



**SOFTBALL**  
Official  
**RULE BOOK**

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS



## MUNICIPAL SPORTS

The primary function of the Municipal Sports Section is to provide sports programs for the adult citizens of Los Angeles.

The emphasis is placed on healthful competition in a recreational atmosphere.

Programs are organized, conducted and administered by a professional staff with expertise in all types of sports activities. Team competition is held in Baseball, Basketball, Flag Football, Soccer, Softball and Volleyball. Individual competition is offered in Boxing, Kick-Boxing and Tennis. Programs are conducted for both men and women.

Services of the Municipal Sports Section include: League formation, facility assignment, league administration, officials' training and assignments, custom awards and sports field permitting.

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**ALL RULES AND REGULATIONS PRINTED IN THIS  
SOFTBALL RULE BOOK ARE SUBJECT TO REVIEW  
AND CHANGE. TEAMS THAT PARTICIPATE IN THE  
MUNICIPAL SPORTS PROGRAM ARE PROVIDED  
WITH SUPPLEMENTAL REGULATIONS AND RULES  
STATING CERTIFIED CHANGES IN THE SOFTBALL  
RULES.**

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Softball: [www.laparks.org/sports/softball.htm](http://www.laparks.org/sports/softball.htm)

# **RULE 1**

## **THE GAME – DIAMOND – EQUIPMENT**

**SECTION 1–** SOFTBALL IS A GAME between two teams of ten players each, under direction and control of a manager, played on a field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one or more umpires.

**SECTION 2–** THE OBJECTIVE OF EACH TEAM is to win by scoring more runs than their opponents. Any team that intentionally forfeits a game in an attempt to influence playoff matchups and/or the dates playoff games are played is subject to suspension.

**SECTION 3–** THE WINNER of the game shall be the team that shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game. LEAGUE STANDINGS shall be determined by a point system. In the event of a tie in points the following tiebreaker system will be used:

1. Head to head record against all tied team(s).
2. Number of forfeited games against each tied team. (Team with the most forfeits loses the tiebreaker)
3. Number of forfeited games in all games. (Team with the most forfeits loses the tiebreaker)
4. If breaking the tie results in one or more teams being eliminated from the playoffs a one-game playoff will be used. If breaking the tie only changes playoff seeding a coin flip will be used.

Teams will receive 2 points for a Win, 1 point for a Tie, 0 points for a Loss, and 1 point will be taken away for each Forfeit Loss. Teams that do not have their roster submitted by the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the season will only get one point for a win from week 4 on until they submit a legal roster. Once they submit a legal roster they will start receiving two points per win starting with the next game played after a legal roster is submitted. ~~All leagues will have a three-team end of the season playoff. The second and third place teams will play and then the winner will play the first place team. Exception—If the 1<sup>st</sup> place team finishes 12-0 they are the league champions and there are no playoffs.~~

**SECTION 4–** THE HOME TEAM shall be the defense team at the top of first inning. *The Home Team is assigned the dugout on the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of the field.*

**SECTION 5–** A REGULATION GAME:

- (a) Shall start at the scheduled starting time. In the event a team has less than eight players present (on the field or in the dugout), the umpire shall permit a GRACE PERIOD, not to exceed five minutes, for such team(s) to field a minimum of eight players. The grace period is part of the playing time. Upon failure to do this, the game shall be forfeited to the other team.
- (b) Shall consist of seven innings, unless the team second at bat scores more runs in six innings than the team first at bat has scored in seven innings.
- (c) Shall consist of a GAME TIME PERIOD as follows: No new inning may be started after 1 hour and 15 minutes from the scheduled starting

time. If an earlier game runs late or the field is not ready for play the GAME TIME PERIOD will start from the time of the first pitch. Time is not added for injuries. A new inning starts immediately after the third out in the preceding inning is made unless time has expired. Once an inning starts, it must be completed unless the home team is ahead after time has expired and it is their turn at bat (bottom of the inning).

- (d) **OFFICIAL WATCH/TIMEKEEPER:**
- (1) Any questions concerning the time limit shall be determined by the umpire's watch, which shall be official, and cannot be protested.
  - (2) It is the responsibility of the two opposing team managers to verify the time with the umpire prior to the start of each game. The umpire shall notify the team managers of the time limit for the starting of new innings, and his/her decision shall be final.
- (e) Is complete when the team last at bat in the seventh inning scores the winning run before the third out is made.
- (f) Is complete if the game is called by the umpire, and four innings have been completed or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in three or more innings than the other team has scored in four or more innings.

**SECTION 6– WHEN A GAME IS CALLED** in any inning after the fourth, the score shall be what it was at the time the game was called if the team second at bat has more runs than the first at bat, or if the team second at bat has, in that inning, tied the score. If the team second at bat has fewer runs than the first team at bat when the game is called, the score shall be that of the last completed inning by both sides.

**SECTION 7– IF THE GAME IS TIED** at the end of seven innings, all available time left in the GAME TIME PERIOD shall be permitted and used to break a tie.

**NOTE: No extension of the time period is permitted.**

**SECTION 8– A REGULATION TIED GAME** shall be declared by the umpire(s) if the score is equal after the last complete inning played, when he/she terminates play in accordance with Section 7 of this rule after each team has played four or more complete innings. If the side that went second to bat is at bat when the game is terminated, and has scored in the incomplete inning the same number of runs as the other side, the umpire shall declare the game tied without regard to score of the last inning. If the side last at bat shall, before the completion of its fourth inning, equal the score made by the opposing side in four complete innings, the game shall be declared legally tied.

**SECTION 9– THE SCORE OF A FORFEITED GAME** shall be seven to nothing (7 to 0) in favor of the offended team. A FORFEIT shall be declared by the umpire(s) in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases:

- (a) If a team fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field refuses to begin a game for which it is scheduled or assigned at the time scheduled, or within 5 minutes of the schedule starting time.
- (b) If, after the game has begun, one side refuses to continue to play within 2 minutes, unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire(s). If, after play has been suspended by the umpire(s), one side fails to resume playing within 2 minutes after the umpire(s) has called "PLAY BALL."
- (c) If a team employs tactics designed to delay or to hasten the game.
- (d) If the umpire's order to remove a player from the immediate area of the facility (out of sight and earshot of the game, bleachers & dugouts) is not obeyed within 1 minute.
- (e) If because of the removal of a player or players from the game by the umpire(s), or for any injury or cause, there are fewer than eight players on either team.
- (f) If an individual does not sign his/her own name on the official scorecard.
- (g) If a player does not provide identification on an umpire's request prior to the completion of the game.
- (h) If no umpire appears (slow pitch only), teams are to choose an umpire. It is the responsibility of the winning manager to submit a scorecard, with the signatures of the players present, to the Sports Office within two working days after the game.

NOTE: Any team that FORFEITS a game before it is a REGULATION GAME will pay its own portion and the opponent's portion of the umpire(s) fees. The Opponent's portion of the umpire(s) fees will be taken from the "Team Forfeiture Bond," which must be replenished before the next scheduled game.

#### **SECTION 10– TEAMS DROPPING FROM THE LEAGUE:**

- (a) If a team drops out of a league prior to the scheduled third game, all games in which the team played shall not count in the standings. There will be no refund of registration fees or bond.
- (b) If a team drops out after the third league game, then all games played prior to this shall count, and any game scheduled in that same round thereafter shall be forfeited to the opposing team. All fees paid by said team shall be retained by the Sports Office.

NOTE: A team that FORFEITS two games in one season risks being dropped from the league without refund.

**SECTION 11–** When a team is ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of the fifth (or four and one half innings, if the home team is ahead) or **subsequent inning**, the game will be stopped and the game awarded to the team with the most runs. This is called the "Mercy Rule."

**SECTION 12–** SUSPENDED GAMES that are not completed due to mechanical failures (i.e. sprinklers, lights, etc.) will be made up from the

point of suspension. Games called due to INCLEMENT WEATHER will be replayed from the beginning if they are not regulation games. All MAKE-UP games will be scheduled the next available week after the last game of the regular season league schedule if time permits and at the discretion of the Sports Office (major factor is if the game has a bearing on teams qualifying for the playoffs). Teams are guaranteed a minimum of 10 scheduled games. Games are not made up for playoff seeding.

### **SECTION 13– PROTESTS**

- (a) **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:** A protest concerning the identification of a player, the use of illegal players (players not on a legal roster), players not signed in, or players playing out of classification, must be entered with the plate umpire prior to the third out of the bottom of the fourth inning (maximum of two players). **EXCEPTION:** Late arriving substitutes who enter the game after it has started may be protested at any time before the game ends (and do not count against the maximum of two players stated above). A roster or I.D. check is one in the same. **PENALTY** for violation of the eligibility rule: Forfeit – provided a formal, written protest is filed and upheld.
- (1) The manager must protest the game and point out the specific player(s) to the umpire
  - (2) The umpire logs it on the scorecard
  - (3) The player(s) must present a pictured I.D. to the umpire prior to the umpire leaving the field. The umpire will check that the picture (photo) matches the player’s features and that the name matches the scorecard.
  - (4) A maximum of two “starting” players may be protested.
  - (5) The manager must file a formal, written protest naming the player(s). Refer to Rule (c) below.
  - (6) The manager shall check on the status of the protest at the end of the game.
- (b) **RULE PROTEST:** Only protests based on misinterpretation of a playing rule shall be received and considered. Judgment calls cannot be protested.
- (1) The manager must notify the plate umpire before the next pitch that the game is being played under protest. The protest must include the rules and section of the official rule(s) under which the protest is made.
  - (2) The umpire logs the specifics on the scorecard and notifies the opposing manager.
  - (3) The manager must file a formal, written protest. Refer to Rule (c) below.
- (c) **FORMAL PROTESTS** must be submitted in writing and received by the Municipal Sports Office prior to 4:30 p.m. on the second working day following the day of the game. The protest must contain the date, time, place of the game, league number, and

the rule/section being protested. Each protest must be accompanied by a \$10.00 protest fee (no cash).

- (d) An eligibility protest is not accepted if the protesting team's roster is not on file in the Sports Office by the Roster Deadline.
- (e) In the event the Municipal Sports Directors or Executive committee upholds any rules or eligibility protest, such fee shall be returned; otherwise, it shall revert to the Sports Office General Fund.
- (f) Protests lodged during a playoff game will be decided immediately.
- (g) If a protest is upheld the game will not be replayed unless it is also determined that the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning.

– THE DIAMOND –

**SECTION 14– THE PLAYING FIELD** is the area within which the ball may be legally played or fielded. When possible the playing field shall have a clear and unobstructed area.

**SECTION 15– GROUND OR SPECIAL RULES** establishing the limits of the playing field may be designated by the sports office whenever backstops, fences, stands, vehicles, spectators, or other obstructions (i.e., soccer players, trees, shrubs, etc.) are within the prescribed area.

