



## ADULT SOFTBALL RULES & GENERAL INFORMATION

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| <b>League Director:</b>               | Brett Geertsma (748-3231   <a href="mailto:bgeertsm@zps.org">bgeertsm@zps.org</a> )               |
| <b>League Secretary:</b>              | Kylee DeBoer (748-3230   <a href="mailto:kdeboer@zps.org">kdeboer@zps.org</a> )                   |
| <b>Site Supervisor / Lead Umpire:</b> | Wayne Nyenbrink (218-2564)  |
| <b>Schedules, Rules, Standings:</b>   | <a href="http://recreation.zps.org/sports-leagues/">http://recreation.zps.org/sports-leagues/</a> |
| <b>Social Media:</b>                  | Follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter (@ZeelandRecreation)                                  |

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1. **Entry Fees:** Registration is not allowed without full payment.
2. **Late Registration Fee:** A registration deadline is established for each season. If there are still remaining spots in our leagues at end of the registration deadline, we will allow “late registration” to continue until enrollment is full or until schedules have to be made (late enrollment = additional \$25 fee).
3. **Cancellation Fee & Refunds:** Due to game schedules having to be re-made if a team backs out of the league within two weeks of the season, a \$100 cancellation fee will be charged if a team requests to be removed from the league within two weeks of the start of the season. Once the league schedule begins, no refunds can be provided.
4. **[UPDATED] Team Managers Expectations:** All teams must have a manager who is responsible for submitting the team fee, roster, and responding to Recreation staff in a timely manner. Discussion between teams and the Recreation Department must be handled through the team manager. Additionally, (and most importantly), the manager is responsible for informing their team of league rules and guidelines, and also for the conduct of its team members and spectators.
5. **League Structure:** There is a regular season followed by a single elimination tournament. The amount of teams in your competition level is the largest factor in how many games your team gets in the regular season.
6. **Competition Levels:** We have upper, middle, and lower level leagues (for most leagues). During registration, be sure to indicate what competition level you feel fits your team best. Your request, along with a review of previous season results will be used to determine your competition level. After the first 2-3 weeks, game results will be reviewed and potential team movements to different competition levels will be made when appropriate.
7. **Pre-Season Practices:** Usage of DeWitt Sports Complex softball fields when they are not reserved by Zeeland Public Schools programs is on a first come, first serve basis. They are open to the public. Fields are not reserved for practices for adult sports league teams. If you wish to use a field for practice, simply show up and see what is available. If a field is clearly dragged and lined for an upcoming Zeeland Public Schools event that evening, please use a different field.
8. **Weather Cancellations:** In the event of inclement weather and/or unforeseeable schedule conflicts, games may be canceled. Game cancellations will be made before 5pm on the day of the game, unless the inclement weather begins later in the evening. If inclement weather begins after 5pm, the game decision will be made by the site supervisor on site. When in doubt, show up to your scheduled game time. Team managers will receive emails regarding cancellations, but participants may also get cancellation information via our “Weather Cancellation Line” (616-748-3235), our website (<http://recreation.zps.org>), or our social media pages.
9. **Tobacco & Alcohol:** Tobacco products and alcoholic beverages are prohibited on Zeeland Public School property.
10. **Game Protests:** Protests can be made on rule and roster violations. To file an official protest, the protest must be verbalized to the umpire before the next pitch is thrown (if a rules protest) or prior to the start of a game (if a roster protest). The protest and exact violation must then be submitted to the Recreation Director within 24 hours of the incident. The League Director will review the situation and communicate the decision to the team managers and umpires involved.



