

FREDERICK COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

All-Nighter Softball Rules

(All rules not outlined below will reference the USSSA rulebook)

Revised 5/19

A. PLAYERS/TEAMS

1. **All Participants must be at least 18 years old to play.**
2. Only managers, coaches and sponsors are allowed in the dug-outs.
3. Players can only play for one team.
4. In the event that a team withdraws from competition or is dropped from the tournament, the bracket will be adjusted accordingly. There are no refunds.

B. 3 Game Guarantee Bracket

1. Tournament bracket will be produced by FCPRD and team representatives will be notified of start times.
2. **Rapid succession** will be enforced. Teams must be at the field **ready to play 30 minutes prior to their game time.**
3. **Cancellation Line – 540-665-5678 option 3- after 3:30 p.m. daily.** Field conditions after 5 p.m. are left to the decision of the park ranger and the cancellation line will be updated once they make a decision.

E. HOME RUN RULE

1. Option A. 1 Home Run per inning. Excessive homeruns will be ruled as outs.
Option B. If your team pays an additional \$50 before your team's 1st game, your team gets 10 homeruns to hit each game. Homeruns can be used at any time. Excessive homeruns will be ruled as outs. The winner of the tournament will receive a check in the mail for the amount of participating teams.
Example: If 5 teams pay the additional \$50, a \$250 check will be issued to the champion coach. If 10 teams pay, \$500 check will be issued.
2. The team that hits an over the fence home run is responsible for retrieving the ball.
3. After a player hits a homerun over the fence, they **Do Not** need to touch 1st base or any other base.

C. GENERAL RULES

1. Softballs must be optic yellow and clearly marked **12 inch, USSSA Classic M.** Teams will hit their own ball. All balls entering the field of play must be inspected by the umpire before they can be used in the game. If the umpire cannot determine if the ball is clearly marked and optic yellow (example: Classic M), it will not be allowed. Both teams should have extra playable balls on hand in case replacements are needed for balls that are lost or damaged during game play.
2. Bats must meet the new or old USSSA bat stamped standards. A list of approved bats can be found at <http://www.ussa.com/slowpitch/>, and then click on the "Rules/Legal Info" tab found midway on the top part of the page. Bats that are considered to be "Senior Bats" are not allowed to be used in this league. If you are found using a bat that is altered or not on the approved bat list, you will be removed from the league and subject to stiffer punishments by FCPRD.
3. **Time Limit: When 55 minutes has been reached during the game, the next full inning will be the last inning of the game. No matter what part of the inning the game is in (top, middle, end) the umpire will make this announcement.** Please note game starting time in your respective scorebook. All players should be encouraged to hustle between innings. The game will not conclude until each team has batted in their half of the inning. **In the case of a mercy rule, when 55 minutes has been reached during the game, the next full inning will be the last inning of the game no**

matter what inning the game is in (Example- bottom of 3rd). However, in cases of weather related issues a game will be considered complete after 4 ½ innings have been played.

4. In the event a game is tied and the full inning after the 55 minute mark has been played **or** 7 innings have been played, teams will break the tie using the International Tiebreaker Rule. Teams will start the next inning with the **player of their choice** on 2nd base. There will be zero outs and each team will get a chance to score. This will continue until a winner is determined.
5. **Mercy Rule – 10 runs after 5 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, or 20 runs after 3 innings of play.** The mercy Rule will be used in the tournament championship game(s).
6. **Flip/Flop Rule**
FCPRD League Flip/Flop Rule EXCEPTION- to **OFFER** it to the losing home team as opposed to making them do it when a run rule is in effect. This shouldn't be a debate between the umpire and team(s).

From the USSSA Rule Book: (rule book- https://ussa.com/docs/2018/2018_SP_RuleBook.pdf page 24- mid-page)

F. Flip/Flop Rule—All Programs: In the inning when the run rule for that particular program is exceeded and the home team is losing, the home team will remain at bat and become the visiting team. If the team (new visiting team) does not score enough runs to reduce the run difference below the run rule, the game is over. If they reduce the run difference to below the run rule then the new home team will bat. If they subsequently score enough runs to exceed the run rule, the game will be over; if they do not, the game will continue under that format. If the situation reverses, the teams would flip/flop again.

