

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
SPORTS MANAGEMENT
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VBgov.com/Sports

REVISED
8/2020

VIRGINIA BEACH COMMUNITY LEAGUE YOUTH SOFTBALL BYLAWS
(FAST PITCH)

The object of this league shall be...

- To provide a wholesome and enjoyable recreational activity for the participants.
- To develop character, skill, sportsmanship, leadership, and promote good will among the teams and individuals participating.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These bylaws are in effect for the 2020 Community Youth Fastpitch Softball League season. Coaches are responsible for advising their players and spectators of the articles within these bylaws.

OFFICIAL RULES: Virginia Beach Department of Parks and Recreation Sports Management (SM) rules and regulations and the National Federation of High School (NFHS) Fastpitch softball rules shall govern all leagues unless otherwise listed below. Coaches, players, and spectators must abide by all rules, regulations, and bylaws. For more information about the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Fastpitch Softball Rules please visit their website at <http://www.nfhs.org>.

TEAM REGISTRATION FEE: SM will require a registration fee (Spring - \$325.00 and Fall - \$280.00) from all teams (check, money order, or credit card only). Checks/Money Orders are to be made payable to: **Treasurer, City of Virginia Beach**. Payment should accompany the Team Entry Form, and must be received by **August 21, 2020** in order for a team to participate in the league. Forms received after this date will be assessed a \$25.00 late fee, and will be accepted until **August 25, 2020** only if space is available. **TEAM ENTRY FEES CAN BE PAID ONLINE.....PLEASE ASK FOR DETAILS.**

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES: SM assumes the following responsibilities.

1. Game facilities and equipment.
2. Payment of umpires association.
3. Custody of contract cards and team rosters.
4. Authority to rule on player eligibility, rules and regulations.
5. Awards to division (Fall and Spring) and league champions (Spring Only).
6. Provision of game balls (to teams prior to the start of the season) and are not to be used for practice or warm ups.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND AGE GROUPS

Information on player eligibility policy can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports.

1. A player's age on **September 30, 2020** determines eligibility. **EXCEPTION:** A player who turns 10 years old during the league season (Fall: July – November) (Spring: March – June) will have a "league age" of 10 years old.
 - A. 12U Girls: Age 12 and under (must be 10 years old on or before September 30 of the current season or turn 10 years old during the league season (Fall: July – November) (Spring: March – June).
 - B. 15U Girls: Age 15 and under (cannot be 16 years old on or before September 30 of the current season).
 - C. 18U Girls (**Fall Only**): Age 18 and under (cannot be 19 years old on or before September 30 of the current season).

CONTRACT CARDS AND ROSTERS

Information on contract card and roster policy can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports.

1. SM will generate team rosters for game site staff. Rosters can also be viewed online at VBgov.com/Sports. The deadline for adding new players to a team's roster for a weekday game is the previous business day by 5:00 p.m. For example, in order for a player to be eligible to participate in a Thursday game, the player must have a completed player contract card in the SM Office by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday. Contract cards can be submitted during regular business hours (Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.).
2. Maximum of twenty (20) players under contract and four (4) coaches per team.

3. The final cut-off date (when all rosters are frozen for the remainder of the season) will be Friday, October 23, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. No new player(s) or coach(es) can be added after this time.

Note: Information found to be false on a player contract card shall result in player ineligibility for one (1) year.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. Practice may begin Saturday, August 1, 2020.
2. **Players are encouraged to participate within their own community.** Information on playing outside your community can be found in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports.
3. **Each team is permitted one (1) Head Coach, two (2) Assistants (Base & Dugout Coaches/Scorekeeper), and one (1) Junior Assistant (Base & Dugout Coach/Scorekeeper).** If equipment managers and/or team parents are used, they are included in (and not in addition to) the maximum number of assistant coaches. The name and telephone number of each team's Head Coach and Assistants must be on file in the SM Office before the start of the season. SM shall be notified of any coaching changes during the season.
4. **Information on Youth Sports League Volunteer Identification System are located in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports and at VBgov.com/Sports.**
5. **Mandatory rules clinic for coaches in April (Spring) and August (Fall).** The date, time, and location of the clinic will be included in the coach's packet. It is mandatory that each team be represented at this clinic. The umpires' association will cover rule changes and answer questions.
6. **Coaches are encouraged to become certified by the National Youth Sports Coaches Association.** Becoming a certified youth coach is highly recommended. The cost of the certification program is \$20.00 per year. The date, time, and location of the clinic will be included in the coach's packet.

