



## 2021 DISTRICT 25 LITTLE LEAGUE FALL BALL SOFTBALL RULES

### THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES SHALL GOVERN PLAY, EXCEPT AS MODIFIED HEREIN

- These local rule modifications are for the fall season only.
- Teams should show up at least 45 minutes before game time. With short game times in the fall, teams should be ready to take the field and begin play at the scheduled game time. A brief manager/umpire meeting to discuss ground rules and conduct the little league pledge should occur 5 minutes before the scheduled game time.
- **PHILOSOPHY:** The philosophy of Fall Softball is to develop players and teams in the off-season. The focus should be on instruction and developing team play. Win-loss records will not be kept. Camaraderie between coaches, players and teams, with a positive competitive spirit, is the goal.
- **PREGAME:** There will be no infield warmup for either team. Teams should warm up in spaces off the field prior to their game, and be ready to take the field as the prior game ends.
- **BATTING ORDER/FREE DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTION:** Teams will use a continuous batting order for all fall games -- all players in attendance are included in the batting order. There is free substitution of players at defensive positions including pitchers. Pitchers may pitch, move to a different position and return to pitch.
- **NO MERCY RULE:** There is no mercy rule, due to the run caps each inning and short time limits.
- **COACHES IN DUGOUT:** 2 adult base coaches may be used during the games, and **1 adult coach must always be in the dugout.** Teams may have a 4<sup>th</sup> coach in the dugout to keep things moving. All game coaches must be approved by each local league.
- **FIELD SETUP/TAKEDOWN:** Parents and coaches from both teams are expected to assist in field setup and field take down before and after each game. The host league will ensure the availability of fields and equipment, but is not expected to perform pre- and post-game setup and takedown.

## **MAJOR SOFTBALL**

- **RUN LIMIT:** There is a 4 run cap per inning. Short time limits do not permit an open inning. Teams will try to maximize the total number of innings played, regardless of score. If there is no field constraint and you wish to play an open inning, agree to it during the managers meeting just keep in mind your drop time.
- **TIME LIMIT:** Fall games this season will have varying time limits: In 2 hour slots with games to follow, the limit is 1:40. When no game follows, 6 innings can be completed, with a 2:15 drop. When double headers are taking place with both teams, each game should be 1:20 drop with a 10 minute break in between to reset. The field and dugout areas need to be immediately vacated to allow for the next game to begin on time. Team meetings should occur after the dugout is cleared and the field vacated.
- **FIELDING POSITIONS:** Regular 9 player defense is used.
- **LESS THAN 9 PLAYERS:** The philosophy of fall softball is participation and development, and thus, if a team is short players, the game should still be played. Teams can play short in the outfield, borrow defensive players from the opposing team, or allow players from the previous or later game to fill in. If you know ahead of time you are going to be short, let the League Coordinators know so they can alert pool players.

## **MINOR SOFTBALL**

- **FIELDING POSITIONS:** 10 players may be used on defense (4 outfielders).
- **LESS THAN 9 PLAYERS:** The philosophy of fall softball is participation and development, and thus, if a team is short players, the game should still be played. Teams can play short in the outfield, borrow defensive players from the opposing team, or allow players from the previous or later game to fill in. If you know ahead of time you are going to be short, let the League Coordinators know so they can alert pool players.
- **RUN LIMIT:** There is a 3 run cap per inning. Short time limits do not permit an open inning. Teams will try to maximize the total number of innings played, regardless of score.
- **TIME LIMIT:** Fall games have a 1:40 drop dead time limit, to be strictly adhered to. The field and dugout areas need to be immediately vacated to allow for the next game to begin on time. Team meetings should occur after the dugout is cleared and the field vacated.
- **PITCHING:** There is no limit to the number of innings one pitcher can pitch, however...use your judgment. If you have multiple viable pitchers, limit them to no more than three innings. If you only have one viable option, then work on

developing more pitching...but hold off pitching them in a game until they've gotten to a point where they can throw enough strikes to move the game along. The goal isn't to win, but the pitching needs to be good enough for the batters to get reasonable practice while the developing pitchers work as well.

- **DROPPED THIRD STRIKE:** Dropped third strike rules are not used in minor games at any time.
- **COACH-PITCH, BASE STEALING, BUNTING:** There are no coach-pitch, base stealing or bunting modifications or restrictions in fall softball. Normal Little League rules apply.