

**VERNON HILLS PARK DISTRICT
2021 ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUES
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The Vernon Hills Park District has developed the following set of rules and regulations to govern softball leagues organized or controlled by the Park District. Rules not covered herein will be determined by the 2017 ASA Rule Book.

These rules have been developed as a guide to enjoyable participation. The spirit of the rules is extremely important. To apply a positive approach it is essential that each participant abides by these rules and enlists the support of all other members of the team.

LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

The Athletic Department has the final power in decision making in all matters pertaining to the league. The Park District will call all meetings of team representatives. Any special meetings desired by teams should be requested through their team representative who will contact the Athletic Department.

The placement of teams in leagues and the number of teams in leagues shall be determined by the Park District.

The Park District reserves the right to schedule league games on alternate nights other than the night registered for in order to schedule makeup games or to get all scheduled leagues games played.

TEAM REPRESENTATIVES' RESPONSIBILITY

1. Each team shall designate a representative who will be the sole liaison between that team and the Park District. Since there are many participants in the Adult Softball Program, only the designated representative should communicate concerns with the Park District. To avoid confusion, players should speak with their team representative on all inquiries and not contact the Park District directly. The representative may be a player or a non-player. This also applies to speaking with the umpire.
2. Each team representative will receive:
 - A. 1 copy of the rules and regulations
 - B. 1 scorebook
3. Team representatives are expected to inform players of all the rules & regulations prior to the first game, and as often, thereafter, as necessary to ensure no violations occur.
4. Team representatives are expected to inform players of the game schedule, make-up dates, etc. and pass along any other information from the Park District.

GENERAL RULES

1. Two competing teams or managers may not agree to alter any rules.
2. One umpire will be assigned to all games.
3. Possession of alcoholic beverages is not allowed on or around the fields at any time. Violators will be suspended from the league for the remainder of the year.
4. Cars must be parked only in the appropriate designated areas. If cars are parked illegally, they will be ticketed or towed.
5. Any players, manager, or coach ejected from a game must leave the playing field and the parking lot area and is automatically suspended from the next game his/her team plays.
 - A. Umpires do not have the authority to waive this suspension.
 - B. It is the manager's responsibility to control the suspension and may be subject to further action.
 - C. Manager must give the umpire and field supervisor the ejected player's full name. If the manager refuses to give this information, the entire team will be suspended from the next scheduled game.
6. All players must be 18 years of age or older or be a high school graduate.

7. No player will be allowed to be on the roster of more than one team in each league. If leagues play combined play-offs, players must declare one team for which they will play during the playoffs.
8. The home team will occupy the third base bench area, and will receive the game ball, if applicable.
9. The maximum for the roster will be 20. Players must be registered in the park district league software to be considered on the roster. Changes may be made at the Park District office up to the third scheduled game. After the 3rd game players will no longer be able to register for the team. If a team loses a player to injury, replacements can be made by bringing in a physician's note for the injured player and then adding a new player. The injured player that is removed will not be eligible to play on any team for the remainder of the season. Falsifying rosters results in the loss of any or all games that the player participated in. Random checks of rosters may be made during games throughout the season.
10. Falsifying rosters results in loss of any and all games the player played in.
11. All players are required to bring a photo ID to every game. In the case of a roster protest, players in question will be required to prove their identity to the umpire. Any player who is unable (or refuses) to prove their identity will be assumed to be illegal, and their team will forfeit the game.
12. Game Time is Forfeit Time except for the 6:15 pm games! For the 6:15 pm games ONLY, teams will be given a 10 minute grace period. The "game clock" will begin at 6:15 pm; no new inning can start after 7:15 pm. If a team forfeits three games, they may be dropped from the league with no refund given and may not be invited back into the league the following season.
13. Nine players are required to start a game.
14. Four or more innings will constitute a full game, 3 ½ if the home team is winning.

GAMES, RULES AND PROCEDURES

1. Equipment:
 - A. Metal and screw in spikes are NOT allowed. Only molded cleats will be allowed.
 - B. Bats must be **NSA or ASA** approved.
 - C. Gloves are required in all 12" leagues.
 - D. Gloves are optional for women in the co-ed 14" league. Men are not allowed to wear any type of glove while playing defense.
 - E. The Park District will provide one new game ball for each game.
2. All leagues will use a base distance of 70 feet. The pitching distance for co-ed leagues will be 40 feet. The pitching distance for men's leagues will be 50 feet.
3. All batters start with a 1 and 1 count. There is NO free foul after 1 strike.
4. A third strike foul ball caught by a defensive player is a live ball – runners are in jeopardy.
5. Slaughter/Run rules: 20 after 4 innings, 15 after 5 innings and 10 after 6 innings.
6. There is a one-hour time limit for all games. No inning shall start after the one-hour mark (except for games that are tied). Games called due to the time limit will be considered complete games regardless of the inning.
7. If a game is tied when it reaches the time-limit, extra innings will be played with the following rules until a winner is declared:
 - A. The last batter from the previous inning will start at second base.
 - B. "One-Pitch" rules will be used for the remainder of the game. Each batter gets one pitch; if the pitch is declared a strike or a foul ball is hit, the batter is out; if the pitch is ruled a ball, the batter is awarded a walk; if the ball is put in play, it is a live ball and runners may be in jeopardy.
 - C. This is not a "sudden-death" situation; home team will have an opportunity to bat.
8. On a play, the baserunner **MUST avoid deliberate contact** with a defensive player in position to make a play. Any runner who does not avoid deliberate contact will be called out and, depending on the severity of the contact, may be ejected from the game.

