

**Youth Softball Rules**  
**9U & 12U League**  
**Revised 4/2019**

The following are modifications made within the City of Reynoldsburg Youth Softball League(s). All other rules will be governed by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Softball Rules. All players must be registered with a signed release form by his/her parent or guardian before being eligible to participate. **The City of Reynoldsburg Parks & Recreation Department reserves the right to modify any rule as deemed necessary.**

**A. Team Formation**

1. The size of the teams will be set by the RPRD. 9U & 12U will utilize a draft system to form teams.
2. Please refer to Youth Sports League Draft Rules for complete details.
3. Management of a softball team may consist of one head coach, and no more than two (2) assistant coaches. ALL must complete and submit a coaching application, complete mandatory concussion training and NAYS training.  
**ALL must pass a background check through the City of Reynoldsburg**

**B. Team Rankings**

1. Awards will be given for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2nd place in the regular season for the 12U Division.
2. Standings will be kept for 12U Division. Tie breakers will be head to head match ups then least amount of runs allowed in those head to head matchups.
3. Team Certificates will be distributed to all teams in the 9U Division.

**C. Game Format**

1. 9U - six (6) innings or 1 hour 15 minute time limit
2. 12U - six (6) innings or 1 hour 45 minute time limit
3. 9U will never go into "extra" innings since official scores are not recorded.
4. 12U will play (1) extra inning to determine a winner if game is tied at end of time limit. Each team will have a runner placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base to start off their at bat. If game is still tied after the (1) extra inning, the game will be called a "tie."
5. Time limits will be based upon the actual start time of game as declared by the Umpire. The official start time will be recorded in the Home Team's score book. A new inning is considered to have started immediately after the last out of the previous inning.
6. The Umpire will declare the last inning to be played and notify each head Coach, based upon his/her judgment in relation to the "no new inning" time limit. If the Umpire declares the inning about to be started the last inning, and that inning is completed before the "no new inning" cutoff, then a new inning may be started. There is no minimum inning requirement to be considered an official game, if the game is ended due to exceeding the respective time limit.
7. All games should start on time, due to field limitations. Coaches and Players should be at the field at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
8. Pre-game warm-up is permitted off field or outfield only; however, may not delay the game passed its scheduled start time. Toss drills, i.e., hitting hard or restricted flight balls into fences during practice or warm-ups, is prohibited. Plastic and/or whiffle balls may be used, however.

9. Home Team will sit on the first base side. Visitors will sit on the third base side.
10. Coaches must have line-ups prepared and exchanged with the opposing Coach AND Umpire at least 5 minutes before each game. Line-ups must include last names, numbers of players & defensive starting position.
11. The Home Team is required to provide an Official Scorekeeper, who will maintain the Official Scorebook and communicate the score with the umpire and opposing team.
12. Coaches or players shall not intentionally or unreasonably delay the game (i.e. slow play, excessive/unreasonable defensive changes, to include pitcher and catcher, defensive/offensive conferences, substitutions, etc.) to gain a competitive advantage. Any such tactics by players or Coaches can/will result in "balls" assessed against the pitcher, "strikes" against the batter, and/or ejection of player/Coach at the discretion of the Umpire. The Umpire is permitted to disallow any such tactic, to avoid unnecessary delays that would adversely affect the outcome of the game.
13. No Coach, Player or Spectator may sit or stand in the designated area outside of the fencing directly behind the home plate Umpire. This area may be marked on the ground or designated by the Umpire.

