8/7/2026 (DP)

Charlottesville Parks and Recreation: Adult Softball Rules and Regulations

The Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Adult Softball Program shall be governed by the rules contained in this packet. Any rule or regulation not specifically addressed herein shall be governed by the current **USA Softball Rulebook** and/or shall be left to the discretion of the Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Athletics Office.

Section 1 – Teams

- Teams must consist of **10 or more players**. A minimum of **8 players** is required to start and finish a game.
- A maximum of **12 players** may be listed on the lineup card for each game.
- Lineup cards **MUST be completed by the team captain/coach BEFORE the start of each game** and submitted by the official game time.
- Team rosters may consist of **8–18 players** at any given time.
- If a team needs a substitute player for a particular week, the team captain/coach must contact the Athletics Office by **4:00 p.m. on the day of the game** and identify the player being replaced on the active roster (if the roster is at the 18 player max).
- No player may be added to a roster that already contains 18 players unless another player is removed to make room.
- All coaches and/or scorekeepers who will be in the dugout or on the field must be listed on the team's roster. Coaches and scorekeepers who do not play, do **not** count toward the player roster limit.
- Anyone who is not listed on the roster as a player, coach, or scorekeeper is **not permitted on the field or in the dugout**.

Section 2 – Field Locations

- All games shall be played at **McIntire Fields**.

Section 3 – Players & Positions

- A team must have a minimum of **8 players** to start and continue a game.
- Two players must occupy the positions of **pitcher and catcher**.
- A ninth or tenth player may be added to the game when they arrive. Any player arriving after the game has started will be added to the **bottom of the batting order**.

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- Teams may have a maximum of **12 players** on the lineup card.
- Any player may play defense at any time as long as that player occupies a batting position on the lineup card.
- On offense, players must bat in the order listed on the lineup card.
- Teams may substitute players in and out of the game. There is no limit to the number of times a player may substitute in and out, provided the player returns to the **same spot in the batting order**.
- The substitute and original player may not play defense at the same time.
- Either the original player or substitute may occupy and bat in the lineup spot.
- Only the player who records the at-bat may serve as the baserunner for that lineup spot during that inning, except when:
    - The player is injured during the play in which they are batting; or
    - A courtesy runner is used.
    - Or if the line spot is being shared via two people. IE someone is playing in the field and not hitting or vice versa. (Regular Season Only)

Section 4 – Equipment

- The official game ball for league and tournament play will be supplied by Charlottesville Parks & Recreation.
- The official softball shall be an **ASA/USA Softball-approved yellow optic ball with red stitching, 52/300**.
- Male players will use a **12-inch softball**.
- Female players will use an **11-inch softball**.
- **Teams are responsible for retrieving balls that go out of play.**
- All bats will be furnished by Charlottesville Parks & Recreation.
- Male players will use **wood bats**.
- Female players will use **metal bats**, with the option to use a wooden bat.
- All players and coaches must wear appropriate footwear:
    - Closed-toe, closed-heel shoes are required.
    - **Metal cleats are prohibited.**

Section 5 – The Game

- The home team shall be determined by a **coin toss** during the regular season.
- In the playoffs, the **higher-seeded team** shall be the home team and may choose whether to bat or field first.
- Coaches are required to submit a lineup card containing the **first initial and last name** of each

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player to the umpire/site supervisor before the start of the game.

- Games shall consist of **7 innings or a 55-minute time limit**, whichever occurs first.
- No new inning may begin after the 55-minute time limit has been reached.
- Once the time limit is reached, the current inning shall be completed unless the team batting in the bottom half of the inning is already winning, in which case the game shall end.
- The official game clock begins with the **coin toss**. The umpire shall record the official game start time on the scorecard.

Overtime

If the game is tied after 7 innings or when the time limit expires:

- A **one-pitch format** shall be used for extra innings.
- If the pitch is a **strike**, the batter is out.
- If the pitch is a **ball**, the batter is awarded first base.
- If the pitch is **fouled off**, the batter is out.
- The last batter from the previous inning shall begin each half-inning on **second base**.
- The runner placed on second base may only be replaced if:
    - The player is substituted at the beginning of the overtime inning, in which case that player may not return for the remainder of that overtime inning;
    - The player is injured while running the bases; or
    - A permitted courtesy runner is used.
- Overtime shall continue until a winner is determined, subject to the maximum of three overtime innings described below.
- A maximum of **3 overtime innings** will be played during regular-season games.
- If the game remains tied after 3 overtime innings, the game shall end in a **tie**.
- **Playoffs only:** If the game remains tied after one full overtime inning, overtime shall continue until a winner is determined.