**SECTION 16– THE OFFICIAL DIAMOND** shall have 60-foot baselines.

**SECTION 17– THE PITCHING DISTANCE** shall be 46 feet.

EXCEPTION: Pitcher's box rule (page 24.)

**SECTION 18–** To determine the position of the home plate, draw a line in the direction it is desired to lay the diamond. Drive a stake at the corner of the home plate nearest the catcher. Fasten a cord at 46 feet, 60 feet, 84 feet 10½ inches, and 120 feet.

Place the cord (without stretching) along the direction line, and at the 46-foot marker place a stake – this will be the front line of the pitching plate. At the 84 feet 10½ inch mark will be the center of second base; and taking hold of the cord at the 60-foot marker, walk to the right of the direction line until the cord is taut, and scribe an arc on the ground. Next take the stake from the home plate position and place it at the center of second base. Now holding the cord at the 60-foot marker, scribe an arc that intersects the arc previously scribed in the ground. This will be the outside corner of first base. Again holding the cord at the 60-foot marker, walk across the field, and in like manner mark the outside corner of third base. Home plate, first, and third bases are **wholly** inside the diamond.

To check the diamond, place the home-plate end of the cord at the first base stake, and the 120-foot marker at third base. The 60-foot marker should now check at home plate and second base. (See Diagram on Page 8).

**SECTION 19– THE THREE-FOOT LINE** is drawn parallel to, and three feet from, the baseline starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base, and extending to a point 10 feet beyond first base.

**SECTION 20– THE BATTER'S BOX** is located one on each side of home plate, and measures three feet by seven feet. The inside lines of the batter's

box shall be six inches from home plate. The front line of the box shall be four feet in front of a line drawn through the center of home plate.



**SECTION 21**– THE CATCHER’S BOX shall be 10 feet in length from the rear outside corners of the batter’s boxes and shall be eight feet five inches wide.

**SECTION 22**– THE COACHES’ BOX is behind a line 15 feet long drawn outside the diamond. The line is parallel to and six feet from the first and third base lines extending from the bases toward home plate.

**SECTION 23**– THE PITCHER’S PLATE shall be 24 inches long and six inches wide, and shall be made of either wood or rubber. The top of the plate shall be level with the ground and the front of the plate shall be 46 feet from the far corner of home plate.

**SECTION 24**– THE HOME PLATE shall be made of rubber or other suitable material. It shall be a five-sided figure 17 inches wide across the edge facing the pitcher. The sides shall be parallel to the inside line of the batter’s boxes, and shall be eight and one half inches long. The sides of the point facing the catcher shall be 12 inches long. The entire white surface and black border is home plate.

THE SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL HOME PLATE EXTENSION (TEMPLATE) shall extend 17 inches from the rear of home and shall be constructed of a piece of rubber or other suitable material that fits against home plate and, combined with home plate, forms a 17” x 34” rectangle. The extension is used by the umpire for calling balls and strikes **ONLY; home plate must be touched in order to legally score a run.**

**SECTION 25**– FITNESS OR SUITABILITY OF THE DIAMOND for play shall be determined in advance by the director or supervisor of the area. Teams should telephone the field conditions hotline (818) 765-074. After 5:30p.m., weekdays, or after 8:30 a.m. Sundays, when such questions arise.) If both teams and umpire(s) are on the field of play ready to begin a game, the decision regarding the diamond’s suitability for play shall be determined by the director and/or the umpire(s). After play has been started by the umpire(s), he/she/they alone shall be the judge as to the fitness of the diamond for continuing play.

- (a) If playability cannot be determined prior to arrival at the scheduled field, teams and the umpire(s) must appear as scheduled.
- (b) Once a game has started, the umpire must have the consent of BOTH managers before the game can be moved to another diamond.

**SECTION 26**– BASES

- (a) First, second, and third base shall be approximately 15 inches square, and not more than three inches thick, made of canvas (filled with suitable material) or rubber. Such bases shall be securely anchored in position, or used without anchors in accordance with loose base rules (See Rule 2, “LOOSE BASES” on Page 17).
- (b) **FIRST BASE EXTENSION (Orange)** – Where Applicable: This is a safety devise used at first base to prevent collisions on close plays. The orange extension base is to be used by the batter-runner only. Oncethe

batter-runner has been judged to be safe at first by the umpire, the orange extension part of the base is no longer in play. To record an out the fielder must touch the white (regular) base, not the orange extension base. The batter-runner has the option of touching the regular base or the orange extension base, except when there is a play at first base – then the batter-runner must touch the orange extension base ONLY.

**PENALTY:** Batter-runner is out.

– EQUIPMENT –

**SECTION 27**– THE OFFICIAL BAT shall be round, made of **hardwood or metal**, no more than 34 inches long, and no more than 2¼ inches in diameter at its largest part. A tolerance of 1/32<sup>nd</sup> of an inch is permitted for expansion. The bat must have a safety grip of cork, tape, or composition material. The safety grip shall not be less than 10 inches long, and shall not extend more than 15 inches from the small end of the bat. Bats cannot be altered or tampered with, including the manufacturer’s labeling. Umpires may remove any bat(s) that they suspect might be altered. This discretion is left entirely to the umpire, and he/she needs no more evidence than a suspicion to remove a bat for the remainder of a game. Bats cannot exceed 1.20 BPF

- (a) **WOOD BAT** – The bat may be made of hard wood, in one piece, or laminated from sections of hard wood bonded together with adhesive in such a way that the grain directions of all the pieces are essentially parallel to the length of the bat.
- (b) **METAL BAT** – Metal bats must have only **ONE** layer of metal which composes the outer wall/shell of the bat. The handle/neck of the bat may be made of a separate piece from the barrel of the bat. The handle/neck of the bat may be composite. No bat may contain or have wording suggesting it contains titanium or other material of similar qualities. Multi-wall/shell bats are illegal. An illegal inner wall/shell is defined as any metal cylindrical layer separated from or made of a different material than the core of the barrel of the bat, regardless of whether this layer is fused, bonded, or has a zero-tolerance with the outer wall/shell. Bats must have an attached knob.

**NOTE:** Composite bats with shells not made of metal or wood are illegal.

**SECTION 28**– THE OFFICIAL BALL shall be a regular, smooth-seam, concealed-stitch ball. The ball shall not be less than 11½ inches, or more than 12 1/8 inches in circumference, and shall weigh not less than six ounces, nor more than 6¾ ounces. The current league approved softball is the Diamond Zulu, model #12RKYSC44375. **Each team must provide a new approved ball for each game or there will be fine for not doing so.** All game balls must be used at the discretion of the umpire or until the ball goes out of play, at which time the umpire will produce the back-up ball given to him/her by the teams. Teams can *request* a change of game ball if the ball becomes damaged or wet (at the discretion of the umpire) or between innings by the defensive pitcher.

**SECTION 29– SPIKES** – Closed toe shoes of some sort must be worn by players and base coaches; bare feet will not be permitted. Use of metal spikes is not permitted. Molded composition cleats will be allowed.

**SECTION 30– GLOVES** – A fielder’s glove may be worn by any player, but mitts **may be used only by the first baseman and catcher**. Webbing of any glove between thumb and forefinger shall not exceed more than five inches in length.

**SECTION 31– THE PENALTY FOR USE OF ILLEGAL EQUIPMENT** shall be the immediate removal of the illegal equipment from the game. Batters that enter the batter’s box with an illegal bat will be declared out immediately. The penalty for use of an illegal bat, when the ball is hit fair or foul and discovered before the next pitch, shall be: the batter is declared out, ball declared dead, and the illegal bat is removed from the game. The penalty for use of an illegal glove or mitt, when the ball is hit fair or foul and the illegal glove or mitt is used and discovered before the next pitch, shall be: the offensive team has choice of (1) the result of the play or (2) batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base and all other baserunners advance 1 base if forced, and the illegal glove or mitt is removed from the game.

**SECTION 32– WARM-UP ATTACHMENTS:** All bat weights, donuts, sleeves, etc. are not allowed in live-ball territory.

**SECTION 33– ALL EQUIPMENT**, both game and personal, must be furnished by each participating team with the exception of bases and the pitching template.

**SECTION 34 – LEAGUE DIRECTOR:** The League Director has the authority to rule on any subject not specifically covered in the rule book.

## RULE 2

### DEFINITION OF TERMS

**AN ADJUDGED PLAY** is a play involving a judgment decision by the umpire(s).

**AN APPEAL PLAY** is a play in which an umpire(s) cannot make a decision until requested to do so by a player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch, or before the entire defensive team has left the field. For the purpose of this rule, the defensive team has “left the field” when the pitcher and all the infielders have left fair territory on the way to the bench or dugout area. Any fielder may appeal any runner once.

- (a) While the ball is in play, an appeal play may be made by tagging the runner who missed the base, or by tagging the base that was missed. The whole appeal must be stated. Any defensive fielder may state the appeal; or
- (b) Once the ball has been returned to the infield, and time has been called, any fielder (including the pitcher or catcher), with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon. The umpire should acknowledge the appeal and make a decision on the play. The ball remains dead until the next pitch.
  - (1) The appeal must be made before the next pitch or before all infielders have left the field of play.
  - (2) Only verbal appeals are necessary, no action is needed.
  - (3) More than one appeal may be made and by different defensive players, but only one appeal per runner.

**A BALL** is a pitch that does not enter the strike zone in flight, and is not struck at by the batter.

**A BASE** is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; usually refers to the canvas bags or rubber molds and the rubber plate which marks the base points.

**A BASE COACH** is a team member who is stationed in the coaches’ box at first or third base to direct the batter and base runners.

**A BASERUNNER** is a player of the team at bat who has finished his/her turn at bat, has reached first base, and has not yet been put out.

**A BASE ON BALLS** or **WALK** is an award of first base granted to a batter who, during his/her time at bat, receives four pitches outside the strike zone.

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: See also **INTENTIONAL WALK**.

NOTE<sup>-2</sup>: **Co-Recreation Slow Pitch**: A male batter who is walked on four consecutive balls with no strikes thrown during his time at bat shall be awarded *second* base. Base runners advance only if forced to vacate their bases.

**A BATTER** is an offensive player who takes his/her position in the batter’s box.

**A BATTED BALL** is any ball that hits the bat, or is hit by the bat, and which lands either in fair or foul territory. No intention to hit the ball is necessary in order for a ball to be declared a batted ball.

**A BATTER-RUNNER** is a player who has finished his/her turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.

**THE BATTER'S BOX** is the area within which the batter shall stand during his/her time at bat.

**THE BATTERY** is the pitcher and catcher.

**THE BATTING ORDER** is the official listing of offensive players in the order in which members of that team **must** come to bat. (Also known as the LINE-UP.)

