.**

**INFIELD PRACTICE:** There will be no BP practice at the park. Soft toss against fences is also prohibited due to the extensive damage it causes. Teams that do not adhere to this rule run the risk of being dropped from the league.

**PLAYING TIMES:** Teams must be able to play at any of the scheduled game times.

**SCOREKEEPING:** The scorebook shall be possessed by the offensive/batting team. At the conclusion of each ½ inning, the score book shall be turned over to the opposing team. All players must be listed for each game (first and last names). It is recommended that all teams keep a second scorebook during the game. The City will provide the above mentioned game scorebook. **Both teams are responsible for checking the score each ½ inning, and bringing any discrepancies to the attention of the umpire immediately. No protest allowed after first pitch of next ½ inning begins.**

**Please initial the final score on the umpire score sheet at the end of each game.**

**TEAM ROSTERS:** All players must be at least 18 years of age prior to participating. The team roster must contain no more than 18 players. The roster must be submitted at the time of registration. Players can be added/deleted using the add/drop form **prior to the start of the last regular season game.** Changes made to the original roster must be written on the appropriate drop/add form before the new player participates in a game.

**TEAM ROSTER MOVEMENT:** A player **MAY NOT** appear on 2 rosters and/or play for 2 teams in the same division. (Ex. 1 player playing for 2 teams in the Tuesday Men's "REC I" division is not allowed).

**BORROWED PLAYERS (REGULAR SEASON ONLY. NO BORROWED PLAYERS ALLOWED IN TOURNAMENT)**

- ❖ The field supervisor and umpire must be notified prior to utilizing the borrowed player(s). Furthermore, all borrowed players must be approved by the opposing team manager.
- ❖ Players may be borrowed to bring the line-up to a maximum of 8-10 players. However, the team may only borrow player(s) to bring their line-up to an equal or lesser number than the team they are playing against.
- ❖ A borrowed player DOES NOT have to fill out an add/drop form as long as they are on a current team roster. If they are not on any other rosters they must be added via add/drop form. (please see illegal player protest rule above)
- ❖ The borrowed player(s) must bat in the last one/two places in the line-up. Failure to bat a borrowed player(s) in the last 2 spots will result in an automatic out each time their name appears in the line-up. The opposing team is responsible for notifying the umpire of this error. If the borrowed player(s) has already completed their at bat, the penalty will go into effect the next at-bat. The borrowed player may still play defense.
- ❖ The borrowed player(s) must play catcher and/or right field. The opposing team must notify the umpire if the borrowed player(s) play a defensive position other than catcher or right field. The umpire shall call time out and move the player(s) into the assigned position(s) and play will continue.
- ❖ When the team's actual roster player(s) arrive, the team must immediately substitute their roster player(s) for the borrowed player(s).

## LEAGUE RULES

**SOFTBALL:** In all Surprise leagues, women will hit an 11” ball and men will hit a 12” ball. **The offensive team is responsible for retrieving any ball hit out-of-play that cannot be quickly retrieved by the home team.**

**PITCHING DISTANCE – 53ft.**

**BASE PATHS – 70ft.**

**BAT USE:** Bats that are approved by Amateur Softball Association (ASA) and (USA) are the ONLY bats that will be permitted in league and tournament play. Penalty for using a bat not approved by the ASA/USA. will be ejection from the game. If a player is ejected for this reason they cannot be substituted for in the line-up and it is an automatic out each time their name appears in the line-up. Search the listing of non-approved bats provided at <https://www.usasoftball.com/certified-equipment/>

**BATTING LINE-UP:** Team Managers have the option to bat their entire roster. Teams must have a minimum of eight players to start and complete a game, in coed league players must consist of a minimum of four males and four females. For coed, teams have the option of batting up to nine men and nine women in the batting order. Any player arriving late to the game may be added to the bottom of the lineup. Any player that occupies a defensive field position must be listed in the batting line up.

**FOR COED:** The lineup will be a continuous alternating order, male/female or female/male, throughout the entire game. At NO time will two players of the same sex bat next to each other.

If a player leaves a game due to injury or illness and does not return, his/her spot on the official scorebook can be taken by a bench substitute. If a substitute is not available, all subsequent batters will move up in the lineup, and an automatic out will be recorded during that players next at bat only. If a player is ejected from the game and a substitute is not available, that position in the lineup is an automatic out each time it appears throughout the game.