#### **D. Pace of Play**

1. Teams shall change positions as rapidly as possible at the end of each inning. Play should resume within (1) minute of the last out. The Umpire will monitor and enforce this rule.
2. With two (2) outs, the offensive team must courtesy run for the catcher with the previous batted out. Each coach should designate an assistant coach or parent to be in charge of putting on and taking off the catcher's equipment each inning.
3. A new pitcher, to include a pitching change, is allowed 5 warm-ups from the mound, and 5 warm-ups each inning from thereon. (**Exception:** In the event the defensive team did not run for the catcher (or the catcher is not immediately available), the pitcher will be afforded only 2 warm-up pitches after three (3) minutes have elapsed from the last out.)
4. Umpires have been encouraged to keep play moving and players should be coached to hustle on/off the field.
5. Games may be started early whenever the occasion arises, but both head coaches & umpires must consent
6. Game time begins with first (1<sup>st</sup>) home team warm-up pitch. 9U – 1<sup>st</sup> pitch by coach. Main umpire is the official clock.

#### **E. Equipment**

1. No metal cleats are allowed in any division
  2. Bats cannot exceed 2 ¼ inch diameter or 34 inch in length. Bats should be labeled "Official Softball" or "Official Fast pitch."
- Only bats marked "softball" will be permitted for use (i.e. – no baseball bats).
3. Players at bat and all base runners must wear a protective helmet with ear protection for both ears. Male catchers are required to wear a cup.
  4. All batters will bat with helmet to include face mask. (ALL Divisions)
  5. Catchers can wear a catcher's mitt or a regular mitt.
  6. Illegal equipment Rule (i.e. – bat, spikes, etc.): The use of illegal equipment with in our Youth Softball Leagues is strictly prohibited. It is ultimately the Head Coach's responsibility to know the equipment rules and take responsibility for the team's equipment. If and when an equipment infraction does occur, we will follow the below protocol:

##### ***1<sup>st</sup> occurrence***

Head Coach is restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. Plate umpire will document on score card and follow up to the site supervisor after the game. Plate umpire will warn both teams regarding the use of illegal equipment. Site Supervisor will include the infraction details on the nightly report. Recreation Superintendent will follow up with the Head Coach the next business day to further discuss.

*Batting (i.e. – illegal bat):* player is automatically called “out” if batting. The player may return to the same spot in the lineup if the team bats around as well as future innings. The illegal bat must be removed from the dugout for the remainder of the game so that it is not used again.

*Playing defense (i.e. – illegal cleats or glove):* – player is removed for the remainder of that half inning. The player can return to play the next half inning once equipment meets league guidelines. For example, the player can bat as long as the illegal equipment has been corrected (i.e. – change cleats, etc.)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence**

Head Coach is restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game. Head umpire will document on score card and follow up to the site supervisor after the game. Plate umpire will warn both teams regarding the use of illegal equipment. Site Supervisor will include the infraction details on the nightly report. Recreation Superintendent will follow up with the Head Coach the next business day. Head Coach will be suspended a minimum of 1 game and is subject to removal as a volunteer head coach for the remainder of the season and/or permanently within the Youth Sports Leagues managed by the City of Reynoldsburg Parks & Recreation Department. This will be at the discretion of the Recreation Superintendent.

*Batting (i.e. – illegal bat):* player is automatically called “out” if batting. The player may return to the same spot in the lineup if the team bats around as well as future innings. The illegal bat must be removed from the dugout for the remainder of the game so that it is not used again

*Playing defense (i.e. – illegal cleats or glove):* player is removed for the remainder of that half inning. The player can return to play the next half inning once equipment meets league guidelines. For example, the player can bat as long as the illegal equipment has been corrected (i.e. – change cleats, etc.)

