

**CITY OF AZLE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
**Adult Softball Program By-laws – 2023**

THESE BY-LAWS ARE A SUPPLEMENT TO THE 2023 USSSA RULEBOOK

**A. Playing Rules:**

1. GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME, in the event a team(s) is/are not ready to play at scheduled time, a forfeit shall be declared. Please note there will not be scorekeepers, the umpires will be the official scorekeepers.
2. Men's: A minimum of 8 players can start a game. A 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> player may be added to the position any time before the end of the game. All vacant spots(s) in the lineup will be declared an out every time that lineup position is due to bat. (See Rule 11)
3. **Co-ed:** A modified Co-ed team consists of 10 players, 6 men and 4 women, 5 men and 5 women will be allowed. Teams may play 6 males and 6 females. If a team starts with 9 players and a player arrives late, that player may enter the game immediately, in the last spot in the batting order. Until the last player arrives, the vacant position will be an out. If a team plays using the 6/4 format, a female must bat 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup>. Men must bat 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>. A team CANNOT play 7/3. Teams may bat 4-4, 5-5, 6-4, 6-6, or 5-4 (in the event of 5-4 which more males are batting, team must take an out in the spot of the missing position). A legal lineup shall consist of at least eight players, including no less than 4 males and 4 females.
4. Offensive teams must alternate the batting line-up according to gender. If a player leaves the game for any reason their substitute must be of the same gender.
5. Players cannot play on two teams in the same league.
6. Time Limit: no new inning will start after 50 minutes of play. Time will stop if a serious injury occurs; judgment of the umpire is final. The official start time is noted in the scorecard and established by the umpire.
7. All batters will begin with one ball and one strike count. A courtesy foul is not allowed. All Games are scheduled as seven (7) innings or 50 minutes time limit. Any game still tied after the end of the 7 innings or when time expires will play extra innings with a 3-2 count.
8. Run rules are as follows: 20 after 3, 15 after 4 and 10 after 5.
9. All batters begin with one ball and one strike count (1-1 count). A foul ball with two (2) strikes is an out.
10. Softball teams will provide game balls for each game of the season. Smoking on the playing field or in the dugout is NOT permitted.
11. Warm-up before or during the game is only permitted in designated areas.
12. Players, Coaches, Manager, or Team Attendants shall NOT be allowed to participate while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.
13. A game is considered official if it is called after 4 innings or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
14. Home and visitor will be determined by coin toss before the game. During play-offs, higher seeded team will be home team.
15. Only Softball World stamp ball is allowed. The umpire has the right to eject any ball considered by him or her to be unplayable.
16. A player's back foot CAN NOT be in front of home plate until the pitch is released.
17. ALL players and managers must sign the City of Azle COVID-19 Wavier before the first game of the season. Players that have not signed the City of Azle COVID-19 Wavier will

- not be able to participate in games until signed.
18. Only one batter allowed on deck.
  19. An umpire has the right to remove a player/manager if they are showing signs of being ill.
  20. Please practice social distancing of 6' when possible. We recommend wearing face mask.

**B. Coed Player Rules**

1. A Team may play either 5/5, 6/6, or 6/4.
2. If mixed team has 5 females, they MUST play 5 females.
3. If a team plays using the 6/4 format, a female must bat 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th . Men must bat 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th and 10th.
4. If a team using the 6/4 format and a 5th female arrives during the game, the team MUST play 5/5. The 5th female will be inserted into the 9th batting position immediately and the male originally in that spot is now done for the game.
5. A team CANNOT play 7/3 on the field.
6. Team may score up to eight (8) runs per inning. After the eighth run, teams change sides.
7. A legal lineup shall consist of at least eight players, including no less than 4 males and 4 females.

**C. Eligibility:**

1. All participants in adult leagues must have attained the age of sixteen (16) years prior to the registration date.
2. Any player who signs the roster before the game is eligible to play. Final roster add/drop deadline is due by team's seventh game.
3. Everyone who plays must sign their team's roster form.
4. Team rosters must be filled out completely. Completed rosters must be submitted to the umpires prior to the start of the team's first game. Failure to do so may result in forfeit or suspension. Church teams must have the signature of the pastor, priest, etc., on the roster.

**D. Batting:**

1. Batting order of each team must be listed and delivered to the umpire prior of starting time of the game. (See Rule 7)
2. Teams may insert additional hitters into the lineup.

**E. Player Conduct**

1. Player ejections will be effective for the remainder of the game and for the team's next game. In the event the player is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct, player must leave the park. Two ejections in a season will be grounds for removal for the remainder of the season.

**F. Uniforms:**

1. Playing jerseys are requested but not required for all team members.
2. Shoes are required, metal cleats are not permitted.
3. Medical braces with exposed metal may be considered legal if covered by soft material and taped.

4. Exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, or ear studs may not be worn. Medical alert bracelets or neck chains are not considered jewelry, but if worn must be taped to the body. Also, any other item judged dangerous by the umpire must be removed. Players who are asked to remove jewelry and fail to do so may be ejected from the game.

**G. Scheduling:**

1. The Athletic Coordinator shall schedule all regular season games and if make-up games are scheduled, game times may be shortened to accommodate the completion of the leagues.
2. In case of inclement weather, players may contact the Park office at (817) 444-7127 (recorder) after 3:00 pm on the day of the game to see if games have been cancelled.

