

**CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**



of Metro Detroit

**2026
SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL
RULES & REGULATIONS**

Men's, Women's and Coed Leagues

Dear Manager,

We have revised this document to give you important information in regards to participating in our league. The information, in conjunction with the USA Softball rulebook, should serve as a guide for your season. As always, I am open for communication on any topic. Please do not hesitate to call or email as needed. I will also be around at many of the games and would enjoy talking to you then. Please keep this rulebook with you and use it as a reference as the season progresses. I hope that you enjoy the season with your friends and some good competition. Good Luck!

Troy Nowotny

STERLING HEIGHTS PARKS & RECREATION STAFF

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Business Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Administrative Policies

LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

The Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation Department and its duly appointed representatives shall be responsible for the administration of this program.

USA Softball

All teams in the league will be registered with USA Softball automatically. Your registration fee is included in your entry fee.

MEETINGS

Meetings shall be called at the discretion of the Parks and Recreation Department. All teams must have a representative (manager or otherwise appointed) at the Manager's Meeting or any other scheduled meeting.

SCHEDULES

In an effort to conclude a season in a timely manner, league games and/or makeup games shall be played on dates and times designated by Parks and Recreation and may deviate from the normal days played on.

MEMBERSHIP

Any player who has attained the age of 18 years and/or has graduated from high school, on or before September 1st of the given season, and has a validated contract on file, is eligible for membership in the Sterling Heights Softball League. Teams and individual players may register and participate in any and all leagues sponsored by the Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation Department as long as all applicable rules are observed.

ROSTERS

We encourage teams to have as many players as possible. As long as rosters are completed in full they will be considered a legal member of the team.

No player shall appear in the line-up of any team in the League unless his name is legally affixed to a completed and validated roster, which must be on file in the Parks and Recreation office. Players can only be on one roster per night. A player to that is listed on multiple rosters will be considered illegal for all teams they are on.

CUT-OFF DATE FOR SIGNING NEW PLAYERS

Deadline for adding players shall be 4th week in the Spring, 2nd week in the Fall for all leagues.

REPLACING PLAYERS - Injured or Armed Forces

In the event a player is lost to a team at any time during the season because of a serious injury or sickness, said team shall be allowed to replace the injured or sick player. The players shall go on a voluntary retired list and shall not be eligible to play with any team in the program for the remainder of the season.

A doctor's certificate certifying that the player has suffered a serious injury or sickness may be required before a player replacing the injured or sick player can be used. Dr.'s Certificate and new player's contract may be turned in the same day the new player is to play rather than the day before.

Any team losing a player to the Armed Forces shall be allowed to replace this player at any time. Only a player who has not played in the program during the present season may replace the vacated player's roster spot. This player is eligible for all playoffs.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Alcoholic beverages are allowed **at L. W. BAUMGARTNER PARK ONLY**, never at **Delia Park** or any school diamond.

Drinking is not allowed before, during or between the games in which you are participating. This includes split double-headers!!!

Any player guilty of this infraction will be subject to one of the following actions, depending on the circumstances:

1. Not permitted to play the upcoming game (if found prior to game)
2. Ejection from current game and Three Week Suspension
3. Expulsion from the league

AWARDS

Regular season and playoff champions will receive a team and individual awards.

FORFEITS

A team must have a **minimum of 8 players to start and finish a game.**

As a courtesy to the Recreation Department and the opposing team, if you know you are unable to field a team, please call and notify the office as soon as possible. This will allow us to cancel the umpire and notify the other team not to appear.

A forfeiting team has three options in regards to forfeits and umpire fees:

1. Contact the Parks and Recreation Department 48 hours or more in advance- No penalties for umpire or forfeit fees will be levied.
2. Contact the Parks and Recreation Department less than 48 hours in advance or forfeit at the field- Forfeiting team is responsible for paying umpire fees for both teams at the scheduled game time.
3. No call/no show- \$100 forfeit fee is kept by the Parks and Recreation Department and an additional \$100 must be put on file before participating in the next scheduled game.

Any team forfeiting two games in succession or three games during the season, may be suspended from the league. In such cases, forfeits (wins) shall be awarded to the opposing teams in all previously played games and games remaining on the schedule. The schedule may then be revised.

If a rain-out occurs when you have called 48 hours or more in advance, you may have the opportunity to make that game up. You will not be penalized for your courtesy.

MANAGERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

A manager is responsible for the conduct of his team and coaches before, during, and after a game.

Any manager not making a genuine and sincere effort to restrain an unruly player, who is subsequently ejected from the game, may also suffer ejection and a minimum one game suspension.

Managers are not required to always keep a roster copy with them. Official rosters will be kept in the Softball Office at L.W. Baumgartner Park. This roster will be accessible in the event of a roster challenge. A manager may be challenged at any time during a game, but not after a game. See rules on ineligible players.

