

**OFFICIAL WELLES PARK
PARENTS ASSOCIATION**



**Youth
Softball
Rules**

**2018
UPDATE**

2018 Highlights

We are governed by the NFHS softball rules with the modifications identified in the “WPPA Softball Rules: 2018 Exceptions” section of this document. These extra rules are in addition to the WPPA softball rules that govern uniforms, practices, coaches’ actions, and other non-softball-specific rules. These rules will be in place until season’s end unless determined by the commissioner that a change is needed.

Softball Divisions:

Junior / 8U (7-8 year-olds)

Minor / 10U (9-10 year-olds)

Major / 12U (11-12 year-olds)

Senior/14U (13-14 year-olds)

Fields:

	Senior (14U)	Major (12U)	Minor (10U)	Junior (8U)
Base paths	60’	60’	60’	60’
Pitching plate	43’	40’	35’	35’
Pitcher’s circle diameter	16’	16’	16’	16’
Additional field markings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Halfway chalk marks will be drawn on base paths (except for en route to first). Note: No softball divisions draw or use the diagonal line on the field in front of home plate. The fields should <i>not</i> be marked with this line. If the line is drawn, umpires should ignore this line. 			

Equipment:

	Senior (14U) and Major (12U)	Minor (10U)	Junior (8U)
Bats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bats must be alloy Must say “official softball and include “ASA” or “USSAA” softball logo No oversized barrels (over 2.25” in diameter) are allowed. 		
Softballs	12”	11” “Dream Seam”	
Helmets	Batters, on-deck batters, and runners must wear helmets with facemasks.		
Facemasks	Required for pitchers. Supplied by league and optional for players at 1st and 3rd base.		Required at pitcher and 1 st base. Supplied by league and optional for player at 3rd base.
Uniforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated uniforms required at all game—team shirts, uniform pants, socks. In the event of extreme heat, and at the discretion and announcement of the Softball Commissioner, shorts (black or gray) will be allowed. No metal cleats are permitted. WPPA coaches must wear WPPA shirts for all games. Parents helping coach 1st and 3rd bases do not need to wear official shirts. 		

Games:

	Senior (14U) and Major (12U)	Minor (10U)	Junior (8U)
Time limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games are a maximum of 6 innings or 2 hours 15 minutes No full inning started after 2 hours; no half-inning started after 2 hours 10 minutes. In the regular season, any game still being played at the scheduled starting time of the next game will end immediately and revert back to the score at the end of the previous inning, 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games are a maximum of 5 innings or 2 hours No full inning started after 1 hour 45 mins; no half-inning started after 1 hour 55 minutes.

	<p>unless the home team is ahead at the time the game is called, or unless the home team, having been behind at the end of the previous inning, has tied the game.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the playoffs, a full game must be played. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because the time limit usually occurs before the inning limit, umpire will ask coaches to agree IN ADVANCE when they are moving to the open inning (which is the final inning of the game). 		
	<p>Speed up rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time elapsed between the third out and the start of the next half inning shall be no longer than 3 minutes. This time includes warm up pitches for pitchers returning to the mound from the previous inning. New kid/coach pitchers may use 6 warmup pitches, even if 3 minutes have already passed. Coaches for the team up to bat should instruct their catcher for the next inning to suit up after the 2nd out and be ready to play immediately after the 3rd out is made. (When there are two outs and the catcher is on base, it is required that coaches send in a courtesy runner for the catcher so that she may put on her equipment. Runner will be the player that made the last out.) 	<p>Speed up rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time elapsed between the third out and the start of the next half inning shall be no longer than 5 minutes. Coaches for the batting team should instruct their catcher for the next inning to suit up and be ready to play immediately after the third out is made. 	
Complete game	3.5 innings if home team is winning; 4 if the visiting team is winning. (i.e., in case of rain or time limit has been reached).		
Minimum players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full team is 9 players. Eight (8) players are required to start the game. A mandatory out is recorded each time the 9th spot in the order is reached. If both teams have 8, they may play an official game with no out penalty. If a team has fewer than 8, that team will forfeit, although the teams may play a scrimmage game if they choose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full team is 9 or 10 players. Eight (8) players are required to start the game. A mandatory out is recorded each time the 9th spot in the order is reached. If both teams have 8, they may play an official game with no out penalty. If a team has fewer than 8, that team will forfeit, although teams may play a scrimmage game if they choose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full team is 9 or 10 players. 8 players are required to start the game with no mandatory out penalty If both teams have 8, they may play an official game. If a team has fewer than 8, that team will forfeit, although teams may play a scrimmage game if they choose.
Borrowed players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be borrowed from Minors for 12U and Majors for 14U May only play in the outfield or at 2nd base. Teams may only borrow enough players to reach a full team of 9 players. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be borrowed from Juniors May only play in the outfield or at 2nd base or short center if one is being used. Teams may only borrow enough players to reach a full team of 9 or 10 players. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be borrowed from Juniors, and both coaches must agree May only play in the outfield or at 2nd base or short center. Teams may only borrow enough players to reach a full team of 9 or 10 players.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must bat at bottom of order. No official player may sit out more innings than a borrowed player. Teams may not call up the same farm team player more than once during playoffs. 		
Run limits / slaughter rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum of 5 runs per inning before the last inning; no maximum runs in the last inning (or mutually agreed upon final inning, should a complete game be impossible) The umpire will declare a "slaughter rule" in effect if one team is ahead by 15 or more runs at 		

the end of a half inning (if the home team is ahead) or after a complete inning (if the visiting team is ahead).

Batting:

	Senior (14u) and Major (12U)	Minor (10U)	Junior (8U)
Batting order / lineup	Continuous batting order—everyone bats.		
Strike zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strike zone is the space over home plate which is between the batter’s forward armpit and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural batting stance. Any part of the ball passing through the strike zone in flight shall be considered a strike. The umpire shall determine the batter’s strike zone according to the batter’s usual stance. Any ball that touches or bounces off of home plate shall not be called a strike by the umpire. 		
Hit by pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the pitched ball is within the batter’s box and it strikes the batter or her clothing, the batter is awarded 1st base. No movement to avoid the pitch is required, although batters are encouraged to do so in order to avoid injury. A player is considered “hit by pitch” even if the ball is on the bounce (i.e., has hit the ground first). If a pitched ball contacts the batter while she is swinging at the ball or the batter is hit by the pitch that is in the strike zone, a strike will be charged to the batter (and the ball will be dead—base runners may not advance). 		
Bunting / slapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A batter may bunt or slap the ball during kid pitch. No bunting/slapping during coach pitch. Holding the bat in the strike zone is considered a bunt attempt. In order to take a pitch, the bat must be withdrawn—pulled backward and away from the ball, and the umpire will call the pitch a ball or strike. A batter may NOT fake a bunt and then pull back in order to swing. The batter will be called out and the play will be dead. Batter is out when a bunt on a third strike is foul. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No bunting or slapping. 	
Dropped 3rd strike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “dropped 3rd strike rule” is in effect if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are two outs or If 1st base is unoccupied and there are fewer than two outs. If there are two outs or if no runner occupies first base, the batter is not out unless the third strike is caught. The batter is entitled to try to reach first base before being tagged or thrown out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A drop 3rd strike rule is NOT in effect. The ball is dead when a 3rd strike is called (whether caught by the catcher or dropped) and the batter may not advance to first base. 	
Thrown bat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a batter throws her bat, she will receive one warning from the umpire. If she throws it again during the course of the game, she will immediately be called out 		

