

MEDFORD PARKS & RECREATION
Adult Softball League Rules, Regulations & Procedures
Softball League 2010

Current Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rules govern play except the variations denoted here. The Medford Parks and Recreation Department (MPRD) reserves the right to modify rules, regulations and policies whenever due cause warrants a change. (Note: Senior and Co-Ed leagues have specialized variations - in a separate document.)

1..... LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

- A. League Director has final authority to make decisions pertaining to all softball league rules, regulations and schedules.
- B. Upon enrolling as a team in leagues sponsored by the City of Medford, each team and all players agree to abide by MPRD rules and regulations.
- C. Whenever possible, league placement decisions will be made to ensure competitive balance and logistical convenience.
- D. MPRD officials and umpires may stop, postpone or cancel any game due to weather, darkness, unsafe conditions or other circumstances that may jeopardize participant safety in any way, including games in which player behavior is deemed out of control.

2..... FIELD USAGE

- A. Teams using City of Medford owned or leased facilities must abide by City codes and ordinances.
 - 1) These include no alcoholic beverages, drugs and controlled substances in, around or on fields, parking areas or spectator areas at all times.
 - 2) Players and spectators must abide by U.S. Cellular Community Park rules and regulations.
 - 3) No smoking is allowed on any 549-C School District grounds including bleachers, parking lots, on fields, or team seating areas.
- B. When not scheduled for league games or rented for other uses, Jackson, Howard, Jefferson and Wilson softball fields are available at no charge for practice sessions and practice games on a first-come, first-served basis after 6 p.m. on weekdays and during daylight hours on weekends. Reservations are accepted for these fields. Contact the MPRD office (774-2400) for reservations. Reservations take priority over drop-in users.
 - 1) "First-come, first-served" means having at least FIVE players ready to take the field. Teams with less than five players may not claim a field even if it arrived first. Practice sessions are limited to 90 minutes if another team is waiting for the practice field. Play practice games, if possible, when multiple teams want to use the same practice field at the same time.
 - 2) Do not play on wet infields and make every effort not to damage the playing surface. Dispose of litter properly.
 - 3) Teams not abiding by policies may face sanctions determined by MPRD.
- C. When not scheduled for league games or tournaments, the five-field softball/baseball complex at U.S. Cellular Community Park is available to be rented for practice sessions and practice games. Rental fee for city-league teams is \$10 per hour/per field. Contact the MPRD office (774-2400) for reservations.

3..... ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

- A. To be eligible, players must have personally signed the official team roster or a liability waiver prior to playing in any league games. Failure to comply subjects a team to possible forfeiture in which ineligible player(s) participated.
 - 1) Teams may have as many players as needed. Rosters are not limited to a maximum number.
- B. Minimum age for participation is 18 with the following exceptions:
 - 1) Men's, women's and co-ed teams may have two players age 16 or 17 participate in a game if a parent/guardian signs the roster or liability waiver prior to participation.
- C. **A player may not compete on two teams in the same league category.** League categories are Men's, Church, Women's, Weekday Co-Ed, Sunday Co-Ed and Senior.
- D. Only amateur players are permitted to participate in MPRD leagues. Professional or semi-professional baseball or softball players are ineligible for MPRD league play without permission from the League Director.
- E. Players may switch teams only after one of the following two conditions have been met:

- 1) Team captains (old and new) must agree to the switch.
- 2) In the event the old team captain does not grant permission, the player must sit out one game before being allowed to play for the new team.
- 3) The League Director must be notified in writing prior to a player playing in a game the same day as the player is dropped. (amended 5/4/10)