## **E. Player Participation**

1. **\*NEW\* Short Handed Rule: Teams must have at least (7) players to begin the game, otherwise the team will forfeit the game. If a forfeit occurs, teams may elect to play a “friendly”. \*\*Short-Handed Rule does not Apply to 9U\*\***
2. If only 7 players are present at game time, the 8<sup>TH</sup>/9<sup>TH</sup> positions will be vacant in the batting line-up and no out recorded, unless specifically stated within League Rules. **The vacant “8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>” spot is not an automatic out.**
3. If a player leaves the game temporarily (restroom, injury, etc.) while at bat, his/her at bat will be delayed or suspended for no more than (5) minutes, awaiting his/her return to complete the at bat. If a player is unable to return or leaves permanently, regardless of the reason, at or during his/her time at bat, the team shall forfeit if they were to drop to 7 players or less. Teams must have 8 players.
4. Teams will utilize roster batting (CBO – CONTINUOUS BATING ORDER), meaning every player present will be in the batting order. All players will be placed in the line-up and this will never change throughout the game. The batting order remains intact regardless of defensive changes. When batting nine (9) or more players, a player that leaves the game for any reason (restroom, injury, etc.) may return at any time and resume his previous batting order position without penalty. This spot will be skipped and no out recorded. **If a batter chooses not to bat for any reason (fear, emotions, etc.) other than a temporary leave (restroom, injury, etc.), he/she cannot be forced to bat; however, his/her at-bat will be considered an out.** Should a player arrive late, he/she will be added at the end of the batting order. If the player is at bat and is injured causing the player to be unable to complete his/her at bat, the next batter in the batting order will assume the batter’s count

and play will continue. If the player's at bat was completed (i.e. hit batter, base hit, base on balls, etc), the last batted out will become a courtesy runner, once play has stopped.

#### **F. Cancellation, Stoppage, Suspension of Play**

1. Cancellations - The activity status hotline will be updated by 8am on SAT and 4pm M-TH. The number is 614.322.6834. Please do not call the office to ask for updates regarding weather related cancellations. The hotline number will be updated any time questionable weather develops or field status is in question. Do not assume that a game is cancelled because it is raining or a game is on because it is sunny. The infields change quickly depending on amount of rain, sun exposure, wind, etc.

2. Darkness - The Umpire or any site supervisor can stop a game at his/her discretion due to darkness. (Games on fields without lights will be scheduled with adequate time to complete a normal game.) If the game is stopped due to darkness, the game is considered official, regardless of the number of innings completed. **NOTE:** The score reverts to the previously completed inning, unless the Home Team is ahead or tied in the bottom half of the shortened inning. If the "reverted to" score is a tie, the tie stands.

3. Delays - The Umpire or any site supervisor can delay or suspend a game at his/her discretion due to weather or unsafe field conditions (i.e. – storms move in during the game). If the game is delayed by rain/unplayable field conditions and cannot be resumed within a reasonable time, the game will be suspended/cancelled.

4. Lightning/Thunder Policy - In the case of lightning or thunder, the game will be immediately suspended via the new lightning/thunder detectors that have been installed at Huber & JFK Parks.

5. Cancelled or suspended games may be made up but will depend on various factors. If considered an official game, the game will not be made up.

6. Official Game - A game is considered to be official after three and one half (3 ½) or four (4) innings, if shortened by weather, field conditions, or any other circumstance not specifically addressed in the rules. **NOTE:** The score reverts to the previously completed inning, unless the Home Team is ahead or tied in the bottom half of the shortened inning. If the "reverted to" score is a tie, the tie stands.

7. Suspended Game Procedures - If a game is suspended due to weather, field conditions, etc., the game may/may not be rescheduled. If re-scheduled, the game will pick up from the time of suspension, to include innings, outs, runs, batter, and runners. The batter will assume his/her count. A Coach is required to continue with the batting order/lineup or as close to it as possible. Additional players will be added to the bottom of the lineup.

a. In the case of a player missing from the original lineup and an extra player available, the extra player will assume the missing players offensive role, to include batting order, base runner, at bat, etc. In the case of a player missing from the original lineup with no extra player available and the number of remaining number of players does not violate each league's respective shorthanded rule, the missing players spot in the batting order will be skipped without penalty. If the missing player was at bat, the next batter in the batting order will assume the batter's count. A courtesy runner can be used for the missing player by rule.