Base Running Rules:

	Seniors (14U) and Major (12U)	Minor (10U)	Junior (8U)
Leadoffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No leadoffs. Runners may leave base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Any runner leaving early will result in a team warning. The next time a runner (the same or another) leaves early, she will be called out. If the ball is hit, it will be called a no-pitch. If a strike or a ball is called, the runner will be out and the pitch will count. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No leadoffs. Runners may leave base when the ball crosses the plate. Any runner leaving early will result in a team warning. The next time a runner (the same or another) leaves early, she will be called out. If the ball is hit, it will be called a no-pitch. If a strike or a ball is called, the runner will be out and the pitch will count. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No leadoffs. Runners may leave base on hitter's contact.
Stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During kid pitch only, stealing 3rd and home are allowed—no stealing 2nd is permitted. There is no overthrow penalty for throwing to 3rd on a steal of 3rd base (i.e., there is a "wall at third"). Runners may leave when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. There are no delayed steals. The runner may not steal while the coach is pitching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During kid pitch only, stealing 3rd is allowed—no stealing 2nd or home is permitted. There is no overthrow penalty for throwing to 3rd on a steal of 3rd base (i.e., there is a "wall at third"). Runners may leave when the ball crosses the plate. There are no delayed steals. The runner may not steal while the coach is pitching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stealing.
Runners advance vs. dead ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Runners may advance on a played ball until the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's circle, at which point the ball is declared "dead". Runners will advance if the runner is past the halfway chalk line in the base path. If there is no pitcher's circle drawn, umpires must consistently call dead ball when the pitcher is within 8 feet of the pitcher's plate. If they are not past the halfway mark, the umpire will send the runners back to the bases from which they came. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Runners may advance on a played ball until an infielder has control of the ball in the infield, at which point the ball is declared "dead". Runners will advance if the ball is past the halfway chalk line in the base path. If there is no pitcher's circle drawn, umpires must consistently call dead ball when the pitcher is within 8 feet of the pitcher's plate. If they are not past the halfway mark, they umpire will send the runners back to the bases from which they came. 	
Infield fly rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When declared by the umpire, an "infield fly" is a fair fly ball that can be caught by a player near the infield with ordinary effort when runners are on first and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No infield fly rule 	

	<p>second or when all three bases are occupied and before there are two outs in the inning. The batter is automatically called out (whether the ball is caught or not), which removes force plays at 2nd and 3rd and home (if bases were loaded). The ball is considered live, so runners may properly advance at their own risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a declared infield fly becomes foul, it is treated as a foul ball. 		
Overthrows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-play boundaries must be clearly identified and agreed upon prior to the game by coaches and umpire(s). • In the case of an overthrow to 1st or 3rd in which the ball goes out of play, the umpire will award one extra base (one base beyond the base to which they were headed at the time the ball went out of play) to the runner(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-play boundaries must be clearly identified and agreed upon prior to the game by coaches and umpire(s). • No penalty on overthrows to 1st base, even if the ball goes out of play. No extra bases will be awarded, and the ball is declared “dead.” • In the case of an overthrow to 3rd base in which the ball goes out of play, the umpire will award one extra base (one base beyond the base to which they were headed at the time the ball went out of play) to the runner(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No penalty on overthrows. • No extra bases will be awarded.
Helmets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helmets must be worn by batters, on-deck hitters and base runners. Base runners must keep their helmets on until they leave the field and return to the bench or dugout. If a base runner’s helmet is deliberately removed before time has been called by the umpire, the runner will be called out. 		
Sliding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No headfirst slides while advancing to the next base. Runner is out if she does it. A player may, however, slide head first when returning to a base previously occupied. 		
Courtesy Runner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there are two outs and the catcher is on base, a courtesy runner must be used for the catcher so that she may put on her equipment. (Courtesy runner must be the player that made the last out.) • Coaches are encouraged to bring in a courtesy runner when a batter has been hit or otherwise injured during the course of her at bat. 		

Defensive Rules:

	Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U)	Minors (10U)	Juniors (8U)
Player maximums & field positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nine (9) players allowed in the field Outfielders must play on the grass. Each player must play 1 inning per game in the infield. Catcher is considered an infield position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten (10) players allowed in the field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1: Play 4 outfielders; all must play on grass. Option 2: Play 3 outfielders (on the grass) and 1 “short center.” Short center must play behind 2nd base. Each player must play 2 innings per game in the infield Catcher is considered an infield position 	
Sitting out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on a 6-inning game, no player may sit out more than 2 times before all other players have sat at least 2 innings 		
Pitcher putouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitcher may not herself run to bases to make force outs, with the exception of 1st base and home when forward momentum makes that play the smartest/safest. Pitcher must throw ball to 2nd and 3rd bases for force outs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitcher may not herself run to bases to make force outs. Pitcher must throw ball to 1st, 2nd, 3rd base for force outs (i.e., the pitcher can’t run around infield to make putouts). Pitcher may run to home to make an out. 	
Catcher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catcher will assume position behind plate for all pitches 		
Coach positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offensive coaches may position one coach (or parent volunteer if necessary) at first base and one at third to assist runners. Offensive coaches may also pitch during coach pitch and modified kid pitch. Parent volunteers are expected to follow the same conduct guidelines as coaches. Coaches are responsible for communicating those guidelines to parent volunteers and enforcing them as well. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No coaches may coach from the outfield or infield. Defensive coaches must remain on, near or behind their players’ bench and may not interfere with offensive coaches who are coaching runners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A maximum of one coach is allowed to coach from the outfield. The outfield coach must be on the outfield grass once play begins. Other defensive coaches must remain on, near or behind their players’ bench and may not interfere with offensive coaches who are coaching runners. 	

