**City of El Paso Parks & Recreation Sports Division Adult Softball Spring/Summer League Rules 2023** (revised April 19, 2023)

1. **Introduction**

The City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department Adult Softball League will be conducted under USSSA rules, except as amended herein. The Following local rules/procedures take precedence in all cases.

1. **Organization**

The sports programming section of the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department will be the governing body for this program. The application, construction and interpretation of these rules and regulations or the eligibility requirements, shall be solely at the discretion of the program supervisor and sports staff to include any change.

1. **Entry Fee/League policy**

# Refund Policy: Once a team is posted on the schedule no refunds will be issued. Refunds will only be issued when the cause of the program cancellation is initiated by the City.

* 1. Teams may be moved up or down a division through the season at the City’s discretion.
	2. There are no guarantees that divisions will not overlap. Men’s division will not wait on coed division to finish or coed will not wait for men’s division to finish at any complex.
	3. No Schedule requests shall be granted.
	4. Failure to close any open balances with the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation will result in the team being dropped from the league without a refund.
	5. All coaches must sign and submit an El Paso Parks and Recreation **Coaches Code of Conduct prior to the first game of the season**. Also, all players and player/coaches must sign and submit the **Player Waiver prior to the first game of the season** (Failure to do so may result in a forfeits and/or withdrawal from the league without a refund)
	6. No schedule changes will be made after release unless initiated by the City.
	7. Schedule is posted on [www.quickscores.com/elpaso](http://www.quickscores.com/elpaso)
1. **Managers/Coaches Responsibilities**
	1. Pay league fees/attend mandatory coaches meeting.
	2. Ensure all players read league rules and park policies prior to participation.
	3. Inform Sports Center staff of any changes in email address and telephone numbers.
	4. Coaches/Captains will be held responsible for the actions of their players and team spectators. Everyone is subject to the same penalties as players. Relatives and/or friends of players are to bring up their concerns to the coach, the coach may bring them up to city staff.
	5. Coach/Captains are responsible for having all players IDs available at the time sports staff requests them. Staff may ask to see ID’s more than once on any given day.
	6. The person recognized as the “Official coach” for that game is the person who represents the team at the pregame conference. Only one person being the “Official game coach” can represent the team with any disputes, protests or complain ts to the field supervisor.
	7. Coaches/Captains will be responsible to sign final roster on the third week.

# Music Policy:

* + 1. Music may be played pre-game and during the game. **Umpires discretion**.
		2. Music may **NOT** contain abusive or offensive language nor reference any illegal substances.
		3. The volume of the music must be maintained at a level that is audible only within the vicinity, and not outside of the dugout or bleacher area of the team playing the music.

# Appropriate volume level is at the discretion of the umpire and Sports Staff.

* + 1. Teams will be given one warning for adjusting the music or volume level before having it turned off or music player removed from the complex.
	1. There shall be no more than two coaches (these are not the “official game coach”) on the field for the team at bat to give words of assistance and directions to the member of their own team. One coach shall be stationed in each coaching box, at first and third bases. They shall remain in that box. There shall not be more than one charged offensive conference between players and coaches or other players each inning. Any additional request shall be denied.
	2. Dogs and any other animals are **NOT** allowed inside the Sports Complex. (Exception: Service or emotional support animal)

# Alcohol and Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the Park or in the Sports Complex (In compliance with City Ordinance 13.24.130) Anyone caught drinking will be ejected from the Park for the day. If a player is caught drinking during a game in the dugout the game will be stopped immediately and a forfeit will be issued to the team for that game. Players(s) caught drinking or smoking will be subject to disciplinary actions. Coaches/Captains will be held responsible for the actions of their players and subject to disciplinary actions.