SCHEDULING OF GAMES

1. Games will be played in accordance with the schedule designed by SM with game site/times distributed equitably as possible.
2. Any coach finding it impossible to play a scheduled game must notify SM as soon as possible, so that necessary arrangements can be made. This constitutes a forfeit, and the opposing team will receive credit for a win. **In an effort to encourage more timely communication, when a coach notifies SM of forfeiture, the opposing coach can either record the game as an official forfeit or request to have it rescheduled in the event games on that field are cancelled due to inclement weather by 5pm, the day of the game.**
3. If a game is postponed due to weather, light failure, or other conditions beyond our control, SM will determine a makeup date/time/location, and will post make-up information on our website (VBgov.com/Sports). Whenever possible, coaches will receive 48 hours' notice. **Postponed games are typically rescheduled at the end of the regular season. When necessary, games may be rescheduled on alternate nights of play (due to excessive cancellations). Games that have no bearing on league standings may not be made-up.**
4. SM reserves the right to arrange postponed games at its convenience and/or cancel games, if necessary, due to inclement weather or conditions beyond our control. Coaches are urged to contact SM with any questions.
5. There will be no postponement or rescheduling of league games to play in middle school games and to prepare for or play in tournaments of any kind.
6. If a team forfeits two (2) games in succession or three (3) games overall in a season for not having the required number of players to start the game, the team will be subject to removal from the league.
7. If during a game, conditions (light failure, loss of power, surface playability, inclement weather etc.) force a stoppage of play before the game is considered official, a 15 minute delay shall be in effect. If after 15 minutes conditions have not improved so as to continue the game, that game will be called off and rescheduled for a later date. The remainder of scheduled games at that site for that day may also be cancelled and rescheduled for a later date (See General Bylaws For All Community League Sports).

STANDARD GAME AND PREGAME PROCEDURE

1. Teams must provide their own practice balls, uniforms, and other equipment they deem necessary. SM will provide each team a set (dozen) game balls. **These balls are not to be used for practice.**
2. Uniforms are not required, but uniformity is requested. Teams must have like-colored shirts with numbers on the back. Numbers should still be visible when shirts are tucked in.

3. One (1) umpire will work each regular season game. Two (2) umpires will work all playoff games (Spring only). Additional information on officials can be found in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports.
4. Field Supervisors are assigned by SM. Coaches, players, and spectators are expected to cooperate with the Field Supervisors in every way possible.
5. Head Coaches are the **ONLY** coaches permitted to address an umpire. Assistant Coaches and Spectators **ARE NOT** permitted to address an umpire regarding a call. Coaches should remain within the coaching box and not go on the field or in the stands.
6. Head coaches are responsible for maintaining proper conduct among their assistants, players, and spectators at all times (before, during, and after all practices and games at all practice/game facilities). Players, coaches, and spectators may be suspended from future games based on inappropriate behavior. Unsportsmanlike conduct is not tolerated.
7. Coaches are responsible for keeping spectators and non-rostered individuals off their benches and out of the dugout area.
8. Home team is listed to the left on the schedule. Home team will occupy the third base dugout/bench area and the visiting team will occupy the first base dugout/bench area.
9. Home team shall provide an official scorer and furnish the scorebook. However, it is recommended that the visiting team's scorer frequently check with the home team's scorer to avoid the possibility of mistakes. The scorebooks of home and visiting teams must be filled out with all player's first and last names, and uniform numbers. If this information is not provided, protests will be denied. In the event of any disputes that cannot be settled, the umpire will review both scorebooks immediately and make all necessary notations. **THE GAME WILL CONTINUE.** As soon as possible, after the conclusion of the game, the official scorer (the home team) will present SM with the score book and all pertinent information.

10. **Starting of Games:**

- A. There will be no grace period. Game time is forfeit time. Official time is by the umpire's watch/mobile phone.
- B. Teams should be at their game site thirty (30) minutes ahead of their scheduled game time. **A game can start earlier than the scheduled time only if both coaches agree.**
- C. **Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players present at game time to begin.** If a team does not have eight (8) players at game time, the game will be declared a forfeit by the umpire(s).
- D. If neither team has eight (8) players at game time, the game will be declared a double forfeit by the umpire and both teams will be credited with the applicable number of losses.
- E. If a game is forfeited, participants scheduled to play may use the field for thirty (30) minutes (**except at City View Park and the Princess Anne Athletic Complex**).
- F. SM staff will determine postponement or cancellation of games.
- G. **ANY DEVIATION OF THE ABOVE IS AT THE DISCRETION OF SM.**

