



RECREATION, PARKS, & CULTURAL RESOURCES



2023 Spring Adult Co-Rec Softball Playing Rules & Procedures

Updated: March 13, 2023

Section One: League Organization

1. Administrator: The Recreation Supervisor (Athletics) is the League Administrator.

2. Principles of Adult Athletics

- A) To provide organized games and activities, recreation facilities, supervision and leadership.
- B) To promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, rejuvenate individual skills and talents, and to provide the community's residents with a wholesome recreation atmosphere.

3. Duties of the Team Representative

A) The Team Representative is the official contact person between the team and the Recreation & Parks Department. He/she may also appointment one Assistant Team Representative for team communication in his/her absence. If the Team Representative is absent from a game, an Interim Team Representative **MUST** be designated in advance. The Interim Team Representative will then assume responsibility for ensuring the team abides by all playing rules/regulations and he/she may be held accountable for actions of the team and its associates.

B) The Team Representative is responsible for providing all **Adult Player Contracts**, an **Official Team Roster** and collecting and submitting all applicable **Out-of-County Fees**.

Falsification of Adult Player Contracts and/or failure to submit Adult Player Contracts and pay applicable fees will result in forfeiture of all games in which the concerned player has participated. All falsified contracts are ruled ineligible for the season. Furthermore, the use of an ineligible player may result in the suspension of the offending player and the team representative and/or acting team representative.

Any additions or deletions to the Official Team Roster must be submitted to the Recreation & Parks Department by the Team Representative prior to the team's **5th played game**. **See Section Four: Rule 2-F for specifics.** Adult Player Contracts will not be accepted at the playing field.

C) The Team Representative must submit a line-up to the field supervisor **no later than 5 minutes prior to the game time** (as stated on the schedule). If the preceding game is still in progress at the scheduled game time, the line-up must still be submitted to the field supervisor at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.

D) The Team Representative is responsible for sharing the Carrboro Recreation & Parks Department *Code of Conduct* with his/her players and spectators. He/she may be held responsible for individual players' actions if it is determined the team representative could have prevented the conduct violation and/or if repeated violations of the *Code of Conduct* occur on a specific team. Violations of the Code of Conduct may lead to further suspension from Department-sponsored activities.

Code of Conduct violations resulting in ejection during tournament play, or in the first game of a regular-season double header, will result in the automatic suspension of the individual for the next played game. Future/Additional suspension may result if the violations warrant such.

Section Two: Team Practices – Reservation of Fields

1. Team Practices - Reservation of Fields

- A) Practice times may be reserved by contacting the Recreation & Parks Department at 919.918.7364 or through email by contacting the League Administrator. The registration fee must be paid in full prior to the team reserving a field.
- B) Teams may reserve one practice per calendar week (Monday – Sunday) for a maximum of two hours.
- C) Practices requiring lights will be handled as a standard rental and a \$40.00/hour rental fee will apply. The rental fee must be paid at the time of the rental. A two-hour minimum rental is required for rentals requiring lights.

Section Three: League Format

1. Game Location – All games will be played at **Hank Anderson Community Park Field #2 or Field #3**. The park is located at 302 NC Hwy. 54 West. The Carrboro Recreation & Parks Department reserves the right to change game locations.

2. Game Times – Games will be played on **Tuesday** and **Thursday** evenings. If 2 games are played then the game times will be **7:00pm** and **8:20pm**. **Make-up games may also be scheduled on Sunday afternoons and evenings**. Typical start times for Sunday games include 2:00pm, 3:40pm and 5:20pm.

3. Regular-Season Format – The league format will be determined following completion of the registration period. The League Administrator will determine the appropriate format and provide each Team Representative with a description of the format and a league schedule.

4. Post-Season Tournament Format – A post-season tournament will be held following completion of the regular-season. The tournament(s) format(s) will be determined at the time the regular-season format is determined. Seeding in the tournament(s) is based on regular-season record.

