

MEDFORD PARKS & RECREATION
Adult Softball League Rules, Regulations & Procedures
Holiday and Winter Leagues (Revised Feb. 2012 – changes in RED)

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.

1.....LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

A. League Director has final authority to make decisions pertaining to all softball league rules, regulations and schedules; **to act in the best interest of the City of Medford; and to make decisions in the spirit of competitive balance and fair play.**

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 park 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 permitted within 50 feet of fields, or seating areas.

B. When not scheduled for league games or rented for other uses, Howard and Jefferson 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.

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) Rosters are not limited to a maximum number.
- 2) Team rosters will be on hand at every game to allow for players to add. Players may add through the 5th week, or game, of the season.
- 3) Players must sign the roster prior to taking the field for a given team. Failure to do so may result in a forfeit by the team accepting the player.
- 4) Teams using an illegal player may face forfeiture of games in which illegal players competed.

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, Women's, Weekday Co-Ed, Sunday Co-Ed, Senior and 1-Pitch.

D. Only amateur players are permitted to participate in MPRD leagues. Professional or semi-professional baseball or softball players are ineligible for city-league play without prior approval from the League Director.

E. **The League Director reserves the right to prohibit participation by A-level players on lower-level co-ed teams.**

4. STARTING TIMES, FORFEITS, TIME LIMITS

A. Game times begin at 6 p.m. unless otherwise noted on schedules.

1) If short handed team is listed as the visiting team, the game will begin at 6:00 without a full team fielded. At 5 minutes after game time, the team shall be re-evaluated to determine if there are a minimum of 8 players.

- a) If the short handed team is listed as the home team, they give up their home team status and allow the other team to take the field in an effort to start the game on time. At 5 minutes after game time, the short-handed team shall be re-evaluated to determine if a minimum of 8 players are present.

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 was 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). **A new inning starts after the third out is recorded in the bottom of the previous inning.**

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.

C. If a game is called before the end of an inning due to weather, time constraints or unforeseen circumstances, 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 four innings (3 ½ if the home team leads), by at least 15 runs after five innings (4 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.

1) The hotline and website are only updated if games are cancelled.

2) It is unlikely games will be postponed due to rain.

6.UMPIRES AND SCOREKEEPERS

A. Umpires and 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. **A scorekeeper is not provided for games.** The scoreboard is the official score, as operated by the umpire or his/her designee.

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 supervisor will attempt to locate an umpire for remaining game(s).

E. **Lineups are not required for the Holiday or Winter leagues.**

F. Umpires are issued two softballs per game. If teams lose the game balls, they are required to put another umpire-approved, game-quality ball in play to continue the game – or face forfeiture. **Game balls issued by MPRD remain City property upon conclusion of the game.**

7.....UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

A. All MPRD softball games will be played with .44 and/or .52 core Yellow Optic softballs.

B. Teams supply their own equipment except the game ball and bases.

C. **Heaters are prohibited inside the team area and near the playing surface. The facility supervisor has discretion on determining safe locations for heaters.**

D. 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.

E. Each player must have a legible number on the back of his or her shirt/uniform. In the event of cold or inclement weather, players may wear jackets or sweaters over their uniforms **but are requested to notify the scorekeeper of their uniform number prior to stepping into the batter box.**

1) **Exception: One person on each team may assume the number "00" or no number.** Coed teams are allowed 1 player per gender without a 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, or taped numbers are permitted.

F. Bats must be marked "ASA Approved" or be ASA-certified, as verified by umpires (USSSA bats and any bat on the ASA Banned Bat list are NOT allowed for any league). Exception: Senior Softball League.

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 dents and visible cracks or evidence of tampering or excessive wear.
- 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 the 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 removed from the batting order or base path without penalty.

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. 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. Each batter will begin their at bat with a 1 and 1 count.

E. The ASA foul-tip rule will be used. After two strikes, if the ball is hit foul, the batter is given one additional strike.

