

2017

Central Mass League

Northborough

Southborough

Westborough

Hudson

Shrewsbury

Girls 10U Division Softball League

Objectives

Guidelines

Rules

For all the latest 10U Division Softball League news and team information visit the appropriate Youth Softball website listed on the last pages of this document.

Objectives

Have fun

Reinforcement of advanced play

Introduction of more advanced concepts (Leading, steals, sliding, etc)

Improvement of ability and skill on an individual and team level

Development of good sportsmanship and proper conduct

Understand the importance of commitment, teamwork and respect

Guidelines

Coaches and parents are looked upon as role models and are expected to conduct themselves properly and promote good sportsmanship at all times.

Umpires are to be treated with respect and are not to be intimidated, threatened or ridiculed in any manner. Umpires for this Division are youth umpires who are developing in the role. Coaches should act positively towards the umpires and if desired also provide positive and constructive feedback as required between innings with an intent to help them improve.

Players are encouraged to cheer for their own team in a positive nature. Negative cheers, directed at an opposing team and/or player, are not allowed. Any coach, parent or player making discriminatory or derogatory remarks directed at another individual during the course of a game or practice will be removed from the league.

When not in the field, all players are required to be in the bench area. Each team is responsible for ensuring that their bench area is clean after all games and practices. Food is allowed in the bench area for medical necessity only.

ASA rules apply except for several local rules, which ensure fair playing time and a fun experience for all. If a rule interpretation cannot be agreed upon at a game, the game should not be delayed. At the conclusion of the game, the Head Coaches of both teams in addition to the umpire will meet with the 10u Director to discuss and resolve any issue. The rules are guidelines to fair play. Coaches should use good judgment during the course of play to abide by the "spirit" of the rules.

Programs should have yearly evaluations and drafts to ensure the teams are of equal strength, thus keeping the playing field equal.

Parents

- Attend and volunteer your assistance at practices and games – share in your child's successes. Those working directly with the girls are **required** to submit a CORI form to their respective organizations
- Make sure your child is on time for practices and games
- Ensure that your child will be picked-up when a game or practice is scheduled to end
- Inform the coach when someone other than yourself is picking up your child or when you are not going to be present at a game or practice (in case of an emergency).
- Have your child inform her coach when she will be late or cannot attend a practice or game.
- Inform your child's Head Coach of any medical conditions that he/she should be aware of in the event of an emergency (asthma, diabetes, allergic reactions to bee stings, etc.). The Officers, Directors and Coaches of **CML** Youth Softball are not allowed to administer advanced first aid to any child. In the event of an emergency, the proper emergency personnel will be notified as soon as possible. The information provided will only be used to assist emergency personnel.
- Thank your child's coaching staff on occasion. Without their dedication and commitment there would be no softball program.
- Be a good fan to your child and her team. Yelling at your child from the stands not only embarrasses your child but also reflects upon yourself – learn to love the game for what it is – a game!

Official Rules

1. Games will be up to 6 innings with no inning starting after 1 hour and 30 minutes from the first pitch. Head Coaches and Umpires are responsible for the coordination of the time being kept. The Umpire will keep the official time. Both coaches should note start time to avoid any confusion.
2. Weekday games will begin as close to 5:45 as possible but no later than 6:00 p.m. (Exception; scheduled night games at any town's field participating in the program that has lights.)
3. The home team shall be entitled to the playing field for warm-ups until 10 minutes before game time, at which time the visitors shall be entitled to the playing field. The game shall start promptly at game time.
4. In the event of rain or darkness, four (4) innings (3 ½ if the Home Team is ahead) will be considered a complete game.
5. A team must have six (6) players to begin a game. If a team has less than six (6) players by game time (see exception in rule 2) the team must forfeit. The game should still be played and, the forfeiting team may be loaned a player from the opposing team. Game results will be included in league standings
6. Every effort must be made to avoid rescheduling games. However, if a Head Coach knows within 36 - 48 hours of a game that he/she will not have enough players to play, he/she may reschedule the game. Any game, rescheduled at the request of a Head Coach, must be made up within ten (10) days of the original schedule date or it will be considered a forfeit by the team requesting the alternate date. All games must be played prior to the last scheduled game of the season.