5. Trophies – Trophies are awarded to the following teams:

- Tournament Champion
- Tournament Runner-Up
- Regular Season Champion

6. Regular-Season Ties – Ties after completion of the regular-season will be handled as follows:

Teams Tied For:	Tie-Breaker:
1 st Place	1) Head-to-Head Games 2) Random Draw
2 nd Place and Lower	1) Head-to-Head Games 2) Random Draw

Section Four: League Rules

1. Governance – League rules are governed by **USA Softball** rules except where local league rules apply. Local league rules will take precedence over USA Softball rules if a conflict occurs.

2. Eligibility

A) **Age Requirement** – A player must be at least **16 years old by April 1st of the playing season.**

B) **Roster Size** – Each team may consist of a maximum of **24 players.**

C) **Adult Player Contract** – An Adult Player Contract must be signed and submitted to the Recreation & Parks Department at least 24 hours prior to that player participating in a league game. All Adult Player Contracts must list the players' physical addresses.
Contracts with PO Boxes will not be accepted.

D) **Initial Team Roster & Contracts** – All teams must submit initial rosters and contracts for a minimum of 4 males, 4 females and 1 (open slot) to the Recreation & Parks Department at least 24 hours prior to their respective teams' first scheduled games. Failure to do so by the time stipulated will result in the forfeit of all games until the contracts are received by the Department. Adult Player Contracts must include payment of all applicable Out-of-County Fees to be eligible.

E) **Ineligible Players** – Any use of an **ineligible player** will result in the **forfeit of all games** in which that player has participated. Further, the ineligible player **and** the team representative (or acting team representative) may face suspension from future games.

Players should have photo identification at each game. If there is a question about eligibility of a player, he/she may be asked to verify his/her identity. All eligibility questions during tournament play must be handled at the field.



If a player's eligibility is in question (through a written protest) during the regular-season, that player will have to present photo identification to the Recreation & Parks Department. Failure to do so by the time stipulated by the Recreation & Parks Department will result in the forfeit of all games in which that player has participated.

F) **Roster Additions & Deletions** – Players may be added or dropped from the Official Team Roster prior to the team's **5th played game**. No roster changes will be allowed after 5:00pm on the last business day prior to the day of the team's **5th scheduled game**. Schedule adjustments due to postponements and cancellations will be taken into account and may provide teams with more time to modify their rosters.

G) **NO PLAYER MAY APPEAR ON MORE THAN ONE ROSTER.**

H) The field supervisor will have a list of all **eligible** players. It is also important for the Team Representative to verify their rosters with the League Administrator prior to rosters becoming finalized. If a player is not listed on the field supervisor's official roster, then the player in question will not be allowed to play.

3. Softballs – All softballs must meet the following criteria to be eligible for use in the league:

Size	Color	Stitch Color	Stamp (Green)	COR	Compression
12"	White	Red		.52	300lbs. or Less
12"	Optic Yellow	Red		.52	300lbs. or Less

NOTE: All balls entering play should go through an umpire. However, it will ultimately be the defensive team’s responsibility to check a ball that is thrown-in from the sidelines after a ball is hit out of play.

- Each TEAM will furnish one new 12" ball/game.
- The hitting team is responsible for replacing any ball hit out of play with a **playable** ball of the same size. The umpires will have final say as to whether or not a ball is playable. Therefore, teams should arrive for each game with several playable balls.
- **PENALTY – Failure to supply the correct ball in a timely fashion (in the opinion of the umpire), may result in a forfeit.**

4. Bats – All bats must be in compliance with **USA Official Rules of Softball, Rule 7, Section 6B**. When a batter enters the batter’s box with or is discovered using an Altered or Non-Approved bat.

1. The batter is out – 1st Offense
2. Ejected – 2nd Offense

5. Player Protective Equipment – The Recreation & Parks Department **recommends** that all players take appropriate steps to protect themselves however they feel comfortable provided that such protective equipment is legal under USA Softball and local league rules.

Catcher - It is recommended each catcher wear a face mask with a throat protector. Neither USA Softball nor local league rules require the use of either.

Pitcher - It is recommended that each pitcher utilize whatever level of protective gear they feel is necessary within the rules. Vendors offer a variety of options including helmets, shin guards, athletic supporters, etc. that may be utilized.

Baserunners - Any team that would like to request one or more helmets for use by batters and baserunners may do so via the scorekeeper. A minimum of 4 helmets will be on hand for such use.