11. **Pre-Game Warm Ups:**

- A. Teams must warm up in the designated areas on the field where they will be playing.
- B. Home teams should be behind the left field fence or deep enough in left field to prevent interference with the game that is taking place.
- C. Visitors should warm up behind the right field fence or deep enough in right field to prevent interference with the game that is taking place.
- D. Live batting practice with softballs, baseballs, safety softballs, rubber balls etc. is prohibited.
- E. Teams may hit wiffle balls, soft foam balls, and other restricted-flight balls in the designated warm-up areas (Home team – Left Field, Away team – Right Field) facing away from the infield. Hit sticks are allowed.
- F. **ANY BATTING WARM UPS REQUIRE THE PLAYERS TO WEAR HELMETS AT ALL TIMES.** At no time shall players be swinging bats near other players who are not wearing batting helmets.
- G. If you are not sure what warm up balls are approved for use, check with the SM office.
- H. Balls should not be hit or thrown towards pedestrian areas and/or walkways.
- I. Neither team is permitted to warm up on the infield before a game. This includes taking infield, pitching, or batting practice.
- J. For the first game of the day, teams can warm up in the regular outfield grass on the field.

- K. The areas directly adjacent to the dugouts are reserved for teams who are currently playing.
- L. Umpires and Field Supervisors may intervene if they see an unsafe situation.
- M. Players on teams scheduled for the next game shall keep behind the bleachers and may warm up in the side areas along the first and third base. However, they may not detract in any way from the game in progress. Once the previous game has concluded, teams may move to the outfield areas (See Above). For the pleasure and safety of spectators and fairness to the teams playing, coaches must enforce this rule.

PLAYER EQUIPMENT

Information on jewelry and uniform policy can be found in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports.

1. **Bats** – Only official softball bats will be allowed. Bats made of aluminum, graphite, or ceramic materials must have an official softball insignia on it or have had it before such an insignia wore off. Titanium bats are not allowed (NFHS Bat Rules Apply). A softball bat is permitted to have an adjustable knob, provided the knob is permanently fastened by the manufacturer.
2. **Balls** – This league will use a 12-inch optic yellow cover, red stitch, .47 CORE official fast pitch softball (USA or NFHS stamped). For each game, the home team will furnish one (1) new ball and one (1) acceptable (practically new) ball, and additional balls if necessary. The home team shall have at least two (2) other balls on hand and coaches are requested to make arrangements to have the balls retrieved promptly.
3. **Batting Helmets** – All batters, on-deck batters, base runners, and players participating in pre-game hitting warm up are required to wear protective batting helmets with a face mask at all times. It is mandatory for all batting helmets to be equipped with double ear flaps and a face mask. Helmets shall have a non-glare (not mirror-like) surface. Youth players, who occupy first or third as coaches, must also comply with this requirement. The face mask must meet NOCSAE standards for the mask and helmet combination and must be permanently attached by the manufacturer or attached by a procedure approved by the manufacturer with a NOCSAE warning label. Safety Note: Top inside padding of helmet must be touching the top of player's head. Intentionally removing the helmet while actively running the bases or deliberately wearing a helmet improperly shall result in the player being declared out, but shall not remove a force play. The ball remains live.

If an umpire observes a player wearing an illegal or damaged helmet while at bat, coming to bat or while on base, the umpire shall direct the player to change, without penalty, to a legal helmet. Failure to wear a legal helmet, when directed by the umpire, shall result in the ejection of the player.

4. Shoes with metal spikes are not allowed. Only shoes with rubber soles or plastic molded soles will be allowed.
5. **Defense (Pitchers and Infielders)** - It is **MANDATORY** that a protective face mask be worn by all infielders and pitchers for their safety. Any pitcher or infielder refusing to wear such protective gear will not be allowed to occupy the pitchers or infield positions. Face mask must be worn as intended by the manufacturer for safety purposes and no improper accessories that may be glittery, distracting, or the color of the ball may be worn. Distracting face mask may not be worn (umpires judgement). Face mask worn by defenders shall have a non-glare (non mirror-like) outer surface. An eye shield may be worn attached to a defensive player's face/head protection, but it must be constructed of a molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100 percent (no tint) allowable light transmission.
6. **Catchers** - It is mandatory for all catchers to wear a full helmet (no skull cap), with facemask and must meet NOCSAE standards), throat protector (not necessary if the face mask has an integrated throat protector), chest protector, and shin guards. Any player that is warming up a pitcher must wear a catcher's full helmet. Plastic visors attached to the catcher's helmet are prohibited. If an eye shield is worn attached to the catcher's helmet, it must be constructed of a molded, rigid material that is clear and permits 100 percent (no tint) allowable light transmission. The catcher's helmet shall have a non-glare (non mirror-like) surface.
7. Any wristband with a playbook/playcard attached shall be permitted as long as it is a single, solid color (not optic yellow), and does not have to match the color of the uniform. It shall only be worn on the non-pitching arm.