Each individual team is required to keep a record of the team line-up and scores. Please be sure to check with the opposing team after each half inning to verify the score.

Managers shall be responsible for the eligibility of their players and for the validity of their contracts/rosters. An illegal contract/roster makes an illegal player. (See penalty for illegal player.)

In case of inquiry concerning any member or members of his team, the manager shall be liable for producing any evidence of records requested by Parks and Recreation.

REMINDER - Managers make sure your players are aware of the "NO DRINKING BEFORE / DURING GAME" rule and that your players observe this rule.

Any change in managership of a team must be filed with the Parks and Recreation office the next business day, listing the new manager's name, address and telephone number.

PLAYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Players must always have their driver's license/state ID with them. Players cannot go to the car to get their wallet. If a player is challenged and cannot produce identification on the spot, the player is considered illegal (see penalty for illegal player).

Players must notify the Parks and Recreation Department and manager of any change in address.

Players must observe the Rules and Regulations of the City of Sterling Heights, Parks and Recreation Department and the League. Players must conduct themselves in a gentlemanly and sportsmanlike manner.

Each player is responsible for his personal conduct and must refrain from drinking during his game, whether he is playing or not.

Each player should refrain from using language unsuitable for a public place. Continued usage will result in ejection and a two-game suspension.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Change of address or phone number must be immediately filed with the Parks and Recreation Department office or its duly appointed representative. Failure to comply will result in this player becoming illegal.

ILLEGAL/ INELIGIBLE PLAYER

An illegal player is:

- Anyone who falsifies the roster in any way.

- Anyone who has been officially released/suspended from the league.
- Anyone who cannot produce identification or produces false identification.
- Anyone not on the team roster or with incomplete information by the cut-off date.

PENALTY FOR USE OF ILLEGAL PLAYERS

Any team using a suspended, ineligible, or released player shall be penalized in the following manner:

- A. The current game will be forfeited.
- B. Player will be suspended for three weeks.
- C. Manager may also be suspended.

ROSTER CHALLENGES

A player's eligibility may be challenged at any point before or during a game in progress. Roster challenges should be specific to a person, not the entire team. There is no financial penalty for a roster challenge.

Once a roster challenge is called, the player in question must produce identification on the spot (cannot go to the car). This will be checked against the official roster kept in the Softball Office at L.W. Baumgartner Park. Any player not able to produce identification or not on the roster is an ineligible/illegal player (please see penalties under use of illegal player).

If the player is accurately stated on the roster and you believe they have been playing on multiple teams, you can ask that we match it up with a roster from another team to see if a player is listed on both teams. If the player is listed on both teams he/she is then considered an illegal player and the team will forfeit the game. We can then work with the player to get them on the correct team if they choose with a minimum of a one game suspension. It is the responsibility of the manager to send the rulebook to all players and make sure they know this when they sign the roster.

CONDUCT

Parks and Recreation have adopted a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** that focuses on improper behavior and speech of players, coaches and spectators. Accordingly, players, coaches, and the managers on and off the playing area, before, during or after a game, shall conduct themselves in an orderly and acceptable manner. Any player, manager, or coach striking, threatening, or verbally abusing an official, spectator, fellow teammate, member of the opposing team, or Department staff member, found guilty of inciting a disturbance or riot shall be suspended indefinitely from league play pending review by the Recreation Supervisor. Any spectator, player, coach or manager using profane language will be ejected. The penalty for players, coaches and managers will be a minimum one-game suspension. Any player

removed by "ejection" will be suspended from their next scheduled game (or more depending upon the nature of the infraction). Penalties shall apply whether the offense occurs before, during or after a game. Further infractions may result in lengthier penalties.

SUSPENSIONS

Parks and Recreation or its appointed representatives will have the authority to suspend a player for infraction of rules which may or may not be in the jurisdiction of an official and are noticed by the Department or its representatives. Such suspension will be in effect immediately. The penalty for players, coaches and managers will be a minimum one-game suspension. Any player removed by "ejection" will be suspended from their next scheduled game (or more depending upon the nature of the infraction). Penalties shall apply whether the offense occurs before, during or after a game. Further infractions may result in lengthier penalties. The player or players involved have the right to appeal the suspension in writing. This appeal will then be read and a decision made at the earliest possible date. A current list of suspended players is on file at the Parks and Recreation office.

Suspensions will be carried over to the following season for any player that is suspended towards the end of the season and still has games to be served.

PARK REGULATIONS - L.W. BAUMGARTNER PARK

1. Please drive slowly and carefully in the parking lot. Watch for children.
2. No alcoholic beverages in immediate dugout area.
3. No drinking alcoholic beverages before or during a game in which you are a participant.
4. Only the managers, players, coaches and scorekeepers are permitted in the dugout. No children!
5. Bikes must be walked through the park.
6. No dogs in park without being on a leash, six foot maximum. Dogs must not be unattended at any point.
7. Warm up in designated areas only.