**A BUNT** is a tapped ball not swung at, but **intentionally** met with the bat and tapped slowly within the infield. Bunting **is not** legal; if the batter bunts fair or foul, he/she is declared out and the ball is dead. Batters must take a full swing.

**THE BENCH OR DUGOUT** is the seating facility reserved for players, substitutes, and other team members when they are not actively engaged on the playing field.

**A CATCH** is the act of the defensive player in receiving and **holding firmly**, in his/her hand or glove, a batted or thrown ball. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following his/her contact with the ball, he/she collides with a player or with a wall, or if he/she falls down, and as a result of such a collision or falling, drops the ball. If the player has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught. In establishing the validity of the catch, the umpire must believe that the player has held the ball long enough to prove that he/she had complete control of the ball, and that his/her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional.

**THE CATCHER'S BOX** is that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball and/or he/she hits the pitched ball.

**A CHOPPED BALL** is a batted ball that the batter strikes downward so that it hits the ground either fair or foul, with a deliberate attempt (in the umpire's judgment), and downward chopping motion with the bat. In slow pitch, **this is illegal**; the batter is declared out and ball is dead if the umpire(s) declares that a hit ball is a chopped ball.

**A COURTESY RUNNER** is a substitute runner. A batter must reach first base before a courtesy runner may be substituted. A team at bat may use a courtesy runner once each inning. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out. The courtesy runner may be taken **at any time** during the inning. If a runner needs a courtesy runner in the first inning of a game, and there are no outs, the substitute runner will be the last batter in the line up. If a runner needs a courtesy runner in an inning in which no outs have yet been recorded, the substitute runner will be the player who made the last out in the previous inning. If a team goes through the batting order and the player

who was replaced in that inning needs a courtesy runner again, he/she may have one. **CO-RECREATION:** Substitute runner must be of the same gender as the batter-runner, and have made the last out. **CO-RECREATION:** One runner per gender, per inning.

**A DEAD BALL** is a ball not in play, and is not considered in play again until the pitcher holds it in the pitching position, and the umpire has called “Play Ball” or motioned to the pitcher to pitch.

**THE DEFENSIVE TEAM** is the team who is on the field.

**A DOUBLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which two offensive players are legally put out as a result of continuous action.

**A FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that:

- (a) Settles or is touched on fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
- (b) Bounds past first or third base on or over fair territory.
- (c) While on or over fair territory, touches the person, attached equipment or clothing of a player or an umpire.
- (d) Touches first, second, or third base.
- (e) First falls or is first touched on or over fair territory beyond first, second, or third base.

**NOTE:** A fair fly ball shall be judged according to relative position of the ball and the foul line, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time he/she touches the ball.

**FAIR TERRITORY** is that part of the playing field within and including the first and third base lines, from home base along the base lines to the end of the playing field.

**A FAKE TAG** is a form of obstruction that impedes the progress of a runner. The runner doesn’t have to stop or slide, only slow down in order for a defensive team member’s actions to be considered a fake tag. Fake tags on baserunners may result in the award of extra bases and/or ejection of the guilty player at the discretion of the umpire(s).

**A FIELDER** is any defensive player. The tenth player in slow pitch and modified pitch may be positioned anywhere in fair territory.

**A FIELDER’S CHOICE** is the act of a fielder who handles a fair grounder and, instead of throwing to first base to retire the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to retire a preceding runner. The term is also used by scorers to:

- (a) Account for the advance of the batter-runner who takes one or more extra bases when the fielder who handles his/her safe hit attempts to retire a preceding runner.
- (b) Account for the advance of a runner (other than by a stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to retire another runner.
- (c) Account for the advance of a runner made solely because of the defensive team’s indifference, (undefended steal).

**A FLY BALL** is a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight.

**A FORCE OUT** is an out which can be made only when a base-runner loses the right to the base occupied because of the batter becoming a base-runner.

**A FORFEITED GAME** is a game declared ended by the umpire(s) in favor of the offended team by the score of 7 to 0 for violation of the rules.

**A FOUL BALL** is a batted ball that:

- (a) Settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base.
- (b) Bounds past first or third base over foul territory.
- (c) While on or over foul territory, touches the person, attached equipment, or clothing of a player or an umpire, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- (d) First falls or is first touched over foul territory beyond first or third base.
- (e) Touches the batter, or the bat a second time, while the ball is within the batter's box.
- (f) Immediately rebounds up from the ground or home plate and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.

NOTE: A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time he/she touches the ball.

**FOUL TERRITORY** is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

**A FOUL TIP** is a batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's hands or glove and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught, and any foul tip that is caught is a strike. In slow pitch the ball is dead. It is not a catch, if the ball rebounds off of the catcher's mask or body unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand. A foul hit which rises higher than the batter's head shall not be a foul tip under this rule; it is a declared foul ball and, if caught, results in the batter being declared out.

**A GROUND BALL** is a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

**AN ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL** is a ball batted fair or foul by the batter when either or both of his/her feet are on the ground outside the lines (drawn or not) of the batter's box, or are in contact with home plate. It is also an illegally batted ball to strike a ball with an illegal bat.

**AN ILLEGAL PITCH:** (See Rule 4, PITCHING REG. on pages 23-26).

**AN INFIELD FLY** is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) that can be caught, in the opinion of the umpire(s), by an infielder with ordinary effort, and when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out, resulting in the Infield Fly Rule being enforced by the umpire(s). The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder who stations himself/herself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

When it seems apparent to the umpire(s) that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire(s) shall immediately declare “INFIELD FLY RULE” for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire(s) shall declare “INFIELD FLY RULE, IF FAIR.”

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: The batter is out when the Infield Fly Rule is enforced by the umpire(s).

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul ball.

NOTE<sup>-2</sup>: If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline and bounces fair before passing the first or third base it is an Infield Fly, and if appropriate, the Infield Fly Rule is enforced.

**AN INNING** starts when the third out of the previous inning is recorded.

**INTERFERENCE:**

- (a) Offensive interference is an act (physical or vocal) by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders, or confuses any fielder or pitcher attempting to make a play or deliver a pitch. If the umpire(s) declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire(s), legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner including the batter-runner interferes in any way and prevents a double play anywhere, two shall be declared out (the runner who interfered and the runner closest to home plate). If a retired runner interferes, and in the judgment of the umpire, another runner could have been put out, the umpire shall declare the runner closest to home plate out.
- (b) Defensive interference is an act, verbal or physical, by the catcher that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch. On any such interference the ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base.
- (c) Umpire’s interference occurs:
  - (1) When a fair ball touches an umpire in fair territory before passing an infielder. The ball is dead and the batter is entitled to First base without liability to be put out. Baserunners not forced by the batter-runner must return.
- (d) Spectator interference occurs when a batted or thrown ball is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game. If the ball touches an object which is not part of the official equipment or playing area, whether it was thrown or batted, it shall be treated the same as spectator interference and shall carry the same penalty adjudged by the umpire. The penalty for spectator interference shall be the sole judgment of the umpire(s).

**INTENTIONAL WALK** The umpire(s) may award an intentional walk to the batter upon the request of the **defensive pitcher only**. The request must be made prior to the first pitch to the batter. Once the umpire(s) has awarded first base to the batter, the defensive pitcher or manager may not withdraw the request for an intentional walk.

**A LEGAL TOUCH** occurs when a runner, or batter-runner, who is not touching a base, is touched by the ball while it is securely held in the fielder's hand or glove. The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched with the hand or glove in which the ball is held.

**A LEGALLY CAUGHT BALL** occurs when a fielder catches a batted or thrown ball provided it is not caught in the fielder's hat, cap, protectors, pockets, or other part of his/her uniform.

**A LINE DRIVE** is an aerial ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.

**THE LINE-UP:** See THE BATTING ORDER

**A LIVE BALL** is a ball that is in play.

**THE LOOSE BASES** rule applies to bases either not fastened down to the playing field, or to a base that becomes dislodged. When a runner slides feet first or head first, the umpire's first call will stand. When a base-runner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he/she nor succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base *unreasonably* out of position. Whether a base is or is not *unreasonably* out of position is the sole judgment of the umpire(s).

**THE OBSTRUCTED AREA** is the area beyond the out of play lines or imaginary lines.

**OBSTRUCTION** is the act of a defensive team member that hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball or that impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding the ball, or is making a play on an initial batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical or verbal.

**THE OFFENSIVE TEAM** is the team at bat. A player at bat is a member of the offensive team.

**AN OVERSLIDE (OR OVERSLIDING)** is the act of an offensive player when his/her slide to a base, other than when advancing from home to first, or third base to home, is with such momentum that he/she loses contact with the base, which act places him/her in jeopardy to be put out.

**AN OVERTHROW** is a play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another to retire a runner who has not reached base or is off base and which goes into foul territory. (See Rule 5.1g-3 and 5.1i on page 27)

**A PASSED BALL** is a legally delivered ball (by the pitcher) that should have been held or controlled by the catcher with ordinary effort.

**THE PITCHING DISTANCE** shall be 46 feet for Open (a.k.a. “Men’s”), Women’s, and Co-recreation games. See pitchers box rule on page 23

**“PLAY” OR “PLAY BALL”** is the umpire’s order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball. Or the Umpire may simply motion the pitcher to pitch.

**PROTESTING GAMES:** If it is ruled that the protested decision violated the rules (in other words, the protest was upheld), no replay of the game will be ordered unless, in the opinion of the Municipal Sports Directors and/or the Executive Board, the violation affected the protesting team’s chances of winning the game, and at the discretion of the Municipal Sports Office the game has a bearing on the standings. (See Rule 1.13 on pages 6-7)

**A RETOUCH** is the act of a runner in returning to base as legally required.

**THE STRIKE ZONE:** Is an area created by placing a plate extension (template) against the rear of home plate, making a 17-inch by 34-inch rectangle including the plate. A legally pitched ball, not struck at, that lands ON OR TOUCHES ANY PART OF the “strike zone” will be ruled a strike by the umpire. The pitch must be of moderate speed and arc over the batter’s head. The moderate speed and arc of a pitch will be solely judged by the umpire(s).

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: The catcher must allow the ball to land or touch on any part of the strike zone in order for it to be called a strike, (for safety purposes).

NOTE<sup>-2</sup>: The batter shall not hit the ball after it touches the ground, plate, or plate extension. If the batter swings at the ball after it touches the ground, plate, or plate extension the ball is dead and a strike is called by the umpire. If it is the third strike, the batter will be declared out by the umpire(s) (for safety purposes).

**A TAG** is the act of a fielder in touching a base with his/her body while holding the ball securely and firmly in his/her glove or hand, or touching a runner with the ball, or with his/her hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in his/her glove or hand.