9. A pitched ball must reach 6 feet while not exceeding 10 feet from the ground.
10. A courtesy runner is allowed. The courtesy runner must be the last recorded out or the player scheduled to bat last, if in the first inning and no outs. In co-ed leagues, the courtesy runner must be of the same gender.
11. Runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball crosses home plate or is hit by the batter. The ball is considered dead after each pitch not hit by the batter.
12. A maximum of 7 homeruns will be allowed per team per game. Homeruns are all fair, untouched fly balls over-the-fence. Any homeruns in excess of the limit will be ruled a dead-ball out.
13. Lineup Options:
 - A. Bat 10 players-Lineup consists of 10 players. Players must be in the lineup to play in the field. When batting 10 players, players may re-enter once. After a player is removed from the lineup twice, they are ineligible to participate in that game. If choosing this option, the team must end the game with this option. If, for any reason, a player leaves the game and there are no substitutes available, an out will be recorded when that spot in the order is due up. If a team does not have 9 players to take the field, the game will be declared a forfeit.
 - B. Extra Player-Lineup consists of 11 players for men's leagues and 12 players for co-ed league. Players must be in the lineup to play in the field. When using the extra player, players may re-enter once. After a player is removed from the lineup twice, they are ineligible to participate in that game. If choosing this option, the team must end the game with this option. If, for any reason, a player leaves the game and there are no substitutes available, an out will be recorded when that spot in the order is due up. If a team does not have 9 players to take the field, the game will be declared a forfeit.
 - C. Entire Roster-Lineup consists of all of the team's players in attendance at the game. When batting the entire roster, there is free substitution into the field. A player that arrives late will be added to the bottom of the team's lineup. If, for **any** reason, a player leaves the game, an out will be recorded when that spot in the order is due up.

Captains are required to make the umpire and opposing manager aware of their lineup option before the start of the game. Once a team has selected a lineup option for that game, they must finish the game with that option.

14. **Co-ed League:** Batting order must alternate male/female. If a team chooses to bat their entire roster and there are more players of one gender than the other, the lineup will be constructed using one of the following options:
 - A. "Extra" players share a spot in the order – when that spot in the order is due to bat, two players alternate who takes the at bat.
 - B. Two orders – one for men and one for women. After the first time through the lineup, there will be a different female batting between two males and vice versa.
 - C. ONLY if there are more females than males - batting females back-to-back will be permitted
15. **Co-ed League:** a minimum of 4 women must play on the field at all times, and the defensive team shall field no more than one more male fielder than female.
16. **Co-ed League:** when a man is walked (under any condition) the woman following has the choice to bat or accept a walk. If the female accepts the walk she will go to first base while the male batter will proceed to second base. If she decides to bat the male runner will go to first base and the female will bat.
17. **Co-ed League:** The playing field is divided as follows:
 - A. Right side of infield (1st and 2nd)
 - B. Left side of infield (shortstop and 3rd)
 - C. Battery (pitcher and catcher)
 - D. First outfield (left and right field)
 - E. Second outfield (center and short center)

Each of these categories plays one male and one female. If nine players are fielded the short center position is not used. **All outfielders (including the short center fielder) must remain on the outfield grass until the ball is hit.**

RAIN-OUT POLICIES

1. Park District staff will make a decision on field playability and playing conditions at 4:30 pm the day of the games. Please call the Vernon Hills Park District Weather Hotline at 996-6616 after 4:30 p.m. for rainout information.
2. All games that have been rained out will be rescheduled as soon as possible at the discretion of the Athletic Supervisor. Initially, the league may be extended, but if too many rainouts occur, double-headers may be used or games may be scheduled on weekends and/or at alternate locations.
3. If weather conditions become threatening after 4:30 pm, the umpire will be the sole judge as to field playability and playing conditions.
4. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation after 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.

PROTESTS

1. The only protest is one which involves the misinterpretation of playing rules or the use of an ineligible player. If a player's eligibility is in question, the player must provide a valid photo ID to prove he or she is an eligible player. If the player is unable or refuses to show a photo ID, their team will forfeit the contest.
2. A protest based on a play which involves an umpire's judgment is not legal and will not be recognized.

PROCESS OF PROTESTING

1. The protesting manager shall immediately notify the official of the fact that he/she is protesting. This shall be done before any succeeding play begins. The official shall announce that the game is being played under protest. The protest time shall be written on the official score card by the umpire for validity.
2. A protest fee of \$50.00 must be submitted with the following paperwork. A formal written protest must be submitted to the Park District office between 5:30 am and 4:30 pm the day after the game. If the formal written protest is not received in the allotted amount of time, or the \$50.00 is not submitted, the protest will not be considered. The protest will be reviewed by the Athletic Supervisor to determine whether the protest is valid. If valid, the \$50.00 will be refunded. If not, the money will be used to run the league.

KEEPING SCORE

1. Each team will be responsible for keeping score while their team is batting. It is recommended that teams also score for the opposing team. The umpire will confer with the captains after each half inning to verify the score.
2. At the end of the game, the winning and losing captain will be required to sign the official score sheet.

STANDINGS

1. League standings will be determined by the win-loss record at the end of the season.
2. Tie breakers will be as follows:
 - Head-to-head competition
 - Fewest runs allowed (in head-to-head competition)
 - Fewest average runs allowed per game in the season (forfeit scores will not be used when averaging runs allowed)