



2022 Detroit PAL Softball

RULES & REGULATIONS

I. GENERAL:

A. The National Federation High School Rule Book will serve as the playing rules for the Detroit PAL Softball League except as amended by the American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC) Official Handbook, the American Softball Association (ASA), the Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) Official Handbook, or herein by PAL Softball 2022 Rules & Regulations. If a rule is not covered in any of the aforementioned publications, then the Official Softball Rules will apply.

B. Each softball team shall have at least one coach deemed as a “Certified Coach” who has passed a background check, completed the required IMPACT training session, and received a PAL coaching badge. **Badges MUST be displayed at all Detroit PAL softball games and practices. ALL coaches must wear their badge if they want to coach from the bases or the bench.** Team scorekeepers do not need a badge but they must keep score from the bleachers.

*****2022 Adjustment** - No badges will be distributed this year but all coaches must complete a background check. The commissioner will confirm status with each coach on each team’s roster.

C. A team that starts a game without at least one coach that has a badge will start the game with a score of 0-1.

*****2022 Adjustment** - No badges will be distributed this year but all coaches must complete a background check. The commissioner will confirm status with each coach on each team’s roster.

D. **After the 3rd scheduled game of the season, NO team shall play a game without at least one coach that has a badge. If a team does not have a coach that has a badge, the game will be forfeited.**

*****2022 Adjustment** - No badges will be distributed this year but all coaches must complete a background check. The commissioner will confirm status with each coach on each team’s roster.

- E. The “Manager’s Code of Ethics” (Appendix I) will serve as a guide for the expectations for all managers and coaches having a team and/or organization in PAL.
- F. There will be three softball divisions: **Rookie (11U), Junior (14U), and High School (18U).**

II. FIELD DECORUM:

- A. The actions of all players, coaches, managers, umpires, parents, relatives, and volunteers must be consistent with the mission and values of Detroit PAL. ANY PERSON, IN THE OPINION OF THE UMPIRE, SOFTBALL COMMISSIONER, OR ANY DIRECTOR OF DETROIT PAL, NOT ACTING IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE LEAGUE, WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE PLAYING AREA. Further, the umpire may eject the player of a parent or relative described above, from the game. Failure to comply with the umpire’s ruling may result in forfeiture of the game by the team involved. The umpire and both managers shall make a full written report of any such incident available to the Commissioner of Softball within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game. Further disciplinary actions may be taken by Detroit PAL administrative staff, including, but not limited to, permanent dismissal of the team, coach, or player in question.
- B. Any umpire not acting in the best interests of Detroit PAL may, after review by the Commissioner of Softball and the Umpire-in-Chief, be suspended from officiating for a period of time up to and including permanent suspension.
- C. The umpire shall report any player, coach, or manager ejected from a game to the Commissioner of Softball. Any such ejection will automatically result in a suspension in the next regularly scheduled game.
- D. Only registered players, certified managers/coaches, and umpires are permitted within the confines of the playing field just prior to, and during the game. Except for the batter, the on-deck batter, base runners and base coaches, all other players must be on the bench and/or in the dugout while their team is at bat.
- E. Only managers, coaches, and players listed on their roster are allowed to coach the bases. EXCEPTION: In the absence of enough coaches to properly coach the bases in any given game, the manager or coach may appoint a substitute CERTIFIED coach for that game. The name of the substitute coach must be reported to the umpire prior to the game.