7. Games may be terminated due to rain, darkness or field conditions at the discretion of the umpire.
8. The Home Team is responsible for supplying game ball(s) and bases. The ball should be, 11” soft centered, leather covered ball.
9. Both teams must keep a scorebook. Home team book rules in a dispute. It is the responsibility of the home team to note the start time of the game on the scorebook. Home team should notify the umpire and the other coach when 1:30 has elapsed.
10. **No player shall sit twice until everyone has sat at least once.** **Exception:** If a player does not attend a practice or game and the absence is not within the guidelines established by the head coach (ex. not calling, soccer game, etc.). The head coach has the option to sit the player as he/she sees fit. Players and parents should understand this is a team sport that requires a certain level of commitment.
11. Each player must play **at least one inning in the infield** during the game and **one inning in the outfield**.
12. The outfield positions shall be defined as “on the outfield grass”.
13. A defensive team shall consist of a maximum of 10 players, 4 of whom shall remain on the outfield grass until the ball is in play, (when a full team is present). (The intent is to teach position play).
14. Free substitution is allowed. Substitutions during an inning are only allowed in the event of injury, except for the pitcher who is governed by additional rules. Defensive players must remain in the position they began the inning unless she is relieved by the pitcher, or there is an injury.
15. A continuous batting order will be used. Any player showing up after the game’s start will be added to the bottom of the order. Lineup cards (names and numbers) should be exchanged at least 10 minutes prior to the schedule start time.

16. Only the batter and one (1) on-deck hitter will have bats in their hands. Each Head Coach will designate an on-deck area (if available). All other players are to be in the bench area.
17. Players must wear their uniforms correctly at all times (not backwards, sideways or inside-out). Shirts must be completely tucked in. Players should wear the uniform provided to them by the respective towns. It is strongly recommended that any player wearing shorts should also wear compression shorts (sliding shorts) and a knee slider.
18. Profanity by any coach, parent or player will not be tolerated.
19. No coaches are allowed on the field during play, with the following **EXCEPTION**. If a pitcher throws four (4) balls to a batter, a coach from the batter's team will come in to finish that at bat , (keeping any strikes already accrued), with the batter either striking out or putting the ball in play. After that batter, the player pitcher returns to pitch to the next batter. While a coach is pitching, the player pitcher must remain within the pitching circle either to the side or behind the coach (within 8 ft of the pitching rubber). A coach should pitch from the pitching rubber or just in front of it. A coach is not allowed to field a struck ball.
20. Defensive coaches must use discretion if multiple batters are being hit by pitches. This is for the safety of the batter.
21. Coaches must back up the catcher in order to speed up play with the exception of a steal situation where the catcher must field balls that get by them. The Coach behind the umpire is NOT allowed to make any comments on pitches made.
22. All players and coaches will shake hands at the end of every game.
23. Only the Head Coach is allowed to speak to the umpire or opposing team's Head Coach. Assistant Coaches are there to assist the Head Coach.

24. There is no protesting of a call (i.e.: balls, strikes, out, safe, fair and foul). You may only question why an umpire made a call when it involves an interpretation of the rule. If a game is protested, the coach must follow ASA guidelines.
25. Mouth guards (internal) and face masks, although not required are recommended.
26. Each team is allowed only 1 Head Coach and 3 Assistant Coaches in the bench area at any time. All other parents and spectators must be in the stands away from the bench area
27. Helmets with metal cages and chin straps are required for all batters, on deck batters, and base runners.
28. Sliding should be encouraged. No head first sliding. There is no automatic slide rule. It is the umpire's discretion if a play (at any base) was close enough to slide in order to prevent an injury.
29. Bunting is NOT permitted
30. The "Infield Fly Rule", shall NOT apply.
31. Base runners are not allowed to lead and may only leave the base after the pitch has left the pitcher's hand. If a base runner leaves any base prior to the ball being pitched she will be declared out and the play will be dead (no pitch). When the ball leaves the pitchers hand, the baserunners may take reasonable steps towards the next base.
32. Base stealing limits per inning is 2 bases. Steals can be to second or third base but the same girl can steal only 1 base per inning. Taking a base on a passed ball is considered a steal attempt. There is a free throw for the catcher on steal attempts, with no advancements by other runners or advancement beyond the stolen base during the play. Both teams should be scoring the stolen bases per inning to avoid controversy.
33. Batters must attempt to get out of the way of errant pitches. It is the umpire's decision to walk a batter who has been hit by a pitch (a reasonable attempt to evade

the pitch must have been made in order to walk). At this level, girls who still want to hit after being struck by a pitch may remain in to bat.

34. Once in the batter's box, the batter must keep one foot in the box until time is called. (The purpose of this rule is to keep the game moving).
35. Play is stopped once the pitcher has the ball within the 8ft. radius of the pitcher's mound and the umpire calls "Time Out". Runners may proceed to the base they were heading to when "Time Out" was called.
36. If in the judgment of the umpire or the coaches an injury that requires immediate medical attention occurs, the ball is immediately called dead and the player is attended to. Placement of the runners and the batter is at the umpire's discretion.
37. Each team is limited to four (4) conferences (defensive or offensive) per game. Conferences will be limited to approximately 1 minute by the umpire. Removal of the pitcher by a Head Coach does not constitute a conference. This does not apply for an injured player. Deliberate attempts to delay the game will result in a warning from the umpire for the first occurrence. The Head Coach will be removed from the game for a second occurrence.
38. Catchers must be in full gear, including a throat protector. Catchers should stand and throw the ball back to the pitcher.
39. Each team will be responsible for cleaning up their bench area after each game, (gum wrappers, empty beverage containers, etc).
40. Eating on the bench is not allowed unless it is for medical purposes.
41. No courtesy runners are allowed unless a girl is hurt on that play or has a medical condition. The last player to make an out should be used as the runner. Courtesy runners are encouraged for catchers in the following inning when there are 2 outs recorded.