1. **Player Eligibility/Rosters** [*www.quickscores.com/elpaso*](http://www.quickscores.com/elpaso)
	1. All players must be 18 & older, **no exceptions**. (no waivers)
	2. **Rosters must be submitted online (through www.quickscores.com/elpaso) prior to the first game**; no paper rosters will be accepted. Teams who do not submit a roster will receive a forfeit.
	3. Waiver form must be printed, signed and dated by the head coach or team representative by the first game. A forfeit may be issued to the team who do not turn in their waiver.
	4. Rosters are limited to 20 players.
	5. Online rosters will lock **by the 3rd week of play (5/23/23) for the Tues, Wed & Thurs league**. Rosters for the **Sunday league rosters will lock on June 5th**. Players will not be allowed to be added or dropped after that date.

# Players who are suspended through the City of El Paso and/or USSSA are not allowed to play in city league games. This includes during the appeal process. A forfeit will be given to any team who is found playing an illegal player(s) and individual player(s)/team may be subject to further penalties.

**Players suspended through the City of El Paso are not allowed to be at any city facilities per penalty matrix. No Exceptions. Players will NOT be added to rosters to fill spots of suspended players.**

* 1. All Players must have a valid/current and legible City of El Paso Adult Sports ID and bring it to every game. Sports staff may do a roster/ID check at any point in the game and as many times as deemed necessary. **Digital copies of Sports IDs are acceptable only if Date of Birth, Expiration date and the player Photo are legible.** A forfeit will be issued to any non-compliant team.
	2. Once a player(s) plays with a team they may not move to another team until the next session. Players may not play on more than one (1) team in the same division/complex. (Example: On Sundays a player is allowed to play on one (1) Men’s and one (1) Coed team at each complex. Player cannot play on two (2) Men’s or two (2) Coed teams at the same complex). No Exceptions.
	3. Roster checks are done randomly at the discretion of Sports staff. Forfeit will be given to any team who is found playing an illegal player(s) and individual player(s) may be subject to further penalties.
* **Illegal player** is defined as, but is not limited to:
	+ 1. Player who is not on the roster (waiver does **NOT** count as an official roster)
		2. Player playing on more than one team of the same division at the same complex.
		3. Player who has been ejected.
		4. Player who is playing without having completed his/her suspension time.
		5. Player who has not signed a waiver, return to player waver, coach/player who hasn’t signed a safety protocol form.
* **Both teams** will receive a forfeit when an Illegal player found is playing on two teams of the same division/complex (ex: playing on two coed teams or two men’s teams at the same complex)
1. **The Game**
	1. Teams must have a minimum of 8 players to start, any less will be a forfeit. If a roster player arrives late, that player may be inserted into the game at any time, **up to the 10th position only**. Empty positions must be at the bottom of the lineup. (see *VII. Divisions Defined* for rules on the outs given)
	2. Teams may bat up to 12 players**, must be declared to the umpire** **at the pregame meeting**.
	3. All Games have a 50-minute time limit, finish the inning. During the pre-game conference, have umpire write official starting time on scorecard to ensure correct amount of time is played.
	4. Umpire will set timers at 50 minutes and will start timer **after the pre-game conference** is complete. No new inning will begin after timer goes off.
	5. Game time is forfeit time.
	6. Only the first game of the day (not a team’s first game of the day) will have a 10-minute grace period, which will be considered part of the game. Grace period begins at the scheduled game time. At game time, a team must have a minimum of eight (8) players in the dugout, otherwise a forfeit will be called.
	7. Home team will be awarded to the team on time if opposing team uses the 10-minute grace period. (only applied to the first game of the day).
	8. During playoffs a 10-minute grace period will be given to any team that is late for the first game of the day (not a team’s first game of the day), and it will count as part of game time. The highest seed team will remain home team even if grace period is used.
	9. Double forfeits will be assessed in games when neither team has the minimum required number of players. EXCEPTION: During Playoffs a coin flip will determine the winner.
	10. Games will wait to start for a team that is still playing only within the same division and the same complex. Men’s will not wait for coed or coed will not wait for men to finish.
	11. Field dimension are 70 ft. bases and 50 ft. pitchers’ rubber.
	12. The pitcher may only pitch from the pitching plate or from the pitching area (up to 6ft behind and the width of the pitcher’s plate) **Pitcher must be in contact with the pitching plate at the point of release**.
	13. The pitched ball must arc at least 3ft. after leaving the pitchers hand (point of release) and shall not rise higher than 10ft from the ground. **Umpire Judgement**. “Fake” pitches are allowed.
	14. All regular season games are flip for home. During playoffs, the higher seed will automatically be home team. Championship game: Higher seed will be home team.
	15. In the event a game is delayed, teams are required to wait for instructions from the Field Supervisor. If play resumes, absent teams will receive a forfeit. In cases of inclement weather (i.e. rain, lightning, wind or any other circumstances beyond our control) all games will be considered complete if 4 innings, 3 and

