

# **ADULT SOFTBALL RULES & REGULATIONS**



**CITY OF AVONDALE  
Parks & Recreation Department  
11465 W. Civic Center Dr.  
Avondale, Arizona 85323**

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## **Welcome!**

We want to take this opportunity to welcome all coaches, participants and fans to the City of Avondale's Adult Softball Program. This recreational sports program is based on FUN and exercise for all individuals involved. We hope you enjoy your recreational softball experience in our program and we look forward to cooperating and communicating with you throughout the season. The City of Avondale strives to provide a safe, healthy and enjoyable experience for all the participants. Our staff would like to wish you the best of luck for the upcoming season.

The current USA softball rules apply to all league situations not covered in this handbook. The City of Avondale reserves the right to add, delete, modify or change any rules or regulations during the season for the greater good of the league.

All questions or concerns should be directed to Zach Martins, Recreation Programmer, at (623) 333-2420, [zmartins@avondaleaz.gov](mailto:zmartins@avondaleaz.gov).

## **Registration**

Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. LEAGUE FEES AND ROSTERS WITH SIGNATURES ARE DUE BY THE FIRST GAME. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Online: <https://avondale.recdesk.com/Community/Home>

In Person: Avondale Parks & Recreation Office, 11465 W Civic Center Drive.

Phone: 623-333-2400

Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Days of Operation: Monday – Thursday

Closed Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

## **AVONDALE GENERAL RULES**

All league rules are governed and interpreted by the Recreation Programmer, Field Supervisor and/or game officials, using City of Avondale League Rules and Official USA the current USA Guide and Playing Rules. Teams will play 14 regular season games followed by a single-elimination post season tournament. Tournament seeding will be based on final league standings.

## **ALCOHOL**

- The consumption of alcoholic beverages during league or tournament games is strictly prohibited (unless the team purchased the alcohol permit for tournament).
- No rostered players (regardless of playing status) may drink alcohol during or in between games.

Violations of this rule will result in player ejection and forfeit of the game.

## **AWARDS**

- Tournament champions will receive either 15 shirts or a registration discount of \$100 for the following season.

## **BATTING**

- **All batters will begin each turn at bat with a one ball and one strike count with the courtesy foul rule in effect.**
- **Batting Order/Line-Up (Men's and Women's Division)**
  - Teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start and complete a game.
  - Line-up must be filled out before you bat.
    - Any player arriving late to the game is added to the bottom of the line-up.
  - If a player leaves a game due to injury or ejection, his/her spot can be taken by a bench substitute.
    - If a substitute is not available, the vacant position in the line-up will be counted as an out each time that player's spot comes up in the lineup.
  - The Extra Hitter (EH) rule will be in effect. The "EH" rule allows a team up to bat their entire roster and play 10 players on defense.
    - Extra hitters may be used by any team, provided it is made known prior to the start of the game.
  - For coed leagues, alternating order will be male - female or female - male throughout the entire game.
  - If a player is ejected and a substitute is not available, that position in the line-up is an automatic out each time it appears throughout the game.
- All substitutions must be reported to the umpire to acknowledge a player legally entering the game.
  - Any of the starting players may withdraw and re-enter once, provided the players occupy the same batting positions.
  - The original player and the substitute cannot be in the line-up at the same time.
- All courtesy runners must be the last out recorded and must be used before the first pitch to the next batter.
  - In the event there are no outs in the first inning, the courtesy runner will be the last person in the batting order.
  - A rostered non-player may also serve as the courtesy runner.
  - Teams may use 1 courtesy runner per inning.
- All players for the hitting team must remain in the dugout. Only the batter, the player "on deck" and the base running coaches are allowed on the field.
  - Children are not allowed in dugouts or on the field of play.

## **COED MODIFICATIONS**

- There cannot be more than 2 players of either gender in the outfield at the start of the pitch.
- The infield consists of a pitcher, catcher, 1<sup>st</sup> baseman, 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman, 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman and shortstop.
  - There can be no more than 3 players of either gender in the infield at the start of the pitch.
- If playing with 9 players:
  - You may play with 5 men/4 women or 5 women/4 men
- If playing with 8 players, it must be 4 men and 4 women.

- Teams may play with 6 men and 4 women with permission of the opposing coach.
- Teams may play with 6 women and 4 men. No permission is required.
- On a walk to a male hitter, intentional or not, he is automatically awarded second base.
  - With less than 2 outs, the upcoming female hitter must hit (no exceptions).
  - When there are 2 outs, the female hitter has the option of hitting or taking a base on balls.
- Coed teams may use 2 courtesy runners per inning, one male and one female
  - A male runs for a male and a female runs for a female.

### **COMMUNICATION/GAME CANCELLATIONS**

- The City of Avondale Parks and Recreation Division reserves the right to adjust league format during the season.
  - Unavoidable game cancellations due to rain, irrigation, or unforeseen circumstances beyond our control may not be rescheduled.
  - Make-up games may be played on a night different than that of your league.
  - Decisions on rain-out games can be obtained after 3:00pm by phoning the rain-out information hotline at 623-256-2299.
  - Rain out information will also be available on [www.quickscores.com/avondale](http://www.quickscores.com/avondale)
- It is the responsibility of each manager to maintain regular communication with the Recreation Programmer for rescheduling of games, tournament brackets, rulings, and standings.