Pitching Rules:

	Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U)	Minors (10U)	Juniors (8U)
Coach pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No coach pitch at the Seniors and Majors levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach Pitch is in place for one full run through the batting order. A coach-pitcher may throw up to 6 pitches per batter. The umpire will not call strikes unless the batter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach Pitch is in place for the entire game. No tee will be used in Juniors. A coach-pitcher may throw up to 6 pitches per batter. The umpire will not call strikes unless the batter swings

		<p>swings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A batter will strike out after a third missed swing. • If the batter does not reach base safely by the sixth pitch, the batter is out. In the case of a foul ball on the sixth pitch or any subsequent pitch that is fouled, another pitch is thrown. • “Modified Kid Pitch” is in place for the remainder of the game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A batter will strike out after a third missed swing. • If the batter does not reach base safely by the sixth pitch, the batter is out. In the case of a foul ball on the sixth pitch or any subsequent pitch that is fouled, another pitch is thrown.
<p>Modified kid pitch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Majors (12U) only): Modified Kid Pitch will be in place for the first two innings of each game. Kid Pitch will be in place for the remainder of the game. • (Majors (12U) only): During Modified Kid Pitch, the umpire will call balls and strikes while a player is pitching until the ball is put in play, there is a strikeout, or there are 4 balls. After 4 balls, the coach finishes the at-bat. Strikes accumulate throughout the entire at-bat (i.e., coach pitch can start with 0, 1 or 2 strikes). The Coach Pitcher assumes the pitch count and the umpire will call swinging strikes and called strikes. • (Majors (12U) only): Coach pitchers will have a four-pitch limit; that is, if the batter has not struck out or otherwise made contact with the ball after four coach pitches, the batter will be called out. Exception: if the batter hits a foul ball on the fourth pitch or any subsequent pitch that is fouled; then she receives another pitch. • (Majors (12U) only): There are no walks during Modified Kid Pitch. • If a pitcher hits three batters, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Modified Kid Pitch, the umpire will call balls and strikes while a player is pitching until the ball is put in play, there is a strikeout, or there are 4 balls. After 4 balls, the coach finishes the at-bat. Strikes accumulate throughout the entire at-bat (i.e., coach pitch can start with 0, 1 or 2 strikes). • The Coach Pitcher assumes the pitch count and the umpire will call swinging strikes and called strikes. • Coach pitchers will have a four-pitch limit; that is, if the batter has not struck out or otherwise made contact with the ball after four coach pitches, the batter will be called out. Exception: if the batter hits a foul ball on the fourth pitch or any subsequent pitch that is fouled; then she receives another pitch. • There are no walks. • If a pitcher hits three batters, she may not pitch for the remainder of the game. The coaches and/or scorekeepers should keep track of this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No modified kid pitch.

	<p>she may not pitch for the remainder of the game. The coaches and/or scorekeepers should keep track of this to assist the umpire in making this decision.</p>	<p>to assist the umpire in making this decision.</p>	
<p>Kid Pitch (only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Majors (12U) only): After two innings of Modified Kid Pitch, Kid Pitch will begin. Players will pitch—without the coach stepping in—for the remainder of the game. • (For Majors Only): An individual kid pitcher may only walk four batters in one inning. After the fourth walk in one inning by the same kid pitcher, any subsequent ball four thrown will result in Modified Kid Pitch rules being reapplied. This means the coach pitcher will enter the game and pitch to batters after any ball four. This walk total applies for each inning and each pitcher within that inning. Kid Pitch will continue the following inning. • Umpires will call balls and strikes during Kid Pitch, and bases on balls (walks) will be awarded when four balls are called on a batter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Kid Pitch 	
<p>Pitch / inning limits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A player may only pitch 3 innings max per game during regular season and playoffs. There is no weekly pitch/inning limit. • A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided that pitcher has not reached her maximum innings pitched for that game and provided that pitcher was not removed as a result of her own injury or as a result of hitting 3 batters. • If a pitcher throws one pitch it is deemed an “inning.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pitcher may only pitch 2 innings max per game during regular season and 3 innings max per game during playoffs. There is no weekly pitch/inning limit. • A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided that pitcher has not reached her maximum innings pitched for that game and provided that pitcher was not removed as a result of her own injury or as a result of hitting 3 batters. • If a pitcher throws one pitch it is deemed an 	<p>N/A</p>

		"inning."	
Pitcher position & motion (players)	<p>In order for a pitch to be considered legal without penalty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitchers must begin with their pivot foot on the pitcher's plate—they are allowed one step back with their non-pivot foot. • Pitchers may not throw lob pitches. Pitches must be thrown with no discernible arc. • The pitcher's pivot foot must start on the pitcher's plate and remain in contact with the ground, throughout the delivery; no leaping. • A pitcher's windup must be a continuous motion without interruption, stop or reversal of the forward motion. • The ball must be delivered underhanded, below the hip. No side arm pitches <p>If the umpire deems a pitch illegal, the pitcher will receive a warning, and the pitch will be called a ball, whether the batter swings at the ball or not. On the second offense, the umpire will award a ball to the batter and all runners on base will advance one base without penalty. If the illegal pitch is hit and all runners reach their base safely, no penalty is declared.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While a windmill pitching motion is not required, coaches are strongly encouraged to teach players to pitch using a windmill. 		N/A
Pitching rules for coach pitch and modified kid pitch (coaches)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The offensive team will provide a coach-pitcher who will pitch to his/her own team. • The coach-pitcher must have his/her pivot foot on the pitching plate until the ball is released. • Coach will not lob the ball and will pitch with little discernible arc. If the coach lobs the ball, the umpire will issue a warning and that warning will result in a dead ball declared. If the coach continues, the umpire will call lob pitches as strikes. If the batter hits a lob pitch after a warning, the ball will be declared dead and the batter will be called out. • The coach-pitcher must attempt to get into foul territory as soon as the batter makes contact with the ball. If the coach-pitcher is hit by the batted ball, the ball is dead. • The coach-pitcher may not coach any players (batters or defenders) or bases while acting as the pitcher. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The offensive team will provide a coach-pitcher who will pitch to his/her own team. • The coach-pitcher must have his/her pivot foot on the pitching plate until the ball is released. • Coach will not lob the ball and will pitch with little discernible arc. • The coach-pitcher must attempt to get into foul territory as soon as the batter makes contact with the ball. If the coach-pitcher is hit by the batted ball, the ball is dead. • The coach-pitcher may coach the batter but may not coach the other players on the team while acting as the pitcher.