½ if home team is ahead, or if less than 15 min are left in the game. For incomplete games they will continue with the same time, score and runners on base. Lineups don’t have to be the same as the original game.

* 1. Games will switch to a one-pitch format (batters will start their turn at bat with 3 balls and 2 strikes, there will be no courtesy foul) to complete games at the discretion of field supervisor during inclement weather.
	2. If at the end of regulation time the score for teams are tied, **only one more inning** will be played to determine winner (ITB will be used and the last batter in the previous inning will be placed on 2nd base). If the score remains tied after the additional inning, the game will be recorded as a tie. Exception: In playoffs game will continue with ITB until a winner is determined.
	3. Run rule: Game will end if home team is up 20 runs after the 3rd inning, 15 after the 4th, and 10 after 5th. Flip/Flop rule will be applied only if home team is losing by 20 after 2nd, 15 after 3rd and 10 after 4th, at that time home will become the visitor.
	4. There will be NO COURTESY FOUL.
	5. **Halo Rule**: A dead ball out is given to the batter when a batted ball is determined a line-drive or ground ball hit directly at the halo zone. This is an automatic out for the team, dead ball and no runners may advance. **Umpire’s judgement is final**.
		1. The halo zone is an imaginary box measuring 1 foot on each side of the pitching rubber and from the ground to 1 foot above the pitcher’s head. A horizontal chalk line on each side of the rubber will be lined on the field. The imaginary vertical line that goes across the pitching rubber is 4 feet across.
		2. If the ball hits the ground prior to the pitch rubber and goes through the halo zone it will be the umpire’s judgment to call a dead ball or not. If hit hard, it is an automatic out, dead ball and no runners advance. If hit as a slow roller (ex: a dribbler goes up the middle off a missed or checked swing) the umpire will make the call to either continue the play where the runners are liable to being out, or call it a dead ball. The **umpire’s judgment is final, NO exceptions**.
		3. Pitcher is not protected by the Halo Rule if the ball is hit **outside** of the halo zone.
		4. If the ball is hit **inside** the halo zone, the batter is out even if the pitcher leaves the halo zone.
		5. If a ball is caught by the pitcher in the halo zone it is still considered a dead ball, the batter is considered out and no runner may advance.
	6. Home runs allowed: Men’s & COED competitive/recreational divisions- 4 home run limit. (Home runs after the limit is reached will be an out). Women’s – Unlimited.
	7. In the event of a home run the batter does not have to touch any bases; likewise, in the event a pitcher walks a batter and runners on base are scoring they do not have to touch any bases.
	8. Pitchers can walk to get any out, even the third and final out to end the inning.
	9. Only players on the team’s roster and coaches over the age of 18 will be allowed in the dugout during game. For safety reasons all children and friends/family members caring for the children shall remain in the bleacher area. Team will first be given a warning by the umpire or staff, on the second offense the game will be called a forfeit.
	10. Reckless “bat flipping” where other players or the umpire’s safety is put a risk is prohibited. On the first offense a warning is given (applicable to the whole team), the second offense is an out (including homeruns) and the third offense an ejection. It will be the **umpire’s judgment** to determine what constitutes as a reckless “bat flip”.
1. **Divisions Defined**

# MEN/WOMEN’s

* + 1. Teams will receive **only one out if they’re playing with 8 or 9 players**.
		2. Non-Coed leagues may use only one courtesy runner per inning. Courtesy Runner can be any player on the roster, if the courtesy runner’s spot on the lineup comes up to bat while on base it is an out.

