



County of Middlesex

Department of Parks & Recreation

2012 Spring/Summer Adult Softball League Rules & Regulations

Rule 1- League Administration, Organization and Structure

Section 1. League Management

A. The Adult Softball League is operated under the direction of the Middlesex County Department of Parks & Recreation.

Section 2. Team Registration

A. League fees are **\$375.00** per team for the Men's Sunday League's and **\$425.00** for the Thursday Co-ed League. **Full** payment and team application are due at the time of registration. **CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY MADE PAYABLE TO: TREASURER MIDDLESEX COUNTY. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CASH BE ACCEPTED.** **\$100.00** of your entrance fee is held as a forfeit fee deposit and will be refunded at the end of the season provided that your team does not forfeit any games. There are no refunds of league fees once the season has started.

B. To be eligible to participate in the league, all players must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or older.

C. Teams are accepted on a **first come, first serve basis only** and space is limited. Prior participation does not guarantee your team a place in the league for the following season. Your team must re-apply every season. The Parks & Recreation Department will not and cannot verbally reserve a place in the league for any team.

Section 3. Rosters

A. Teams must have the application section completed at the time of registration. All teams will have up until **Friday, April 20, 2012** to submit their final team roster and player information for the season. All rosters will be date stamped after April 20, 2012 and no additions can be made after that. It is the responsibility of the each team manager to make sure that everyone who will be playing on their team is listed on their roster. Any team that does not have their roster turned in by April 20, 2012 will receive a forfeit for each subsequent game until roster is received. There is a limit of twenty (20) players per team roster.

Section 3. Scheduling

A. The official schedule for all regular season games will be distributed to all team managers at the pre-season meeting. Schedules will also be posted on the official league web site.

The Internet address is: www.sportsstandings.com/middlesexcountyparks

The site will be updated each week with all information pertaining to your league including current standings, schedules, special announcements, etc. It shall be the managers responsibility to know when, where and whom his/her team is scheduled to play and inform all team members.

B. Games are played at **William Warren Park (Florida Grove Road in Woodbridge) & Thomas Edison Park (Mill Road in Edison)**. There may also be a rare occasion that Raritan Bay Park in South Amboy will also be a site for games. The Parks & Recreation Department cannot and will not consider any requests from any team to play their games at a certain time or field.

C. The status of all games will be announced on the Game Day Information Hotline (*Weekdays after 3:00PM AND Sunday after 9:00AM*). The phone number is **732-745-4222**.

Rule 2- Playing Rules, Regulations and Points of Emphasis

Section 1. Supplies & Equipment

A. Before the season starts, all team managers or a representative must pickup their team information and supplies at a pre-season meeting.

B. All catchers **must** wear a **catcher's face mask**. Female catchers must also wear a helmet. Metal spikes and bat "doughnuts" are prohibited.

C. Only bats approved for ASA Championship Play are permitted in league play.

Section 2. The Game

A. The umpire shall conduct a pre-game conference with the team managers to discuss ground rules.

B. Umpire fees are **\$22.00** per game per team for each game. Each team will pay the umpire **prior** to the start of the game. In event of a forfeit, the umpire will be paid **\$44.00** by the Recreation Department from the forfeiting teams account. If after two (2) innings a game is called due to inclement weather or any other circumstances, umpire fees are still paid. When game is re-scheduled, payment is once again due. Teams pay umpire fees for the first round of the playoffs. The county will compensate umpires for all other playoff games.

C. There is **NO** grace period (Game time is forfeit time).

D. Each team must supply one (1) new softball per game from those provided to them at the pre-season meeting.

E. In order to start a game each team must have at least nine (9) players present and ready to play at game time. Less than nine (9) players will result in a team forfeit. Teams may use a maximum of ten (10) fielders and may bat up to twelve (12) players. Teams must continue to maintain at least nine (9) players on the field. If a team has started with nine (9) players, other players may enter the game and be added to the batting order on the condition that his/her team has not batted through the order. Those players **must be added to the bottom of the batting order**. If the team has batted through, **additional players may only be added as substitutes**.