6. Footwear – Some type of shoe must be worn. Bare feet are not allowed. Sneakers or rubber cleats are allowed, but **metal cleats are strictly prohibited**.

7. Team Uniforms – The following team uniform requirements apply to all players:

- A) All players must wear a uniform top of the same color. The body of the shirt must be alike in color, though the trim may differ from player to player. Different shades of a color are not considered alike in color (Ex. Sky Blue & Navy Blue; Forest Green & Kelly Green, etc.)
- B) All uniform tops must have a permanent whole number of at least 6" in height on the back. Taped numbers are not considered permanent. Numbers must be whole numbers from 0 to 99. No two players may wear identical numbers (to include 0 and 00).
- C) In cooler weather, players may be allowed to wear sweatshirts, sweat suits, etc. during games. However, team jerseys must worn by each player. Jerseys may be displayed over top of garments or underneath another garment, but they must be worn. Any player questioned and not having a team jersey will be ruled ineligible.
- D) The field supervisor will be responsible for judging any jersey in question.

8. Home & Visitor Designation – The HOME team will be the second team listed on the schedule. Teams will occupy dugouts as follows:

HOME TEAM – 3rd Base Dugout
VISITING TEAM – 1st Base Dugout

9. Dugout Area – Only eligible players, team reps and one bat boy/girl may be in the dugout area. It is **required** that any youth used as bat boys/girls wear a protective batter's helmet. Players are prohibited from standing behind the backstop during game play.

10. Defensive Positioning Requirement – The USA Softball Co-Ed rule allowing an 11th batter will not be in effect during League or Tournament play. This rule, previously referred to as the Defensive Positioning Requirement, will not be used. Teams may bat 9, 10, 12 or 14 players with either 9 or 10 players playing in the field at any given time. Note: There are no rules requiring a specific number of any gender in the infield.

A) Defensive players can take a position anywhere in fair territory as long as they don't obstruct the batter's vision or take a position to distract the batter. However there may not be more than 6 players in the infield at any time and all outfielders must be behind the 150 foot line. In regular & tournament play there is no requirement for where the infielders position themselves inside the 150' line nor where the outfielders position themselves outside the 150' line. (Ex. Any shift of players is legal such as playing on the right side of the field for a left-handed batter.

B) All defensive players must be in fair territory except for the catcher. The catcher is required to be in the catcher's box at the time of the pitch and the pitcher must start the pitch with at least one foot in contact with the pitching rubber.

C) **150 ft. Outfield Line-** All outfielders must remain and have both feet behind the chalked "outfield line" when a batter is up to bat. If the "line" is not clearly marked it is up to the umpire's discretion if an outfielder is too close to the infield. There cannot be more than 6 players on the infield when anyone is batting. Once contact has been made the outfielders may cross the line. If an outfielder crosses the line before contact has been made the batter may be awarded first base after a delayed dead ball has been called by the umpire.

11. Pitch Count – The USA Softball pitch count rule which states the count will begin with 1 ball and 1 strike **WILL** be in effect. A batter may hit one (1) foul ball with two (2) strikes without being called out (courtesy foul)

12. Home Run Rule – Home runs hit over the fence by a team are limited to **three (3) per game**. Any home run hit over the fence in excess of three (3) will result in the batter being declared OUT and the ball will be dead and runner will return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. *Per USA Softball rules regarding over-the fence homeruns, the batter and baserunners are not required to run the bases. The batter and all runners are credited with a run once the ball is deemed a homerun.*

13. Pitcher Protection Rule – If a hard-hit batted ball either hits the pitcher, caught by the pitcher or makes contact with the pitcher's glove or clothing, or is within the proximity at or below head-level, the following penalties will be enforced:

First Offense – Delayed Dead ball, the ball will remain live. At the conclusion of the play, the umpires will call "time" and the defensive team will be given the choice of the result of the play or having the batter declared out with all runners returning to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch. The batter will be warned and a note will be recorded in the official scorebook ("Pitcher Protection Warning").

Second Offense (Same batter) – All provisions of the First Offense and the batter will also be ejected.