PLAYING RULES

1. **Base Distance and Pitching Distance** - The distance between all bases shall be 60 feet. The distance from the point at the back of home plate and the front of the pitching rubber shall be 43 feet. A pitching circle with a diameter of 16 feet or a radius of 8 feet will be lined on the field.
2. **Double First Bases** - Double first bases will be used at all fields for league play. The following rules will be enforced, consistent with National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) guidelines:
 - A. A batted ball hitting or bounding over the white portion is fair.

- B. A batted ball hitting or bounding over the orange portion is foul.
- C. The defense must use the white portion and batter-runner use the orange portion when a play is being made on the batter-runner.
 - i. The batter-runner is out when there is a play being made at first base and the batter-runner touches only the white portion provided the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to the white or orange base.
 - ii. The batter-runner is out for interference when there is a force play and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball while on the white base.
 - iii. Obstruction is called on the defense when there is a force play on the batter-runner, who touches only the orange portion and collides with the fielder about to catch a thrown ball, who is also on the orange portion.
- D. The offense or defense may use either the white or orange portion:
 - i. On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base.
 - ii. On an errant throw pulling the defense off the base into foul ground.
 - iii. When the defensive player uses the orange portion of the double base, the batter-runner can run in fair territory when the throw is coming from the foul side of first base, and if hit by the thrown ball, it is not interference. If intentional interference is ruled, the runner is out.
- E. The offense or defense may touch the white or orange base:
 - i. On a fair ball hit to the outfield with no play being attempted or the runner is returning to first base.
 - ii. On a fly ball tag-up play.
 - iii. On an attempted pick-off play.
 - iv. On a base on balls.

3. Team Makeup:

- A. Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players present at game time to begin. The line-up will be one (1) through eight (8). The ninth (9th) position will be recorded as an out.
- B. **BATTING LINE-UP:** The batting line-up will consist of every player in uniform in attendance at the game. The batting order will remain the same for the entire game.
- C. If additional players arrive after the game has begun, teams must insert their ninth (9th) player in their next vacant position (ninth (9th) position). If additional players arrive (and the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up has been filled), these additional players must be added to the end of the batting line-up.
- D. If a team loses a player due to injury or the player has to leave the game, their batting position will be skipped and no out will be recorded. If a team does not have a substitute and falls below nine (9) players, the vacated spot will count as an out. However, if a player cannot bat, they will not be allowed to re-enter the game.
- E. If a team loses a player due to an ejection, the spot vacated by the ejected player will be recorded as an out each time their batting position comes up.
- F. In order to continue play, a team must always have eight (8) players.

- 4. **Mandatory Play Rule** - Each player in uniform at the game site must play at least two (2) innings in the field and bat at least once. Any nine (9) players in the line-up may play in the field in any given inning. Both scorers will check players off in the scorebook when they play their required innings in the field. It is the coaches' responsibility to adhere to this rule. Violations will be brought to the attention of the SM Office and may result in suspension of the head coach. The Mandatory Play Rule is in effect for all games.
- 5. **6-Run Per Inning Rule** - For the Preteen B Division only, if the team at bat scores six (6) runs in one (1) half-inning before committing three (3) outs, that half-inning will be considered complete. Play will cease immediately after the sixth (6th) run is scored. Runners remaining on base will be considered to have had their turn at bat. Should a batter be in the box, the same batter (position) will lead-off in the next inning (with a fresh count). It is the responsibility of the score keepers (specifically the home team's score keeper) to inform the umpire when six (6) runs are attained. **Note: If the home team is behind by seven (7) or more runs, they are still entitled to their turn at bat. The choice will be up to the coach of the team.**
- 6. **15-Run Rule** - A 15 run rule shall be in effect for all games. The game is over and shall be declared by the umpire after four and a half (4½) complete innings if the home team is 15 or more runs ahead or after five (5) or more complete innings either team is 15

or more runs ahead.

7. **Playing Time:**

- A. If the game has gone on for less than one (1) hour and 20 minutes, a new inning will start and must be completed. A new inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the previous inning. The respective coaches can decide not to play the second half of the final inning if the game's outcome has been decided.
- B. No new inning shall start after the one (1) hour and 20 minute time limit has expired. If a game is tied at the end of an inning and after time has expired, the game will count as a tie.
- C. Home and visiting team must leave the field and dugout immediately following the game to allow for the next game.

8. **International Tie-Breaker Rule** - Starting with the top of the eighth inning, and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who made the last out of the previous inning being placed on second base. If an absent player is the one who should begin the half inning at second base, an out is not declared. Instead, place on second base the player whose name precedes the absent player's name in the line-up.

9. **4-3 Rule** - Four (4) balls will be a walk; three (3) strikes will be an out. No foul ball rule. **Exception:** A bunted ball that lands foul, and is the third (3rd) strike, is an out.