Count & Courtesy Foul

- The batter will receive a **three-ball, two-strike count**, with **one courtesy foul** allowed.

Mercy Rules

The following run rules apply:

- **20-run lead after 3 innings:** Game ends.
- **15-run lead after 4 innings:** Game ends.
- **10-run lead after 5 innings:** Game ends.

Additional Game Rules

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- **Stealing is not permitted** in Charlottesville Parks & Recreation slow-pitch softball.
- A regular-season game is considered official after the completion of the **4th inning or 35 minutes of play**, whichever applies under the league's cancellation rules.
- Regular-season games canceled after the completion of the 4th inning or after 35 minutes of play will **not be rescheduled**.
- The score at the completion of the last full inning shall be considered the final score for a canceled regular-season game.
- Postponed games due to inclement weather shall resume from the **last recorded out at the time the game was postponed**.
- If a playoff game is postponed due to weather, play shall resume from the last recorded out of the inning, even if the game has completed the 4th inning or later.

Section 6 – Pitching

- The pitcher must maintain contact with the pitching plate while delivering the pitch.
- The pitch must travel a minimum of **6 feet** and a maximum of **10 feet** in the air.

Section 7 – Batter-Runner & Runner

- When a defensive player has the ball or is about to receive the ball, the baserunner is responsible for avoiding contact by going around or sliding under the defensive player.
- A runner who fails to avoid contact shall be called **out**.
- If the umpire determines that the contact was flagrant, the runner may be **ejected**.

Section 8 – Courtesy Runners

- Men's and Co-Rec teams may use **one courtesy runner per inning, per gender**.
- If a courtesy runner is on base when the player for whom they are running is scheduled to bat, the courtesy runner must return to bat in accordance with the lineup card, and the runner who was being represented is out.
- Male players must serve as courtesy runners for male players.
- Female players must serve as courtesy runners for female players.
- A non-binary/gender-fluid participant may serve as a courtesy runner for either gender.

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Section 9 – Co-Rec Modifications

Roster Requirements

- For short-handed teams with **8 or 9 players**, a minimum of **3 players who identify as female** is required.
- For teams with **10 players**, a minimum of **5 players who identify as female** is required.
- There is no minimum number of players who identify as male.
- A non-binary/gender-fluid player may count toward either the male or female requirement and does not have to be identified as either gender.

Batting Order

- Teams must alternate male and female players in the batting order.
- Non-binary/gender-fluid participants may be inserted into any male or female batting-order position.
- A male or female player may bat immediately before or after a non-binary/gender-fluid participant.
- An **out will be recorded for any vacant female batting position**.
- No out will be recorded for a vacant position created by a non-binary/gender-fluid player.
- Female players may bat back-to-back when necessary.

Defensive Requirements

No more than **5 players who identify as male** may play defense at any one time.

Infield

- The infield consists of the dirt portion of the field within fair territory, including:
    - First base
    - Second base
    - Shortstop
    - Third base
- A minimum of **2 players who identify as female** must be positioned in the infield.
- Infield players may take 1–2 steps onto the grass.

Outfield

- The outfield consists of the grass portion of fair territory, including:
    - Left field
    - Center-left

- Center-right
- Right field

- A minimum of **2 players who identify as female** must be positioned in the outfield.

Pitcher/Catcher

- A minimum of **1 player who identifies as female** must play either pitcher or catcher.
- If a team is playing with fewer than 5 male players, both pitcher and catcher may be female.

Short-Handed Defense

- Teams playing with fewer than 10 players must have at least:
  - 1 female player in the infield; and
  - 1 female player in the outfield.
- A non-binary/gender-fluid player may count toward either the male or female defensive requirement for the infield and outfield.

Teams must continue to follow the batting-order requirements outlined above and will take an out when required if they are unable to maintain the required batting order.

Section 10 – Home Runs

- Home runs are **unlimited** in all Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Adult Softball leagues.