#### **G. Disputes**

1. Any Umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, fair or foul, strike or ball, or safe or out, obstruction, interference, malicious contact is final. No player or Coach shall object to any such judgment decision.

2. For non-judgment calls or rule applications, if there is reasonable doubt that an Umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the head Coach may, with permission from the lead Umpire and with current rule book in hand, question a call or ruling. All disputes must be settled within 5 minutes by the lead Umpire. The lead Umpire's decision at the end of the 5 minutes IS

**FINAL.** Protests are not allowed. The site supervisor may also assist in this process but the discussion is to be brief and the lead umpire/site supervisor have the final ruling on all decisions.

3. Games may not be put under protest for any reason.

4. Umpires will officiate all games, when Umpires are utilized (9U & older). If for any reason an Umpire is not available, coaches or parents are to perform this function. This is in an emergency case only and we will look to avoid at all costs this scenario. The appointed Umpire from each team will officiate the game when their team is playing offense. For safety reasons, the appointed Umpire will officiate from behind the pitcher, unless they have proper equipment.

a. An expanded Strike Zone will be utilized; Shoulders to the bottom of the knees and one ball width on either side of home plate.

b. Malicious Contact will be strictly enforced in all leagues. The offending player will be ejected without warning.

### **H. Ejections**

1. Any player, coach, parent, or sponsor ejected from any league game must leave the complex and may not return until that person(s) have spoken directly with the Recreation Superintendent.

1. Disciplinary Actions for unsportsmanlike behavior may include any/all of the following :

i. Verbal Warning

ii. Written Warning

iii. Suspension from attending practices

iv. One (1) game suspension

v. Two (2) game suspension

vi. Removal from the league

vii. Banned from all Parks & Recreation Youth Sports Leagues/programs

2. Any player, coach, or sponsor ejected from any league game is subject to a minimum of (1) league game suspension and/or removal from league.

3. Any player, coach, or sponsor on suspension is not allowed at the ball-field for practices and/or games until suspension is over.

### **I. Facility Rules and Conduct**

1. There will be NO tobacco use on the field, coach's box, or dugout area. Spectators are not allowed to smoke in the stands, within 150 feet of dugouts, around other spectators and/or near baseball fields (City Ordinance 971.23)

2. Teams are required to wear the uniforms provided by the Reynoldsburg Parks & Recreation Department. Uniforms CANNOT be altered (i.e. cutting sleeves, cutting the neck out, adding beads, etc.)

3. The official ball will be determined by the Reynoldsburg Parks and Recreation Department for league play.

4. There will be no coaching by anyone behind the home plate area this includes parents, coaches, siblings, and spectators. Violations of this rule may result in forfeiture or removal from the complex.

5. The head coach is responsible for the conduct of his/her: team, assistant coach(s), and spectators.

6. No swinging bats outside of the playing field – there is no on deck circle.



## **9U League Rules & Modifications**

### **J. Game Format**

1. Innings: A half inning consists of three (3) outs or six (6) runs. (Exception: If on the same play as when the 6th run scores, additional runs score, they will be counted.)
2. Time Limit: No new inning will begin after 1 hour 15 minutes.
3. Tie: In the event of a tie at the end of regulation play (Time Limit or Innings), no extra innings will be played since official score is not kept & there are no standings.
4. Field Dimensions: Pitching Distance = 35' with 8' radius circle for defensive player (pitching coach must deliver ball within circle). Base Path Distance = 60', subject to field availability.
5. Run "Mercy" Rule: Since official scores are not kept, all games will be played until the time limit is achieved.
6. One (1) defensive Coach is permitted in the outfield. If a batted ball strikes a Coach on the field, the ball is dead immediately and the hitter is awarded first base and all other runners advance one base, whether forced or not.
7. 11" softball will be used for all practices & games.