**“TIME”** is the announcement by an umpire(s) of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

**AN UMPIRE** has the duty to administer decisions on the game according to the rules of play as adopted herein by the Los Angeles Municipal Sports Section Advisory Board, as well as the policies and regulations of the Department of Recreation and Parks, as they apply. The umpire shall have the power to make decisions for infractions of rules committed before, during or after the game. This includes periods when the game may be momentarily stopped for any reason.

NOTE: If two or more umpires are assigned to a game, the plate umpire will be the umpire-in-chief. All protests must be lodged with him/her.

## **RULE 3**

### **TEAMS PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES**

**SECTION 1**– EIGHT PLAYERS shall constitute a team. No team shall start or continue a game with fewer than eight players. Except for the pitcher and catcher, the team in the field may be stationed at any desirable point on fair ground, except as stated in Rule 3.9b on page 20 and “CO-RECREATION”, DEFENSE (b) on page 44.

Teams can consist of up to 10 defensive players;

NOTE: See Rule 6.2e, CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER on page 30-31.

**SECTION 2**– A SUBSTITUTE MAY REPLACE a player whose name appears in his/her team’s batting order, but such relieved player, shall not thereafter participate in the game except as a coach, coacher, or manager.

**SECTION 3**– COURTESY RUNNERS are allowed pursuant to the guidelines stated in Rule 2, “A COURTESY RUNNER” on page 13.

**SECTION 4**– THE NEW PITCHER shall, unless incapacitated, continue to pitch until the batter then at bat or his/her substitute has either been put out or has reached first base, or the side has been retired.

**SECTION 5**– ON SUBSTITUTIONS, whether for the batter, baserunner, or fielder, the manager making such decisions must immediately notify the umpire(s) who shall call time out and announce same to spectators, players, and scorekeepers. If through oversight such announcement is not made, the substitute shall not be called out and the substitution shall be considered legal.

SUBSTITUTE PLAYERS will be considered in the game on the following conditions:

- (a) If a pitcher, when he/she takes his/her place on the pitcher’s plate.
- (b) If a batter, when he/she takes his/her place in the batter’s box.
- (c) If a fielder, when he/she takes the place of the fielder substituted for and play is resumed.
- (d) If a runner, when the substitute replaces him/her on the base the runner is holding. Failure of a manager or an umpire to make the necessary report and announcement shall place no penalty against the substitute player if such substituted player is considered in the game according to the above conditions.

**SECTION 6**– THE OFFENSIVE TEAM shall be allowed TWO COACHES ONLY, one near first base and one near third base, who shall remain within the coach’s box at all times.

**SECTION 7**– SHIRTS OF SOME SORT MUST BE WORN.

**SECTION 8**– CASTS AND JEWELRY: Casts (plastic or other hard substance in its final form) may not be worn during the game. Exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, large or loop type earrings and neck chains may not be worn during the game. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry, but if worn, they must be taped to the body. **Penalty for violating the Jewelry Rule (Page 19-20, Rule 3.8): Each team will get one**

**warning. After that any player in violation will be declared out when they step in the batter's box.**

### **SECTION 9– UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT**

- (a) No manager, player, substitute, coach, trainer, fan, or bat-keeper shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coach's box, or on the playing field, or elsewhere:
- (1) Incite or try to incite, by word or sign, a demonstration by spectators.
  - (2) Use language that will in any manner refer to or reflect negatively upon opposing players, an umpire, teammate, or any spectator.
  - (3) Call "Time" or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.
  - (4) **USE ALCOHOL OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES: ABSOLUTELY NO DRINKING OF ALCOHOL OR USE OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES IS PERMITTED BY PLAYERS OR SPECTATORS. NO ALCOHOL OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ARE ALLOWED AT RECREATION CENTERS AT ANY TIME.**
  - (5) Violate the Participant's CODE OF CONDUCT (Pages 46-51). The degree of infraction shall, in the official's judgment, draw a minimum penalty of a warning or a maximum penalty of removal from the game.

**NOTE:** Any team or participant reported with alcoholic beverages or controlled substances before, during or after a game on Los Angeles City, Department of Recreation and parks facilities, (including the parking lots), will automatically have their bond revoked. The second offense will result in the team being suspended from future participation.

- (b) No fielder shall take a position in the batter's line of vision and, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, and/or act in a manner to distract the batter. **PENALTY:** The offender shall be removed from the game.

### **SECTION 10– CLASSIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY:**

- (a) **DIVISIONS:**

- (1) **OPEN DIVISION:** (Formerly "Men's"), Teams traditionally composed primarily of Men; however women can participate in an "Open" division. No restrictions based on gender.
- (2) **WOMEN'S DIVISION:** Only women may participate.
- (3) **CO-RECREATION (Co-Rec) DIVISION:** Minimum of 4

women and 4 men needed to play. See CO-RECREATION SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES for specific rules.

- (b) **CLASSIFICATIONS:** SLOW PITCH, FAST PITCH, and MODIFIED PITCH.
- (c) **SKILL LEVEL CLASSIFICATION:**
- (1) "B+" = Most highly skilled softball; exceptional players with expert abilities.

- (2) “B” = Good to exceptional softball; skilled players with very good abilities.
- (3) “C” = Recreational softball; wide range of entry level and average abilities.
- (4) Skill levels are also divided into plus (+) levels (i.e. “C+” and “B+”).

NOTE: The City of Los Angeles, Municipal Sports Section Senior Sports directors have been vested with the authority to determine eligibility of any team or individual in the above divisions. It will be the responsibility of the Municipal Sports staff to determine the team skill level and the appropriate league competition. A major criterion for upgrading league classification is if a team finished in first place in their league.

- (d) INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS MAY PLAY on as many teams as they wish provided any two teams are not in the same league. If a player wishes to switch teams in the same league, a signed release must be submitted to the Sports Office from the first team manager prior to his/her participation for the second team. If a player plays for two teams in the same league the first roster he/she signed will be the only team they’re eligible to play for. If a player plays for two teams on the same day they are at risk for having both their games forfeited.
- (e) INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS ARE RESTRICTED to play within 2 adjoining skill level classifications. Adjoining classifications are: C and C+, C+ and B, B and B+, and B+ and A.
  - (1) Managers are required to ask players if they are playing on another softball team during the season.
  - (2) Any player playing “out of classification” may receive up to a 2-year suspension and the manager in violation may be given up to a 1-year suspension.
  - (3) A team that uses a player out of classification will receive a forfeit loss for any game in which that player has participated in.

NOTE: The team with the lower skill level will be the team penalized. For example, if a player plays on both a “B” team and a “C” team, it is the “C” team that will be penalized.

- (f) The minimum age to play on a Municipal Sports Softball team shall be 18 years old. Players under the age of 18 may are not eligible to play.  
**PENALTY:** Game will be forfeited.

## SECTION 11– TEAM ROSTERS

- (a) ROSTER LIMIT is a maximum of 20 players. Roster minimum is eight players.
- (b) ROSTER DEADLINES: A legal roster:
  - (1) Is due **prior** to the third league game and the final deadline is **prior** to the sixth league game. A late roster is defined as one that is date-stamped in the Sports Office after the sixth league

game begins. Teams with no legal roster on file after the second league game will lose all eligibility protests lodged against them and are not permitted to file an eligibility protest against another team, until a legal roster is filed.

NOTE<sup>1</sup>: A “league game” is counted for each date teams in a particular league are scheduled to play. It is not necessarily the same number as actually scheduled games for each team due to “byes”.

- (2) Faxed rosters will not be accepted.
- (3) Both sides must be signed and all contact information must be completely filled out by all players.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the team manager to verify that the Sports Office received the roster. The Sports Office will not notify teams when rosters are late.
- (d) A team that misses the final deadline will not be eligible for Tournament play.
- (e) ADDING AND DROPPING PLAYERS is allowed prior to the eighth league game by completing and submitting an “Add/Drop Form.” An “added” player cannot play until the signed “Add/Drop Form” is date-stamped in the Sports Office. If a team does not have a legal roster on file in the Sports Office, the “Add/Drop Form” will not be legal.
- (f) Women’s teams must have a woman manager. Co-Recreation and Open teams may have a man or a woman manager.
- (g) Women may play on Open division teams. Men may not play on a Women’s division team. **PENALTY:** Game will be forfeited.

#### **SECTION 12– GAME CHECK IN**

- (a) All starting players must sign the OFFICIAL SCORECARD prior to the end of the second inning. Late-arriving players must sign the scorecard prior to entering the game. **PENALTY:** Game will be forfeited.
- (b) All players are required to have a pictured driver’s license or pictured government issued I.D. with them at all games. I.D. must be produced upon an umpire’s or Sports Director’s request prior to the last out of the game. **PENALTY:** Game will be forfeited.
- (c) Any player signing the OFFICIAL SCORECARD will be considered as entering the game.

#### **SECTION 13– EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS**

- (a) Any player or spectator ejected from a game must leave the immediate area of the facility (out of sight of the game, away from bleachers, dugouts, etc.). That player will receive a minimum one-game suspension from his/her team’s **next** game. The player is not permitted to attend games while on suspension and will be on probation for at least the remainder of the season.
- (b) If a manager is ejected from a game he/she will receive a minimum one-game suspension from his/her team’s next game, and MUST meet

with a minimum of two Municipal Sports Directors before he/she can participate again.

- (c) It is the responsibility of team managers to make sure that suspended players do not participate on their team or attend their games while on suspension.
- (d) If a suspended player participates on a team, any game in which they play will be counted as a forfeit loss, and the team's bond will be forfeited. Once suspended, players may not participate or attend any City of Los Angeles Municipal Sports leagues during the duration of their suspension.
- (e) When a manager refuses to give the name of a player on the request of an umpire, that player shall immediately be removed from the game. This information must be reported to the Sports Office and the team manager will be suspended from his/her team's **next** game.
- (f) If a team is suspended from the league no more than four (4) players from that team may play together on another team during the duration of the suspension.
- (g) No participant shall endanger the safety of any player, official, or spectator.

**RULE 4****PITCHING REGULATIONS**

**NOTE: PENALTY FOR ILLEGAL PITCHES– Any infraction of Sections 1-7 shall be considered as an illegal pitch. The ball is dead. A ball is called in favor of the batter. The ball shall remain dead until put in play at the pitcher’s plate.**

- (a) No baserunners may advance. **EXCEPTION:** If the batter swings at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by the batter.

**SECTION 1–** The pitcher’s hand and body shall come to a **FULL AND COMPLETE STOP** facing the batter with both shoulders in line with first and third base, with the ball held with one or both hands in front of the body (knee to shoulder), and with his/her pivot foot on the pitcher’s plate and non-pivot foot on or behind the pitcher’s plate (**EXCEPTION –** see note below), (both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher’s plate), for not less than one second before the start of his/her delivery or backswing.