The Rules of Welles Park Parents Association

1. All previous unwritten rules, “gentlemen’s agreements”, or understandings as practiced by veteran coaches and players are hereby null and void unless endorsed by their written inclusion in these “Official WPPA Youth Softball Rules.” These rules are intended to achieve the goals stipulated herein and are reviewed and modified on an annual basis to make the games in each league consistent with these goals and to provide a more meaningful experience for all participants.
2. The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Softball Rules Book shall act as the basis of the WPPA Youth Softball program except for any revisions and additions as stated herein. Rules that are specific to Slow Pitch (S.P.) do not apply to this league unless otherwise stated and shall automatically be omitted without notation. To the extent any conflicts exist between the NFHS rules and these WPPA rules, the WPPA rules shall prevail. Head coaches are responsible for knowing NFHS and WPPA rules and for having a copy of each rule book in his or her possession during every game.
3. The WPPA Youth Softball Program emphasizes the highest standards of ethics and sportsmanship and expects that all players, parents, coaches, umpires and spectators will maintain and endorse these high standards. The ethics and sportsmanship of the players, coaches, officials, spectators and others associated with the game must be exemplary and beyond reproach. Everyone participating must conduct himself or herself in a way that is a credit to the league and community.

Objectives of the WPPA

1. To provide a meaningful athletic experience for children while providing them the opportunity to have a good time.
2. To teach teamwork and respect for teammates, opponents, coaches and umpires, and to emphasize good sportsmanship.
3. To teach the fundamentals and rules of softball and sharpen existing softball skills.
4. To teach the players to strive hard to win—fairly!

2018 WPPA Softball Rules & Exceptions to 2018 NFHS Rules

Rule 1: Field and Equipment

The WPPA will furnish all game balls, bases, pitching plate, catcher’s equipment (except gloves), batting helmets, and score books during the regular and post season schedule. Each team will furnish its own bats and mitts. All head coaches are required to put down a \$150.00 deposit before receiving their equipment. If all equipment is returned by the designated drop-off date, the deposit will be returned to the head coach. Coaches will be offered an option to buy the equipment.

Head coaches are responsible for equipment and uniforms issued to their team and for seeing that equipment is properly maintained. Any person willfully abusing or damaging the equipment will be required to pay for the replacement of said equipment. Normal wear and tear is expected. Coaches and umpires are expected to turn in all equipment at the end of the season.

Bats: Softball bats may be furnished by any player. Each bat must indicate that it is an official softball bat and must be in good condition. If a bat is judged by an umpire to be in an “unsafe” condition, it will be removed from play with no penalty to the batter.

SECTION 1: THE FIELD

NFHS Exceptions

Art. 2a... All bases shall be 60 feet apart for 14U, 12U, 10U and 8U.

Art. 2b... The back tip of home plate and the front edge of the pitcher's plate shall be 43 feet apart in 14U, 40 feet apart in 12U and 35 feet in 10U and 8U.

SECTION 2: BASES, PLATES

NFHS Exceptions

Art. 3...distance: The back tip of home plate and the front edge of the pitcher's plate shall be 43 feet apart in 14U, 40 feet apart in 12U and 35 feet in 10U and 8U.

SECTION 3: SOFTBALLS

NFHS Exceptions

Art. 3... Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U) will use a 12" ball. Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U) will use 11".

Art. 7... The WPPA will provide two (2) game balls for each game, distributed at the beginning of the season to each coach. Each coach will make their best effort to bring at least one WPPA-supplied game ball to each regular season game for use during the game. Before each game begins, each coach will give the game ball to the umpire for use during the game.

SECTION 4: GLOVES/MITTS

NFHS Exceptions

None.

SECTION 5: BATS

Art. 1d... Bats must be alloy and must say "official softball" and include either the "ASA" or "USSSA" softball logo. No oversized barrels (over 2.25" in diameter) are allowed.

SECTION 6: BATTING HELMETS

NFHS Exceptions

None.

SECTION 7: CATCHER'S EQUIPMENT

NFHS Exceptions

None.

SECTION 8: OTHER EQUIPMENT

NFHS Exceptions

None.

Rule 2: Definitions

NFHS Exceptions

None.

Rule 3: Players, Substitutes and Coaches

SECTION 1: PLAYERS, POSITIONS

NFHS Exceptions

Art. 1... In Seniors (14U), Majors (12U), and in Minors (10U), a full team is at least nine (9) players. For each of these levels a team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game. If a team starts with eight (8) players, a mandatory out is recorded each time the 9th spot in the order is reached. (If both teams have 8, they may play an official game with no out penalty recorded.) If a team has fewer than 8, that team will forfeit, although teams may play a scrimmage game if they choose. If the team starts with nine (9) and a player leaves mid-game, no

mandatory out will be recorded. (If they start with 8 and a 9th player shows up, they will be added to the batting order and a mandatory out will no longer be recorded starting with the next at bat). In Juniors (8U), a full team is at least nine (9) players. A team must have at least eight (8) players to start the game. There is no mandatory out penalty for starting with eight(8) players in 8U. If a team has fewer than 8, that team will forfeit, although teams may play a scrimmage game if they choose. If both teams have 8, they may play an official game.

Art. 4... Figure 3-1: In Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U), nine (9) players are allowed on the field. All outfielders must play on the grass, and no short center may be used. In Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U), 10 players are allowed on the field in the following positions:

- *Option 1*—Play four (4) outfielders; all must play on grass.
- *Option 2*—Play three (3) outfielders (on the grass) and one (1) short center. Short center must play behind 2nd base and out of the way of the runners until the batter hits the ball. At that point, they may move in front of the base in order to make a defensive play and/or put-out at second base.

SECTION 2: UNIFORMS, PLAYER EQUIPMENT

NFHS Exceptions

Art. 11... No metal cleats allowed. Players may only wear shoes with plastic or rubber cleats.

SECTION 3: SUBSTITUTING

In case of any injury to a player, she may be replaced by a player from the bench. An injured player may return to the game after a rest of at least the remaining half inning in which the injury occurred. Note: In the case of injury to a player, a coach should seek to apply immediate first aid and/or seek emergency medical care as necessary. If a parent or guardian is not present, he or she should be notified as soon as possible. Park District personnel should be notified as soon as possible. The Park District also requires an injury report form be completed.

Pitcher/Defensive players:

- A pitcher may only pitch 3 innings max per game (Seniors and Majors) and 2 innings max per game during regular season and 3 innings max per game during playoffs (Minors). There is no weekly pitch/inning limit.
- A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided that pitcher has not reached her maximum innings pitched for that game and provided that pitcher was not removed as a result of her own injury or as a result of hitting 3 batters.
- If a pitcher throws one pitch it is deemed an “inning.”
- Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U): No player may play more than three (3) innings total at defensive pitcher and/or first base positions each game during the regular season prior to the playoffs.

Batters:

- There is no designated hitter in any division.
- In case of any injury to a batter who cannot continue the plate appearance, the at-bat shall be vacated. An injured player may return to the game after a rest of at least the remaining half inning in which the injury occurred.