- F.** A manager or coach may not leave the vicinity of the dugout except to confer with the umpire or one of his/her players, to serve as a base coach, or to assist with an injured player.
- G.** Any player, coach, manager, or parent ejected from a game must leave the premises immediately. They may not remain in the bleachers, behind the backstop, and may not coach the bases. It is the umpire's discretion if the ejected party is far enough away from the field of play. The umpire has the right to call the game if the ejected party refuses to remove him/herself from the premises.
- H.** Smoking and/or the use of tobacco products; alcoholic beverages; or illegal substances are prohibited at all games and practices.
- I.** Gambling of any kind is prohibited.
- J.** No swearing, taunting or ethnic slurs will be tolerated.
- K.** No gang signs, slogans or paraphernalia will be tolerated.
- L.** No jewelry is to be worn during games, with the exception of medical I.D. bracelets. This includes rubber bands and "starter" earrings. If a player is wearing jewelry during the game **AND** the umpire has gone over this during ground rules, the player will be ejected from the game. If the umpire did **NOT** go over this during ground rules, the player must remove the jewelry at that point and any subsequent offense from **ANY** player will result in ejection.
- M.** Players **deliberately** throwing helmets or bats will be ejected from the game. It is the sole discretion of the umpire if he/she believes the action was deliberate.
- N.** On-deck batters must remain on their side of the dugout.
- O.** Substantial emphasis will be placed on good sportsmanship. Teams cannot make any derogatory remarks or gestures to any official or member of the opposing team or attempt to distract them while making a defensive play, or while batting, by either talk or action. Umpires will have the right to eject anyone from the game not complying with these rules.
- P.** No manager or coach shall abuse, verbally or physically, any player, spectator, opposing manager/coach, or umpire at any time. Violation may result in suspension or other disciplinary action.
- Q.** All coaches and players shall shake hands upon the completion of each and every game. A coach or player that does not shake hands is subject to a one-game suspension. The second infraction will lead to a 3-game suspension. Any further infraction will result in dismissal from the Detroit PAL softball league.

- R.** In the event that there are fewer umpires than games at a particular site on any given day, the umpire(s) present will call the game **that they were scheduled to officiate** unless authorized by the Softball Commissioner to officiate an alternative game. In addition, if two umpires are scheduled to call a single game and there is no umpire at another field, then one of the two umpires will go to the official-less diamond and call the game.

III. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT:

- A.** All players **must** be in matching jersey and pants; otherwise they cannot play. Players should also have on matching hats and socks but can play without them.
- B.** Players may not wear doo-rags during games. Players may not wear sweatbands around their neck.
- C.** Only players in the Junior Softball and the High School Softball divisions are allowed to wear metal cleats. Players in the Rookie division are encouraged to wear rubber cleats.
- D.** Catchers are required to wear all protective equipment while catching (i.e. mask, helmet, throat guard, shin guards, chest protector, and protective cups). This rule also applies to all players designated to warm up the pitcher on or off the field.
- E.** All batters, base runners, on-deck batters, and players who act as base coaches must wear batting helmets in accordance with National Federation High School Rules.
- F.** The umpire shall not allow a player to enter the batter's box without a batting helmet.
- G.** All players will have their jerseys tucked in at all times during the game.
- H.** The 2011 High School Rule covering the weight and length of bats will be enforced in the PAL softball league (-3, 2 5/8 maximum barrel) for the High School Division (15-18) only. Wood bats are allowed in Detroit PAL.

IV. PITCHING:

- A.** See Divisional Rules (pg. 10).
- B.** Number of pitches thrown in a game declared no contest will be charged against the pitcher for the week.

- C.** Violations of Rules IV – A and B will result in a forfeiture of the game in which the infraction took place.
- D.** Starting and relief pitchers out for their first appearance will be allowed a maximum of 8 (eight) practice pitches. At the beginning of each subsequent inning, a pitcher will be allowed a maximum of 5 (five) practice pitches.
- E.** The umpire has the right to remove a pitcher from the game (without ejection) if multiple batters are hit by a pitch.

V. RUNNERS

A. Courtesy Rule

- 1.** When there are two outs, there will be a mandatory courtesy rule in effect for the catcher as soon as he/she reaches base.
 - 2.** Any player who is not currently participating in the game, whether he/she has previously participated in the game or not, is eligible to serve as a courtesy runner for the catcher. **EXCEPTION:** If all players are currently participating in the game, the player who made the last out will act as the courtesy runner.
 - 3.** A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the catcher and then be used as a runner or batter for another player in that inning.
 - 4.** A coach may use a **VOLUNTARY** courtesy runner for the catcher with zero or one out.
- B.** Any time a defensive player has the ball in their possession; the runner must slide or give themselves up. A base runner deliberately running into a defensive player, including the catcher will be ejected from the game. It is the umpire's discretion whether he/she felt the collision is malicious.
 - C.** In the following divisions, a runner from third base cannot score on a passed ball or a wild pitch: Rookie Softball. The runner can score **ONLY** on a batted ball or if the runner is forced in.