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11. **[UPDATED] Roster Guidelines:** No team will be allowed to play until their roster is officially submitted to the Zeeland Recreation department. Roster forms can be found on our website (<http://recreation.zps.org/sports-leagues/>) or hard copies can be picked up at our office. You may have as many players on a roster as you'd like. However, the following guidelines must be followed. If a team violates any of these guidelines, that game is automatically forfeited. Players who violate these rules will be suspended for the remainder of the season.
  - a. You may never have a player play for a team if they are not on the official roster submitted to Zeeland Recreation
  - b. No players may be on your roster if they are on another roster in your competition level (upper, middle, lower)
  - c. Additional players (subs) can be added to your roster until the midway point of the season. Rosters are locked after the first half of the season (unless the roster change is approved by the league director).
  - d. In order to participate in tournament games, players must have been on the roster prior to the halfway point of the season and also played in at least three (3) regular season games with that team
12. **Scoreboard Controller:** Home teams will manage the scoreboard updates. Home teams are listed first on the schedule.
13. **[UPDATED] Start of Game:** Teams not ready to play at their start time will forfeit that game. A 5-minute grace period will be given (ex: ready to play at 6:20 rather than 6:15). You must have at least eight (8) players to start a game. Teams with seven (7) or less players at the start of a game automatically forfeit (unless their opponent approves the start of the game and accepts whatever result comes from that game). The ump's must ask the opponent whether or not they are approving the team playing with less than eight (8) players, or if they want to accept the forfeit victory. A team playing with eight (8) or less players will automatically be visitors and have a 10 run mercy rule in effect starting in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning.
14. **[UPDATED] Ejections:** Any player, coach, or fan showing unsportsmanlike behavior will be ejected from the game. If ejected, that individual must leave the DeWitt Sports Complex property immediately. Any player, coach or fan ejected during or after a game will be suspended for at least the next playable game, and possibly more, depending on the severity of the offense. Any player, coach or fan who makes physical contact with or throws an object at an umpire, site supervisor, opponent, fan, or teammate will be suspended from participating in all Zeeland Recreation activities for at least one year. All suspensions are subject to a written (emailed) appeal by the team manager within 24 hours of the suspension. The terms of the exact suspension will be emailed to the team manager, as well as to that individual(s) involved. Re-admission into the league will be dependent on a mandatory face-face meeting with the Recreation Director after the suspension has ended. For any ejection or suspension incident, a report will be filed by the umpires with the Recreation Director, who will review the situation and act further if necessary.
15. **Regular Season Championship Tie-Breakers:**
  - a. Two Team Ties: If there are two teams tied with the same record at the end of a regular season, head-head record will determine the champion. If the head-head record doesn't clearly determine champion, co-champions will be named. Score differential does not factor into a championship decision.
  - b. Three + Team Ties: If there are three or more teams tied, head-head record will determine the champion. If one of the teams tied in first defeated all other first place teams, they are the champions. If that isn't the case, then all teams will be named "co-champions".
  - c. If All Teams Haven't Played the Same Amount of Games: No team will be withheld a regular season championship or co-championship due to having less games than another team. For example, if one team finishes with a 5-1 regular season record and another team finishes with a 4-1 regular season record, those two teams will be named "co-champions" (unless the head-head tie-breaker breaks that "tie").
16. **Completed Game Policy:** Completion of either 5 innings or 45 minutes of game time constitutes a legal completed game. A game terminated by inclement weather will be determined a completed game if either of those standards are met, or if the home team is leading after 4 ½ innings. The umpires on site have the authority to determine the continuation or termination of a game due to weather. All other games will be re-scheduled.



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### RULES:

All USA/ASA Softball rules apply, with the exception of the below local rules ...

1. **Metal Spikes:** No metal spikes are allowed.
2. **Bat Rules:** Only USA legal bats are allowed. Non-approved list: <http://usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>
3. **Softball Used:** 12" Worth Hot Dot (.52 COR | 300 lb Compression)
4. **[UPDATED] 55 Minute Game Time Limits:** An easily visible 55-minute timer behind home plate will be started at the first pitch. No new innings can begin 55 minutes after the first pitch. If an inning is in process when the 55-minute time limit arrives, the top and bottom of that inning may be finished. However, if an inning ends with five (5) minutes or less remaining in the 55-minute game time limit, the "Flip-Flop Batting Order Rule" is in effect (see rule #5 for details). In that case, the losing team bats in the top half of the inning (even if it is a 1-run difference).
5. **Last Inning Flip-Flop Batting Order Rule:** If an inning ends with five (5) minutes or less remaining in the 55-minute game time limit, the trailing team bats first to start the last inning, (even if they're the home team).
6. **[UPDATED] Game Times:**
  - a.) 4-game nights: 6:15pm, 7:15pm, 8:15pm, 9:15pm
  - b.) 3-game nights: 6:30pm, 7:30pm, 8:30pm
  - c.) 2-game nights: 7pm, 8pm
7. **[NEW] 3 Min Timer In-Between Games:** After a game ends, a 3-minute timer will begin. The next game will begin when that timer runs out. Warm up should be done on the grass while the previous game is being played.
8. **Batting Order "Rocket Rule":** No more than 10 players can play on the field defensively. However, a team can have as many players as they would like in their batting order. Those playing defense are interchangeable at any time, but the batting order must remain the same from the start to the end of the game. Failing to do so will result in an out recorded each time that spot in the lineup is up to bat. *\*Exception: If a player is removed due to injury.*
9. **International Tie-Breaker Rule:** If there is a tie game and there is still time remaining after seven innings, this rule takes effect. Each team will have a runner start the inning on 2<sup>nd</sup> base. The runner must be the last batter to record an out.
10. **Mercy Rules:** A game will be determined and declared official if one team has a 20 run lead after three (3) complete innings, a 15 run lead after four (4) complete innings or a 10 run lead after five (5) complete innings.
11. **Tie Games:** Tie games will not be played out and will go as a tie in the standings. *Exception: Tournaments*
12. **Courtesy Runner Rule:** There will be one courtesy runner allowed per inning. The courtesy runner can be any runner on your roster. If courtesy runner is still on base when his/her spot in the lineup comes up, an out occurs, and the runner is removed from the bases and must take their at bat in the batting order. *\*Exception: If a player is removed due to injury.*
13. **[UPDATED] Pitch Arc Rules:**
  - a.) Upper Leagues: Pitches must be a minimum of **6'** high and a maximum of **10'** high
  - b.) Middle & Lower Leagues: Pitches must be a minimum of **6'** high, and a maximum of **12'** high