# COED LEAGUES

* + 1. Teams can play with 8 players and receive an out at the end of the lineup.
		2. Only in Coed you may play with 5 females and 4 males, 6 females and 2 males and NOT receive an out at the end of the lineup. You can also play 6 females and 4 males to make your lineup. Any male that arrives late after the game has started may enter **as a substitute,** if playing with 10 players, for one of the females already in the lineup. If playing with 8 or 9 he may enter in the game at the bottom of the batting order**. You can never play with more males than females.** Team cannot play with 5 males and 4 females, you must play with 8 and receive an out.
		3. If a team starts with 12 players they may drop down to 11 or 10 players but can NEVER have more males than females in the lineup or on the field while on defense. For example, if a female player is removed from the game because of injury and there is no one to substitute in her place the male player following her in the batting lineup must also be removed entirely from the game (to include playing defense). If the team is now down to 8 players an out will be declared for the vacant position previously occupied by the female batter only. Any player that leaves the game for any reason (exception the blood rules) may not return to the game. (this does not apply to normal re-entry and substitution).
		4. The batting line up does not need to start with a female if team is short players
		5. Courtesy runners can be used twice an inning (1 male and 1 female running for the same sex)
		6. Any walk to a male batter will result in a two-base award. The next female has the option to walk or bat. If there is no female batter due to injury the next male batter will come up to bat and no out will be given. If there is no female batter due to an ejection, the females spot will be an out and the next male batter will come up to bat.
		7. All Co-Ed division will have a home plate extended “Scoring line” and “Point of no return”
			- Point of No Return- Must physically touch the line or the ground beyond the line. Does not count if you “break” the plain. Runner must advance to Scoring Line after passing the Point of No Return.
	+ Scoring Line- Must physically touch the line or the ground beyond the line. Does not count if you “break” the plain. Runners may slide to cross the scoring line. **Runners that touch home plate or run in the batter’s box will be counted out**. All players at home plate are considered force-outs. Runners will be considered safe if the defensive team attempts a tag play.
1. **Equipment/Uniforms**
	1. Teams must use a bat with visible USSSA thumb print stamp. All bats being used must be inspected by the umpire prior to start of the game and placed in the bucket. All other bats will be illegal and be considered out at the plate if using one. Teams using a physically altered bat will forfeit the rest of the season.
	2. Current USSSA stamp & previous logo will be allowed for current 2023 Spring Session.
	3. A list has been attached with a current USSSA suspended bat list until further notice. These bats WILL NOT be allowed in league or tournament play until further notice. If caught using one you will be asked to remove the bat and a warning will be given to the entire team. If the bat is brought in again the team will receive a forfeit and the coach and player may receive further disciplinary actions. Program Supervisor discretion.
	4. Official Softballs: Teams must furnish and bat their own ball (USSSA Classic M or W) Men, 12’’ COR 40 or less & compression no more than 410 lbs. Women, 11’’ softball COR 44 or less & compression of 400 or less. The ball must be easily visible to the defensive team. “Pro M” or NSA/ASA balls will not be allowed.
	5. All softballs should be given to the umpire for inspection at any time a different ball is thrown into the game. Teams using the wrong ball or a physically altered ball will forfeit games played using illegal ball and are subject to further disciplinary action. Teams are responsible for putting the correct game ball into the game.
	6. Uniforms must be similar in color/logo by the 2nd week of games. Umpire/staff discretion.
	7. TEAM UNIFORMS **MUST BE THE SAME** AFTER THE THIRD WEEK (jerseys **must be the same color and have the same design**) and have a non-duplicate number regardless of gender. A forfeit will be given to the team not in compliance with the jersey color/design rule after the third week. (Example: Female wearing #10 and male wearing #10 is a duplicate number). The second player with the same number in the lineup will be the out, and cannot play defense. Also, for example: 12 and 1.2 or 5 and 05 are not considered duplicate numbers. Triple digits are allowed. (Example: 915 is acceptable)
* When a player is found wearing a duplicate number he/she will be counted as an OUT at the time that the player walks up to bat. Players are allowed to correct or change number (NO TAPE it must be permanent) in order to comply for the reminder of the game. Players may not correct numbers when they are up to bat to avoid the out, numbers can only be corrected before his/her turn at bat.
	1. At no time will the opponent be allowed to “waive” the jersey color/design rule.
	2. Pitchers mask are highly encouraged, but not mandatory.
1. **Protests/Ejections**
	1. Umpire judgment calls cannot be protested, staff will not overturn any umpire judgment calls.
	2. Coaches may request a full team Roster Check only during the first 10 minutes of the game, both teams’ rosters and IDs will be checked. Once a request has been made it may not be withdrawn.
	3. Teams may protest an individual player once, up until the last 10 minutes of the official game time. No rosters checks will be done during the last 10 minutes or once the time has expired unless deemed necessary by staff at the site.
	4. Scores must be corrected prior to the first pitch of the next inning. Games will not be held up in order to confirm or correct scores during the game. The team’s scorekeepers are responsible for keeping accurate record of the game. If the scorekeepers can’t come to a resolution then the home team’s book will be the official book. Winning coaches please verify the score with the umpire at the conclusion of the game and initial the official scoresheet.
	5. Protest must be submitted in writing to the field staff or to the Softball Program Supervisor via email within 24 hours of the game played. They are only accepted from teams that attended coaches meeting.
	6. Any player, coach, manager, sponsor, spectator or anyone affiliated with the team who is ejected from the game, must leave the complex with his/her personal belongings/equipment in a timely manner. The “out of sight, out of sound” rule will apply. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit. Ejected players may not re-enter the complex at any time for any reason for the remainder of the day.
	7. If player is removed or ejected from the game with no substitute available, the vacated spot becomes an out when that spot comes up to bat.
	8. If players clear the bench at any time during the game, both teams are subject to receiving an automatic forfeit and further punishment. **Umpire/staff judgement is final**. Any punishment will be left up to the judgment of the program supervisor in charge.
	9. Any bench clearing that involved physical altercations may result in the team(s) being dropped from the league without a refund. The team(s) and all players on their roster(s) will also be subject to suspension through the El Paso Parks and Recreation Department and USSSA. Coaches may be asked for the names and other info for those individuals who were involved. Failure to comply may result in the entire team being suspended and/or being dropped from the league. Program Supervisor discretion.
	10. Ejection from a game may be subject to further disciplinary action depending on the severity of the incident.