10. **Intentional Walk (Base on Balls)** - A request must be made to the umpire by the defensive coach, pitcher or catcher, for the purpose of awarding the batter first base. The request may be made prior to or during the at bat. The intentional walk is considered a time at bat and an appeal of the previous play cannot be made following the intentional walk.

11. **Hit Batter** - A batter hit by a pitch will automatically be given first base as long as the pitch was not ruled a strike and the batter was in the batter's box (umpires judgment), even if no attempt was made by the batter to evade the pitch. The hit batter is given a walk under these conditions, even if the pitched ball hits the ground before hitting the batter.

12. **Squeeze Play** - The squeeze play is allowed in all leagues. **Squeeze play defined:** A play in which a runner advances from third base toward home, following the release of a pitched ball, and during which the batter bunts.

13. **Courtesy Runner:**

- A. When there are two (2) outs, teams at bat **must** use a runner for the pitcher and catcher as soon as they reach base. The same runner may not be used for both positions. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.
- B. Players who have participated in the game in any capacity are ineligible to serve as courtesy runners. A player may not be a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then be used as a substitute in that half inning.
- C. Once a courtesy runner is designated for that half inning, no other courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher may return to run for the original courtesy runner.
- D. If an eligible player is not available, the player who made the second out of that half inning must become the courtesy runner for the catcher or pitcher.
- E. If a courtesy runner fails to report, they shall be considered a substitute.
- F. This rule will be in effect for all regular season and playoff games. **Exception:** Should an injury occur, another courtesy runner or the pitcher or catcher may run until she scores or is put out.

14. **Hidden Ball** - There will be no hidden ball tricks or anything to encourage a delay. Umpires will inform players to put the ball into play immediately and make every effort to keep the game moving.

15. **Illegal Pitch** – An illegal pitch shall be declared immediately by the umpire (delayed dead-ball signal). The batter is awarded a ball. Base runners will not be awarded one base. Exception: If the batter reaches first base safely and each other runner advances at least one base, the illegal pitch is nullified. All action stands and the illegal pitch is canceled. If runners advance beyond one base, though, the opposing team can try to get them out.

16. **Base Running:**

- A. Play is not automatically over when the pitcher receives the ball. The runner may continue to their destination. They may also stop past the base but the direction in which they then decide to run they must continue UNLESS the pitcher takes the ball out of the circle as to make a play. This can be done in the form of running at the runner herself, or throwing to another defensive player.
- B. The batter may not run back towards home plate when going to first base. They can STOP to slow down the play but cannot

go backwards.

- C. A runner may go into a base or home plate standing up; however, a runner cannot go into a base or home plate standing up and make contact with the fielder or alter the play of the fielder, this is an umpire's judgment. If a runner collides with a defensive player when they are going to make a play on the ball, the runner is automatically out. If a defensive player is not making a play and comes in contact with the runner, the runner automatically is awarded the next base. (Even if this collision causes the runner to get "out")
- D. **Look Back Rule:** When a runner 1) is legitimately off her base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat, and 2) is stationary when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the circle, the runner must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or immediately return to the previous base. The responsibility is completely on the runner. There is no obligation on the pitcher to look, fake or throw. Failure to immediately proceed to the next base or return to the previous base after the pitcher has possession of the ball within the circle will result in the runner being declared out. A runner who hesitates or "jitterbugs" is declared out. This is an umpire's judgement and cannot be protested. Complete details for this rule are in the NFHS Rule Book.
- E. A base runner, advancing to any base, must attempt to avoid a collision if the defensive player has possession of the ball or is about to catch a thrown ball. If the base runner does not attempt to avoid a collision and makes aggressive contact with the defensive player, she is automatically declared out and will be ejected from the game if deemed flagrant. Note: This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be protested.
- F. **Sliding:** Players may not slide head first, unless they are returning to a base.

17. Pitching:

- A. A coach will be allowed one (1) visit to the mound per inning. The second (2nd) appearance (in the same inning) necessitates the removal of the pitcher from the pitching position. If a player is removed from the pitching position, she may return to the pitching position a maximum of one (1) additional time and allowed five (5) warm-up pitches.
- B. Pitchers are allowed a maximum of five (5) warm-up pitches between innings.

Legal Pitch:

- A. When taking the pitching position in contact with the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must have their hands separated and must have the ball in either the glove or pitching hand.
- B. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- C. While on the pitcher's plate, the pitcher shall take a signal or appear to take a signal with the hands separated. The ball must remain in either the glove or pitching hand. If the pitcher does not pause after stepping onto the pitcher's plate to take a signal prior to bringing her hands together, an illegal pitch should be called.
- D. The pitcher shall bring the hands together for not less than one (1) second before releasing the ball.
- E. Any step backward with the non-pivot foot shall begin before the start of the pitch. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together.