VI. PLAYING MINIMUMS:

- A.** In the High School Softball Division, player participation is at the sole discretion of the head coach.
- B.** In the Rookie and Junior Softball Divisions, all players present on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of three (3) consecutive defensive

outs and have at least one (1) plate appearance. Failure to meet mandatory play requirements will result in a one game suspension of the coach. *A coach willfully and knowingly disregarding this rule will result in removal from the league.*

VII. STANDINGS, SCHEDULES, AND POST-SEASON PLAY:

A. Team standings will be determined by total points. During the regular season, 2 (two) points will be awarded for each win and 1 (one) point for each tie. The team with the highest total points will be the first place team; the team with the second highest total points will be the second place team, etc. In the event of a tie between any positions, the tie will be decided in the following manner:

1. Record against each other.
2. Total wins.
3. Runs scored – head to head.
4. Coin flip

B. Every effort will be made to grant all requests regarding days off needed by teams, so long as the request is put in at least one week before the schedule is completed. The schedule is typically completed and handed out to coaches 2 (two) weeks before the regular season begins.

C. Once the master schedule is finalized, teams are required to play at the designated day and time as scheduled. A game can only be rescheduled if:

1. Both coaches agree to reschedule the game **AND**
2. The Softball Commissioner is notified a minimum of 48 hours before the scheduled time.

If the criteria are not met, the game must be played at the scheduled day and time on the master schedule. One or both teams will forfeit if they do not show to the game.

D. **All** PAL Softball playoff games are single elimination.

E. The Softball Commissioner reserves the right to drop any player, coach, or team from the league if:

1. Any team forfeits 2 (two) or more games.
2. Any head or assistant coach does not show ethical and moral conduct on and off the field (please see Appendix I and Section II of PAL Softball Rules & Regulations).
3. Any team is found to have used ineligible players whether knowingly or not.

VIII. PROTESTS:

- A.** The proper manner for a making a protest shall be: The manager or coach will inform the umpire that the game is being played under protest. **THIS MUST BE DONE AT THE POINT THE ALLEGED VIOLATION OCCURS** and the game situation must be logged in the protesting team's score book and signed by the umpire (example: 3rd inning, 1 out, runners on 1st and 2nd base, 2-1 count on 3rd hitter John Smith). After one pitch is thrown, the protest cannot be accepted. A written summary of the protest must be submitted to the Softball Commissioner within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game.
- B.** A \$100 deposit must accompany the written protest. The deposit will be returned only if the protest is upheld. If a protest is awarded, the game will be resumed from the point of protest.
- C.** No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment.
- D.** In order to be a valid protest, the play under protest must have a direct effect on the outcome of the game.
- E.** Protests made due to the use of an ineligible player may be considered only if made to the umpire before he/she leaves the field at the end of the game.

IX. FORFEITURES:

- A.** There will be a 15-minute grace period from the scheduled start time before a forfeit is called.
- B.** Each team must have a minimum of 8 (eight) players to start and finish a game. **EXCEPTION:** At the start of the game, the visiting team may take its first at-bat with less than 8 (eight) players. If 8 (eight) players are not present by the time all visiting team players have batted or by the time the visiting team must take the field, the game will be forfeited.
- C.** If any game is started with 8 (eight) players, outs are awarded in the normal manner (with an out recorded in the ninth spot). If a ninth batter should subsequently report to the team, that player must be inserted into the lineup in the ninth position. In addition, if a game has begun and subsequently the roster of any team is reduced to 8 (eight) for any reason, an out will be called each time the removed player was to bat.
- D.** No coach shall use a player who is ineligible. It is the coaches' responsibility to know the correct age of his/her players. If it is found that a team has been using

an overage player, regardless of fault, the player will be expelled, and the team will forfeit all games in which the overage player previously played.