# If ejected, you cannot participate in any remaining games for that day at any complex.

* 1. Umpires may issue out a warning before ejecting a player for the day.
1. **Final Standings and Awards**
	1. Standings are determined by:
		1. Overall won-loss record:
		2. Head to Head Run Differential
		3. Total runs scored for
		4. Total runs scored against
		5. Forfeits
		6. Coin Flip
	2. Awards: Regular season 1st place will receive Trophy and shirts, 2nd place Trophy. Play offs 1st and 2nd place will be awarded trophies.
2. **Covid-19 Measures**
	1. All Players and coaches participating in our city adult softball league are required to sign the player waiver prior to participating in any city sanction game. Failure to do so can deem a player or coach to be ineligible to participate until doing so. **NO WAIVER, NO PLAY, NO EXCEPTIONS!!**
	2. Face covering/masks are highly encouraged for every player/spectator entering the complex and practice social distancing.
	3. Do not make any unnecessary physical contact with others, such as but not limited to shaking hands or giving high fives at the conclusion of the game.
	4. Avoid sharing food, drinks or equipment with each other.
	5. No congregating in the complex before/after the game. Leave the complex as soon as reasonably possible at the conclusion of the game.
	6. Please be advised that all players and coaches, by signing the Player Waiver, assume all risk associated with participating in our league during a pandemic and will not hold the city or USSSA liable.