F. Teams shall conform to the City of Medford's progressive two over-the-fence home run rule in all leagues (Exception: Senior Softball League).

- 1) Neither team shall have more than two over-the-fence home runs greater than the opposing team at any time during the game. If an over-the-fence home run puts a team three home runs ahead of the opposing team's home run count, the at-bat is considered a dead ball out and base runners may not advance.

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. The strike zone is determined by a batter's front knee and back shoulder in relation to where the hitter is standing in the batter's box.

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. **If the batter hits the wrong size ball and the mistake is immediately discovered, the batter may choose to re-do the entire at-bat.**

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.

10. BASERUNNING/COURTESY RUNNERS

A. Teams are allowed to use one courtesy runner per inning, regardless of injury or age (Coed teams are allowed one courtesy runner per gender).

B. Teams are not required to designate a player in need of a courtesy runner.

C. The last out is not required to be the courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is on base and his/her spot in the batting order comes up, the at-bat is considered an out.

D. Stealing is permitted for the Men's and Women's upper divisions only.

E. In the event of cold weather or slick conditions, the umpire may announce to both teams that baserunners are permitted to step over or cut the inside corner of a base. Baserunners must be in contact with a base when the pitch is thrown.

11. CODE OF CONDUCT/DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

A. The captain is the official representative of his/her team unless another player designates him/herself as team captain to the umpire and scorekeeper 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.

B. Verbal abuse, negative comments, vulgarity, racial remarks and objectionable demonstrations will not be tolerated. Umpires **may** issue a warning. If ignored, the player or spectator faces ejection from the game and from areas surrounding the field, and potential stiffer penalties.

1) Any player using unnecessary rough tactics with the intent or potential to do bodily harm will be ejected.

2) Any player willfully throwing a bat 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 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.

C. 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.

D. 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.

E. 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 week of regularly scheduled games.

2) Any player ejected from two games faces a multiple-week suspension determined by League Director.

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 **and comply with ASA Rule 9** and the umpire, 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 and submitted to the League Director, who will consider the protest.

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 ASA, which allows teams to compete in sanctioned sectional, regional or national tournaments.

Co-Ed Softball League Rules & Procedures

These softball rules are used for Medford Parks & Recreation adult co-ed softball leagues in conjunction with normal City-league and ASA rules, regulations and procedures.

1. **BATTING ORDER.** The batting order must alternate male/female or vice-versa. If a team fails to alternate batting order, an out will be recorded.

a. Each team has the option of batting all available players or just those who play in a defensive position. The batting option must be determined at the start of the game and cannot be changed once the lineup has been submitted to the scorekeeper.

b. If teams choose to bat through its entire lineup, the captain must submit a list of female batters in priority batting order, and a list of male batters in priority batting order. The scorekeeper will then set the lineup to alternate male and female batters. Otherwise, teams must adhere to the ASA re-entry rule and bat only 10 players or less, and substitute according to the ASA re-entry rule.

2. **PLAYER POSITIONING.** Defensive positioning shall include two males and two females in the outfield, two males and two females in the infield, and one male and one female in the pitcher-catcher positions. Once determining positions, the players must be stationed in fair territory, except the catcher. In the case of unequal players (fewer men than women), more women may play in the outfield but the infield and pitcher-catcher positions must be equal numbers of males and females. If only 8 players are fielded, 3 must be positioned in the outfield and the pitcher may assume 2nd base coverage.

3. Each team must have at least eight players to start and finish the game. The ratio of men and women must be:

- Men 5 -- Women 4
- Men 5 -- Women 5
- Men 4 -- Women 5
- Men 4 -- Women 6
- Men 3 -- Women 6
- Men 4 -- Women 4
- Men 3 -- Women 5

4. **WALK RULE.** The ASA co-ed walk rule will be used. If a male batter is walked, he automatically is awarded second base. If there are two outs, the next female batter will have the choice to walk or hit.

5. **PITCHING.** 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.