**WALK RULE:** If a male player is walked during his turn at bat, he automatically goes to second base. With less than two outs, the female batter must bat. If there are two outs, the female batter has the option of batting or being awarded first base.

**BLOOD RULE:** Bleeding must be completely stopped before an individual can resume play. Blood-soaked equipment must be changed.

**COURTESY RUNNERS:** One courtesy runner is allowed per gender/per inning. Exception: If a courtesy runner was used for a particular individual and that individual comes to bat a second time the same inning, he/she may use a courtesy runner again. In coed, the runner must be of the same sex. A courtesy runner may be used at any time during the game. All courtesy runners must be the last out recorded or last across the plate, (whichever is most recent), and must be designated prior to the first pitch to the next batter.

**DEFENSIVE POSITIONS (COED):** The outfield must consist of two males and two females, and the infield must consist of two males and two females. The catcher and pitcher must be opposite sex. There must always be an equal number of men and women or a majority of women in all combinations. Female infielders on defense ALWAYS have the option of playing in the dirt or the grass. Male defensive players must ALWAYS start with their heels clearly in the infield dirt until the ball is pitched/delivered/released to the catcher.

**DEFENSIVE POSITIONS (MEN’S):** Male defensive players must ALWAYS start with their heels clearly in the infield dirt until the ball is pitched/delivered/released to the catcher.

**DEFENSIVE POSITIONS (WOMEN’S):** Female defensive players must ALWAYS start with their heels clearly in the infield dirt until the ball is pitched/delivered/released to the catcher.

**MINIMUM NUMBER OF GAME PLAYERS:** Teams must have a minimum of eight players to begin and continue a game; for coed, of these eight players, there must be a minimum of four women.\*

Example:

8 players- 4 men, 4 women / 9 players- 4 men, 5 women / 10 players- 4 men, 6 women / 10 player- 5 men, 5 women

**MINIMUM NUMBER OF GAME PLAYERS Continued:**

\*A Co-Ed game can begin w/5 males and 3 females **ONLY** if both managers agree. No females are allowed in the outfield in this 5Male/3Female player scenario.

Example for 5M/3F - P(M1) C(F1) 1(F2) 2(F3) 3(M2) SS(M3) LCF(M4) RCF(M5)

You cannot switch to a 5 male/4 female lineup if/when your 4<sup>th</sup> female arrives. Once your 4<sup>th</sup> female arrives you must remove your extra male from the lineup and play 4Male and 4Female until/if your 5<sup>th</sup> female player arrives.

**ONE AND ONE COUNT:** All batters will begin their turn at bat with one ball and one strike. There will be one foul ball to waste after a player receives their second strike.

**RUN AHEAD RULE:** If a team is ahead by 20 runs or more at the end of three innings, 15 runs at the end of four innings or **10** runs at the end of five innings, the game will be over.

#### HOME RUNS

**ALL Coed Divisions - 1 UP RULE:** No team may hit more than 1 up (home run) than the other team at any time. For example; visiting team hits a homerun, the home team then may hit 2, one to tie and 1 to go 1 up.

**Men's, and Women's Divisions – 2 UP RULE:** No team may hit more than 2 up (home runs) than the other team at any time. For example; visiting team hits 2 homeruns, the home team then may hit 4, 2 to tie and 2 to go up. If a batter hits more than their teams allotted home runs in any given inning that batter will be called out and any runners may not advance.

**STEEL CLEATS:** Steel cleats are not permitted in any City of Surprise League.

**STRIKE ZONE: PITCHING ARC: 6 – 12 ft.** Any pitched ball with an arc at least 6ft. above the ground and not to exceed a maximum of 12ft with the ball touching any part of the plate or strike mat it will be considered a strike.

**SUBSTITUTIONS:** All offensive substitutes must be reported to the official scorekeeper in order to acknowledge a player legally entering the game. ASA rules for re-entry will apply. Please refer to Batting Order section of the rules.

**TIE GAMES:** If the game ends in a tie, it will count as a tie in the standings. If there is a tie in the Final League Standings between 2 or more teams the following order will be followed for seeding purposes. Head to Head, then R/A, then RS.