X. ROSTERS:

- A.** Each team must pay registration fees set by Detroit PAL for a minimum of 12 players and a maximum of 15 players.
- B.** The following rule applies to all teams: If a team loses a player for the remainder of the season, a new player may be added to the team's roster with approval of the Softball Commissioner. The new player will pay a full registration fee.
- C.** No player may be added to the roster under any circumstances past July 15 without prior approval of the Softball Commissioner.
- D.** A manager or coach has the right to recommend to the Softball Commissioner that any player on his/her team be removed or suspended by presenting evidence of just cause.
- E.** Every player from all teams must be registered on Sports Signup Play before they play in their first regular season game. The online registration must be filled out completely and shall include the player's name, address, phone number, birth date, age, and a parental agreement and waiver stating the child is physically able to play softball. The registration form **MUST** be signed (online) by at least one parent (or by the player if he/she is 18 years of age). Also, a picture and a copy of the player's birth certificate must be uploaded onto SI Play for each player on a roster. If a player's eligibility comes into question, the original document, with official seal, may be requested and must be furnished. Finally, all registration fees must have been paid to Detroit PAL prior to Opening Day. Scheduled games will be forfeited unless and until these rules are complied with.
- F.** A player may elect to play in an upper division (e.g. a 10 year old may choose to play in the 12 & under division).
- G.** No player can play in 2 (two) different divisions of Detroit PAL Softball or be on the same roster of 2 (two) teams in the same division.

XI. MISCELLANEOUS:

- A.** A decision will be made regarding rainouts no later than 2 (two) hours before a scheduled game by the Softball Commissioner and/or the Umpire-in-Chief. E.g. if a 6:00 p.m. game is to be canceled due to weather conditions, a message will be left by 4:00 p.m. on Sports Signup Play. If there is no text or email sent by 4:00

p.m., then all players and coaches should report to their respective field. Every effort will be made to send an email out to all coaches 2 (two) hours before game time regarding weather conditions but a call should be made to Detroit PAL if an email cannot be sent out. Once at the field, only the umpire can make a decision whether or not to postpone a game due to weather conditions.

- B.** The home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook. However, scorekeepers from both teams should confer after each inning to make sure the score is correct. **Both teams are responsible for alerting the Softball Commissioner of the score no later than 24 hours from the end of the game.** The score should be entered on Sports Signup Play or e-mailed to rcox@detroitpal.org. If a coach does not have access to email, the score should be called in to 313-833-1600 x218. Failure to notify the Softball Commissioner of the score within 24 hours may result in a loss for both teams.
- C.** The home team is responsible for laying down the bases and making sure the field is in playable condition. Teams that have their own home field should lay down bases, chalk the field and cut the grass whether they are listed as the home or away team.
- D.** Seven (7) innings shall constitute a game in the High School Softball Divisions. Six (6) innings shall constitute a game in the Rookie Softball and Junior Softball divisions.
- E.** No inning shall start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the **scheduled** game time in the Rookie and Junior Softball divisions. No inning shall start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the **scheduled** game time in the High School softball division.
- F.** If both teams are present but the umpire arrives late, the official game time begins when the **first pitch is thrown** (and then rule XI-E applies). If the umpire is there on time, but one or both teams arrive late (but before forfeit time), the official time begins at the **scheduled** start time (and then rule XI-E applies).
- G.** An abbreviated game shall be counted as official if 5 (five) innings in the 14 & under, and High School divisions, or 4 (four) innings in the 11 & under have been played. A game with less than 5 (five) innings in the 14 & under, and High School divisions, or 4 (four) innings in the 11 & under divisions will continue from the point of suspension if called for any reason (rain, darkness, lightning, etc.). No game shall be started over from the beginning. However, a game will be counted as official if 4 ½ innings in the 14 & under and High School divisions, or 3 ½ innings in the 11 & under divisions.
- H.** There shall be a mercy rule in effect if a team is ahead by 15 runs after 3 (three) innings or 10 runs after 5 (five) innings for **all** divisions.