### **PARTICIPANT CONDUCT/EJECTIONS**

- The field supervisors, Recreation Programmer and/or official have the authority to forfeit any game, eject players, coaches or fans **WITHOUT WARNING** for any conduct deemed unbecoming or detrimental to the game.
- ALL CAPTAINS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF THEIR PLAYERS, ASSISTANTS, OR FANS IN ATTENDANCE.
- The players' **Code of Conduct** is strictly enforced and will govern incidents and occurrences.
- A player that has been ejected from a game, for any reason, will also receive a minimum of one-week suspension.
- Players that have been ejected must exit the facility and grounds immediately. Players are not allowed onto the facility until the completion of their suspension.
- If a player is ejected during tournament play, they will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament.
- All conduct matters will be presented to the Recreation Programmer for further consideration.
- Foul language will not be tolerated. Any participant assaulting an official or City employee will be automatically suspended for the current season and the incident may result in legal action.
- Threats to an official or City employee will result in multiple game suspensions. Comments such as "I will take care of you later" or "I'll meet you in the parking lot" will be considered as threats and will be taken seriously. All captains are responsible

for the behavior of any players, assistant coaches, or fans in attendance. The players' *Code of Conduct* is strictly enforced and will govern incidents and occurrences.

- **NOTE:** There is no arguing with the official over calls. There is no exception to this rule. Any player, coach or observer whose temper gets out of control over a judgment call, or who by vulgarity, intimidation or yelling confronts an official, will be warned or ejected. If warned and the infraction is repeated, the offending person can be dismissed from the game, asked to leave the park, and/or not be allowed to continue playing the remainder of the season, depending on the severity of the infraction.
- Some forms of unsportsmanlike conduct will warrant automatic ejection with no warnings given. Two reprimands or warnings to an individual or team for unsportsmanlike conduct will warrant automatic ejection of said player or team, or spectator from the premises. A third reprimand to any other player or spectator of said team will result in a forfeit.
- Once the behavior has been reviewed and all parties involved have submitted a written statement, a decision will be made as to any penalties or suspensions based on the infraction. This decision will be communicated in the form of a letter and/ or email and will be addressed to the coach of the given team and the individual.
- An appeal may be made by submitting a letter to the Recreation Programmer within one (1) week of notification. Appeals will be presented to the Avondale Parks and Recreation Board as required.

### **ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS**

- A team captain may request an eligibility check of any player during the first three innings of the game. An official will make a stoppage of time and the request must be made known to the field/league supervisor.
- A player is illegal/ineligible if:
  - The player does not have a valid ID in possession (on bench),
  - The player's name does not appear on the roster or drop/add forms,
  - The player does not meet the age requirements, or
  - The player appears on more than one roster on the same league/tournament night.
- Avondale Staff reserves the right to check player eligibility at any time.
- Teams may use up to one player from another team with permission of the opposing coach and recreation staff.

### **PENALTY:**

- The illegal/ineligible player is automatically ejected from the game and the team using the illegal/ineligible player forfeits the game. A second ejection for the same player during the season **may** result in a suspension for the remainder of the season. All decisions made by the field supervisor in this matter are final.

### **EQUIPMENT AND FIELD**

- The City of Avondale reserves the right to withhold or withdraw approval of any

equipment which significantly changes the character of the game, affects the safety of participants or spectators, or renders a player's performance more a product of his/her equipment than individual skill.

- **Only bats with the ASA softball or USA softball stamp will be allowed for play.** Any use of an illegal bat results in player ejection.
- Base distance for all leagues will be 70 feet.
- There will be no infield practice between or before games.
- Any player that deliberately throws a bat may be ejected from the game. In the case of an accidental bat throwing the umpire will issue a warning.
- Metal Cleats are not allowed during play.
- Music played in the dugout must only be audible to those inside the dugout. At any time, an umpire or league staff member can ask a team to turn the music down or turn it off. **Please play appropriate music.**
- **Captains and Players should not leave any litter in the dugout.** Please ask the fans of your team to clean up after themselves as well.

### **END OF GAMES**

- During the regular season, all games that end in a tie will remain a tie.
- In tournament play, the international tie-breaker rule will be used.
- Run Rule: All games will be called at the conclusion of:
  - 5 innings (or 4 ½ if the home team) is ahead by 10 runs.
  - 4 innings (or 3 ½ if the home team) is ahead by 15 runs.
  - 3 innings (or 2 ½ if the home team) is ahead by 20 runs.