4.....STARTING TIMES, FORFEITS, TIME LIMITS

- A. Game times begin at 6 p.m. unless otherwise noted on schedules.
 - 1) Forfeit time is five minutes after scheduled game time (which remains the official start time). If eight registered players are not fielded by forfeit time, the short-handed team(s) will forfeit. The Umpire's watch is the official time. In order to avoid forfeits, a team may borrow a player from the opposing team if both captains agree.
 - 2) In the event of a forfeit, teams may play a practice game lasting no longer than five innings or 45 minutes from the originally scheduled start time, whichever comes first. All players must follow eligibility guidelines to compete in a practice game. Umpires and supervisors may stop a practice game for reasons that represent the best interests of the league or MPRD.
 - 3) After two forfeits, a team may be dismissed from the league for the remainder of the season. A waitlisted team may be given an opportunity to fill the league spot.
 - 4) A team that foresees a conflict with a particular game and notifies the League Director at least 24 hours in advance of game time will be credited with a loss but will not be penalized.
 - 5) Scheduling conflicts will not be rescheduled unless the conflict was a clerical error or weather-related.
- B. No new innings will begin after 70 minutes of elapsed game time. All new innings that begin prior to the 70-minute limit will be completed (unless weather or other unforeseen circumstances force a game to be called early).
 - 1) If a game is called prior to the completion of seven innings, 70 minutes or the mercy rule, a game will be considered "official" upon completion of four full innings, or 3 ½ innings if the home team is leading. Unofficial games will be rescheduled and will start over with a 0-0 score.
 - 2) If time has expired and the inning finishes in a tie, the game is a tie.
 - 3) If a game is tied after seven innings and time remains on the clock, an additional inning(s) may be played using international tie-break procedure.
 - 4) Any 8:30 contests that start with less than 70 minutes of available game time (based on a 10 p.m. curfew) and do not last long enough to be considered an "official" game, will be rescheduled and start over with a 0-0 score.
 - 5) On fields without lights, the final game of an evening may be completed without time limits if daylight allows.
- C. If a game is called before the end of an inning, the final score will be taken from the last completed full inning. The last completed full inning determines whether the game is considered "official."
- D. Tie games will be recorded as a half-win/half-loss for both teams. An additional inning or innings may be attempted to break the tie only if time permits.
- E. Mercy Rule. The game is considered complete and over when a team leads by at least 20 runs after three innings (2 ½ if the home team leads), or by at least 15 runs after four innings (3 ½ if the home team leads).
- F. Visiting team may take infield practice from 5:40 to 5:48 p.m.; home team may take infield from 5:50 to 5:58 p.m. Due to time constraints, no infield practice may be taken before the start of subsequent games unless special circumstances arise.

5.....RAINOUTS AND CANCELLATIONS

- A. If weather conditions look like they may prohibit field usage, both team captains should contact the MPRD softball hotline (774-2424) after 3 p.m. and/or check www.sportsmedford.com. Please do not call the MPRD office to find out if games have been canceled. Team captains must notify their players if games are canceled. Please call your team captain to find out if games are canceled or postponed.
- B. If other conditions prohibit field use, MPRD will attempt to notify team captains prior to Noon.

6.....UMPIRES AND SCOREKEEPERS

- A. Umpires and scorekeeper/supervisors are given full authority to take prudent actions necessary to maintain proper and safe playing conditions.
- B. The umpire will inspect team equipment for safety prior to each game.
- C. The scorekeeper/supervisor is provided for each game (except for 1-pitch leagues). His or her scorekeeping is final unless a discrepancy is brought to the attention of the scorekeeper at or very near the time of occurrence.

Otherwise, if a mistake is made it will not necessarily change the score and it is not normally subject to protest. Captains should double-check with scorekeepers regarding team score as the game progresses.

- D. In the event an umpire is not present by game time, teams are asked to start a practice game. The game will be rescheduled. The scorekeeper will attempt to locate an umpire for remaining game(s).
- E. In the event of a no-show by a scorekeeper, the home team is responsible for keeping score and reporting it to the League Director no later than the next working day.
- F. Lineups are due to the scorekeeper at least five minutes prior to game time. Failure to comply may result in an out assessed at the start of the game for the offending team.
- G. Umpires are issued one softball per game and will have one in reserve. If a team loses the game ball, it is required to put another game-quality ball in play to continue the game – or face forfeiture. The home team shall receive the MPRD-issued game ball(s) upon conclusion of the game, if desired and requested.

7.....UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. All MPRD softball games will be played with .44 core Yellow Optic softballs.
- B. Teams supply their own equipment except the game ball and bases.
- C. Turf shoes with rounded cleats and rubber molded toes and edges are recommended footwear for softball. Metal cleats are not allowed on the field at any time. Shoes with any metal showing, including removable cleats, are not allowed. No hard soled shoes or boots will be allowed. Umpires will determine if a shoe is a potential safety hazard.
- D. Each player must have a legible number on the back of his or her shirt/uniform.
 - 1) Only one person on each team may assume the number "0" or no number.
 - 2) If more than one player does not have a legible number, he or she will automatically be considered out each time at bat.
 - 3) Duplicate numbers are not allowed.
 - 4) The minimum number height is 6 inches, but 8-inch numbers are preferred.
 - 5) T-shirts with magic marker-drawn numbers are permitted.
- E. Bats must be marked "ASA Approved" or be ASA-certified, as verified by umpires (USSSA Bats are **NOT** allowed for any league as per City of Medford regulations).
 - 1) Umpires and city staff may inspect bats at any time.
 - 2) All bats must conform to ASA standards.
 - A. Illegal bats. Team captains should declare at a pre-game plate conference that all players are legally equipped and all bats are ASA-legal. If an illegal bat is discovered, the team captain will be ejected along with the player using the bat. The game is subject to forfeiture based on a review of circumstances by the Site Supervisor and/or League Director.
 - 3) All bats must have a safety grip.
 - 4) No donuts allowed, except for warm up
 - 5) The bat shall be free of burrs, dents and visible cracks.
 - 6) The ASA banned bat list is regularly updated at www.asasoftball.com