14. Regulation Game – A regulation game shall consist of **seven (7) innings** or the following:

A) **Rain or Darkness** – The losing team must have been at bat at least five (5) innings for the game to be declared regulation. EXCEPTION: See C) below:

B) **Run Ahead Rule** – The run-ahead rule will be in effect after the following:

- A team is ahead 20 runs or more after the losing team has batted at least 4 times.
- A team is ahead 12 runs or more after the losing team has batted at least 5 times.

NOTE: **USA SOFTBALL Rule 5, Section 9, B.** – Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run ahead limit while at bat. When the visiting team reaches the limit in the top half of the inning, the home team must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

NOTE: The run-ahead rule will still be in effect in post-season tournament play.

C) **Time Limit** – All games, with the exception of the semi-finals and finals of the post-season tournament(s) and any play-off games, will have a time limit of **ONE HOUR & TEN MINUTES**. Applications of the time limit include the following:

- The time limit shall start on the first pitch of the game.
- No game shall be complete due to the time limit unless it ends on a complete inning or unless the losing team has completed its at bat.
- A game that is tied at the end of seven innings, or after the time limit has expired shall be continued by playing additional innings until one side has scored more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning, or until the team second at bat has scored more runs in their half of the inning before the third out is made.
- Any game called by the time limit shall be considered a regulation game (regardless of the number of innings played). Exception: Tied games/extra innings.

15. Team – A team shall consist of **10 players**:

- A) A team may begin or finish a game with **nine (9) players**.
- B) If a team begins a game with nine (9) players, **the 9th or 10th batting position shall be an Automatic Out**, depending on the player of the missing player. Each time the vacant position is schedule to bat, the team representative and the field supervisor should notify the home plate umpire of the vacancy.
- C) **Acceptable Ratios** – Teams may play with gender ratios of **4 male-4 female-1 open (if playing 9 players), 5 male-4 female-1 open (if playing with 10 players) or 6 male-5 female-1 open (if playing with 12 players) or 7 male-6 female-1 open (if playing with 14 players)** if the Extra Players rule is being used by one of both teams. Teams may bat 9, 10, 12 or 14 with a maximum of 10 players playing in the field at any given time.

NOTE: Once a player occupies a position in the batting order, the player may only bat in that position during the game. No player may occupy multiple slots in the batting order.

NOTE: USA SOFTBALL Rule 4, Section 5 – Re-Entry

- A) Any player may be substituted for or replaced and re-entered once, provided the players occupy their same batting position in the batting order.
- B) The starting player and their substitute may not be in the lineup at the same time.
- C) If a player re-enters the game a second time or a player re-enters the game in a position in the batting order other than their original starting or substitute position, this is considered an illegal re-entry.

NOTE: All players playing in the field must be substituted into the line-up through the field supervisor prior to participating in the field.

NOTE: Teams may **NOT** elect to play 11 or 13 players and take an automatic out intentionally.

- D) **Starting with Nine (9) Players** – If a team begins with 9 players, the 10th player may be added if:
 - 1) **The lead-off batter has not batted a second time and/or**
 - 2) **The fourth (4th) inning has not begun.**

If the situation allows for a 10th player to be inserted into the line-up:

- 1) On offense, the player may be added immediately into the 9th or 10th batting slot, depending on the gender of the player.
- 2) On defense, the player must wait until completion of that half-inning before entering the game.

E) Losing a Player

1) If a team loses a player during the course of a game and there are no substitutes, the player's batting position will be declared an Automatic Out each time the player's turn arrives. The position could be filled by the player returning (later) or by a late-arriving, legal substitute if the situation allows.

2) For D-1 and E-1, the acceptable ratio of males:females:open and at least nine (9) players must be played. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a forfeit.

3) Acceptable Ratios After Losing a Player:

Starting With:	Ratio Following Loss(es):	Automatic Outs
14	6-6-1	1
14	6-5-1	2
14	5-5-1	3
14	5-4-1	4
14	4-4-1	5
12	5-5-1	1
12	5-4-1	2
12	4-4-1	3
10	4-4-1	1

NOTE: A team must be able to field (on defense) no more than 6 players of the same gender and no less than 4 players of the same gender.

