

## **2021 Passaic Valley Softball League Girls' Softball**

**USA Softball Rules apply unless noted in the following league rules:**

### **Section 1--Uniforms:**

- Rubber spikes are required. Metal spikes are never allowed
- **No jewelry is to be worn while playing.** No exceptions even newly pierced ears

### **Section 2--Equipment:**

- Every batter and base runner must wear a caged batting helmet. Runners will be called out if they remove their helmet intentionally
- The catcher must wear shin guards, chest protector and helmet with mask
- For Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) and Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) levels the softballs will be a 12-inch ball as defined by USA Softball (Rule 3)
- For Farm Level (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) softballs will be an 11-inch ball as defined by USA Softball (Rule 3)

### **Section 3--Game:**

- All week-day games will start at 6:00 pm or 8:00 pm. Games will be allotted 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours from start to finish. No new inning will start after 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours from the game start time.
  - For the Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) level, the inning in progress at 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours mark will be allowed to be completed and the game is then ended
  - For the Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) & Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) Levels, there will be no pitch after 2  $\frac{1}{4}$  hours after the game start time; the score reverts back to the previous inning
- Games are to be 6 innings, and can end in a Tie, (no extra innings will be played). A game is considered official when:
  - Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) & Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) levels after 4 innings (3  $\frac{1}{2}$  innings with the home team ahead)
  - Senior Level (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) after 5 innings (4  $\frac{1}{2}$  innings with the home team ahead)
  - Time limit will supersede the inning requirement for an official game. (Example: If team plays 3 innings at Junior level and the time limit is reached, the game is official)
- The infield fly rule and tagging up will be in effect. (Except for Farm Division)
- Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike will be enforced for Senior Division only (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

- Any player removed from a game because of injury or illness may be returned if able to play at discretion of parent or guardian

#### **Section 4--Team Requirements:**

- A team must be able to field 8 eligible players by game time (and during the entire game). There will be a 15-minute grace period. If a team does not have enough players by that time, that team forfeits. At any point after that in the game if a team cannot field 8 players, then that team forfeits and no makeup game will be played
- All eligible players present at the commencement of the game must play on the field (Defense) a minimum of 3 innings. Prior to the first pitch, the Head Coaches of the two teams must mutually agree what to do regarding the turn at bat for players arriving after the start of the game and inform the Umpire of this decision. The Head Coaches can agree to either count the turn in the order as an out or to skip it. If the coaches chose to skip the player's turn at bat and the player fails to arrive after the second inning is completed, the player will be scratched
- Each team must submit a batting order to the opposing team before the beginning of the game. A maximum of 10 players will be on the field. The short fielder must play on the grass or a minimum of 10 ft. behind the second base
- There will be a continuous batting order. Everyone will bat even if they are not currently in the field
- For the Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) and Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) levels, 3 Outs or 8 consecutive batters will end an inning. For the Senior Level (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) 3 Outs or 10 consecutive batters will end an inning (See Game Addendum). The ensuing play will be treated as if there were two outs. Batter can walk if they are the declared last batter of an inning
- Any call up player must be from lower division and on a team roster and must wear their uniform. You can only call up with 9 or less players. Call-ups cannot enter the game after two complete innings. Call ups can **only** play the **outfield** & must be at the bottom of the batting order. A maximum of 4 call ups per game is allowed based on having 6 regular players available; the total number of players including call ups cannot exceed 10 players
- If only 9 players on team they will not be charged an out for the 10<sup>th</sup> position
- If only 8 players on team they will not be charged an out for the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> position
- Only 4 adult coaches are allowed in the dugout at any time during game. This includes the head coach, assistant coach, bookkeeper, team parent, etc. This rule does not apply to any high school volunteers that may be assisting a team.
- Cheering and chants by a team is allowed and encouraged during the game, but must be considerate the opposing team. Screaming or dramatic changes in chant volume with the intention of distracting an opposing player is not allowed. The team will be given one

warning by the umpire and the next time the head coach will be ejected. Any additional incidents will result in a team forfeit.

### **Section 5--Field Requirements**

- The distance between the bases is 60 ft. for All Levels
- The distance between the pitcher's rubber and back of home plate is as follows:
  - 40 ft. for Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) & Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>)
  - 35 ft. for Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Bases are to be the movable type
- Home team bench is on the 1<sup>st</sup> base side
- Home team is to supply two (2) game balls for home games

### **Section 6--Hitting:**

- The batter will not throw the bat. The team will be given one warning by the umpire and the next time the next batter to throw the bat will be called out
- Bunting IS allowed at the Farm (3rd & 4th) level and above
- No fake bunting or false swing allowed. First time it occurs, a warning will be issued to both teams. The second and following infractions by either team will result in an out
- Slap hitting is allowed only at the Senior (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) level

### **Section 7--Pitching**

- Windmill is allowed, Babe Ruth rules apply. Pitchers may start with both feet on the rubber and begin their motion with a step back. Or pitchers may start with their pivot foot on the rubber and their stride foot behind the rubber with no step back in the wind up. First offense will be a team warning only and an instruction visit by a coach. Each additional offense will be considered an illegal pitch under USA Softball rules (Rules 6A)
- A starting pitcher may be removed and returned to the mound only once. If she is removed a second time, she may not re-enter as pitcher. A substitute pitcher may not re-enter as a pitcher after being removed from the mound. One pitch during an inning shall be considered an appearance for the entire inning
- All pitchers are limited to 3 innings per game for Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) & Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>); 2 innings for Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)