**NOTE:** The pitcher may pitch from the pitcher’s plate or from the pitcher’s box, an area the width of the pitcher’s plate and up to 12 feet behind the pitcher’s plate. The pitcher must inform the umpire if he/she is going to pitch from the pitcher’s box. Pitcher may move from one area (pitcher’s box to pitcher’s plate or vice versa) to another but not during an at bat. The pitcher may deliver the pitch from any point inside the pitchers box and for the purpose of rule enforcement, the pitchers box is treated the same as the pitchers plate.

**SECTION 2– THE BODY, FEET, ARMS, AND HANDS** must come to a full and complete stop at the same time before the start of the delivery.

**SECTION 3– THE PITCHER** shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive a pitch.

**SECTION 4– THE PITCHER** shall not take the pitching position on the pitcher’s plate without having the ball in his/her possession.

**SECTION 5– THE PITCHER** shall not at any time during the game be allowed to use tape or other substance upon the ball, the pitching hand or fingers. Under the supervision and control of the umpire(s), powdered rosin may be used to dry the hands.

**SECTION 6– THE PITCHER** shall deliver the ball to the batter within 20 seconds after he/she receives the ball.

**SECTION 7– THE PITCHER** may make any motion until coming to a full and **COMPLETE STOP** and presenting the ball (knee to shoulder). “Presenting” the ball means to hold the ball in front of the pitcher’s body between the knees and shoulders, stopped for at least 1 second; the ball may be in the pitcher’s hand or glove and does not need to be visible to the batter.

NOTE: In making a legal delivery, the pitcher MAY make contact with his clothing or body with his hand or the ball.

**SECTION 8**– NO PITCH shall be declared when the pitcher pitches during the suspension of play. No pitch will also be declared when a baserunner leaves the base too soon.

NOTE: On a “No Pitch” call by the umpire, the ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch will be cancelled.

**SECTION 9**– THE PITCHER SHALL NOT QUICK-PITCH the batter (pitch the ball before the batter has taken his/her position or is off balance as the result of the previous pitch). PENALTY: The ball is dead; no pitch is declared.

**SECTION 10**– THE PITCH STARTS when one hand is taken off the ball. In the act of delivering the ball the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be toward the batter, and simultaneous with the delivery of the ball to the batter.

**SECTION 11**– A LEGAL DELIVERY shall be a ball which is delivered to the batter in an underhand motion.

- (a) The release of the ball and the follow-through of the hand must be forward past the straight line of the body.
- (b) The hand shall be below the hip and wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- (c) The pitch is completed with a forward swing of the pitching arm and a step toward the batter.

NOTE: The pitcher may deliver the ball without taking a step toward the batter.

**SECTION 12**– THE PITCHER MAY USE ANY WINDUP DESIRED PROVIDED:

- (a) he/she does not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- (b) he/she does not use a rocker action in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, he/she removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing and returns the ball to both hands.
- (c) he/she does not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion of the hands and arms

**SECTION 13**– AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH INNING or when a pitcher relieves another, no more than **one minute** may be used to deliver no more than five warm-up pitches to the catcher or other teammate. The minute starts after the third out of the previous half- inning. Play shall be suspended during this time. **PENALTY** of excess warm-up pitches constitutes a ball to the batter.

**Penalty for violations of Sections 10 - 13 is an illegal pitch, unless the batter attempts to hit such a pitch, in which event the pitched ball shall be considered legal.**

**SECTION 14– THE PITCHER MUST** have one foot in contact with the pitcher’s plate and the other foot firmly on the ground or in contact with the pitching plate. Both feet must be within the width of the pitcher’s plate. A step does not have to be made when releasing the ball, but if it is, it must be forward and within the 24 inch width of the pitching plate.

**SECTION 15– A LEGAL DELIVERY** is a ball that is delivered to the batter in an underhand motion and released at a moderate speed.

- (a) The pitch must be a continuous motion and delivered on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
- (b) The pitcher may not continue winding up after releasing the ball.
- (c) The release of the ball and the follow-through of the hand and wrist must be forward past the straight line of the body.
- (d) The hand shall be below the hip and wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- (e) The pitcher may not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- (f) The pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter at a moderate speed. The ball must arc over the batter’s head.

**NOTE:** In the event that an umpire(s) calls an illegal pitch, the umpire(s) declares a Delayed Dead Ball. A ball shall be called on the batter. No baserunners may advance. **EXCEPTION:** If a batter strikes at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by the batter.

**SECTION 16– A PITCHED BALL NOT STRUCK AT** but striking home plate or the template that extends 17 inches behind home plate shall be ruled a strike by the umpire, provided it is a legal pitch.

**NOTE:** The template is only used for determining balls and strikes **by the umpire**; for a runner to score, he/she must touch home plate.

- (a) Any pitch, swung at or not, that touches the ground before crossing or touching home plate will be declared dead. If any ball touches the ground and is then hit by the batter, the pitch is ruled a strike and the ball is declared dead. If it is the third strike, the batter is out.

**NOTE:** This rule is included as a safety precaution to protect the catcher and to penalize the batter when he/she unnecessarily swings at a dead ball.

- (b) A batter does not get his/her base when struck by a pitched ball.

**SECTION 17–** The pitching distance shall be 46 feet for open, women, and co-recreation. **EXCEPTION:** Pitcher’s box rule on page 23.

**SECTION 18** There will be only one charged conference (time-out is called by the umpire) between the manager or other team representative with each and every pitcher in an inning. The second charged conference shall result in the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the inning.

**RULE 5****BALL DEAD – BALL LIVE AND IN PLAY**

**SECTION 1– THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY** under the following circumstances:

- (a) When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter’s person or clothing while the batter is standing in his/her position, whether the ball is struck at or not.

**NOTE:** If the batter swings at a ball and the ball hits his/her hands, the hands on the bat are considered part of the bat and the ball shall be played as a legally hit ball.

- (b) When a pitch is called illegal (Delayed Dead Ball).

**NOTE<sup>-1</sup>:** If a batter swings at any illegal pitch, it shall be a strike and there shall be no penalty for such illegal pitch. The ball shall remain in play if hit by a batter.

- (c) When “NO PITCH” is declared.
- (d) When the batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- (e) When a foul ball is not legally caught.
- (f) When a baserunner is called out for leaving the base too soon.
- (g) When the offensive team causes interference:
  - (1) After hitting or bunting a fair ball, his/her bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory, the ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops his/her bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory, and in the judgment of the umpire, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play.
  - (2) After hitting or bunting a foul ball, he/she intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance.
  - (3) When an overthrow is touched intentionally by the person or clothing of a coach.
  - (4) When a fair ball strikes a baserunner or umpire before touching or passing a fielder.
- (h) When an overthrow enters dead ball territory (including the dugout).
- (i) When a play is completed and runners are stopped and not attempting any further advance and the umpire has declared “TIME OUT.”
- (j) When the ball is played outside the established limits of the playing field.
- (k) When the catcher interferes with the batter.

**NOTE:** The interference will be disregarded if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, or otherwise, and all the other runners advance at least one base, in completion of the play.

- (l) When the umpire(s) calls, “TIME.”
- (m) When a fair batted ball enters dead ball territory.

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: In the judgment of an umpire(s), when any fair batted ball bounds or rolls over or under a fence in fair or foul territory, or is interfered with, the umpire(s) shall award the batter and baserunners as many bases as the umpire(s) feels the batter and/or runner(s) would have reached; or he/she may declare the batter out for a ball which could have been caught.

NOTE<sup>-2</sup>: Any fly or bounding ball that goes immediately into dead territory before reaching a defensive player or after being deflected by a defensive player is considered dead, and baserunners are awarded two bases from the base occupied prior to the pitch. The batter-runner is awarded a double, and is entitled to second base without liability to be put out. EXCEPTION: When in the judgment of the umpire(s), the ball did not go immediately out of play and the batter-runner would have attained more than second base, the umpire(s) may award three or four bases to the batter. An example of this situation is when a batter hits a long fair fly ball over an outfielder's head and then the ball deflects out of play.

NOTE<sup>-3</sup>: If a batted ball is caught and then carried into dead ball territory, ball is dead, the batter is out, and all runners advance one base, without liability to be put out, beyond the base they occupied prior to the pitch. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the fielder intentionally carries a legally caught ball into dead ball territory, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners are awarded two bases without liability to be put out, beyond the base they occupied prior to the pitch.

- (n) When the umpire awards an intentional walk to the batter. The request must be made by the defensive pitcher prior to the first pitch to the batter. Once the umpire has awarded first base to the batter, no one may withdraw the request for an intentional walk.
- (o) When a batter receives a walk. The ball is dead and baserunners may advance only if forced.
- (p) When a pitched ball is not hit by the batter, runners may not advance and the ball must be returned to the pitcher. Runners must be in contact with the base before the next pitch.
- (q) When an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly or fair line drive in flight with at least first base occupied and with less than two outs.

NOTE: In the foregoing cases, the ball shall not be considered in play again until it is held by the pitcher standing in his/her position, and the umpire(s) declares "PLAY."

**SECTION 2– THE BALL IS LIVE AND IN PLAY** under the following circumstances:

- (a) When a fly ball, either fair or foul, has been legally caught.
- (b) When obstruction by a fielder with a baserunner is called by the umpire(s), provided that the runner obstructed with may not be put out before he/she reaches the base to which he/she is entitled.

- (c) When the Infield Fly Rule is invoked.
- (d) When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in the field of play.
- (e) When a fair ball strikes an umpire(s) or baserunner on fair ground after passing or touching a fielder.
- (f) When a fair ball strikes an umpire(s) on foul ground.
- (g) When a thrown ball goes into foul territory or strikes an umpire(s) and is not obstructed.
- (h) When a baserunner is called out for passing a preceding runner.
- (i) When the ball is not dead as defined in Rule 5.1 on pages 26-28.
- (j) When baserunners have reached the bases to which they are entitled under Rule 7 on pages 34-40.

## RULE 6

### BATTING

**SECTION 1–** THE BATTER SHALL take his/her position in the batter’s box promptly when it is his/her time at bat. Batters start with a one ball one strike count.

(a) The batter shall not have his entire foot touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter’s box, or any part of his foot touching home plate when the ball is hit.

(b) The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher to the other batter’s box while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch.

(c) The batter must take his/her position after the umpire declares “PLAY.”

(d) Batters start with a 1 ball 1 strike count.

**NOTE:** If the batter refuses to take his/her position in the batter’s box during his/her time at bat, the umpire shall order the pitcher to pitch and call “STRIKE” on each such pitch. The batter may take his/her proper position after any such pitch and the regular ball and strike count shall continue, but if he/she does not take his/her proper position before three strikes are called, he/she shall be declared out.

**SECTION 2–** EACH PLAYER OF THE SIDE AT BAT shall become a batter in the order in which his/her name appears on their scoresheet (also known as the “batting order” or “line-up”).