NOTE: Substitutions must be of the same gender.

Exception: Open slot may substitute any gender including non-binary.

16. Courtesy Runner – A courtesy runner may be allowed for an injured player whose injury occurs during the game currently being played. The following stipulations apply to the use of a courtesy runner:

- A) One courtesy runner is allowed for one injured player per team per game provided that the injury occurs during the game currently being played.
- B) To request a courtesy runner, the batter/runner must first safely reach base. A team must then ask for time due to injury and request the runner through the umpire. The umpire crew will allow a courtesy runner in the event of an injury only. The umpire shall then confer with the scorekeeper who will record the use of the courtesy runner on the official score sheet.
- C) The courtesy runner is only allowed if no legal substitutes are available. If substitutes are available, the injured player may be replaced via a legal substitution as defined by USA SOFTBALL rules.
- D) The courtesy runner may run for the injured player for the remainder of the game. If the injured player cannot continue in the field and continue to bat and the number of eligible players drops below the required minimum of 9, a forfeit will be declared.
- E) The courtesy runner must be of the same gender as the injured player and shall be selected by choosing the player furthest from the injured player's batting slot who is not currently occupying a base. Exception: Open slot runner may substitute any gender including non-binary.

- F) Any player over the age of 50 or who is turning 50 during league play may request a courtesy runner once the batter/runner has reached first base safely. The courtesy runner must be of the same gender as the batter/runner and shall be selected by choosing the player furthest from the batter/runner's batting slot who is not currently occupying a base. A team must then ask for time and request the runner through the umpire. The umpire shall then confer with the scorekeeper who will record the use of the courtesy runner on the official score sheet.

17. Modified Speed-Up Rules – Warm-up pitches will be limited to the 1st inning, not to exceed 5 pitches or 1 minute. Substitute pitchers will have the same warm-up restrictions the first time they occupy the pitching position. No infield/outfield balls will be allowed after the 1st inning. **EXCEPTION:** If a new pitcher comes into the game, field players will be allowed to warm-up while the pitcher takes warm-up pitches in between innings (not in the middle of an inning).

18. No Grace Period – The game time is designated on the schedule. The official time will be kept by the field supervisor. If a team cannot field the appropriate minimum of nine (9) players at game time, the game shall be declared a forfeit. Players must be in the dugout and ready to begin the game. Line-ups must still be submitted no later than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.

19. Pre-Game Warm-Up – Warm-ups for each game are handled as follows:

- A) 1st Game – All warm-ups should occur in the outfield area or in the large open areas outside of the fence and away from the bleachers. Teams will not be permitted on the infield until the game is ready to begin. No batting practice will be permitted on the infield.
- B) Remaining Games – All warm-ups must occur outside of the fence and away from the bleachers and automobiles.

20. Suspended Games – All suspended games will be handled in accordance with USA SOFTBALL rules. Suspended games will be picked up from the point of suspension with all batters, base runners, outs, etc. remaining the same. Rosters must remain the same. Anyone not in attendance at the start of the restarted game must be substituted with a legal substitute or an automatic out will be declared in the missing player's spot.

21. Forfeits – Each team must submit a copy of their line-up to the field supervisor no later than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled game time. Teams must be ready to play at game time. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit. If both teams fail to submit a line-up on time and/or report ready to play on time, a double forfeit will be declared.

- After a line-up is submitted to the field supervisor, a change from one player to another will result in a substitution being made.
- No grace period is allowed. Game time will be the designated time listed on the schedule.
- The field supervisor will always keep the official time.
- If a forfeit occurs, teams will be allowed to have the field for one hour.

NOTE: The forfeiture of 2 games will result in a team being placed on probation by the Recreation & Parks Department. The Team Representative will receive written notification that their team has been placed on probation. The forfeiture of 3 or more games may result in the team's expulsion from the league. If a team is expelled, a refund will not be issued.

Note: If a team wishes to forfeit a game in advance as a courtesy to the opposing team then they may do so, provided that a written and/or signed statement is submitted to the Recreation & Parks Department. Once a team has indicated their intent to forfeit, the game is considered officially forfeited and will not be replayed.

This includes situations where a game is forfeited during the afternoon and games are rained out that evening.