The Farm Team System

Farm Team players will be used only to the extent to ensure a team has nine (9) players in Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U) and ten (10) in Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U) eligible for a game. In the event a coach foresees that his or her team will not have an adequate number of players for a game, he or she may add a player or players to the game day roster—to reach a maximum of ten (10)—by leveraging the Farm Team System as follows:

- Seniors (14U) borrows from Majors (12U)
- Majors (12U) borrow from Minors (10U)
- Minors (10U) borrow from Juniors (8U)
- Juniors (8U) have no Farm Team, but a team may borrow players from another 8U team, subject to approval of the opposing coach.

The coach seeking a Farm Team player to perform on his or her team must first obtain permission from the Farm Team coach and then the permission of the player’s parent. Participation of a Farm Team player is not mandatory.

Farm Team players:

- Must be registered with WPPA. Only Spring/Summer Season registrants may play up in the Spring/Summer Leagues. Only Fall Season registrants may play up in the Fall Leagues.
- Must be identified as such to the opposing coach and the umpire before the start of the game.
- Must wear an official uniform of either the Farm Team from which she was recruited in order to play or the team for which she is temporarily playing.
- May not play more innings on defense than the fewest number of innings played by a member of the team that is borrowing her
- May not play pitcher, 1st or 3rd base, or shortstop. Must play outfield or 2nd base (Seniors and Majors) or short center (Minors and Juniors).
- Must occupy the last spot(s) in the batting order.
- May not play for the same team more than once during the playoffs.

NFSH exceptions

Art. 1-3...omit.

Art. 5-8...omit.

SECTION 4: ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTE

NFSH exceptions

All articles...omit.

SECTION 5: COACHING

Senior (14U), Major (12U) and Minor (10U):

- No coaches allowed in the outfield.
- All defensive coaches must remain on, near or behind their players' bench and may not interfere with offensive coaches who are coaching runners.

Junior (8U):

- A maximum of one (1) coach may be in the outfield area at a time to verbally assist defensive players. The outfield coach must be on the outfield grass once play begins. He or she may not cause any interference or make physical contact with any player. A ball put in play by a batter that hits a coach shall be considered to be a non-playable ball and will not count against the batter. The play will be re-played as if it had never occurred.
- All other defensive coaches must remain on, near or behind their players' bench and may not interfere with offensive coaches who are coaching runners.

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 6: BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT

All coaches, parents, and spectators are reminded that alcohol is not permitted on Park District property. This rule is enforced by Chicago Ordinance and subject to the City's enforcement policy.

Coaches & players

- A coach shall not use, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at any game or practice. Violation will mean immediate and permanent dismissal from coaching in the WPPA. IHSA rules prohibit use of tobacco and tobacco-like products near the field.
- A coach or player ejected for any reason will sit out the next game. If the same coach or player is ejected from a second game, in the same or any other WPPA league, within the same season, he or she will be suspended indefinitely and will be required to appear before a disciplinary committee made up of board members before reinstatement.

- Only team members and their respective recognized coaches (including a designated scorekeeper or pitch counter) are allowed on a team bench or in the team's dugout area while a game is being conducted.
- At the end of a game, each team must quickly clean up its dugout area and leave the dugout area before the next team enters the dugout area. Coaches are reminded that they are responsible for cleaning up any litter left in the viewing stand area from the spectators watching their game.
- Coaches not coaching a base, supervising a warming-up batter or pitcher, or coaching defense (Junior) must remain in the dugout/bench area while the game is being played.

Spectators

Spectators are not allowed on a team bench for any reason. All players are to remain on the bench except for the player at bat, the "on deck" player, and the pitcher and/or catcher warming up.

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 7: CHARGED CONFERENCES

NFSH exceptions

None.

Rule 4: Starting and Ending Game

SECTION 1: STARTING A GAME

Fields

- Thirty minutes prior to the first game of the day, the softball commissioner will determine if the grounds and other conditions are suitable for starting the game. If the softball commissioner is not available to make the decision, another non interested board member shall make the decision.
- The home team is responsible for setting up all bases and always occupies the 3rd base side of the field.

Game

- Before each game, the head coach from each team must identify themselves to the umpire.
- Before game time, each head coach must provide the opposing head coach with his or her line up, including the names of all players in attendance.
- Note: All able and eligible players, including Farm Team players, will constitute the "batting order" and all players will bat during the entire game in the order established by the lineup. The only exception to this rule exists if a player is temporarily or permanently removed from the game due to injury, illness, or disciplinary action or has to leave the game early for personal reasons.
- Any player arriving after the beginning of the game is added to the end of the batting order.
- In Seniors (14U), Majors (12U) and Minors (10U), each team's line up must have at least nine (9) batters to have a full team. If a line up has eight (8) batters, a mandatory out is recorded each time the 9th spot in the order is reached. Seven (7) players or fewer results in a forfeit.
- In Juniors (8U), each team's line up should have at least nine (9) batters; however, no automatic outs will be charged for having only eight (8) players. Seven (7) players or fewer results in a forfeit.

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 2: ENDING A GAME

- A regulation game consists of six (6) innings in Seniors (14U), Majors (12U) and Minors (10U), and five (5) innings in Juniors (8U).
- There is a two and one quarter (2:15) hour time limit for all regular season games in 14U, 12U and 10U.
- There is a two (2) hour time limit for all regular season games in 8U.

- No inning is allowed to start within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled starting time of the next game, all divisions.
- No half inning shall start within five (5) minutes of the scheduled start of the next game.
- Any game still being played at the scheduled starting time of the next game will end immediately and revert back to the score at the end of the previous inning, unless the home team is ahead, or unless the home team, having been behind at the end of the previous inning, has tied the game.
- A game is official after three and one-half (3.5) complete innings, if the home team is ahead, or four (4) complete innings if the visitors are ahead or if the game is tied. If the game must be called because of darkness, inclement weather, or time limit before it is considered official, it will be replayed at a later date, from the beginning. All pitcher inning count rules remain in effect whether the game is official or not.
- A game that is tied at the end of the last inning will be continued until a winner is determined, unless time limits, darkness or inclement weather intercedes. If an official regular season game is tied and cannot be continued because of time limits, weather or darkness, the game will remain a tie. Note: For league standings, a tie game counts as one half (1/2) of a win and one half (1/2) of a loss.
- In the event a coach thinks that a game should be called and the umpire doesn't agree, the coach can stop play (at a dead ball situation) and appeal the umpire's ruling with a WPPA Board member. The Board member must not have a stake in the game and must be present at the game.
- Note: The umpire will declare a "slaughter rule" in effect if one team is ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of a half inning (if the home team is ahead) or after a complete inning (if the visiting team is ahead).

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 3: FORFEITED GAME

A game is forfeited if a team cannot field the minimum number of players within fifteen (15) minutes of the scheduled start time of the game. Note: For Juniors (8U), if there is a forfeit because not enough players showed up for a game, the two teams will divide the total number of players equally. The two teams should play a scrimmage game regardless of how many players are available.