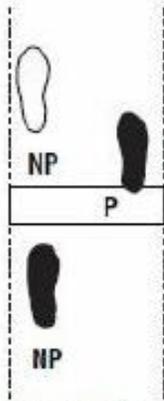
Legal Delivery:

- A. The pitcher shall not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- B. The pitcher shall not make a stop or reversal of the forward motion after separating the hands.
- C. The pitcher shall not make two revolutions of the arm on the windmill delivery.
- D. The delivery shall be an underhand motion with the hand below the hip.
- E. The pitch shall be delivered on the throwing arm side of the body and not behind the back or through the legs.
- F. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
- G. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball to prevent the batter from hitting it.
- H. The pitcher's pivot foot must remain in contact with the ground, either by staying in contact with the pitching rubber or by pushing off and dragging away from the pitching rubber, prior to the front foot touching the ground. If a hole has been created, the pivot foot may drag no higher than the level plane of the ground. The non-pivot foot needs to be close to, but does not have to touch, the pitching rubber at the start of the pitching motion. Techniques such as the "crow hop" (the replant of the pivot foot prior to delivering the pitch) and "the leap" (when both feet are airborne) are illegal. These actions, if and when they occur, are in the judgment of the umpire and may not be protested. (See diagram from NFHS rule book on next page).

Figure 6-1

REFERENCE CHART
FOR (F.P.) 6-1-1 AND 6-1-2

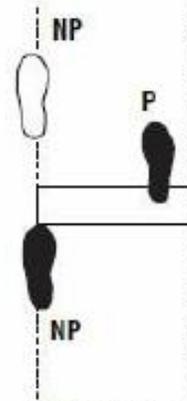
P = PIVOT
NP = NON-PIVOT
STARTING POSITION = BLACK
FINISHING POSITION = WHITE



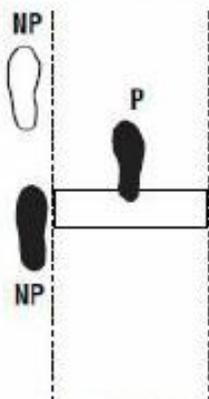
NO. 1 LEGAL
P — ON TOP
NP — BEHIND/WITHIN



NO. 2 LEGAL
P — ON TOP
NP — CONTACT/WITHIN



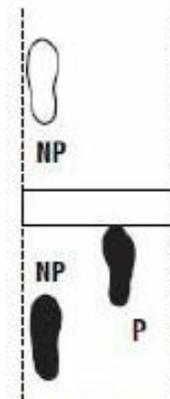
NO. 3 LEGAL
P — ON TOP
NP — CONTACT/WITHIN



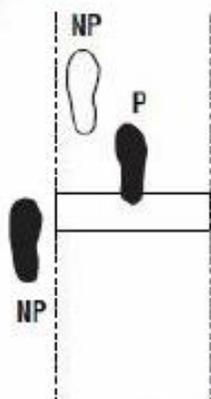
NO. 4 ILLEGAL
P — ON TOP (LEGAL)
NP — FORWARD STEP TOTALLY
OUTSIDE (ILLEGAL)



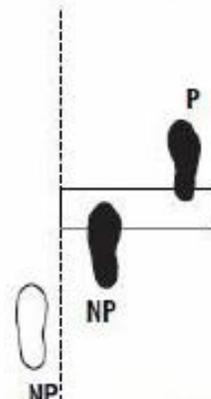
NO. 5 ILLEGAL
P — NOT ON TOP (ILLEGAL)
NP — BEHIND/WITHIN (LEGAL)



NO. 6 ILLEGAL
P — NOT ON TOP (ILLEGAL)
NP — BEHIND/WITHIN (LEGAL)



NO. 7 ILLEGAL
P — ON TOP (LEGAL)
NP — BEGINS TOTALLY OUTSIDE
(ILLEGAL)



NO. 8 ILLEGAL
P — ON TOP (LEGAL)
NP — BACKWARD STEP TOTALLY
OUTSIDE (ILLEGAL)