DIVISIONAL RULES

ROOKIE SOFTBALL:

- 1. Girls born on or after January 1, 2009 are eligible to play in the Rookie Softball division.**
2. The distance between the bases shall be 50 feet. The distance between the pitching rubber and the front of home plate shall be 35 feet.
3. An 11" yellow softball will be used for all Rookie Softball games.
4. Rookie Softball is a Fast-Pitch division. A "Windmill" type pitch with a complete revolution in the delivery is legal. A modified "Sling shot" type pitch is also legal. A pitcher may throw a slow-pitch if she chooses.
5. The defensive team may field 10 players in the traditional defensive alignment except the outfield will have 4 players stationed there. All outfielders must be at least 10 feet behind the base path.
6. All players on a team shall bat in rotation throughout the game regardless of when they play in the field. The rotation should remain the same throughout the game. Players that come after the game has started must be placed at the end of the line-up.
7. The batter may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
8. Each half-inning ends when 3 outs are recorded or all players on the offensive team have batted, whichever comes first. If one team has fewer players than another team, the team with the fewer players gets an equal number of bat opportunities. For example, if one team has 10 players, and the other team has 13 players, then each team would get 13 at-bats per half-inning provided 3 outs were not made during the half-inning.
9. Bunting is allowed.
10. There is no infield-fly rule in Rookie Softball.
11. Leadoffs are not allowed in Rookie Softball.
12. Stealing is allowed after **the ball crosses home plate.**
13. Players **CANNOT** steal home even if the ball crosses home plate first.
14. A base runner shall be declared out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.
15. All players must play at least three innings in the field and have one plate appearance.

JUNIOR SOFTBALL:

- 1. Girls born on or after January 1, 2006 are eligible to play in the Junior Softball division.**
2. The distance between the bases shall be 60 feet. The distance between the pitching rubber and the front of home plate shall be 40 feet.
3. A 12" yellow softball will be used for all Junior Softball games.

4. Junior Softball is a Fast-Pitch division. A “Windmill” type pitch with a complete revolution in the delivery is legal. A modified “Sling shot” type pitch is also legal.
5. The batter CAN advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
6. Leadoffs are not allowed. A runner may attempt to steal a base only after **the ball has left the pitcher’s hand.**
7. A base runner shall be declared out for leaving the base before the ball has left the pitcher’s hand.
8. All players must play at least three innings in the field and have one plate appearance.

HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL:

1. **Girls born on or after January 1, 2002 are eligible to play in the High School Softball division.**
2. The distance between the bases shall be 60 feet. The distance between the pitching rubber and the front of home plate shall be 43 feet (NEW for 2011).
3. A 12” yellow softball will be used for all Senior Softball games.
4. Junior Softball is a Fast-Pitch division. A “Windmill” type pitch with a complete revolution in the delivery is legal. A modified “Sling shot” type pitch is also legal.
5. The batter may advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
6. Leadoffs are not allowed. A runner may attempt to steal a base only after **the ball has left the pitcher’s hand.**
7. A base runner shall be declared out for leaving the base before the ball has left the pitcher’s hand.
8. All players must play at least one inning in the field and have one plate appearance.

**DETROIT PAL SOFTBALL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CHANGE,
MODIFY, ADD, OR DELETE ANY RULES AND REGULATIONS AT ANY
TIME.**

APPENDIX I

DETROIT PAL COACHES CODE OF ETHICS

Detroit PAL expects adherence to the following code of ethics from all its coaches and managers. Since we play an important part in building a young person's character, it is imperative that we lead by example and follow a standard of ethics that is beyond reproach.

- Ethical and moral conduct on and off the field is expected from you and your entire coaching staff.
- Players already on a team should never be approached about changing teams during the season. After the season, the player's current coach should be notified that he/she is going to be asked to play on another team.
- Specific promises regarding such things as playing time, particular playing positions, travel tournaments, etc., should not be made unless they will be kept.
- A player's current coach should be asked before a player is invited to join another team for a tournament. During the season, if permission is not given, the player should not be approached.