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14. **[UPDATED] Pitching Rubber Rules:** The pitcher must have a one foot in contact with the pitching rubber when the pitch is released, unless they are within five feet behind the pitching rubber. No steps may be taken before a pitch is thrown except for one “stride step”, which must conclude with one foot being in contact with the pitching rubber (unless you are behind the pitching rubber). No pitch may be thrown in front of the pitching rubber without having at least one foot contacting the pitching rubber. Pitchers may pitch to the side of the pitching rubber if they wish, as long as one foot is in contact with the pitching rubber when the pitch is released.
15. **[UPDATED] Balls, Strikes & Foul Ball Rules:** All batters will begin with a 1-1 count. Once there are two strikes, one grace foul ball is allowed. A second foul ball with two strikes will result in an out. A fourth ball equals a walk. If a team wants to intentionally walk a batter, they may do so by informing the umpire and that batter will be awarded first base. Definitions of balls and strikes:
- a.) **Balls:** Any pitch that hits home plate, lands outside the horizontal boundaries of home plate, or lands behind the “strike” line behind home plate. The “strike line” is a line that is marked 24” behind the back point of home plate.
  - b.) **Strikes:** Any pitch that lands inside the horizontal boundaries beyond home plate and in front of the “strike line” behind home plate (without hitting home plate). The “strike line” is a line that is marked 24” behind the back point of home plate.
16. **Collision Rule:** Runners must make an effort to avoid collisions. Intentionally colliding may result in an ejection.
17. **Age Eligibility:** All players must be 18 years old or older to play.
- Exception: Summer Thursday Men’s Church League teams may have a max of three players on their roster who are 16 or 17 years old. However, those individuals may not be on the roster of a school team for that school-year and must have a parent/guardian sign our waiver giving them approval to participate. Waiver forms will be supplied upon request by the league director. The purpose of this exception is to help churches to get young adults involved in church activities.*
18. **Home Run Rule:** Three (3) over the fence home runs are allowed for each team per game. The fourth over the fence home run and any after that will automatically be called “out”.
19. **Forfeit / No-Show Rule:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Warning | 2<sup>nd</sup>: \$50 fee | 3<sup>rd</sup>: League suspension (no refund)
20. **Ball Retrieval:** We ask that participants do all they can to help retrieve foul balls and home run balls, and then to give them back to the umpire. Not losing track of softballs is as a money saver and helps us keep team fees as low as possible.

### **ADDITIONAL CO-ED RULES:**

21. **Minimum Players & Genders Rules:** 10 players (5 men, 5 women) is the standard roster. Eight (8) players are required for participation. Each gender must be represented by at least four (4) players. Having more women than men is allowed, but having more men than women on defense and in your batting lineup is not allowed.
22. **Defensive Position Rules:** Males/females must occupy the following positions: Two (2) male and Two (2) female outfielders. Three (3) male and Three (3) female infield positions.
23. **Encroachment Rule:** An encroachment line will be used in the outfield 165 feet from home plate. If an outfielder passes in front of this line before the batter hits a fair-batted ball, the batter will receive a double, or the result of the play, and the base runners will advance accordingly.



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24. **Batting Order Rules:** Even though only 10 players can play on the field defensively, a team can have as many players as they want in the batting order. The batting order shall alternate sexes, unless two women choose to bat back-back. Those playing defense are interchangeable at any time, but the batting order must remain the same from the start of the game to the end of the game. Failing to do so will result in an out recorded each time that spot in the lineup comes around. If you have an odd number of players in your line-up, you must use the weave (every other sex) to maintain an odd/even batting order. *\*Exception: If a player is removed from the batting order due to injury, no out will be recorded.*
25. **Walking a Male Batter Rule:** Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award (sent to 2<sup>nd</sup> base rather than 1<sup>st</sup> base). *Exception: With two outs, the female batter that is up next has the option to walk or bat.*
26. **Substitute Runner Rules:** The courtesy runner can be anyone on your roster (it does not have to be the last player to record an out). If the courtesy runner is still on base when his/her spot in the lineup comes up, an automatic out occurs, the runner is removed from the base paths, and that runner then takes their scheduled turn to bat in the batting order. *\*Exception: If a player is removed due to injury. Men can only run for men and women can only run for women (one gender per inning). If an injury of a runner prevents him/her from running the bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted for the injured player. \*Exception: If a player is removed due to injury.*