**H. Home Runs:**

**Men's E (Tuesday):**

Home run rule is 1 and 1 up single rule.- Once both teams hit 1 homeruns each, any team can hit 1 homerun that allows the other team the opportunity to hit 1. Any homeruns hit over by the same team will count as a single until the opposing team hits a homerun.

**Modified Coed (Friday):**

Home run rule is 3 and 1 up single rule.- Once both teams hit 3 homeruns each, any team can hit 1 homerun that allows the other team the opportunity to hit 1. Any homeruns hit over by the same team will count as a single until the opposing team hits a homerun.

**I. Conduct and Suspensions:**

1. The Athletic Coordinator will rule on all situations concerning participant conduct and suspension of players, coaches, or managers for violation of rules, inciting fights, etc. All games are in the hands of umpires and every man, woman and team is required to respect their authority. Inappropriate conduct such as profane language, consuming alcohol beverages during the game or abusing the umpires or the opponents will be subject to suspension.
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as abusive language either directly or indirectly toward officials in charge of game, throwing a bat at or toward an official or participant or in any other matter dangerous to any person: intentional delay of game tactics: unnecessary rough tactics against an opposing player: fighting, playing while intoxicated or deliberately violating the rules of the game. Any player or team found guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct shall be subject to suspension.
3. Any player who strikes another player or umpire shall be subject to indefinite suspension. The Athletic Coordinator shall determine the length of suspension. A player who pushes or otherwise molests the person or and official shall be subject to suspension.
4. Any Player(s) who attempts to interfere with the orderly disposition of a dispute during the course of the game shall be subject to ejection. Managers shall instruct their players to remain in the dugout area during any dispute involving rule interpretation or unnecessary rough tactics between members of opposing teams. Any player harassing an umpire shall be penalized by suspension: THREATS shall be grounds for indefinite suspension.
5. Any player removed or ejected from a game shall have one (1) minute to leave the facility (sitting in dugout, stands or in the immediate area is not permitted). Failure to

comply may result in the game being ruled a forfeit. Continued abstinence may result in team disqualification from the league. Umpires may suspend players for the following game if player actions are deemed severe.

6. Any team member who continues to display conduct which detracts from competitive recreational objective of the program, after the game is over, could result in disciplinary action taken against the team or team member.
7. The conduct of the fans, family and friends are the responsibility of the team manager. Unruly conduct or interfering with the play of the game may result in a forfeit.
8. Use of profanity, directed to the other team, umpires, or to one's self, can result in immediate ejection, No warnings are necessary.

**J. Rosters:**

- K. Up to 15 players may be added on a roster however 15 (per team) league and awards will be given to championship and runner up team. As of the end of the of the second calendar week of the season AND regardless of the number of actual games played or not played, rosters are due to the umpires. Rosters must be filled out completely.

Teams that do not turn in rosters will forfeit previous played games until the roster is submitted. Additions to the rosters will be allowed until the end of your 6th scheduled game. No additions will be allowed in the playoffs.

**L. Protests:**

1. All protests, regardless of nature, will not be considered unless the umpire is notified according to USSSA rules that the game is being played under protest. No protest after final out of game.
2. Only the following protest will be considered:
  - a. Misinterpretation of a playing rule
  - b. Failure of an official to apply a correct rule to a given situation.
  - c. Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation
3. Plays involving judgment calls are not subject to protest.
4. Player's eligibility protest must be made NO later than the first at bat of player in question.
5. Only the manager or the assistant manager may file a protest.
6. A formal written protest by the team manager must be filed with the Athletic Coordinator within 48 hours after the game in question, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or Holidays.
  - a. The protest fee of \$50.00 must be presented to the UMPIRE at the time of the protest. A general statement of the protest must be noted on the back of the game score sheet.
  - b. Fee will be returned if protest is upheld.
  - c. Fee will be retained if protest NOT upheld.
  - d. A formal written protest by the team manager MUST contain:
    1. The time, date and place of game.
    2. The names of the officials.
    3. The rule and section of the officials' rules or policies under which the protest is being made.
    4. The decision and conditions surrounding the making of the decision.
    5. All essential facts involved in the matter protested.

- e. An incomplete protest shall be ruled invalid.
- f. Protest decisions will be made by a Protest Board consisting of the Athletic Coordinator and two (2) officials selected by the Athletic Coordinator.

**M. Insurance:**

1. Teams must provide their own insurance coverage if they so desire.

**N. Tiebreakers:**

1. Ties for first and second place will be broken as follows:
2. Head to head (If head to head teams only play once, a play-off will be scheduled)
3. Run differential head to head
4. Run differential for all games
5. Total runs scored.

**O. Middle Rule:**

If a batted ball in the air hits a defenseless pitcher and the "middle" rule is invoked, the umpire will take up the bat for the remainder of the game. For the "middle rule" to be in effect, the pitcher must be in contact with the pitching box.

**P. General Information:**

1. USSSA rules shall govern play unless otherwise specified in the league by-laws.
2. The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to delete or add any rule that in the opinion of the department will help improve the softball program.
3. The Athletic Coordinator reserves the right to combine leagues in order to ensure a league will not be canceled.
4. To view the 2023 USSSA Rulebook, go to <http://www.ussa.com/>.

**Q. Awards:**

1. Individual shirts will be awarded to 1st place.

**R. Bats**

1. Must have a permanent USSSA Mark (USSSA thumbprint mark) on its taper. Either old or new stamps is acceptable.
2. Be an aluminum bat.

**S. Balls**

Game balls can be purchased at the park for \$6. Balls must be either Softball World stamp or Worth Hot Dot Classic Plus.