REGULATION GAMES

1. It will be a regulation game when seven (7) innings have been played and the game is not tied or the **time limit** has elapsed and each team has had an equal number of "at bats". If seven (7) innings have not yet been played and time remains, the next inning must be started even though it may be impossible to finish the inning within the time limit. Once an inning has started, it **must** be completed unless the respective coaches decide not to play the second half of the final inning. If a team is leading its opponent by 15 runs after five (5) innings (four and a half (4½) with the home team winning), the game will be terminated and the team with the most runs will be declared the winner. A new inning must not start after the time limit has elapsed.
2. It will be a regulation game when the umpire calls it on account of rain or other factors, which based on the umpire's judgment, interferes with further play provided five (5) or more innings have been played. Four and one half innings (4½) will constitute a regulation game if the home team has scored more runs in its four (4) innings than the visiting team has in its five (5) innings. If the game is ended prior to regulation, it will be rescheduled for a later date. Rescheduled games are **started over**, instead of resuming at the point of interruption. **Exception:** Playoff games are continued from the point of interruption.
3. If a game ends in a tie after seven (7) innings have been played and the time limit has not yet expired, the game will go into extra innings (see International tie-breaker rule, page 6) until a winner is decided or the time limit expires. If a game is tied at the end of an inning after time has expired, it will count as a tie in the league standings and will not be replayed. Ties count as half a win and half a loss in the standings.
4. Time Considerations for Injuries - In the event of an injury to a player, the umpire will allow only the time he/she deems necessary for the safe removal of the player. This amount of time will be added to the time limit of the game and the umpire will immediately inform each head coach of the new time limit.

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY (Spring Only)

1. At the end of the regular season, if two (2) or more teams are tied, the standings tiebreaker will be head-to-head play amongst all tied teams. When head-to-head play is used, runs scored/run differentials will not be considered; only win-loss. Additional tie-breaker information can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports.
2. The time limit will be in effect for all playoff games, except for the Championship game. **Note: The Preteen B Championship game will be a six (6) inning game (no time limit). If the game is tied after six (6) complete innings, the International Tie-Breaker Rule will be used to determine a winner** (see International Tie-Breaker Rule page 6).
3. The 15 run rule (after five (5) innings) is in effect for all playoff games.
4. Any playoff game halted will be rescheduled and will resume from point of interruption. Be prepared to play on short notice if games are rained out.
5. Higher seed shall be the home team. If teams have the same seeding, a coin flip shall be used to determine home team.
6. Game balls will be provided.

SCORES

The winning team is responsible for calling in the scores to 385-0456 (recording) by 8:00 a.m. the morning following the game. When calling, give the following information.

- A. Date Played
- B. League (12U, 15U, or 18U Fast Pitch) & Division (if there is more than one in your league)
- C. Game Site
- D. Team Names
- E. Scores (with winning team first)

It is very important that you call in scores so that accurate records of the standings can be maintained. In case of a tie, we ask both teams to call in.

WEBSITE

Updated schedules, scores, and standings can be found at the following website: VBgov.com/Sports.

SUSPENSION POLICY

Information on the suspension policy can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports.

PROTESTS

Information on protest instructions can be found in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports.

AUDIO/VISUAL

Information on the audio/visual policy can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports.

LIGHT DIFFICULTY

1. If light difficulty should occur, please see on-site Field Supervisor, if available.
2. Any difficulty arising out of light trouble during the progress of a game will be decided in this manner:
 - A. If the losing team has batted five (5) times or more, it will be considered an official game.
 - B. If the losing team has not batted at least five (5) times, the game will be replayed.
3. Games will not be delayed more than 30 minutes to wait for the lights to come on, unless teams are informed otherwise.
4. Any other problems that may arise out of difficulties with lights will be decided by the umpire. Teams will abide by this decision.

INCLEMENT WEATHER - CONDITION OF THE PLAYING FIELD

Information on inclement weather policy can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports.

LIGHTNING PROCEDURE

Coaches, Field Supervisors, and umpires will use the following guidelines for suspension and resumption of play when thunder or lightning is present:

1. When thunder is heard, detected, imminent or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. For practice; coaches will alert all players and spectators to take shelter immediately and suspend all practices. For games; Umpires, Field Supervisors or facility staff will alert coaches, players, and spectators to take shelter immediately and suspend all games. It is critical to monitor how far away the lightning is occurring and how fast the storm is approaching, relative to the distance of a safe shelter.
2. All team members should seek shelter in a building or vehicle away from the fields. Umpires or Field Supervisors will notify coaches when the game will resume or be suspended.
3. 30 Minute Rule: Once play has ceased, teams will wait no more than 30 minutes from the original game start time before resuming play. If more than 30 minutes elapses from the original game start time, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled for a later date. Additional games will continue on their regular scheduled start time unless a lightning delay is still in effect.
4. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30 minute count the clock must be reset and another 30 minute count will begin before play can be resumed.
5. The responsibility for removing athletes from the practice/game area in a timely manner lies with the head coach of the team. If the head coach is not present, an assistant coach will assume responsibility. If unable to reach safe shelter, persons should stay away from the tallest trees or objects (i.e. light poles, flag poles, etc.), metal objects (i.e. fences, bleachers, etc.), individual trees, standing pools of water, and open fields. Persons should avoid being the highest object in an open field (crouching is recommended in this event).