(a) Each team must keep their batting order on their scoresheet. Upon request, scoresheets must be made available to the opposing team’s manager and/or the umpire(s).

(b) The batting order on the scoresheet must be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another, in which case, the substitute must take the place of the removed player in the batting order. All defensive players must be in the batting order.

(c) The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who *completed* his/her turn at bat in the preceding inning.

(d) When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed his/her turn at bat, he/she shall be the first batter in the next inning.

(e) **THE BATTING ORDER MUST BE ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE GAMES STARTS.** Once the batting order is established, teams may not increase or decrease the number of spots in the batting order *EXCEPT* as allowed in rules 6.2g-3 and 6.2i on page 31. A team has the option of two types of Batting Orders:

(1) Using a “REGULAR BATTING ORDER”: All players in the batting order play defense. Slow Pitch and Modified teams may use eight to ten players; Fast Pitch teams may use eight or nine players.

(2) Using a “CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER”:

- (i) Teams may use 11-20 players;
- (ii) A team can bat any number of legal players attending the game.
- (iii) All defensive players must have positions in the batting order.
- (iv) Defensive players coming out of the game may return to play defense, but must continue to bat in their original spot in the batting order.
- (v) Defensive positions may be interchanged.
- (f) The batting order cannot be interchanged. Players are “locked into” the order listed on the scoresheet.
- (g) Late arriving players must check in with the umpire when they arrive and may be added to end of the batting order.
- (h) A team may start a game with eight players. If the line-up drops to seven players, the game is forfeited to the opposing team.
- (i) If a player leaves the game, the game will continue unless the line-up drops to seven players; however an out is recorded the next time the vacated position comes up in the order. The line-up closes after the out is recorded. Once the line-up closes, the vacated position cannot be “filled.”

### **SECTION 3– BATTING OUT OF ORDER IS AN APPEAL PLAY:**

- (a) If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take his/her place and assume any ball and strike count.
- (b) If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed the turn at bat, and before there has been a pitch to another batter, the player who should have batted is out. Runs scored are cancelled, and baserunners must return to the bases occupied when the incorrect batter took his/her position in the batter’s box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the players been put out by ordinary play.
- (c) If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the term at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal, and the next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted, and who have not been called out, have lost their turn at bat until it is reached again in the batting order.

**SECTION 4– THE BATTER SHALL NOT HINDER THE CATCHER** from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter’s box or intentionally hindering the catcher while standing within the batter’s box.

NOTE: If the batter does hinder the Catcher, the ball is dead and baserunners must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire(s), was touched at the time of the interference.

**SECTION 5– MEMBERS OF THE TEAM AT BAT** shall not interfere with a player attempting to field a foul fly ball.

NOTE: If interference occurs, the ball is dead and the batter is out; baserunners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

**SECTION 6– THE BATTER** shall not *intentionally* strike or bunt the ball a second time, strike it with a thrown bat, or deflect its course in any way while running to first base.

NOTE: If the batter commits any of these infractions, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance.

**SECTION 7– A STRIKE IS CALLED** by the umpire:

- (a) for each ball legally pitched at moderate speed that arcs over the batter’s head, strikes home plate, or the template that extends 17 inches behind home plate.
- (b) for each legally pitched ball struck at and missed by the batter.
- (c) for each foul hit not caught on the fly unless the batter has two strikes.
- (d) for each pitched ball at which the batter strikes at but misses and which touches any part of his/her person.
- (e) for each foul tip held by the catcher.
- (f) for each legally pitched ball that the batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by and which the umpire judges would have struck home plate or the template.

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: On a foul tip, the ball is dead, a strike is called on the batter, and the baserunners may not advance.

**SECTION 8– A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE:**

- (a) For each pitched ball which touches the ground before touching home plate or the home plate extension (template), and which is not swung at by the batter.
- (b) for each illegally-pitched ball (see illegal pitches).

NOTE: For each enforced illegal pitch, the ball is dead, and a ball is called on the batter.

- (d) for each time the ball is handled (possession) by more than one fielder after each pitch, a ball shall be called in favor of the batter except after an unintentional overthrow, after a foul hit, or when an out has been made. (Only one ball shall be called regardless of the number of players involved in the delay). NOTE: When a ball is thrown from the catcher to an infielder, and an error in the catch by the infielder is made

which causes another player to return the ball to the pitcher, the umpire shall discount the fact that the ball was handled by two players in this instance. If excessive time is used in returning the ball, or errors of this nature are frequent, the umpire shall call a ball on each play after a warning has been given.

**SECTION 9– THE BATTER IS OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- (a) After he/she has three strikes.
- (b) When his/her fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder.
- (c) When the infield fly rule is declared and enforced.
- (d) When he/she attempts to hit a third strike and the ball touches him/her.
- (e) When his/her fair ball touches him/her before touching a fielder.
- (f) When, after hitting a fair ball, he/she intentionally or accidentally strikes the ball a second time in fair territory. If this occurs the ball is dead, the batter is out, and baserunners may not advance. If the batter-runner drops his/her bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is live and in play and the batter is not out.
- (g) When, after he/she hits a fair ground ball, the batter-runner is tagged before he/she touches first base.
- (h) When a fielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first, first and second, first and third, or second and third base occupied before two are out. Ball is dead and not in play.

**NOTE:** In this situation, the batter is not out if a fielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground except when the infield fly rule applies.

- (i) When the batter interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box, or making any other movements that hinder the catcher's play at home plate.

**EXCEPTION:** The batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is put out, or if the runner trying to score is out for batter's interference.

- (j) When batting out of order. (Rule 6.3 on pages 30-31).
- (i) when the batter hits a second foul ball after he/she has a two strike count. **NOTE:** The ball is live.
- (j) When in the judgment of the umpire, the batter dangerously throws the bat.
- (k) When batter makes contact on less than a full swing.

**SECTION 10– THE BATTER BECOMES A RUNNER AND IS PERMITTED TO ADVANCE TO FIRST BASE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT (provided he/she advances to and touches first base) when:**

- (a) Four balls have been called by the umpire.  
An intentional walk is requested by the defensive team pitcher. Once the umpire has awarded first base to the batter, no one may withdraw

the request.

- (b) The catcher or any fielder interferes with the batter. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire that he/she elects to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, *and all other runners* advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference.
- (d) A fair ball touches an umpire or runner on fair territory before touching or passing a fielder.

**SECTION 11– THE BATTER BECOMES A BASERUNNER WHEN:**

- (a) He/she hits a fair ball.
- (b) A fair ball strikes the person or clothing of an umpire on fairground before touching or passing a fielder.
- (c) The catcher interferes with or prevents him/her from striking at a pitched ball.

The umpire shall award an intentional walk to the batter upon the request of the defensive pitcher, prior to the first pitch.

NOTE: SLOW PITCH: A batter does not get his/her base when hit by a pitched ball.

**SECTION 12– THERE SHALL BE ONLY ONE CHARGED CONFERENCE** between the manager, or other team representative, and the batter or baserunner in an inning. **PENALTY:** Batter is out.

**RULE 7****BASERUNNING****SECTION 1– THE BASERUNNER MUST TOUCH BASES IN LEGAL ORDER, i.e., first, second, and third base and home plate.**

- (a) When a baserunner must return while the ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
- (b) When a baserunner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, he/she is entitled to hold the base until he/she has legally touched the next base, or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding baserunner.
- (c) When a baserunner dislodges a base from its proper position, neither he/she nor succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base *unreasonably* out of position. Whether a base is unreasonably out of position or not is determined solely by the umpire(s).
- (d) A batter-runner shall not run bases in reverse order either to confuse the fielders or make a travesty of the game.
- (e) Two baserunners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.

NOTE: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it; the other baserunner may be put out by being tagged.

- (f) The failure of a preceding runner to touch a base, and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a succeeding baserunner who touches bases in proper order unless two are out. If such third out is the result of a FORCE play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.
- (g) A baserunner must maintain contact with the base he/she is legally entitled to occupy until the ball is hit or the pitched ball reaches the front edge plane of home plate vertically extended. A ball not hit by the batter automatically becomes a dead ball. Runners may not advance and the ball must be returned to the pitcher.

NOTE: Penalty for leaving a base early is an out. (“No Pitch” shall be called and the ball is dead)

- (i) A runner may advance only on a hit ball that is playable, or when a batter is awarded a base on balls, or when catcher’s interference with a batter forces a runner to vacate a base.
- (j) No base stealing. If a runner advances illegally to the next base, the runner must return.
- (k) A COURTESY RUNNER may be used by the team at bat once per each inning. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out. The courtesy runner may be taken at any time during the inning. If a runner needs a courtesy runner in the first inning of a game, and there are no outs, the substitute runner will be the last batter in the line up. If a runner needs a courtesy runner in an inning in which no outs

have yet been recorded, the substitute runner will be the player who made the last out in the previous inning. If a team goes through the batting order and the player who was replaced in that inning needs a courtesy runner again, he/she may have one. **CO-RECREATION:** Substitute runner must be of the same gender as the batter-runner, and have made the last out. **CO-RECREATION:** One runner per gender, per inning.

**NOTE:** If an incorrect runner is used as a courtesy runner, upon discovery, said runner is simply replaced with the correct runner – no further penalty.

**SECTION 2– BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT** under the following conditions:

- (a) When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.
- (b) When a fielder obstructs the baserunner from making a base unless the fielder is trying to field a batted ball or has the ball ready to tag the baserunner.

**NOTE:** When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call and signal “OBSTRUCTION.”

- (1) If a play is being made on the obstructed runner or if the batter-runner is obstructed before he/she touches first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire’s judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base he/she had legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.
- (2) If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall signal “Delayed Dead Ball” (left arm extended) and, when the play is completed, shall call “TIME” and impose such penalties, if any, as in his/her judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.
  - (e) When interfered with by the catcher or fielder, ONE BASE is awarded.
- (h) When a fielder contacts or catches a batted or thrown ball with the cap or any part of the uniform or glove while it is detached from its proper place on his/her uniform.

**PENALTY:** The baserunners shall be entitled to three bases if a batted ball, or two bases if a thrown ball; in either case the baserunners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair-hit ball which, in the umpire’s judgment, would have gone for

a home run by clearing the fence in flight or landing and rolling, the runner shall be awarded a home run.

- (i) Two bases are awarded to the batter-runner and all baserunners when an overthrown ball goes into dead territory. When such a wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw left the fielder's hand.

**APPROVED RULING:** If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw left the fielder's hand.

**SECTION 3– A PLAYER FORFEITS HIS/HER EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT WHEN:**

- (a) If while the ball is in play, he/she fails to touch the base to which he/she was entitled before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter-runner at first base, or any other baserunner forced to advance because the batter became a baserunner, this out is a force-out.
- (b) If after overrunning first base, the batter-runner attempts to continue to second base.
- (c) If after dislodging the base, the baserunner tries to continue to the next base.