Section 11 – Staff

- All games will be supervised by a minimum of:
  - **1 umpire; and**
  - **1 Charlottesville Parks & Recreation site supervisor.**
- Umpires and site supervisors are responsible for:
  - Enforcing league rules and player conduct;
  - Ensuring player safety;
  - Managing league operations; and
  - Enforcing applicable City park ordinances.

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Section 12 – Eligibility

- Team rosters must be emailed to the Athletics Department at **athletics@charlottesville.gov** once the team is registered.
- Rosters will also be maintained through a Google Sheet (with the link provided HERE at the start of the season)
- A copy of the rosters will also be maintained in the softball binder at the field.
- The Athletics Office may move teams up or down a league at its discretion. Factors may include:
    - Previous season records;
    - League standings; and
    - Team rosters.
- Players may participate on a maximum of **one team per day per season**.
- Players must be **18 years of age or older**. Players under 18 will not be permitted to participate, and waivers will not be accepted.
- The league will primarily operate under an honor-code system. However, if concerns arise, the Athletics Office may require verification of a player's date of birth.
- Coaches must add players to their roster or notify the Athletics Office of substitute players **before those players participate in a game**.
- Player additions and substitute notifications must be submitted by email to the Athletics Office no later than **4:00 p.m. on the day of the game**.

Eligibility Enforcement

- **1st Offense:** Removal of the player in question.
- **2nd Offense:** Automatic forfeiture of one game.
- **3rd Offense:** Team disqualification from the league.

Substitute Players

- A substitute player must replace a player on the active roster.
- The player being replaced by a substitute may not participate in the same game as the substitute.
- A team may use an **at-the-field substitute** under last-minute circumstances only if the opposing team agrees.
- If the opposing team does not agree to the substitute, or was not informed before the game, the team using the substitute will forfeit the game.
- A substitute may only play **up one division or within the same division**. For example, a Pro-level player may not substitute for a Rookie-level team on the same day, but a Rookie-level player may substitute in either league.
- Teams may use “at field pickups” substitute players only to reach the minimum of **8 players**.
- A maximum of **2 non-rostered players** may be used as at-the-field substitutes.
- If a team has 8 rostered players available, it must play with those players and may not add

at-the-field substitutes.
- At-the-field substitutes are permitted **only during the regular season**.
- Only rostered players may participate in the playoffs. **NO at-the-field substitutes are permitted during the playoffs.**

Roster Deadlines

- Final Playoff rosters may be updated through the **Sunday before playoff week**.
- No roster changes will be permitted during the week of league playoffs, except as necessary for game cancellations/rescheduling.
- Any roster changes for rescheduled games must be submitted by the Sunday before the week of the rescheduled games.
- Coaches are responsible for protesting player eligibility in accordance with Section 15.
- **Charlottesville Parks & Recreation staff and/or USA Softball umpires may check team rosters at any time.**
- Failure to comply with eligibility requirements may result in forfeiture of affected games.

Section 13 – Ejections & Injuries

Injured Players

- If a player becomes injured during a game, another player may substitute into that player's lineup position.
- If an injured player leaves the game and the team no longer has the minimum 8 players required to continue, the game shall end in a **forfeit**.
- A non-rostered player may be added during a game if the opposing team agrees, but only when an injury reduces the team to fewer than 8 players.
- Only **one** non-rostered player may be added under this injury exception.
- If a team has 9 or 10 players available and one player is injured, the team must continue with the reduced number of players.
- If the opposing team permits an injury-related non-rostered replacement, the game may not subsequently be protested on roster-eligibility grounds.

Injury-Related Batting

- No penalty or out shall be assessed when a player is injured and the team can continue with the required minimum number of players.
- Exception: If the injury results in male players batting consecutively in a Co-Rec game, an out shall be recorded between the two male batters.

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Ejected Players

- An ejected player must leave the field immediately.
- The ejected player's team shall take an **out each time the ejected player is due to bat**.
- The team may not substitute another player into the ejected player's batting position.
- Following an ejection, the maximum number of players that the team may have on defense is **9**.
- If a second player is ejected, the maximum number of defensive players is reduced to **8**.
- If a third player is ejected, the game shall end in a **forfeit**.

Section 14 – Forfeits & Defaults

- Teams must start and finish games with a minimum of **8 players**.
- A coach or designated team representative must submit the lineup card to the site supervisor **at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start time**.
- There is a **5-minute grace period for 6:00 p.m. games**.
- If a team does not have the required number of players after the grace period, the game shall be ruled a **forfeit**.