8.....BATTING ORDER/BATTING

- A. Prior to the start of the game each team may elect to use ASA batting order rules or it may elect to use a modified free-substitution rule that mandates each team member in uniform be placed in the batting lineup in whatever sequence the team captain chooses. Players using the modified rule may be substituted freely and are not bound to the ASA re-entry rule.
 - 1) Teams must report their choice of play prior to the start of the game to the umpire, scorekeeper and opposing team captain. Once a decision is made, it must play the entire game under the batting rule they chose.
 - 2) Captains do not have to agree to utilize the same rule.
 - 3) In case of free substitution, players arriving late may be included on the bottom of the batting order list upon arriving at the game and players may leave early and be skipped over without penalty.
 - 4) Scorekeeper will make every effort to keep the batting order in sequence. He or she will notify the umpire if they detect an error in the batting order.
- B. If a player is injured during the game or has to leave early, he or she may be removed from the batting order without penalty for the remainder of the game.
- C. All players in uniform must be included in the batting lineup under the free substitution option. Players not in uniform

must sit in the stands or identify themselves as non-players at the start of the game to the scorekeeper.

- D. The ASA foul-tip rule will be used. After two strikes, if the ball is hit foul, the batter is given one additional strike.
- E. Teams shall conform to the two home run progressive rule in all leagues (Men's A league is exempt).
 - 1) Neither team shall have more than two home runs greater than the opposing team at any time during the game. If a home run is hit that puts that team three (3) homeruns ahead, it would be considered a dead ball out, that batter is out and all runners shall remain at their original base.

9. PITCHING

- A. Pitching arcs are 6 feet (minimum) and 10 feet (maximum) for all leagues. Pitching distance is 50 feet for all leagues.
- B. The ASA interpretation of the strike zone will be used for all city-league games. No strike zone mats will be used. The strike zone is determined by a batter's front knee and back shoulder.
- C. In co-ed games, the pitcher must use the 11-inch women's softball when pitching to female batters. Conversely, all men's players will hit the 12-inch men's softball.
- D. If permitted by the umpire due to time considerations, a pitcher may throw a maximum of three warm-up pitches each inning. Relief pitchers are also allowed three warm-up pitches prior to facing a batter. Additional warm-up pitches are considered balls in the count for the next designated batter.
- E. If a pitcher decides to intentionally walk a batter, he or she should notify the umpire. In order to save time, the batter will automatically be awarded first base.
- F. Underhand fastpitch-style warm-up pitches are prohibited at all times.
- G. Each batter will begin their at bat with a 1 and 1 count.
- H. Halo Rule: The "Halo" Rule has been developed to provide greater protection for the pitcher.
 - 1. If a line-drive ball is hit back at the pitcher **within the pitching zone, without hitting the ground**, the batter is automatically out and the ball is ruled dead, regardless of if the pitcher makes an attempt for the ball or not. If the pitcher moves out of the pitching zone they are no longer protected by this rule.
 - a. Pitching Zone is defined as the width of the pitching plate with an additional 1 foot on either side, including 2 feet to the rear of the plate and within 1 foot of the top of the pitchers head.

10. COURTESY RUNNERS

- A. All men's and women's teams may designate one player per game who will utilize a courtesy runner if he or she reaches base. Exception: Any player over age 64 may request a courtesy runner if he or she successfully reaches base.
 - 1) A player requesting a courtesy runner must be identified at the start of the game to the umpire, or at the time of injury. The batter then must use a courtesy runner each time he/she reaches base.
 - 2) In the event of an injury, the courtesy runner is the player who was the most recent out.
 - 3) If more than one person on a team is injured, the use of a courtesy runner shall be used at the discretion of the umpire. The other must be removed from the game or not use a courtesy runner.
 - 4) Switching of courtesy runner status is not permitted once the batter is designated.
- B. Church league teams may use multiple courtesy runners if:
 - 1) Both captains agree to use multiple courtesy runners.
 - 2) Both teams identify and agree on all players requiring courtesy runners before the start of the game.
 - 3) Designated players will be allowed to have the last out substitute for them as soon as they have successfully reached a base.