**SECTION 4– THE BASERUNNERS ADVANCE IS LIMITED:** See Rule 5.1 n and 5.1o on pages 27-28.

**SECTION 5– THE BASERUNNER MUST RETURN TO HIS/HER BASE UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- (a) When a foul ball is illegally caught and is so declared by the umpire.
- (b) When an illegally-batted ball is so declared by the umpire.
- (c) When a batter or baserunner is called out for interference. Other baserunners shall return to the last base which was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched by them at the time of the interference.
- (d) When there is interference by the plate umpire, or his clothing, with the catcher's attempt to throw.
- (e) When any part of the batter's person is touched by a pitched ball that is swung at and missed.
- (f) When an umpire is struck by a fair, batted ball before it is touched by or passes a fielder.
- (h) When a coach or a member of the team at bat, with intent or design, permits a thrown ball to touch his/her person or clothing.
- (i) When the umpire declares a dead ball, unless it is also the fourth ball on the next batter and he/she is thereby forced to advance to the next base.
- (j) When attempting to steal a base (illegal).

**SECTION 6– BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- (a) When after a fair ground ball is hit, he/she is legally touched with the ball before he/she touches first base.
- (b) When after a fair ball, the ball is held by a fielder touching first base with any part of his/her person before the batter-runner touches first base.
- (c) When after a fly ball, the ball is legally caught by a fielder before it touches the ground or any object other than a fielder.
- (d) When he/she runs outside the 3-foot line and in the judgment of the umpire interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base. However, he/she may run outside the 3-foot line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball.
- (e) An infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball, including a line drive, which can be caught with ordinary effort with first; first and second; first and third; or first, second, and third bases occupied with fewer than two outs.

NOTE: in the above instance the ball is dead, and each runner must Return to the last base touched at the time of the pitch. If an infield fly is ruled, it has precedence over an intentionally dropped ball.

- (f) See Rule 1.26b, FIRST BASE EXTENSION (Orange) on pages 9-10.

**SECTION 7– THE BASERUNNER IS OUT UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- (a) When running to any base, he/she runs more than three feet from a direct line between a base and the next one in a regular or reverse order to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand or glove of a fielder.
- (b) When the ball is in play, the fielder legally tags a runner who is not in contact with a base.
- (c) When on a force-out, a fielder holds the ball in hand or glove and any part of his/her body is touching the base to which the baserunner is forced to advance before the runner reaches the base.
- (d) When the umpire calls the baserunner out for failure to return to touch the base when play is resumed after a suspension of play.
- (e) When a baserunner passes a preceding baserunner before that runner has been put out.

NOTE: In the above instance the ball is in play and the illegal baserunner is out.

- (f) When a baserunner leaves his/her base to advance to another base before a fly ball has been caught, provided the ball is returned to a fielder and legally held on that base, or legally touches the baserunner before the runner can return.
- (g) When the baserunner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order, and the ball is in play and legally held on that base, or the baserunner is legally touched while off a base.

- (h) When the baserunner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base before returning to first, and is legally touched while off base.

NOTE: (f), (g), and (h) above are appeal plays and the defensive team loses the privilege of putting the baserunner out if the appeal is not made before the next pitch.

- (i) When the baserunner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
- (j) When he/she is struck by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no runner may score, nor runners advance, except runners forced to advance.

EXCEPTION: If the runner is touching a base when hit by a fair batted ball, the runner is not out unless the runner intentionally interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play. The ball remains alive with all runners continuing to be in jeopardy.

- (k) When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which an infielder has missed.
- (l) When, with a baserunner on third base, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than two outs.
- (m) When in the judgment of the umpire, the coach touches or holds the runners physically to assist him/her to returning or leaving a base.
- (n) When the coach near third base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the baseline while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batter, or thrown ball, and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The baserunner nearest third base shall be declared out.
- (o) When one or more members of the offensive team stand or collect at or around a base, to which a baserunner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making the play.
- (p) When the baserunner runs the bases in reverse order (as defined in Rule 7.1d on page 34).
- (q) When the coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.

NOTE: Sec. 7, i-q: The ball is dead and the baserunner is out; no base may be run unless necessitated by the batter becoming a baserunner.

NOTE: If the runner leaves the base before the pitcher releases the ball, the ball is dead, NO PITCH is declared, and the baserunner is out.

- (r) When any batter or runner who has just been put out, hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner, such runner shall be declared out for the interference of his/her teammate.
- (s) If, in the judgment of the umpire(s), a baserunner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted or thrown ball the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner.
- (t) When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains on his feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player. The ball is dead and all other baserunners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: The runner has to be going for the base, not the defensive players.

If in the umpire's judgment the runner is trying to hurt the defensive player or separate him/her from the ball, the offender shall be ejected. If the runner raises his forearms and makes contact with the defensive player, he/she shall be ejected.

NOTE<sup>-2</sup>: A runner does not have to slide, but he/she must try to avoid contact with the defensive player.

- (u) If a runner and/or batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball, or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted or thrown ball, with obvious intent of breaking up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference, and shall also call out the runner who had advanced *closest to home plate* regardless of where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference.
- (v) **Interference: It is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid contact with the ball and/or defensive player** and not interfere in any way with the completion of the play. Contact is not always necessary for interference to occur.

#### **SECTION 8– BASERUNNERS ARE NOT OUT:**

- (a) When, while in contact with the base, the baserunner is hit with a fair batted ball, unless the umpire rules that the ball was intentionally interfered with, or a fielder interfered with, while the fielder was attempting to field a batted ball. The ball remains alive with all runners continuing to be in jeopardy.
- (b) When a baserunner runs behind the fielder and outside the baseline in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball in the base path.
- (c) When a baserunner does not run in a direct line to the base providing the fielder in the direct line does not have the ball in his possession.
- (d) When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball, and the baserunner comes in contact with one who, in the umpire's judgment, was not entitled to field the ball.
- (e) When a baserunner is hit with a fair ball that has passed through or by an infielder and, in the umpire's judgment, no other fielder had a chance to play the ball.
- (f) When a baserunner is touched with the ball not securely held by a fielder.
- (g) When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the next pitch.
- (h) When the defensive team does not request the umpire's decision on an appeal play until after the entire defensive team has left the playing field.

NOTE: A runner who has started to advance cannot be stopped by the pitcher receiving the ball while on the pitching plate, nor by stepping on the plate with the ball in his/her possession.

- (j) When a baserunner holds his/her base until a fly ball touches a fielder and then attempts to advance.
- (k) When a baserunner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position, the base is considered to follow the runner.

NOTE: A baserunner having made such a base safely shall not be out for being off that base. He/she may return to that base without liability to be put out when the base has been replaced. A runner forfeits this exception if he/she attempts to advance beyond the dislodged base before it is again in proper position, or if he/she elects not to slide into a base and his/her momentum carries him/her past the proper position of the base – even if he/she drags the base with him/her.

## RULE 8

### SCORING OF RUNS

**SECTION 1**– ONE RUN SHALL BE SCORED every time a baserunner, after having legally touched the first three bases, shall legally touch home plate before three players are out; provided, however, that if he/she reaches home on or during a play in which the third person is forced out or is put out before reaching first base, a run shall not count; also, if the third out is made by a preceding runner failing to touch a base, a run shall not count.

**The runner must touch home plate in order to score; template extension is for balls and strikes only; touching the template is not considered as having touched home plate.**

NOTE<sup>-1</sup>: An out for leaving too soon on a caught fly ball is not a *force-out* and when such an out is the third out in an inning, any runs scored before the out *was actually made will count*.

NOTE<sup>-2</sup>: In case of a runner failing to touch a base, if the base missed is the one to which a runner is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a baserunner, and the out is the third out of an inning, no run scored in that series of plays will count regardless of whether the runs were across the plate before the out was actually scored.

**SECTION 2**– WHEN A PITCH IS STARTED, a runner on base cannot score on any pitched ball which passes the batter, except when the bases are full and the runner is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a baserunner by reason of a base on balls.

**SECTION 3**– A RUNNER ON THIRD, WHEN THE PITCH IS STARTED, MAY SCORE:

- (a) on a fair hit ball.
- (b) on a foul ball that is legally caught.
- (c) if forced by catcher's interference being called by the umpire.

**SECTION 4**– THE OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER is the plate umpire. Any disagreement on runs scored will be decided by the plate umpire. It is the responsibility of each team to maintain a clear record of runs scored each half inning.

**Any rule, definition, or diagram not covered in the Rule Book or Supplemental Rules shall be interpreted according to the discretion of the official.**

<b>REGULATIONS WHICH APPLY TO ALL TEAMS AND INDIVIDUALS</b>
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**SECTION 1**– It shall be the prerogative of the Municipal Sports Section Advisory Board, or respective Executive Committee, to refuse any individual or team entrance into a sports program who has displayed unacceptable conduct.

**SECTION 2**– It shall be the prerogative of the Municipal sports Section to refuse to let a team use a name, wear clothing that contains graphic images or printed messages, play “walk-up” music, and display signs that do not meet acceptable social standards.

**SECTION 3**– It shall be the responsibility of the team managers to be informed of all league and tournament deadlines. It shall be their responsibility to have all registration forms and fees in by the prescribed deadline dates. The Municipal Sports Section assumes no responsibility for forms when mailed.

**SECTION 4**– It shall be the responsibility of team managers to meet required deadlines for rosters and “Add/Drop Forms.” If these forms are submitted by mail, it is the manager’s responsibility to see that the forms have been received by the Sports Office.

**SECTION 5**– The Department of Recreation and Parks of the City of Los Angeles and Municipal Sports Advisory Board shall set forth rules and regulations governing all activities under their jurisdiction. Team managers will be given copies of all rules applicable to their particular sport. It shall be their responsibility to disseminate this information to their team members.

**SECTION 6**– All individuals in the Municipal Sports program are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Municipal Sports “PARTICIPANTS CODE OF CONDUCT” section. It is the responsibility of the manager to inform his/her players of the “CODE OF CONDUCT” and insure that the players abide by it. Managers are responsible for controlling their teams, coaches, and team followers. Friendly competition is expected. Profanity and/or “trash talking” will not be tolerated.