INSURANCE

Information on insurance requirements can be found in the General Bylaws For All Community League Sports

INJURED PLAYERS

Information on injured players can be found in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports.

FACILITY USE

Information on facility use can be found in the General Bylaws for All Community League Sports.

NOTES

- ✓ The Sports Management Coordinator has the authority to make final decisions on all bylaws, interpretations and any matters concerning all youth sports, and will impose penalties and suspensions upon teams, coaches, and players as necessary to insure the orderly conduct of the league.
- ✓ Coaches will advise parents, players, and assistant coaches of the bylaws. Unfamiliarity of any rule in the bylaws on the part of the coach, parent, player, or assistant coaches shall not be tolerated.
- ✓ These Bylaws are in addition to the **GENERAL BYLAWS FOR ALL COMMUNITY LEAGUE SPORTS.**

COVID-19 Youth Fast Pitch Softball Bylaw Additions

*** COVID-19 bylaw additions will supersede Youth Softball rules and regulations and the National Federation of High School (NFHS) Fastpitch rules.**

Coaches, officials, players, and parents must conduct a daily screening for COVID-19 symptoms prior to coming to the facility. It is suggested that anyone exhibiting and/or experiencing the following symptoms of possible exposure to COVID-19 listed below not come to any facility (games and/or practices) until such time as symptoms are no longer present.

- Fever (Temp of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)
- A new cough that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- New chills that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- New sore throat that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- New muscle aches that cannot be attributed to another health condition or specific activity

Teams:

- Players provide their own (clearly marked) water bottles.
- Players bring their own hand sanitizers.
- All players and coaches must maintain 10 feet physical distance.
- Equipment placed 10 feet apart from each other along the extended dugout area (both 1B and 3B side). No equipment should be placed in the dugout.
- Players/teams provide antibacterial wipes to sanitize equipment regularly.
- Players are encouraged to use their own bat.
- Designate a coach responsible for picking up bats after use. This coach should wear disposable gloves and wipe down bats after each use.
- Pre-game & post-game handshakes/high fives prohibited, and instead, more appropriate (socially distant) displays of sportsmanship are encouraged along with no physical contact (high fives, huddles, fist bumps, etc.) and/or sharing of equipment (helmet, water bottle, towel, clothing, etc.) between players.
- No use of sunflower seeds, gum, or other similar products along with no spitting or other similar acts.

Coaches:

- Encouraged to wear a mask or a face covering.
- Pre-game meeting: Only one coach allowed during the meeting and maintain 10 feet apart.
- Lineup cards: exchange team to team (to scorekeeper) via photo, text, or verbal exchange with at least 10 feet physical distancing. No paper lineups shared.
- Pitcher visit: maintain 10 feet physical distancing and all other players stay outside the pitching circle.
- Softballs periodically disinfected or replaced during the game. New balls should be supplied to the umpire during the pre-game meeting. Used balls should be sanitized before going into the game. Home team will be responsible for switching out softballs.
- Base coaches must stay 10 feet from a runner during or after suspension of play.

Parents/Spectators:

***If Virginia Safer at Home guidelines limit social gatherings to 50 people, spectators will be limited to immediate family only (parents and siblings of the player). If the Virginia Safer at Home guidelines limit social gatherings of 250 people, spectators (not just immediate family) will be allowed at games.**

- Encouraged to wear a mask or face covering.
- Proactively monitor their own household's health status.
- No bleachers will be available (used for expanded dugout/team area).
- Parents/spectators can line the outfield fence line with chairs, and/or stand, etc. but should remain 10 feet from spectators of different households during practices/games.

- Provide own hand sanitizer.
- Provide own sanitizing wipes.
- Consider limiting the number of family members who attend a game (see above).
- If an individual is incapable of maintaining physical distancing on their own (ex: young child), they must be accompanied at all times by someone who can ensure physical distancing is maintained (ex: to the restroom, etc.).

During the Game:

- Use of verbal exchange from safe distance when making lineup changes.
- Coach to umpire interaction must be 10 feet apart.
- Umpires will maintain 10 feet from any player and/or coach, where practicable as a starting position (behind the pitcher's mound).
- Umpires should wear a mask or face covering if unable to keep 10 feet physical distance between self and players.
- Catcher must be 10 feet from the plate when umpire needs to dust off the plate.
- Meetings off the field with coaches and players need to be in a half circle maintaining 10 feet physical distancing.

Before/After the Game:

- No tailgating or congregating in the facility or parking lot before or after games. Teams required to exit the field and facility within 15 minutes of the game ending.
- One (1) game played on each field per night to prevent large congregations of players, teams, and spectators.
- No before/after game snacks.
- No before/after game huddles and/or talks unless 10 feet physical distancing can be maintained.