### **K. Player Participation**

1. Four (4) defensive outfielders are allowed. No player can defensively sit the bench a second inning during a game until all players have sat at least one (1) inning. Additionally, all players must be given the opportunity to play one (1) of the six (6) infield positions at minimum one (1) inning during the game regardless of the actual innings played in the game, unless due to safety concerns or disinterest of the player, which shall be communicated to the opposing coach/umpire prior to the game. For the purpose of this rule, an inning is defined as three (3) consecutive outs. This is required regardless of the innings played, therefore, it is recommended to occur in the by the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> inning.
2. Defensive Changes: One (1) defensive change is permitted during an inning. Pitching changes are excluded. Catchers and bench players are NOT eligible for a defensive change during the inning, unless due to injury, sickness or ejection. Attempts to violate this rule will be disallowed by the Umpire.
3. Catchers are encouraged to wear a catcher's mitt; however a fielder's glove is allowed.

### **L. Pitching**

1. Each batter will receive five (5) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. If the last pitch or pitch thereafter is fouled, the batter receives another pitch. If the batter does not achieve a batted fair ball, he/she will be declared out. A hit batsman is not in effect when the Coach is pitching.
2. If the ball inadvertently hits the pitching Coach or the pitching Coach interferes with a fielder making a play on the ball, the ball is dead and all runners advance one (1) base. If in the Umpires judgment, the pitching Coach fails to make an effort to avoid or intentionally interferes with the ball or attempted play, the ball shall be declared dead. Penalty: Batter declared out, all runners return, Coach warning.
3. The defensive player listed as pitcher cannot leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit. One foot must remain in the pitching circle and be no closer than the pitching coach.
4. No balks
5. No Intentional Walks
6. There is no pitcher's mound
7. The pitching coach MUST pitch underhand to ALL batters.
8. Dead ball is called when the pitcher is deemed by the umpire to have control of the ball within the pitching circle.

### **M. Batting**

1. Bunting is not allowed.
2. Dropped 3rd Strike is NOT in effect.
3. Infield Fly Rule is NOT in effect.

4. Thrown Bat: 1<sup>st</sup> Offense = Team Warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense= Immediate dead ball, Batter is out. An intentional thrown bat can result in an immediate ejection. All thrown bat calls are made at the Umpire's discretion.
5. Continuous Batting Order will be applicable in this division.

#### **N. Base Running**

1. No Steals and no leadoffs
2. Overthrow Rule – Players may advance one base on any over throw. Players are limited to advancing just one base however.
3. Slides: Head first slides are not allowed. The result will be a team warning followed by an out for second offense.
4. Halfway Line: If any runner, unless forced by the batter runner, is not beyond the halfway point between bases when the play has ended (Reference 6.1 below), the runner must return to the last base achieved. Runners behind the returning runner must also return to their previous base if forced. This does not apply to overthrow situations listed above.
5. END OF PLAY - The play concludes (dead ball) and time is called by the Umpire when an infielder is deemed by the Umpire to have clear possession of the ball while in the infield, unless the infielder immediately attempts to make a play on a runner. It is the Umpires discretion whether the infielder is making an immediate play attempt.
6. Home Plate Slide Rule - A runner approaching home plate must slide - or - avoid contact with the catcher (or other fielder covering home plate). If the runner does not slide and makes contact with the player covering home plate, the runner is out. Any malicious contact will result in an out and an ejection from the game without warning.

## 12U League Rules & Modifications

### T. Game Format

1. Innings: A half inning consists of three (3) outs or six (6) runs. (Exception: If on the same play as when the 6th run scores, additional runs score, they will be counted.)
2. In the final inning (6th or as declared by the Umpire due to time limit) there is no limit to runs scored.
3. Time Limit: No new inning will begin after 1 hour 45 minutes
4. Ties - In the event of a tie at the end of regulation play (Time Limit or Innings); one (1) Tie-Breaker Inning will be played with each offensive team having a player start their at bat with a player on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. Only one extra inning will be played unless it is in the end of season tournament. During tournament play, extra innings would continue until we have a winner.
5. Field Dimensions: Pitching Distance = 40'; Base Path Distance = 60', subject to field availability.
6. No Mercy/Run rule – games will be played as scheduled until time limit or inning max is reached.
7. End of Play - The ball remains live, unless declared a dead ball or time out is given.
8. 12" softball will be used for all practices & games.