- **If a pitcher hits 3 batters in an inning or total of 5 players in the game, she will be removed from the pitching position and not be allowed to return as pitcher during the game**

### **Section 8--Fielding**

- For the Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) there will be no advancement of base on an overthrow from the catcher following a non-batted pitch (i.e. no advancement will occur on an overthrow by the catcher during an attempted steal, throws made by the catcher to pick-off runners when they are leading from a base or when the catcher throws back to the pitcher). Batted balls will be subject to the same rules as the other fielders
- For the Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>), runner at any base can advance one base on an overthrow from the catcher following a non-batted pitch. If runner at third advances home, this will be considered a steal and will count toward the steal limit outlined in Section 9.
- For the Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>), on any ball hit into the outfield, time will be called once the ball is returned securely into possession of an infielder on the infield. Runners will return to the last touched base unless umpire determines they were more than halfway to the next base.
- For the Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>), there will be NO ADVANCEMENT on any ball that does not go into the outfield grass. If the ball gets hit in the infield, the runner(s) are only allowed one base.
- Look back rule will be enforced once pitcher has control of ball in the pitching circle

### **Section 9--Base Running:**

- The number of successful steals allowed per inning will be as follows:

| <b>Level</b> | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Base</b> | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Base</b> | <b>Home</b>  |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Senior       | Unlimited                  | Unlimited                  | 3 per inning |
| Junior       | Unlimited                  | Unlimited                  | 2 per inning |
| Farm         | NOT ALLOWED                | Unlimited                  | NOT ALLOWED  |

- At the Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) and Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) levels only, an attempt to steal a base after all successful steal limits have been reached will be treated as a live ball, with runner subject to put out.
- At the Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) and Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) levels only, runner can overrun first base and proceed to the next base, at their own risk, after a walk. This is commonly known as a “continuous walk”. This “continuous walk” is not considered a steal and is not counted in the stealing limits. Look back rule is in effect once pitcher has control of the ball in the pitching circle

- Base sliding will be permitted and is encouraged. The base runner must slide or avoid hitting the defensive player. No blocking base by Infield if does not have possession of ball, if occurs Runner is safe
- Coaches must use a courtesy runner for catchers once the catcher on base. The pinch runner will be the last batted out
- Coaches must use a courtesy runner for pitchers once the pitcher is on base. This only applies to pitchers who will be entering the game, as a pitcher, in the next inning. The pinch runner will be the last available batted out

### **Section 10--Mercy Rule**

- The 12 run mercy rule is in effect after 4 completed innings for the Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) & Junior (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>) Levels and after 3 completed innings for the Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) Level

### **Section 11--Protests and Ground Rules**

- Protests allowed concerning interpretation of rules only. **Rule 9**
- Any ground rule gone over and agreed upon by both coaches and the umpire will stand for that game. If no agreement is reached, rules stand as written. No ground rule agreements can be made during the playoffs. Written rules applies for all playoff games.

### **Section 12--Playoff Eligibility**

For a player to be eligible to participate in the post season (playoff through championship game), the player must have participated in a minimum of 6 regular season games. Excused absences for medical conditions can be counted towards the 6 game requirement and must be approved by the Town Commissioner. Call ups for playoffs are allowed in rare situations, with the approval of all Town Commissioners.

Players that are double rostered at different levels during the regular season must choose one level for playoffs and remain at that level for the entirety of the playoffs. Players that are double rostered cannot play at two levels during the playoff.

The Head Coaches will be required to provide their Town Commissioners with a list of games played by their players and the Town Commissioners will issue approved team rosters for the playoffs.

**It is imperative that before any practice or game, coaches physically do a spot check of the field. All coaches and assistant coaches are expected to cooperate. Remember, you are taking responsibility for the girls during the time they are practicing or playing a game. Have an enjoyable season and good luck to all coaches and players.**

### **Game Addendum for Farm (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>) Level**

- There will be no more than a 1 base advancement on an overthrow from any infielder except for throws made by the catcher for which no advancement is allowed as outlined in Game Rule 8 above
- Coaches from their own team will pitch the first 2 innings. Each batter will be allotted 7 total pitches. If the 7<sup>th</sup> pitch is not put in play, the batter is automatically out, unless it is fouled or tipped, in which the batter will receive another pitch. Batter can strike out swinging only. NO BALLS OR STRIKES WILL BE CALLED BY UMPIRE DURING COACH PITCH
- Runner cannot steal a base while coach is pitching. If runner steals when the coach is pitching, umpire will return runner back to previous base with no penalty.
- Player Pitchers will enter the game in 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. If the pitcher walks 4 batters in an inning, the coach will re-enter to complete the inning and rules from first two innings will take effect
- Defensive player must be in circle next to coach on the field. Coach must STAND ON RUBBER when pitching. Coach cannot interfere with ANY play
- Defensive Coach maybe permitted on the field. He/She must be on grass behind 2<sup>nd</sup> Base. Defensive Coach cannot interfere with ANY play

### **Game Addendum for Senior (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) Level**

- ONLY if a team is under the 10 players, and their missing players is/are team pitchers, and available players on original roster are unable to pitch, team can use call up to pitch
- Entering the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, a team that is losing by 12 or more runs will no longer be subject to the 10 batter limit (outlined in Section 4). The losing team will play the remaining innings until they reach 3 outs or are subject to the mercy rule. Once the losing team's deficient is 11 runs or less, the rules will convert back to the normal batter limit (outlined in Section 4).