NFSH exceptions

Art. 1f and 1g...omit.

Art. 2...omit.

SECTION 4: PROTESTED GAME

During the regular season, there will be NO protests allowed. The umpire (head umpire, if there are two umpires), will be the final arbitrator of the rules. Note: Head coaches are responsible for knowing NFHS and WPPA rules and for having a copy of each rule book in his or her possession during a game.

NFSH exceptions

None.

Rule 5: Dead Ball and Suspension of Play

SECTION 1: DEAD BALL

In Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U), runners may advance on a played ball until the pitcher has control of the ball and is standing with both feet **in the pitcher's circle**. At that time, the ball is considered dead. If the ball is called dead and the runner(s) are already past the halfway chalk line in the base path, the runner is awarded the base to which they were headed with no penalty. If there is no pitcher's circle drawn, umpires must consistently call dead ball when the pitcher is in control of the ball and is within 8 feet of the pitcher's plate.

In Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U), the ball becomes dead when, in the umpire's opinion, an infielder controls the ball and the runners have stopped advancing, the umpire can and should call time to stop the play. The player with

the ball should demonstrate some control of the situation. For example, if the player with the ball has his or her back to play, the umpire should not call a time out. After the ball is declared dead, it must be returned to the pitcher in the pitching circle. If there is no pitcher's circle drawn, umpires must consistently call dead ball when the pitcher is within 8 feet of the pitcher's plate. If the ball is called dead and the runner(s) are already past the halfway chalk line in the base path, the runner is awarded the base to which they were headed with no penalty.

Also, in Juniors (8U) the ball is called dead when there are fewer than three bases occupied at the time that the ball is put into play, and a fielder receives the active ball and stands on home plate. Note: If there are fewer than two outs, and a base runner has reached the halfway mark between 3rd base and home, the base runner can score safely. If the fielder does not stand on home plate, but attempts to tag the base runner coming from 3rd base, the play and all base runners remain active until the ball is otherwise ruled dead by the umpire. Notwithstanding the above, the determination as to whether the defensive team is attempting to end the play or make a play on a base runner, which would still be a live play, is within the sole discretion of the umpire.

"Infield fly" rule:

In Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U): When declared by the umpire, an "infield fly" is a fair fly ball that can be caught by a fielder with ordinary effort when runners are on first and second or when all three bases are occupied and before there are two outs in the inning. The batter is automatically called out (whether the ball is caught or not), which removes force plays at 2nd and 3rd and home (if the bases were loaded). The ball is considered live, so runners may appropriately advance at their own risk.

There is no "infield fly" rule in Minors (10U) or Juniors (8U).

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 2: SUSPENSION OF PLAY

NFSH exceptions

None.

Rule 6: Pitching

- In Juniors (8U), an offensive team coach ("coach-pitcher") will pitch to his/her own players for the entire game.
- In Minors (10U), an offensive coach-pitcher will pitch to his/her own players until his/her team has gone through the lineup one time. After that time, "modified kid pitch" will begin. Sometimes the transition from coach pitch to kid pitch will happen mid-inning.
- In Majors (12U), modified kid pitch will occur for the first two innings. After that, Kid Pitch will be in place for the remainder of the game, provided no kid pitchers reach the per-inning walk limit. There is no "coach pitch" in Majors.

Coach pitch

- A coach-pitcher may throw up to 6 pitches per batter.
- The umpire will not call strikes unless the batter swings. A batter will strike out after a third missed swing.
- If during coach pitch a batter doesn't put one of the first five (5) pitched balls into play or strike out swinging, the coach will deliver a sixth pitch. The batter is out if she swings and misses or doesn't swing. If the batter hits a foul ball, the "sixth pitch" process is repeated until a pitch is thrown that is not hit foul. Strikes will be called by the umpire from behind the plate in the appropriate position to observe the strike zone.
- The coach-pitcher must attempt to get into foul territory as soon as the batter makes contact with the ball. If the coach-pitcher is hit by the batted ball, the ball is dead.
- While pitching, the coach-pitcher must have his/her pivot foot on the pitching plate when s/he starts his/her pitch, and the pivot foot must remain on the ground until the ball is released.

- Coach will not lob the ball and will pitch with little discernible arc. If the coach lobs the ball, the umpire will issue a warning and that warning will result in a dead ball declared. If the coach continues, the umpire will call lob pitches as strikes. If the batter hits a lob pitch after a warning, the ball will be declared dead and the batter will be called out.
- Once the coach-pitcher pitches the ball, the coach-pitcher cannot instruct, coach or comment in any manner so as to influence any batter, base runner or defensive fielder.
- The coach-pitcher is not to interfere with the play or the ball during a game. This is a judgment call by the umpire. Note: If a batted ball strikes the coach-pitcher, the ball is considered dead, and the pitch does not count. Note: If the coach-pitcher is ruled to have interfered with a play, it should be treated as interference with penalty given.
- The exchange of the ball from the coach-pitcher to the catcher is a dead ball exchange unless the batter makes contact with the ball. The return exchange of the ball from the catcher to the coach pitcher is also a dead ball exchange.
- The exchange of a ball from the player in the defensive pitching position to the coach pitcher is a dead ball exchange.
- When the coach pitches, the defensive pitcher must have one foot inside the pitcher's circle (or, if there is no circle drawn, be positioned within 8 feet of the pitcher's plate).

Modified Kid Pitch

During modified kid pitch, all plate appearances will start with kid pitch. After ball four is pitched by the kid pitcher, no base on balls will be awarded the batter. Instead, the hitting team's coach pitcher will come in to pitch. The coach pitcher will inherit the existing strike count on the batter. The coach pitches until the batter puts the ball in play or strikes out to a maximum of 4 pitches. Exception: If the player hits a foul ball on the last pitch, the coach pitcher will deliver one more pitch until a pitch is delivered that is not hit foul. All other WPPA rules governing coach pitchers will continue to be observed.

Kid Pitch (Majors only)

- After two innings of modified kid pitch, kid pitch will begin. Players will pitch—without the coach stepping in—for the remainder of the game unless a player walks four (4) batters in a an inning.
- Umpires will call balls and strikes during Kid Pitch, and **bases on balls (walks) will be awarded when four balls are called on a batter.**
- An individual kid pitcher may only walk four batters in one inning. After the fourth walk in one inning by the same kid pitcher, any subsequent ball 4 thrown will result in modified kid pitch rules being reapplied. This means the coach pitcher will enter the game and pitch to batters after any ball four. This walk total applies for each inning and each pitcher within that inning. Kid Pitch will resume the following inning.