F. The pitcher must deliver the ball at moderate speed, underhand and with an arc of **at least six (6) feet (from ground) and no more than 12 feet** from when it leaves the pitchers hand to when it reaches home plate. The umpire will indicate eligible pitch, but the batter has the option to play pitch. A legal pitch **that** hits any part of home plate and/or the softball mat will be considered a strike.

G. Five (5) warm up pitches are allowed in the first inning. No warm up pitches are permitted after the first inning with the exception of a substitution for a new pitcher. A new pitcher will be permitted five warm up pitches.

H. Only the on deck batter is permitted in front of the dugout area.

I. Runner(s) may not leave the base until after the ball has been hit by the batter. Violation will result in the runner(s) being out. The pitch will count as called by the umpire.

J. All batters will start with a one (1) and one (1) count. A batter is out on the third strike (**including a foul ball**). However, if the foul ball is caught, the ball remains in play and runners may advance at their own risk.

K. There is a five (5) over the fence home run limit for each team per game. Any subsequent home run ball hit over the fence will be called an "out".

L. Courtesy Runners are permitted. The courtesy runner **must** be the last player to make a **batted** out. The only exception is if the game is in the first inning and there are no outs. In that case the last player in the batting order will become the courtesy runner.

M. All runners will be awarded two bases from the start of play on a ball thrown "**out of play**". Players positioning when the ball is thrown out of play will govern base advancement.

N. **Hit and Sit Rule:** Batters and runners **DO NOT** run the bases on any home run ball that is hit over the fence.

O. Re-entry rule will be in effect. Substitutions must be reported to the umpire. Re-entry is allowed only one time per player and batting order must remain the same.

P **Double First Base.** A double first base will be used. All batters who have committed to overrunning first base must proceed to and touch the orange base. All fielders **MUST** have possession of the ball with their foot on the white base in order for an out to be recorded.

Q. **Run Ahead (Mercy) Rule.** The following Run Ahead (Mercy) Rule is in affect:

Twelve (12) runs after 5 innings of play (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by Twelve (12) runs or more).

R. Forfeiture of two (2) games by any team will result in removal from the league. Any subsequent games will be recorded as a "7-0" win for the opposing team. Teams will not be charged an official forfeit provided that they notify the Parks & Recreation Department that their team will not be present by **no later than 12:00PM** on the day of the game. For the Sunday League you must call by 4:00PM on Friday. The game result will still be recorded as a 7-0 loss.

S. All games (including playoffs) are considered regulation after 5 innings (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead). **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.** If a game is called after five (5) innings but before (7) seven innings, the final score will revert back to the last completed inning.

T. **RAIN OUTS:** If all games for a particular day are rained out, they will not be made up. If some games for a particular day are rained out and other are played, the games that were rained out will be re-scheduled.

RULES SPECIFIC TO THE CO-ED LEAGUE ONLY

A. All teams must have a minimum of four (4) female players to start the game and must continue to play with four (4) female players in the field.

EXCEPTION: If a team has six (6) male players and four (4) female players and a female gets injured and can no longer continue and there is no female substitute available that team can play with 6 males and 3 females in the field. The injured female player's spot in the batting order will become an automatic out.

B. An alternate male-female batting order must be used.

C. All male batters who walk will be awarded 2nd base. Runners will move up two bases only if forced.

D. When courtesy runners and substitutes are used a male player can only replace a male player and a female player can only replace a female. Regular re-entry rules apply for substitutes.

Section 3. Post-Season Play

- A.** Post-season (*playoff*) play will start after the conclusion of the regular season.
- B.** The top eight (8) teams in each league will qualify for the playoffs.
- C.** In the event of a tie for post-season seeding, the final standings and playoff seedings will be determined by the following criteria:
- 1) **“Head to Head” Competition**
 - 2) **Least amount of runs given up against only teams that are tied**
 - 3) **Least amount of runs given up against all opponents**
 - 4) **Coin Toss**
- D. The post season will be as follows:**
- 1) **All rounds of the playoffs are the best two out of three games with the exception of the first and semifinal round of the co-ed league which are single elimination. All three (3) games (*if necessary*) will be played on the same day. The Higher Seed will be the Home Team for Game 1 and Game 3 (*if necessary*).**
 - 2) **FIRST ROUND PLAYOFF FORMAT**
 - a) **Team One (1) will play Team Eight (8)**
 - b) **Team Two (2) will play Team Seven (7)**
 - c) **Team Three (3) will play Team Six (6)**
 - d) **Team Four (4) will play Team Five (5)**
 - 3) **SEMIFINAL ROUND PLAYOFF FORMAT**
 - a) **Teams are re-seeded**
 - b) **The Highest Remaining Seed will play the Lowest Remaining Seed**
 - c) **Next Highest Seed will play the Next Lowest Seed**
 - 4) **CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND**
 - a) **The two (2) semifinal winners will play for the league championship**