22. Protests – All protests will be handled in accordance with USA SOFTBALL rules (Rule 9).

- A) The only protests that shall be received and considered are;
 - 1. Misinterpretation of a playing rule.
 - 2. Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation.
 - 3. Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.
 - 4. Eligibility of a player.
- B) The notification of intent to protest must be made to the plate umpire before the next pitch or, if the protest occurs on the last play of the game, the protest must be indicated to the field supervisor immediately. You may not file a protest once both umpires have left the field of play at the end of the game.
- C) Protest forms must be filled out completely, signed and submitted to the Recreation & Parks Department within **48 working hours** of the game in question along with a **\$25.00 fee**.
- D) All protests will be received by the **League Administrator**. Those ruled invalid by the Department (judgment calls, incorrect procedures used in filing a protest, etc.) will not be considered. If the protest is valid (proper reason and procedure used), the League Administrator or his designated officer will make a ruling. The **\$25.00 fee** is returned only on a valid protest that is upheld.
- E) If a protest that involves items A-C under Protests, then the game shall be replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made (with the decision corrected).
- F) If a protest for ineligibility is upheld, the game shall be forfeited by the team in violation.

23. Inclement Weather & Cancellation Policy – Games may be postponed or canceled for a variety of reasons including weather, scheduling conflicts, etc.

- A) **Before 5:00pm**, the Recreation & Parks Department will make any decision needed regarding the cancellation of games. This decision may not be made until 4:00pm or later if conditions warrant. **If games are canceled**, the Department will:

- 1. **Attempt to contact each Team Representative**
- 2. **Leave a message on the Weather Information Hotline (919.918.7373).**

If games are not canceled, the Department will contact no one.

- B) **After 5:00pm and on weekends**, all decisions will be made by the field supervisor or the field supervisor and umpires if the games have begun. **If games are canceled**, the field supervisor will:

1. Attempt to contact each Team Representative

If games are not canceled, the field supervisor will contact no one.

NOTE: Players are asked to contact their Team Representative or call the Weather Information Hotline. Please DO NOT phone the Recreation & Parks Department.

Lightning Policy: (per high school rules)

1. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Play will be suspended and shelter will be sought.
2. 30 minute rule. Once play has been suspended, there will be a wait of at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
3. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30 minute count resets the count to begin the 30 minute waiting period to restart.

****If any game is suspended with less than 30 minutes to play, the game will be re-scheduled to a future date (per Rule 20 –Suspended Games) with an exception to a regulation game. Regulation games will revert back to (Rule 14 sec. A, B & C) in the case of lightning and thunder.***

24. Ground Rules

Ball Contacts Tree or Limbs

Ruling A: If the ball is over the fence outside the playing area:
It is declared foul and ruled a dead ball.

Ruling B: If the ball strikes the tree inside the field of play:
It is declared foul and ruled a dead ball.

Ball Rolls Under Gate or Any Section of the Fence

Ruling: Player should raise both hands up to indicate ball is unplayable. If player reaches down and obtains the ball, it remains live.

25. Miscellaneous Information

- A) Please park in designated spaces (not on grass, curbs or medians).
- B) All park rules and Code of Conduct rules must be followed at all times.
- C) Please do not ask for games to be rescheduled for anyone's convenience.
- D) During the tournament, each team is responsible for keeping in contact with the Recreation & Parks Department to find out their team's schedule.
- E) Teams may be held responsible for any action caused by that team's spectators.

F) Umpires and supervisors are provided by the Recreation & Parks Department and will have complete control of all games.

G) All teams are expected to assist the Recreation & Parks Department in cleaning up their area at the completion of their games. Teams representatives are encouraged to check behind their players to ensure no items are left behind.

H) Lost and found items not belonging to the team representative's team may be given to the scorekeeper to enter into the Department's lost and found inventory.

26. Town of Carrboro Website – The Recreation & Parks Department is now posting schedules, scores and other league information on its website. The site can be accessed at the following address:

<http://www.carrbororec.org>

27. Any situation that occurs which is not covered by **USA SOFTBALL** or **local league rules** will be left to the discretion of the **Carrboro Recreation & Parks Department**.