SECTION 1: PITCHING REGULATIONS

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 2: INFRACTIONS BY PITCHER

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 3: INFRACTIONS BY CATCHER

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 4: PITCHING REGULATIONS (S.P.): N/A...omit

SECTION 5: BALL ROTATION

NFSH exceptions

Art. 1...omit.
Art. 2...omit.

Rule 7: Batting

SECTION 1: POSITION AND BATTING ORDER

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 2: STRIKES, BALLS AND HITS

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 3: BATTING INFRACTIONS

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 4: BATTER IS OUT

Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U):

- Runners may attempt to advance at their own discretion once a ball leaves a kid pitcher's hand or the ball is hit. (When a coach is pitching, the runner may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.) Any runner leaving early will result in a team warning. The next time a runner (the same or another) leaves early, she will be called out. If the ball is hit, it will be called a no-pitch. If a strike or a ball is called, the runner will be out and the pitch will count.
- Stealing is only allowed when advancing to 3rd base or home; no stealing may occur while a coach is pitching.
- Bunting is allowed; however, fake bunting and then swinging is not permitted. The umpire will call a batter out if she shows a bunt, then pulls the bat back and swings.

Minors (10U)

- Runners may attempt to advance at their own discretion once a ball has crossed the plate after being pitched.
- Any runner leaving early will result in a team warning. The next time a runner (the same or another) leaves early, she will be called out. If the ball is hit, it will be called a no-pitch. If a strike or a ball is called, the runner will be out and the pitch will count.
- Stealing is only allowed when advancing to 3rd base; no stealing may occur while a coach is pitching.
- Bunting is not allowed.

Juniors (8U):

- Runners may attempt to advance from 1st, 2nd or 3rd base at their own discretion once the ball is hit. Any runner leaving early will result in a team warning. The next time a runner (the same or another) leaves early, she will be called out. If the ball is hit, it will be called a no-pitch. If a strike or a ball is called, the runner will be out and the pitch will count.
- Stealing is not allowed.
- Bunting is not allowed.

Art. 7...A third strike is called in Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U), whether or not the ball is caught by the catcher, and whether a runner occupies 1st base or not. There is no "dropped 3rd strike" provision Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U).

There is a dropped third strike provision in Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U). In a dropped third strike scenario, if there are two outs or if no runner occupies first base, the batter is not out unless the third strike is caught. The batter is entitled to try to reach first base before being tagged out or thrown out. (A batter is out when the third

strike (in flight) is not caught, a runner occupies first base at the time of the pitch and there are fewer than two outs.)

SECTION 5: ON-DECK BATTER

NFSH exceptions

None.

Rule 8: Batter-Runner and Runner

Stealing

14U, 12U and 10U: Base stealing will be allowed within the following guidelines.

- In Senior (14U) and Major (12U): A base runner may not leave a base before the pitcher, while in the act of pitching, releases the ball from his/her pitching hand. Runners may attempt to steal 3rd base or home and may only do so while a player is pitching, not a coach. Runners who leave the base before the ball is released by the pitcher will be warned by the umpire. Runners leaving early again in the same game will be called out by the umpire.
- In Minor (10U): A base runner may leave the base when the ball crosses home plate. Runners may only steal 3rd base and may only do so while a player is pitching, not a coach. Runners who leave the base before the ball has crossed the plate will be warned by the umpire. Runners leaving early again in the same game will be called out by the umpire.

In Junior (8U): No base stealing or lead-offs permitted. A base runner may not leave the base until the ball has been hit.

Sliding

A baserunner may not slide head first while advancing bases. A player may only slide head first when returning to a base previously occupied. Any baserunner sliding head first in violation of this rule will be called out. There are no warnings. The player will be called out on the first occurrence.

SECTION 1: THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-RUNNER

NFSH exceptions

Art. 1b...There is no dropped third strike rule in Minors (10U) or Juniors (8U). Three strikes results in the batter being out. Art. 1b applies in Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U).

SECTION 2: BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT

NFSH exceptions

Art. 1... There is no dropped third strike rule in Minors (10U) or Juniors (8U). Three strikes results in the batter being out. Art. 1b applies in Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U).

Art. 9-10...There is no infield fly rule in Minors (10U) or Juniors (8U). Art. 9-10 do apply in Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U).

SECTION 3: TOUCHING BASES IN LEGAL ORDER

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 4: RUNNERS ENTITLED TO ADVANCE

NFSH exceptions

Art. 1a...Runners may advance with liability to be put out when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand (Seniors 14U and Majors 12U), crosses the plate (Minors 10U) or when the ball is hit (Juniors 8U).

Art. 3c...Runner is entitled to advance from 2nd to 3rd or from 3rd to home in Seniors (14U) and Majors (12U) or from 2nd to 3rd in Minors (10U) without liability to be put out when a wild pitch or passed ball lodges in or goes under, over or through the backstop, while a kid is pitching. The ball is considered a dead ball in Juniors (8U).

After the umpire calls a “dead ball,” a runner is given a base if she has advanced halfway or more; otherwise, the runner must return to the previous base.

SECTION 5: RUNNER MUST RETURN TO HER BASE

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 6: THE RUNNER IS OUT

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 7: THE LOOK-BACK RULE

Omit whole section. All decisions on advancement or sending back of runners are the umpire’s.

SECTION 8: RUNNER IS NOT OUT

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 9: COURTESY RUNNERS

All courtesy runners must be chosen based on who made the last out in the same inning (if there is at least one out) or who made the 3rd out in the previous inning (if there are zero outs).

Seniors (14U), Majors (12U) and Minors (10U): When there are two outs, a courtesy runner should be used for the catcher. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the last out (e.g. the runner forced out at second).

NFSH exceptions

Art. 5...omit. (There is no DP in WPPA.)

SECTION 10: DOUBLE FIRST BASE

These rules apply only on fields on which a double first base is present. On fields where there is a single first base, players will share the base.

Rule 9: Scoring and Record Keeping

NFSH exceptions

None.

Rule 10: Umpiring

Umpires are selected, trained, scheduled and compensated by the WPPA. Eligibility is determined by the WPPA Board of Directors and managed by the Umpire Coordinator, who is a duly elected officer of the board. No umpire outside of the WPPA organization is authorized to participate in the program unless authorized by the board. Any coach or parent who has a complaint about the manner in which any umpire conducts him or herself in sanctioned games is to submit that complaint to the board in writing.

Seniors (14U), Majors (12U), Minors (10U) and Juniors (8U): Umpires will be provided for the games whenever possible. In the event an umpire is not provided, each team will provide a coach volunteer to umpire. They may umpire in tandem throughout the game (plate/field) or umpire alone for half the game each.

SECTION 1: GENERAL

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 2: PLATE UMPIRE

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 3: FIELD UMPIRE

NFSH exceptions

None.