**TIME LIMIT:** Umpire will be the official timekeeper. It is the responsibility of the team manager to confirm the start time for the game. 7 inning or 55-minute time limit in effect, no new inning can begin after 55 minutes. **The next inning starts as soon as the last out in the previous inning is made.** Additional time may be added for games delayed by rain, injury or unforeseen circumstances. The third out of the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning constitutes a complete game. Games that are canceled before the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning due to inclement weather or other reasons will be made up and replayed from the beginning of the game, at a later date if possible. **7 full innings for the TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME ONLY.** The 55 minute time limit will NOT be enforced for the Tournament Championship game. However, the Run Ahead Rule will still be in effect in all situations.

**HIT BALL AT PITCHER: All Leagues will be giving a warning at the plate meeting.**

The first hit "Up the Middle" will result in an out.

Any player batting a ball in the air that passes in the vertical plane of the pitching area will be considered an illegal hit. The pitching area is defined as the width of the pitcher's box and within 2 feet above the pitcher's head. This is a judgment call and may not be argued. If this is deemed by the umpire to be **intentional** that player will be ejected from the game and may face further suspension. If a player hits a ball back at the pitcher and it's deemed **unintentional** under the above guidelines an automatic out will be called by the umpire.

**PITCHER PROTECTION RULE:** This rule allows pitchers to pitch from behind the pitching rubber. This area will be a 4ft. x 8ft. box that will start 1ft. in front of the rubber. Pitcher's have the option to pitch from the rubber if they choose and may pitch from any spot within the box from pitch to pitch.

**COMMITMENT AND SAFETY LINES (COED ONLY): Don't Touch Home Plate** - A line will be chalked from the left front edge of home plate towards the backstop. This line will act as a scoring line to avoid collisions w/ the catcher at home. If the base runner touches home plate or the batter's box they will be called out. There will also be a commitment line chalked 20ft. from home plate, once a base runner passes this line they must continue home and cannot retreat to third base.

#### BASE RUNNING SAFETY (ALL Leagues)

Runner Safeties will be allowed at first and third base. Runners must retouch prior to advancing to the next base and will not be permitted to take a running start before ball his hit.

- Runner will be called out by force play if fielder fields ball and touches the base prior to runner's retouch
- Runners coming from 3rd to home will be called out for not retouching upon touching home or in co-ed upon crossing the commit line

\*For all other rules related to the City of Surprise's Adult Softball League, please consult a USA/ASA "Official Rules of Softball" rule book.



**CODE OF CONDUCT:**

1. When registering your team, it is understood that you are participating in a RECREATION program. The intent of City of Surprise recreation leagues is for players to have fun and enjoy themselves. Participants are expected to demonstrate sportsmanship before, during and after all activities sponsored by the Surprise Parks & Recreation Department.

Should an official feel that player(s) are demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct or their conduct is detrimental to others around them, they will be penalized for their misconduct. At no time shall any player verbally or physically abuse a City of Surprise staff, which included the officials. An official at any time may require a player(s) to sit out a designated number of innings. An official may issue a warning to the player(s), or eject player(s) right away depending on their discretion.

2. The officials will penalize unsportsmanlike conduct by a player, coach, substitute or team spectator. If there is a flagrant conduct violation, the officials will penalize the team by removing the offending player(s) from the game, and they will be ejected from the park. Any spectator or team follower may also be removed from the park. Failure to comply with official's direction to leave the field can result in forfeiture of the game. A player or team can also be dropped from the league if they become a problem. Coaches and players will be responsible for their team followers and must make every effort to control them.

3. Rules should be understood by all coaches/managers and players. It is the coach's responsibility to make sure that their players fully understand the consequences they will suffer if these rules are violated. When a player is listed on the roster, it will be understood that they will be informed, by the manager, of all rules and regulations as well as the Code of Conduct.

4. Players ejected from a game must leave the park immediately. Any player ejected faces a one-game suspension. Additional action may also be taken, including but not limited to, probation or total suspension. The Parks & Recreation Department reserves the right to determine the length of the probation and/or suspension. Each incident will be reviewed, and a decision on the length of the suspension will be made in a reasonable amount of time.

5. Profanity will not be tolerated (this includes casual profanity). Guilty parties are subject to one warning, or possible immediate ejection from the game.

6. Any player ejected two times during a season may be suspended for the remainder of the season. Participants must control their actions at all times.

Manager's Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Manager's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_