Season Forfeits

- Each team is allowed a maximum of **4 forfeits per season**.
- If a team notifies the Athletics Office of a forfeit before **4:00 p.m.**, the forfeit will count as **1 forfeit** toward the season total.
- A "no-call, no-show" will count as **2 forfeits** toward the season total.
- Once a team reaches 4 forfeits, the Athletics Office may dismiss the team from the remainder of the season.
- **No refunds will be issued** to teams dismissed due to forfeits.

Section 15 – Protests

There are two types of protests. All protests shall be handled on-site by the Charlottesville Parks & Recreation site supervisor.

A. Rule Enforcement

- A coach may protest an umpire's enforcement of a rule.
- The protest must be made by the coach **before the ball next becomes live** following the umpire's ruling.

- The protest must be made to the umpire and will be decided by the on-site supervisor.
- If the decision is reversed, the correct rule enforcement shall be applied.
- If the original decision is upheld, the protesting team shall receive an **out**.
- If the protesting team is on defense, the out will be applied the next time that team is at bat.
- A team may not protest another rule-enforcement decision after an unsuccessful rule-enforcement protest during the same game.

B. Player Eligibility

- A coach may protest the eligibility of an opposing player.
- The protest must be made to the umpire and/or field monitor **before the end of the 3rd inning**.
- If the protest is successful, the team using the ineligible player(s) shall forfeit the game in question.

Section 16 – Scheduling

- As a general rule, the Athletics Office does not accommodate requests to reschedule games.
- Rescheduling requests may be considered on a **case-by-case basis** depending on the circumstances.
- Requests must be submitted at least **one week before the scheduled game**.
- Approval of a rescheduling request is not guaranteed.

Rainouts

- Rainout games are typically played on the **first available Sunday** following the rainout.
- On makeup Sundays, game times are generally moved up one hour.
    - Example: A game originally scheduled for 6:00 p.m. would typically be played at 5:00 p.m. on the makeup Sunday.
- In some circumstances, game dates and times may differ from this schedule due to other events or activities at the softball fields.

Section 17 – Playoffs

- The **top 4 teams from each league** qualify for the playoffs.

Playoff Schedule

- **2nd Seed vs. 3rd Seed:** 6:00 p.m.

- **1st Seed vs. 4th Seed:** 7:00 p.m.
- **Championship:** 8:00 p.m.

Standings & Tiebreakers

Standings will be determined in the following order:

1. Winning percentage
2. Head-to-head competition
3. Total runs against
4. Head-to-head point differential
5. Forfeits
6. Coin flip

- There is **no time limit** for playoff games.
- Overtime rules are the same as the regular season, except that playoff games will continue until a winner is determined.
- The higher seeded team in the playoffs, can also decide whether they would like to hit or field first.

Section 18 – Inclement Weather

- The inclement weather hotline is **434-970-3593**.
- A decision regarding cancellation will generally be made by **4:00 p.m.**
- If rain or severe weather develops after 4:00 p.m., the cancellation decision will be made on-site.
- If a game cannot continue due to inclement weather, the score shall revert to the score at the end of the **last completed inning**.
- If 4 or more innings have been completed at the time the game is canceled, the score at the end of the last completed inning shall be the final score.
- Postponed games shall resume from the last recorded out, subject to the applicable rules governing regular-season and playoff games.

Section 19 – Team League Placement

- As stated in Section 12, the Athletics Office may move teams up or down a league at its discretion.
- The Athletics Office may consider:
    - Prior-season records;
    - League standings; and
    - Returning team rosters.

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- Rosters and standings from the previous season will be maintained to assist with league placement for the following season.
- If a team finishes in the **top 2** during the regular season and returns with at least **8 of the same players** on its roster, the team must move up a division, if applicable.
- These are league **guidelines** for team placement. The Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Athletics Office retains the authority to move teams based on the criteria outlined in this section and elsewhere in these rules.

Section 20 – Alcoholic Beverages

- Possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the vicinity of scheduled league games and on public property.
- Charlottesville Parks & Recreation maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding alcohol at league games.
- If a player or spectator is asked to put away alcohol and refuses to do so, the individual will be required to leave the park by Charlottesville Parks & Recreation staff and/or the umpire.