### **GAME BALLS/BALL RETURN POLICY**

Game balls will be provided by the League. The size of the ball will be:

- Men's: 12 inch softball (52 cor. – 300 com.) Optic Yellow
- Women's: 11 inch softball (44 cor. – 375 com.) Optic Yellow

### **GAME TIME/FORFEIT TIME**

- There will be a ten (10) minute grace period for a team's first scheduled game of the night only. Those ten (10) minutes are part of the official game time. The umpire's time will be the official time for determining forfeits/game time, however the league supervisor has the final say. If the team that has enough players still wants to play after that ten (10) minute grace period is over then the game can still be played, but time has begun at the designated start time.
- Three forfeits or no shows may cause a team to be dropped from the league.
- There will be no new innings after 55 minutes of play.

### **FORFEITS**

- Any team that forfeits a game (no call or no show) for any reason will incur a \$25 fee that must be paid prior to playing their next scheduled night of games.
- Any team that forfeits a game due to violation of the code of conduct will incur a \$25 fee that must be paid prior to playing their next scheduled night of games.
- The score of a forfeited game shall be seven (7) to zero (0).
- No Refunds for games that are a forfeit a head of time.

## **HOME RUNS**

- Each team is allowed three (3) over the fence homeruns per game. Homeruns after the limit are considered outs.

## **LEAGUE STANDINGS**

- Standings will be available at [www.quickscores.com/avondale](http://www.quickscores.com/avondale) and will be updated the following business day.
- All teams will be seeded for the tournament, based on their regular season record. In the event of identical records, the following tie breaker system will be in effect:
  - 1st tie breaker: Head to Head records
  - 2nd tie breaker: Scoring differential between head to head
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> tie breaker: Runs scored throughout the season
  - Any team that has forfeited a game to any team they are tied with will automatically take the lowest ranking.

## **PITCHING & HITTING**

- The pitcher must come to a complete stop in the pitching area before delivering the pitch to the plate.
- Pitcher must have one foot touching the pitching rubber.
- The pitch must be delivered with perceptible arc and reach a minimum of six (6) feet and a maximum of twelve (12) feet from the ground.
- The pitcher's plate will be placed at 53 feet.
- Any batted ball that passes in a vertical plane through the pitching area, but no more than 2 feet above the pitcher's head, is considered a dead ball with the batter declared out and runners return to the last occupied base.
  - This rule applies whether the pitcher touches the ball or not and is still in effect if the pitcher leaves the pitching area.
  - Rule is in effect for both Men's and Coed divisions.

## **PROTESTS/UMPIRE EVALUATION**

- During League Play:
  - All protests/complaints shall be made by a team captain.
  - Only misinterpretations of the rules or player eligibility may be protested.
    - Official's judgment decisions cannot be protested.
  - The team captain must call time and bring the protest to the official. The official and field supervisor will confer to make a decision.
  - All decisions are final.
  - The captain has the option of playing the game out under protest.
    - This decision must be told to the site supervisor before play resumes.
  - Any protest regarding the score of the game must be made immediately. You may check in with the official about what the score is after every inning but you will not be able to protest a score once the new inning is started.
- During Tournament Play:
  - All protests will be resolved immediately by the Recreation Programmer or field staff and Official before play resumes.

## **ROSTERS**

- Players must be at least 18 years old prior to the start of the season.
- Each team roster is to be submitted by the captain before the start of the first team game. A team must have a minimum of ten (10) players and a maximum of eighteen (18) players on its roster to start the season. The captain must be listed on the roster if he/she intends to play in ANY games.
- Players may be added and/or deleted from the original roster up to the first pitch of the fourth week of play which would be the start of the seventh game.
- Roster changes must be done at the field— see the field supervisor.
  - If you cannot find the field supervisor, email the Recreation Programmer to add them to the roster and they can sign it the next night of league.
- If you are in need of extra players for your roster you can contact the Recreation Programmer for a list of names.
- Using players from teams without permission, playing before or after your game on a given night constitutes use of an illegal player and will result in a forfeit.
- Players without permission may be suspended for playing on a different team.
- A player may play on one or more teams if it is in the same division, but not on the same night. *Example:* If a player plays in a “D” League on Tuesday night, he/she can play on another team in another league on a different night such as a “D” League on Sunday or Friday nights.

## **SAFETY BAG/COMMITMENT LINE**

- Due to safety concerns, 1<sup>st</sup> base double bags will be used at levels in all divisions for Men and Coed play.
- Runners must use the orange portion of the bag and defensive players must use the white portion (See USA rulebook for exceptions).
- Safeties will be allowed at first and third base.
- Coed Division runners will also use a home plate commitment line. Once a player crosses the Commitment Line between 3<sup>rd</sup> Base & Home Plate they must continue through to Home.
- A player that touches Home coming from 3<sup>rd</sup> Base due to a walk or homerun is not called out.
- The act of crossing the Safety Line (Home Plate to backstop) will now act as Home Plate, whereas any player running Home that touches Home Plate will be considered out unless it's a dead ball play i.e. walk.
- All plays at Home Plate will be force outs (i.e. once a player crosses the Commitment Line they can be forced out at Home). (NO SLIDING INTO HOME)

## **SCORE SHEETS**

- Both teams are responsible for keeping the official score on their own.
  - Both visitors and home team captains are required to sign umpires score sheet after game for verification of correct scores reported.

## **UNIFORMS**

- Uniforms are not required, but shirts must be worn.