42. A 15 run mercy rule is in effect after 5 innings (4 ½ if the home team is ahead).
43. A 4 run mercy inning rule is in effect for all innings. The only exception is a team that is behind entering the agreed last inning (or 6th) can score as many runs as needed up to a tie in the game if they are behind by more than the 4 run per inning limit. (Example 1: the away team is down by 6 runs in the last inning. The run limit doesn't apply to them as they are behind by more than 4. Instead they can score 6 runs to tie the game and then their half of the inning is over. If they do tie, the home team gets a chance to score and would only need 1 run to win. Example 2: The away team is ahead by 3 going into the last inning. They score 4 and hit the inning mercy rule which ends them ahead by 7 runs. The home team now has the opportunity to bat and can score up to 7 runs to tie the game).
44. Maximum of 6 innings will be played. Games can end in a tie.
45. The home team will be responsible to pay the umpire.
46. If a team requires substitute players in order to play a game, it is permitted. A coach should make an effort to maintain the approximate skill level of the team when calling a sub to ensure the balance of play is not impacted. Players may be called up from another 10U team or a lower division. Substitutions are NOT allowed for playoff games.

Pitching

1. The pitcher's plate will be thirty-five (35) feet from the back of the home plate. It will consist of an 8-foot radius around the pitcher's plate. There shall be a temporary pitching plate installed for each game. This is the home team's responsibility. For safety reasons, no pitcher shall move closer to the home plate than 35 feet.
2. A windmill pitch is recommended, in proper form.
3. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without the ball.
4. The pitcher must have both feet in contact with the pitching plate before starting her delivery.
5. Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.
6. The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arm on a windmill pitch.
7. The delivery must be an underhanded motion with the hand below the hip. Slingshot pitching is accepted, however, it is not recommended.
8. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher must take one step while releasing the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. Raising the foot off the pitching plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is illegal.
9. Pushing off with the pivot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal and will be deemed NO PITCH. The pivot foot must remain in contact with or push off and drag away from the pitcher's plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground. (No crow hopping)
10. If a ball slips from a pitcher's hand during her delivery (prior to her release to the plate) it will be deemed NO PITCH (this would include hitting the hip during the release of the ball).

11. A pitcher can only pitch three (3) innings per game. The starting pitcher may leave the position and return to it one time per game (i.e. they may pitch one inning, then another position in the 2nd and come back to the pitcher position in the 3rd and pitch 1 or 2 innings). No other pitcher can leave the pitching position and return later in the game.
12. Pitchers can be substituted at any time during an inning. One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched (if a pitcher is substituted after throwing 30 pitches and the replacement pitcher throws only 2 pitches, both will be charged with an inning pitched). A starting pitcher may not re-enter in the same inning.
13. It is ***STRONGLY SUGGESTED*** for all pitchers to wear a Mouth Guard (internal) and face mask.

Bulleted Rules Highlights:

1. Games will be 6 innings with no inning starting after 1 hour 30 minutes after first pitch. Last inning shall be declared.
2. 4 run limit per inning, with the exception of allowing a team down by more than 4 runs in the last inning has the opportunity to score enough runs to tie the game.
3. A team must have six (6) players to begin a game.
4. Leading is permitted after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
5. (2) steals are allowed per inning which can be to second or third base but cannot be the same girl in a single inning. All steals allow a free throw for the catcher. Advancing on a passed ball is considered a steal attempt.
6. The Pitcher's plate will be forty (35) feet from the back of the home plate.
7. A pitcher can only pitch three (3) innings per game. One pitch in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.
8. Only the starting pitcher can re-enter a game one time.
9. If a pitcher throws four (4) balls to a batter, a coach from the batter's team will come in to finish that at bat with the batter either striking out or putting the ball in play. The pitcher will return

after that one batter.

10. Bunting is NOT permitted
11. No Infield Fly Rule.
12. No drop third strike rule.

The Massachusetts Junior Olympic Amateur Softball Association "Taunting Policy" will be enforced:

Taunting shall include any actions or comments intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist.

All coaches, players, spectators, etc. will refrain from any type of taunting as described above.

CENTRAL MASS LEAGUE Youth Softball is committed to high standards of sportsmanship from all its members. The Division League Commissioner, in conjunction with the Executive Board of CML Youth Softball, reserves the right to request the removal of any person not abiding by the rules and policies as so stated. **Each town's respective Code of Conduct will apply.**