### U. Player Participation

1. No player can defensively sit the bench a second inning during a game until all players have sat at least one (1) inning. Additionally, all players must be given the opportunity to play one (1) of the six (6) infield positions at minimum one (1) inning during the game regardless of the actual innings played in the game, unless due to safety concerns or disinterest of the player, which shall be communicated to the opposing coach and umpire prior to the game. For the purpose of this rule, an inning is defined as three (3) consecutive outs. This is required regardless of the innings played, therefore, it is recommended to occur in the by the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> inning. Penalty: Forfeit
2. Changes: One (1) defensive change is permitted during an inning. Pitching changes are excluded. Catchers and bench players are NOT eligible for a defensive change during the inning, unless due to injury, sickness or ejection. Attempts to violate this rule will be disallowed by the Umpire.

### V. Pitching

1. Maximum Innings: three (3) per game, eight (8) per week (Monday-Sunday). For purposes of this rule, an inning pitched is considered one (1) pitch (Legal or Illegal); or play or attempted play (i.e. Pick Off, Feint); or an intentional base on balls.
  - a. (3) maximum innings a pitcher can throw may occur consecutively or separately. For example, a player pitches in 1<sup>st</sup> inning and then returns to pitch the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> innings equaling (3) total innings.
2. Balks WILL be called after one (1) pitcher warning. The Umpire announces "Balk!" and the ball is dead immediately, to include the warning. Normal balk penalties apply after the team warning.
3. Intentional Walks are allowed. If a team wishes to intentionally walk a batter, the head coach must call time out and notify the plate umpire. The batter will then be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base without having any pitches thrown. This is an OHSAA rule and will keep the game moving.
4. Ball is live after a batter strikes out – a batter is out when he/she has three (3) strikes, either called or swinging. The batter is out, but the ball is in play and base runners may advance at their own risk.
5. Full or half wind ups are allowed.
6. Pitching wind-up shall not consist of more than one (1) circular motion.
7. Leaping & crow hopping are **illegal** regarding pitch delivery.

## **W. Batting**

1. Bunting IS allowed; however slug bunting is prohibited. Slug Bunting is defined as showing bunt, re treating the bat back and taking a swing instead. This rule is a safety issue and the player will be called out w/o warning.
2. Dropped 3rd Strike IS in effect.
3. Infield Fly Rule IS in effect.
4. Thrown Bat: 1<sup>st</sup> Offense = Team Warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense= Immediate dead ball, Batter is out. An intentional thrown bat can result in an immediate ejection. All thrown bat calls are made at the Umpire's discretion.
5. Every player is placed into the batting line up

## **X. Base Running**

1. Stealing is allowed at all bases once a pitched ball passes home plate. Lead offs are not allowed.
2. Leaving Early: Runners may not leave the base early, whether on a steal play or hit.
  - a. On plays where a runner leaves early and the batter does not hit, walk, or get hit by the pitch, the ball is dead immediately and all runners return. All pitches shall be counted as either a ball or strike, even though the ball is dead. One (1) team warning will be given before the runner of the warned team will be called out.
3. Overthrows: All runners can advance and score on all overthrows with no limitations, including a catcher's throw back to a pitcher unless the ball is declared dead or out of play by the umpire
4. Slides: Head first slides are not allowed. The result will be a team warning followed by an out for second offense.
5. Home Plate Slide Rule - A runner approaching home plate must slide - or - avoid contact with the catcher (or other fielder covering home plate). If the runner does not slide and makes contact with the player covering home plate, the runner is out. Any malicious contact will result in an out and an ejection from the game without warning.