TEAMS PAY UMPIRE FEES FOR THE
FIRST ROUND OF THE PLAYOFFS

THE COUNTY WILL COMPENSATE UMPIRES FOR
THE SEMIFINALS AND THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUNDS

Section 4. Game Protests

A. After an alleged infraction, notification to protest must be made **immediately** before next pitch. The manager of the protesting team shall be the only person to notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest. The umpire will notify the opposing manager. All protests must then be submitted in writing, within twenty-four (24) hours of the game to the Director of Parks & Recreation, who will review all decisions concerning protests within forty-eight (48) hours.

B. To appeal a play to the umpire the ball must be returned to the pitcher and the appeal made by the pitcher. With verbal acknowledgment from the umpire, the ball will be declared a “Dead Ball”, and runners may not advance. There will be only one (1) appeal per play.

Umpire’s decision is final.

C. No protests will be allowed on any decision of any umpire on the grounds that the umpire was incorrect in as to whether a batted ball was fair or foul, a runner safe or out, a pitched ball a ball or strike, or any play involving accuracy of judgment.

PROTEST OF ILLEGAL PLAYERS AND/OR TEAM ROSTERS

Any protest on the grounds that a team is using illegal, non roster players must be done **prior** to the start of the game (unless the player(s) being challenged arrive late and attempt to enter the game). This protest must be done by the opposing team manager to the umpire. In a best two out of three game playoff series, it must be done prior to the start of the first game (unless the player(s) arrived late). The umpire will notify both teams that the game is being played under protest. Any team found using a non- rostered player(s) during a league game will receive a forfeit. Player’s are permitted to play on only one (1) team per division.

Section 5 Player and Team Code of Conduct

A. This is a Middlesex County sponsored league strictly for recreation, and as such, un-sportsmanlike conduct does not belong. ***Foul and abusive language towards other players, spectators, umpires and township officials will not be tolerated. Physical threats and/or actions will result in expulsion from the league, and other possible Recreation Department activities.***

B. Any player ejected from a game will receive a **minimum** one (1) game suspension. A second ejection will result in expulsion from all Middlesex County Parks & Recreation Leagues for the remainder of the season.

C. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the field or surrounding area as per Middlesex County Parks Rules & Regulations.

Any team found violating this policy will have their game stopped without warning and forfeited to the opposing team. A second offense will result in the team’s removal for the season.

D. Each team is responsible for their players, and spectators, leaving the field and surrounding area clean and free of debris.

E. Smoking is prohibited on the playing field.

F. **It is recommended that each team carry insurance to protect players in case of injury.**

THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX
DOES NOT PROVIDE THIS COVERAGE.

**IT IS THE MANAGERS RESPONSIBILITY THAT ALL PLAYERS ON HIS/HER
TEAM ARE MADE AWARE OF ALL OF THE
RULES & REGULATIONS OF THIS LEAGUE !!!!**

PHONE NUMBERS & CONTACTS

**PARKS & RECREATION OFFICE
732-745-4222 or 732-745-3900**

**GAME DAY INFORMATION LINE
732-745-4222 AFTER 3:00PM ON WEEKDAYS;
SUNDAYS AFTER 9:00AM**

INTERNET

www.sportsstandings.com/middlesexcountyparks

All of your team information such as schedules, updated standings, bulletins and special announcements will be posted on the site.

The Middlesex County Parks & Recreation Office
is located on 1030 River Road in Piscataway

Our Mailing Address is:

Middlesex County Department of Parks & Recreation
P.O. Box 661
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Thank you for your participation in the
Middlesex County Parks & Recreation Adult Softball League.

We hope you have a fun season of playing recreational softball.