SECTION 4: EQUIPMENT AND APPAREL

Art. 2....WPPA umpire uniform should be selected by WPPA and provided to umpires.

WPPA Procedures

SECTION 1: WPPA BOARD

1. The WPPA Board of Directors will meet the first Thursday of every month except August.
2. Board officers must attend the monthly board meetings. If a board member misses three meetings within a year, the board member will receive written notice from the board that he or she has been relieved from duty and his or her position will be filled by appointment.
3. If a league commissioner cannot attend a board meeting, it becomes the assistant commissioner's responsibility to attend the board meeting to ensure that every league is represented.
4. The WPPA October board meeting will be closed to the public, in part, to discuss any disciplinary action (demotion, temporary suspension, permanent suspension or reprimands) deemed necessary against coaches.
 - a) Coaches will be informed during the month of October of any disciplinary action against them.
 - b) If a coach wishes to protest the board's action, he or she may appear before the executive board at a mutually agreed upon time and location.

SECTION 2: PRE-SEASON

1. Pre-season practice may begin four weeks prior to the official practice-game day. No coach may practice or encourage his players to practice on their own before this designated day. A team is allowed one, non-practice, team meeting prior to this day.
2. Trading: Deadline for trading of players will be set by the board. Other trades will be allowed if a parent requests the trade for reasons that are acceptable to the board president, both vice-presidents and the commissioner of the league involved.
3. If a coach encounters serious family problems or illness that makes him or her unable to fulfill his or her coaching duties, the WPPA board should be notified. The board will do whatever it can to help the team during the coach's absence.
4. The WPPA President will appoint commissioners subject to WPPA Board approval. Each commissioner is to have an assistant.

SECTION 3: PRACTICES

1. Coaches shall inform all players of practice times and any changes to previously published practice and game times.
2. Number of practices during each week of the softball season, weather permitting. Minimum of one (1) per week, maximum of two (2) per week.

3. A practice shall be defined as any gathering of two (2) or more players at the request or direction of a head coach or assistant coach either directly or indirectly for the purpose of practicing or coaching softball. Practices include gatherings at batting cages or at a coach's house or coming to a game more than one (1) hour before game time.
4. Practices should be no more than two (2) hours in length.
5. Any team may practice on any open and available field, but batting practices may only occur on the division's assigned field or the next league up, if available.
6. If a coach is unable to attend a scheduled practice or game for whatever reason, an assistant coach or a responsible adult should take over and conduct the practice or the game.

SECTION 4: GAMES—PLAYERS AND SCHEDULING

1. All players must play a minimum of three (3) full innings on defense. For 10U and 8U, each player must play at least two (2) innings in the infield at pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, shortstop or short-center if applicable. For 14U and 12U, each player must play at least two (2) innings in the infield at pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base or shortstop.
2. Coaches are prohibited from discouraging a player's participation or encouraging a player not to show up for games or practices because the player is weak in softball skills. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate and permanent removal of the coach from WPPA softball.
3. The WPPA will furnish to each player, coach, and umpire the "Official Schedule of Games" for his or her respective league indicating calendar dates, days, times and team match-ups for regular season games. The Official Schedule of Games will also indicate dates available for rain make-up games and playoff games. Actual team match-ups during the playoffs will be posted once regular season rankings are determined. It is the obligation of all players, coaches, and umpires to make themselves available for these times throughout the season. Note: No revision to the published schedule of games (other than changes caused by rain-outs) can occur unless authorized by the softball commissioner.
4. Any game that cannot be played due to inclement weather will be re-scheduled by the softball commissioner for the next available rain day. In the event that a team's complete season games cannot be played due to an insufficient number of rain days, the team's record will be based on the number of actual games played.

SECTION 5: PLAYOFFS—SCHEDULING AND STANDINGS

1. Each team makes the playoffs.
2. Until the League Championship, the team with the better regular season record is the "Home Team."
3. There will be two (2) umpires for each playoff game, when available.
4. There is no time limit in playoff games.
5. In the event that a playoff game is rained out or called for darkness after it is an official game:
 - a)... and the home team is ahead, the game is over and that team wins. For example, if a playoff game is called during the bottom of the 4th inning and the home team is ahead 6-5, the game is over and that team wins.
 - b)... If the visiting team is ahead, the score reverts back to the previous complete inning to determine the winner. The team with the highest run total is the winner. For example, if a playoff game is called during the bottom of the 6th inning and the visiting team is ahead 5-4, the game is over and the score reverts back to the score at the end of the 5th inning.
6. Playoff games must be played until a winner is determined. If an official playoff game is tied and cannot be continued because of time limits, weather or darkness, the remainder of the game will be played at a new time and, if necessary, a new venue. The game will begin after the last complete inning played and will be played until a winner is determined (where the game is not tied after the home team bats) or until the time limit is reached or weather or darkness prohibit play from continuing.
7. Note: In the event that a playoff game is rained out prior to becoming an official game, the game is replayed in its entirety.
8. Kid pitch pitching/inning limitations during the playoffs are three (3) innings per game per player and six (6) innings per week per player.
9. The playoff format will be determined by the board each season. The possible choices are single-elimination, double-elimination, or round-robin formats. The choices will be made by the board – taking into consideration the advice of the commissioners of the according division.

10. Consolation games can be part of the post-season schedule.
11. Note: Consolation games do not require two umpires but are otherwise considered playoff games, i.e. there is no time limit for consolation games, a winner must be determined, etc.
12. Note: Consolation games are considered "real" games for purposes of these rules.
13. Note: A single game will determine the League Champion between division playoff winners.
14. Teams tied for first place in the standings at the end of the regular season games will use head to head wins as the first tie breaker, and total season runs as the second.
15. Protests over rule interpretations during the playoffs must be settled at the time of the incident by a committee (minimum of three people) of available Board members or their appointees. This means that the protesting head coach or acting head coach must ask for a protest from the umpire at the dead ball period immediately following or the dead ball period during the protested call. Once the protest is recognized, Board members must be found and consulted. In the event there are no Board members present, contact with a Board member must be obtained by phone and the board member must preside over a resolution remotely.

SECTION 6: SPECIAL EVENTS

1. All head coaches and assistant coaches shall help promote all WPPA activities and fund raisers.
2. Thillens Day, photo day and the picnic date are known months in advance. There should be no reason, barring family illness, not to make these events.
3. Picnic day responsibilities: All coaches are required to pass out their teams' trophies, promote the event, and organize or delegate to a team parent the responsibility of organizing the food and nonalcoholic beverages for their team. Coaches should provide for their own seating and tables at the picnic.
4. Note: Not providing adequate coaching or parental supervision at Thillens or at the picnic will make the coach forfeit his or her coaching position in the WPPA forever.