11. CODE OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- A. Verbal abuse, negative comments, vulgarity, racial remarks and objectionable demonstrations towards a player, captain, umpire, scorekeeper/supervisor or opposing spectator will not be tolerated. Umpires normally issue a warning. If ignored, the player or spectator faces ejection from the game and from areas surrounding the field.
 - 1) Any player using unnecessary rough tactics with the intent or potential to do bodily harm will be ejected.
 - 2) Any player throwing a bat because of an umpire's decision will be ejected.
 - 3) Any player, spectator, or coach refusing to abide by an umpire's decision will be ejected.
 - 4) Any player or spectator deemed by the umpire or scorekeeper/supervisor to not have control of his/her faculties to the extent that there is a chance of physical injury to him/her or others will be asked to leave the facility.
 - 5) Any ejected player will be an out each time he/she comes up in the batting order.

- B. Any player physically attacking or striking an umpire, scorekeeper/supervisor, player or spectator before, during or after games shall face expulsion from the league and possible criminal charges.
- C. Destruction of property, theft or assault before, during or after activity will be handled by law enforcement. Individuals and teams will be held responsible for any damage or theft stemming from their use of the facility.
- D. Any player ejected from a game must leave the property immediately. If a player or spectator refuses to leave, the team whose member or fan refused to cooperate will forfeit the game.
 - 1) Any player ejected during a game will be suspended for a minimum of one regularly scheduled game.
 - 2) Any player ejected from two games faces a multiple-game suspension determined by League Director.
- E. The captain is the official representative of his/her team unless he or she designates another player as team captain prior to the game. The captain is responsible for his or her team abiding by rules, procedures and regulations. All players are expected to know Medford city-league rules, regulations and expectations.
- F. A player or team expelled from the league will not receive a refund.

12.....PROTESTS

- A. Protests must be submitted in writing, accompanied by a \$25 filing fee, to the MPRD office, at the Santo Community Center, 701 N. Columbus Ave., within 24 hours after the game. Protests are to help clarify and interpret rules, not to question the judgment of officials. Protests are to help prevent similar occurrences and to better the league. Depending on the amount of staff time required to investigate the protest, the League Director may refund the \$25 fee if the protest is upheld.
- B. Protests must be stated at the point of contention (before the ball is put into play) and the umpire and scorekeeper/supervisor and opposing team captain must be notified as to the exact rule that is being protested. Protesting captain must complete a typed description of what happened.

13.....MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Notify the League Director of any potential schedule conflicts or scheduling errors. MPRD will make every effort to resolve logistical issues.
- B. Blood rule. When blood is visible, the game will be stopped to allow for quick dressing of wounds.
 - 1) Any visible blood stains on clothing must be taped over or removed entirely. Numbers are not required for those needing to change shirts due to blood stains.
 - 2) Skin wounds/abrasions must be bandaged with no visible blood leakage.
 - 3) Each team should have a supply of athletic tape and bring spare shirts.
- C. Wearing jewelry is discouraged for safety reasons.
 - 1) Players are encouraged to tape wedding bands or wear batting gloves.
 - 2) Casts (plaster, metal or other hard substance in its final form), exposed jewelry (wrist watches, bracelets, metal barrettes, large earrings and neck chains or any other item deemed dangerous by the umpire) may not be worn during the game.
- D. All players are responsible for their own insurance coverage. The City of Medford does not carry accident insurance for players participating in sponsored activities.
- E. League champions are determined by win-loss records. Ties are broken by head-to-head outcomes during league play. Multiple ties are broken by the League Director using traditional tie-break methods.
- F. The MPRD web site (www.sportsmedford.com) is the primary source for up-to-date schedules, standings and rules. MPRD will use e-mail and/or phone communication to disseminate schedules or other information.
- G. Past team performance may be considered during initial league composition. The League Director reserves the right to make scheduling decisions in the best interests of competitive balance.
- H. Teams that drop or are dropped from the league lose any right to reclaim any part of their entry fee once the schedules have been posted on the MPRD web site.
- I. All MPRD league teams are automatically associate members of both ASA and USSSA, which allows teams to compete in sanctioned sectional, regional or national tournaments.