<b>CO-RECREATION SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES</b>
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Rules and conditions of league play shall follow the rules as are outlined for regular softball in the Municipal Sports Softball Rule Book with the following exceptions:

**OFFENSE:**

- (a) Two separate batting line-ups will be used, one for females and the other for males. The manager shall indicate which gender will lead off the game and the genders shall alternate from that point. Two players of the same gender may never bat in consecutive order unless a rule violation is being enforced.
- (b) A team must have a minimum of four females and four males at all times. If the lineup drops to seven players or three females or three males, the game is forfeited. Minimum necessary to start a game:
  - (1) Four female players and four male players
- (c) COURTESY RUNNERS must be the last out of the same gender as the individual being replaced.
- (e) IF A PLAYER LEAVES THE GAME and there is no replacement, the game will continue, but “outs” will be recorded as follows:
  - (1) The next time the vacated position comes up in the line-up. The line-up “closes” after the initial out is recorded.
- (f) A male batter who is walked on *three* consecutive balls with no strikes *thrown* during his time at bat shall be awarded *second* base. Base runners advance only if forced to vacate their bases.

**DEFENSE:**

- (a) There may be no more than five men on the field. Fielders may assume any position regardless of gender.
- (b) Prior to the bat contacting the ball, all outfielders (Required minimum of 4 outfielders with 10 defensive players, 3 with 8 or 9 defensive players) must be positioned at a minimum of **160** feet from home plate.

**PENALTY:** For a batted fair ball, the batter and all baserunners will be awarded one base unless each has advanced one base safely, in which case the play proceeds without reference to the violation. For a batted foul ball or foul tip, a ball is awarded to the batter. However, if a play follows the infraction (such as runners tagging-up on a caught, foul fly ball) the manager of the team at-bat may elect to decline the penalty and accept the results of the play.

**TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES**

Rules and regulations for Tournament play are the same as regular season league play unless otherwise stated below or in any Supplemental Tournament Rules.

To be eligible to participate in a Municipal Sports Tournament, teams must be in good standing and have a legally signed roster on file in the Sports Office by the Roster Deadline. Teams must have played in a Municipal Sports league, all teams are eligible regardless of record.

NOTE: Teams that play in a combined division will be placed in the higher division for the tournament if they are three or more games above .500.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

- (a) All players must be on the signed team roster on file with the Sports Office. Late rosters are not accepted. Late Rosters are defined as rosters that are received by the Sports Office after the “Roster Deadline” (6<sup>th</sup> league game).
- (b) Players must participate in a minimum of four league games, (for the team(s) entered in the tournament), to be eligible for tournament play.
- (c) Players may compete on one team in each division (i.e. only one Slow Pitch (Women or Open) and one Co-Recreation team).

NOTE: Games will **NOT** be rescheduled due to conflicts.

- (d) If a player participates on two teams in a division (regardless of skill level classification), the 2<sup>nd</sup> team he/she plays for becomes ineligible.
- (e) Players must present a government issued (Federal, State, local, or school) ID card to the official prior to signing the game scorecard.
- (f) The Sports Office reserves the right to place a team in a higher skill level classification if there are not a sufficient number of teams entered in a classification. (Minimum of eight teams in each tournament).
- (g) Co-recreation participants that also play on an open (men’s) or women’s slow pitch team during league play may compete in the co-recreation tournament, but only on a co-recreation team of equal or higher skill level classification than the slow pitch team, (i.e. “C+” slow pitch league participant may play in a “C+” or “B” co-recreation tournament, but not a “C” co-recreation tournament).
- (h) Committee and/or Sports Directors have the authority to eject any team or player from the tournament for due cause or infraction of any of the rules or regulations governing Los Angeles Municipal Sports Leagues.
- (i) Tournament games could be scheduled any weeknight or weekend.
- (j) All games to be played as scheduled. Games will not be rescheduled.

**GAME PLAY**

- (k) Teams are allowed a grace period not to exceed five minutes to field the minimum number of players. **PENALTY:** Forfeit.

- (l) Game time limits and regulation games will be the same as the regular season league rules. Mercy rules are always in effect.

**EXCEPTION:** Citywide Semi-final and final games will be seven innings regardless of time limit, however mercy rule is still in effect.

- (m) Should any game be terminated without a winner, the teams must contact the Sports office the next morning between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. (Teams should expect to be rescheduled to play that night).

**PROTESTS:**

- (n) The procedure for filing a formal protest of a tournament is the same as a regular season league game with the following exceptions:
  - (1) Official written protest must be received prior to 12:00 noon on the first day following the day of the game involved.
  - (2) Any ruling will affect protested game only.

<p style="text-align:center"><b>MUNICIPAL SPORTS SECTION PARTICIPANT'S CODE OF CONDUCT</b></p>
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Los Angeles, second largest city in the nation, has one of the finest adult municipal sports programs in the country for its citizens.

The primary purpose of adult sports programs is to offer each resident of our city the opportunity to pursue, through competitive sports, the physical and emotional benefits such activity offers.

All too often the emphasis in such participation has been placed on winning at any cost. As a result, reports reaching the Municipal Sports office have revealed a serious trend toward violence and destruction of property. Players and officials have been attacked, property has been damaged, and fans have been incited to riot.

It should be remembered that in every competitive sports activity there are winners and losers. The purpose of the Code of Conduct, applicable to every participant, is to engender and motivate a return to good sportsmanship, proper conduct on and off the field, and fully complying with the rules and policies of the Los Angeles Municipal Sports Section. Every individual and team participating has adequate recourse through established procedures in the filing of complaints or protests.

The Department of Recreation and Parks, the Municipal Sports Section and the Municipal Sports Advisory Board are determined to provide adult municipal sports programs to individuals and teams willing to comply fully with this code of good conduct.

Effective immediately, the Code of Conduct, as defined below, is in force. We strongly urge all league organizers, coaches, and team managers to carefully review the rules and requirements herewith set forth for the actions of their teams and players on and off the playing field. Improper behavior on the part of any participant can directly affect future participation by the entire team.

Each participant in the Municipal Sports program should not let the competitive spirit and desire to win exceed the limits of human decency. Remember that these sports activities are for fun and recreation.

<b>CODE OF CONDUCT</b>
------------------------

The Participant's Code of Conduct applies to all players, coaches, umpires, fans, and managers. The Code of Conduct applies to players as individual or as a team; and the penalties can be applied on an individual or an entire team. This Code becomes effective as soon as the participants arrive at the facility of play and remains in effect until the participants leave the facility.

**A. No Participant shall:**

1. At any time lay a hand upon, push, shove, strike, or threaten to strike an official.
2. Be guilty of physical attack as an aggressor upon any player, official, spectator, or Recreation & Parks employee.
3. Endanger the safety of any player, official, spectator, or Recreation & Parks employee.
4. Threaten and/or attempt to intimidate any player, official, spectator, or Recreation & Parks employee.

**PENALTY:** Officials are required to immediately suspend the participant from any further play in the game and report such participant to the Sports Office. Such participant shall remain suspended until a letter is received by the Sports Office requesting a hearing before the Executive Committee. Such a hearing will be scheduled as soon as possible. The offending participant's team may be charged with a forfeit by the official.

**NOTE:** All managers and participants involved must submit a written report within two working days following the incident.

**B. No Participant shall:**

1. Refuse to abide by an official's decision and/or contest such decision in an unsportsmanlike manner.
2. Be guilty of heaping personal, verbal abuse upon any official for any real or imaginary wrong decision or judgment. This also includes direct and indirect comments about the accuracy of the official's judgement.
3. Be guilty of using unnecessary rough tactics in the play of the game against an opposing player.

**PENALTY:** Officials are required to immediately suspend the participant from any further play in the game and report such player to the Sports Office for appropriate action. It shall be the prerogative of the League Sports Directors to allow such participant to play under probation, to levy a limited suspension, or to have such participant request a hearing before the Executive Committee to consider the case. The offending participant's team may be charged with a forfeit by the official.

NOTE: All managers and participants involved must submit a written report within two working days following the incident.

**C. No Participant shall:**

1. Be guilty of objectionable demonstrations of dissent at an official's decision by throwing of gloves, bats, balls, personal equipment or any other forceful action.
2. Discuss with an official in any manner the decision reached by such official. (Exception: Manager).
3. Be guilty of abusive verbal attack upon any player, official, spectator, or Recreation & Parks employee.
4. Be guilty of discussing publicly with spectators in derogatory manner any play, decision, or personal opinion of other players during the game.

**PENALTY:** The degree of infraction of this tenet of good sportsmanship shall, in the official's judgment, draw a minimum penalty of a warning or a maximum penalty of forfeiture of the game. The offending participant's team may be charged with a forfeit by the official.

**D. No Participant shall:**

1. Smoke while going on or coming off the field of play, or while on the field of play.

**PENALTY:** Officials are required to warn participants guilty of infractions of this rule, and failure of such players to comply will result in removal from the game.

**E. No Participant shall:**

1. Permit anyone to remain in the dugout or on the player's bench during the game, who is not a playing member of the team, managers and coaches excepted.
2. Mingle with or fraternize with the spectators during the course of the game in a way that negatively affects the game in any way.

**PENALTY:** Officials are required to warn members of the team guilty of violation of this rule. Failure of such players to comply will result in removal from the game.

**F.** No Participant shall appear on the field of play at any time in an intoxicated condition, or consume any alcoholic beverage (or use a controlled substance) while on a recreation facility.

**PENALTY:** Officials are required to immediately suspend the participant and report the incident to the Sports Office for further consideration.

**G.** No Participant shall be guilty of gambling upon any play or the outcome of the game with any spectator, player, or opponent.

**PENALTY:** Officials are required to report violations of this rule to the Sports Office.

**Any participant ejected from a game by the official for any cause will be automatically suspended for their next game and be subject to further disciplinary action by the Sports Office and/or Executive Committee. If the ejected player does not appear on the team's roster his/her team will be charged with a forfeit.**

**CODE OF CONDUCT – PENALTIES**

Penalties for violations of the Participant’s Code of Conduct or other violations of the Department of Recreation and Parks or Municipal Sports Section policies will be determined by the Executive Committee having jurisdiction in the matter. The following categories of penalties may be levied by an Executive Committee:

**A. SUSPENSIONS**

1. Suspension of a player for more than one year.
2. Suspension of an entire team.

These suspensions may be appealed to the Advisory Board. A letter must be submitted to the Chairman of the Advisory Board via the Supervisor of the Municipal Sports Section within one week following the decision of the Executive Committee. The letter must state the reason for the requested appeal. The Advisory Board has the prerogative to review the suspension and their decision shall be final.

3. The suspension of a player for one year or less.

The decision of the Executive Committee is final and may not be appealed.

**B. FORFEITURE OF GAME(S):** The forfeiture of one or more games. The decision of the Executive Committee is final and may not be appealed.

**C. PROBATION**

1. A team or player may be placed on probation for a length of time to be determined by the Executive Committee.
2. A team player on probation, who violates the Participant’s Code of Conduct, may be suspended from the Municipal Sports Program.

**D. FINES:** In addition to the above penalties, violations of the Code of Conduct or other Department or Municipal Sports rules could result in forfeiture of the team’s bond or a fine.

When a participant is under suspension in a sport, he/she is ineligible to participate in any other Municipal Sports program until reinstated.

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