Again, ***FCPRD League Flip/Flop Rule EXCEPTION- to **OFFER** it to the losing home team as opposed to making them do it when a run rule is in effect. This shouldn't be a debate between the umpire and team(s).***

7. A pitcher may have a total of three warm up pitches prior to the start of all innings.
8. The tournament will use a 3 ball, 2 strike count (3-2), **No Courtesy Foul**.
Three balls = walk, two strikes = Out
- If first pitch is called strike, next foul is an out- NO COURTESY FOUL BALL
9. The pitch must be underhanded at slow speed and with an arc that must have a minimum height of **3 feet from the pitcher release and a maximum of 10 feet** from the ground, in the umpire's judgment. Pitchers must **release the ball within 5 seconds** of the start of their wind-up. Any time after 5 seconds, a "ball" will be called by the umpire.
8. Teams must furnish scorebooks for their team. Umpires are responsible for communicating each final score to the Field Supervisor to complete the bracket.
9. Teams must have a minimum of 9 players to start a game. Teams unable to field nine eligible players at the scheduled starting time will have to forfeit that game. If at any point your teams falls below 9 players the game will be considered a forfeit.
10. Teams that start with 9 players may **ONLY** add a 10th player to their line-up (scorebook) at any time after the game has started without penalty. Any player added will be placed at the bottom of the line-up.
11. Teams with more than 10 players present have the option of batting up to 12 players or using 2 Extra Players (EP). The EP(s) must be declared prior to the start of the game. These players may enter the game on defense but must remain in the same batting position the entire game. The EP can be substituted by a player not yet in the game. The starting EP is eligible to re-enter.
12. If a team falls below the total number of players that started the game and no legal substitute players are available, that players position in the line-up will continually receive an out every time throughout the remainder of the game.

13. The bases will be positioned at 70 feet.

D. COURTESY RUNNER

Any player can run for another player once per inning (one runner per inning). If the courtesy runner is stranded on any base and it is their turn to bat, they will remain on the base and be considered out at the plate. The next batter in the line-up will then go to bat.

F. EQUIPMENT

1. Cast, splints and braces must be padded. Any of this equipment judged by the umpire to be dangerous is illegal and you will not be permitted to play with them.
2. No exposed jewelry will be permitted. If it is unable to be removed, it must be taped to the body before that player is allowed to play. If a player refuses to remove or tape item to his/her body, that player will be removed from the game. (**Note: medical alert bracelets and necklaces are not considered jewelry, but, if worn, must be tapped to the body.**)
3. Rubber sole footwear, metal cleats are not allowed.

H. EJECTIONS

1. A coach or player who is ejected from a game is also ejected from their very next game. If the player's or coach's actions are deemed severe by the Umpire and/or Field Supervisor, players and/or coaches are to be suspended from the tournament.
2. If a player is ejected in 2 separate games, they are automatically removed from the tournament.
3. All ejections must be reported to the Field Supervisor by the Umpire.
4. The following offenses will be considered grounds for ejection:
 - i. Foul language
 - ii. Verbal/Physical abuse of umpire or FCPRD staff member
 - iii. Fighting
 - iv. Unnecessary poor sportsmanship
5. **ALL EJECTIONS ARE SUBJECT UP TO A 2-YEAR BAN FROM ALL FCPRD PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES.**

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME(S)

1. The championship game(s) will be played without a time limit.
2. The slaughter rule will be in effect (10 after 5, 15 after 4, 20 after 3)
3. During the first championship game the undefeated team chooses to be the home or away team. If a second game is needed then the home & visitor teams will switch.

J. WEATHER

Thunder/Lighting

- Removal of all players from the field area (go to your cars) for a duration of 30 minutes each time **lightning is seen or thunder is heard (no exceptions).**
- Games can resume after thunder and or lightning has stopped for 30 minutes & if fields are deemed playable.

NO ALCOHOL is permitted in FCPRD Parks.

NO SMOKING within 50 feet of the softball complex.

NO DOGS within 50 feet of the softball complex.

Anyone who does not adhere to these rules is subject to being banned from the Parks and ejected from tournaments and or leagues for a period of two years.