Section 21 – Player Conduct

The Charlottesville Adult Softball League is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all participants. While competition is encouraged, **sportsmanship and fair play take priority**.

Coaches and team managers are responsible for the conduct of their players. The following Code of Conduct applies to all players, coaches, team managers, and spectators on or around the playing field.

I. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

No participant, team manager, coach, or spectator shall:

- Disrespectfully argue with or demonstrate dissent toward an umpire or league official, including throwing or slamming a bat.
- Engage in rough or aggressive play.
- Use profane language.
- Harass, heckle, or insult officials, staff, or participants.
- Intentionally delay the game.

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Penalties:

- **1st offense:** One-game suspension.
- **2nd offense within one year:** Two-game suspension.
- **3rd offense:** Suspension for the remainder of the season. Reinstatement by the Athletics Office is required before returning.

II. Severe Misconduct

No participant, team manager, coach, or spectator shall:

- Direct profane, obscene, or vulgar language or gestures toward another person.
- Be intoxicated before, during, or after a game.

Penalties:

- **1st offense:** Two-game suspension.
- **2nd offense:** One-year suspension. Reinstatement by the Athletics Office is required before returning.

III. Violent Conduct & Threats

No participant, team manager, coach, or spectator shall:

- Physically assault or attempt to harm an official, player, staff member, or other participant, including striking, kicking, pushing, or similar conduct.
- Make verbal threats, use racial slurs, or make sexually discriminatory remarks that could incite violence.

Penalties:

- **Zero tolerance:** Any participant involved in a Section III altercation shall receive an automatic **one-year suspension**, or a longer suspension depending on the severity of the incident.
- Following an Athletics Department review, a Section III offense may also result in a **permanent ban from Charlottesville Parks & Recreation activities**.
- Reinstatement by the Athletics Office is required before returning, when applicable.

General Ejection & Suspension Rules

- The umpire and/or field monitor has the authority to remove a player, coach, or spectator from a game and/or declare a forfeit due to unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Players, coaches, and spectators may be ejected before, during, or after a game for unsportsmanlike conduct.
- If an incident related to the sport occurs on City park property, appropriate disciplinary action

may be taken.

- Anyone ejected from a game must **vacate the premises immediately**.
- A suspended individual is prohibited from playing or participating on **any team** for the duration of the suspension. Suspensions apply across all divisions.
- Example: If a men's league player is suspended on Monday night, that player may not participate in another division until the suspension has been lifted.
- Individuals who have been suspended are not permitted at the game facility during the suspension.
- If a suspended individual is found at the facility during the suspension, the individual's team may be assessed a **forfeit**, with the opposing team receiving credit for the win.
- If a player or coach is ejected during their final regular-season or playoff game, the suspension will carry over to the following season.
- Charlottesville Parks & Recreation reserves the right to modify or impose any suspension or disciplinary action it deems necessary.
- All disciplinary actions issued by the City of Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Department are subject to appeal.
- Appeals must be submitted **in writing within 48 hours** to the Athletics Department. Appeals submitted after the 48-hour deadline will not be reviewed.

Section 22 – Miscellaneous Rules

Music & Speakers

- Speaker systems and music are **not permitted during live play**.
- Music is permitted between innings and during warm-ups, provided the music is clean and appropriate for all ages.
- If an umpire or field monitor instructs a team to turn off its music more than once, the team may be assessed an **out per inning and/or a forfeit**.

Field & Dugout Access

- No player, coach, captain, or scorekeeper may be on the field or in the dugout unless they are listed on the formal roster submitted to the Athletics Office.
- Coaches and scorekeepers who do not play do not count toward the player roster limit but must still be listed on the team's roster so Athletics staff can verify who is authorized to be on the field or in the dugout.

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Footwear

- All rostered players and coaches on the softball field or in the dugout must wear **closed-toe, closed-heel shoes**.
- Players or coaches wearing open-toed shoes will not be permitted on the field or in the dugout.
- Refusal to comply with the footwear requirement may result in **ejection and/or suspension** from the league.

Final Authority

Charlottesville Parks & Recreation reserves the right to interpret, clarify, and enforce these rules as necessary to ensure the safety, fairness, and proper operation of the Adult Softball Program. Any situation not specifically addressed in this packet shall be governed by the USA Softball Rulebook and/or determined by the Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Athletics Office.