END OF SEASON STANDINGS TIES

In the event two or more teams are tied for first place at the end of the season, a one game playoff will be held.

If the tie involves three teams, the team with the best win/loss record against the other two will draw a bye. The other two teams will play one game, with the winner of that game meeting the bye team for the championship. If none of the three teams has a clear-cut win/loss record advantage, the team with the least runs scored against, in the

games among the three will draw a bye. If all points, etc. shall be equal, a random draw shall be held to determine the bye.

All other ties for placement/seeding will be determined by head-to-head record or runs against during the head-to-head games.

PLAYOFFS

Single Elimination Playoffs will begin at the end of the regular season, and the Parks and Recreation Department will determine the schedule. Brackets will be determined according to regular season record.

TRANSFERS FROM ONE LEAGUE TO ANOTHER

Teams desiring to transfer leagues will be placed on a list. Transfer priority will be based on previous year's regular season division finish. Transfer decision will be made after entry fee deadlines, and you will be notified immediately of your status.

POSTPONEMENT OF GAMES

The softball hotline is available to disseminate information on postponed games. No games are cancelled before 5:00 p.m. **Beginning at 5:00 p.m., players may call 586-446-2693 to receive the latest status of that night's games.** IN CASE OF POSTPONEMENT: MANAGER WILL NOT BE CALLED. The hotline will be updated as soon as weather conditions dictate.

Please do not call the main Parks and Recreation office. Please advise your players not to call the office. This only ties up the office lines of communication.

UMPIRES

The Parks and Recreation Department will contract with the officials. They have complete authority over the playing area and the conduct of the game. All umpire fees are the responsibility of the teams participating. In all leagues, one umpire will be assigned to all games. The City will not pay any umpire fees. Umpires shall be required to:

- A. Start game on time.
- B. Keep players hustling and game moving.
- C. Acquaint managers with ground rules and/or any other unique rules.
- D. Enforce rules and regulations governing the game.
- E. Warn players, managers and spectators who violate the rules and eject them from the game and/or facilities, if necessary.

Umpires are scheduled by an outside association, not by the Sterling Heights Recreation Department.

League Rules

LEAGUE RULES

USA Softball rules will be in effect for all games played. However, Sterling Heights league rules will take precedence over USA Softball when there is a deviation.

DRESS CODE

No uniform dress code is in effect. However, players are expected to dress suitably. Shirts and shoes must be worn. Hats or visors may be worn forward or backward. Bandanas are permitted; however, players may be required to take the bandana off if it becomes a safety concern during the game.

SOFTBALLS

Softballs will be provided by the Parks and Recreation department and supplied at each game. Managers are not responsible for bringing a new ball each week. We will be using an ASA certified

Men's League- 12" optic yellow softball

Coed League- 12" optic yellow softball

Women's League- 11" optic yellow softball

GRACE PERIOD

Each game will have a ten-minute grace period, effective from the regularly scheduled game time. Time used will be subtracted from the total minutes allowed for game play. The umpire's ruling will be final. Any team not ready to start after the grace period shall be subject to loss of the game by forfeiture. The grace period starts at the scheduled game time or when the teams and umpires are ready to start play if not the first game of the night.

HOME TEAM

For position rounds, all tie breakers, and all play-off games, the higher seeded team will be home team. On the schedule the team listed second will be the home team.

TIME LIMIT

Game times will be implemented at **70 minutes**. The 7th inning is the final inning of all games regardless of score. No new inning will begin after time limit expires. Current inning will be completed. Tie games can and will result in a tie if the score is tied upon the completion of this inning. Unavoidable delays (injury, equipment failure) shall not be counted toward time limit. Intentional delays are not reason for extra time. In the event of

inclement weather, a game will be considered complete after 5 innings of play, or 4 ½ if the home team is winning. This includes the playoffs and championship game.

GROUND RULES

Pitching rubber will be at 50'. Pitching from up to 6 feet behind the pitchers plate is legal provided one of the feet stay within the 24" width. Pitch must still satisfy the 6' to 10' arc and not have excessive speed.

Bases will be set at 70'.

COED ONLY- Two of each sex must occupy both infield and outfield positions and one of each will make up the battery.

EQUIPMENT

Metal spikes (including metal tipped cleats) are **NOT** legal in any of Sterling Heights' adult softball leagues. Any person found wearing metal spikes will be asked to change into legal athletic shoes. If they refuse to do so or question why, the player will be ejected from the current game and an out will be taken in the spot if no person is available to substitute.

See also the section on ejections for further action.

- The pitcher and catcher both MAY wear helmets.
- The pitcher, as well as the catcher, MAY wear a face mask.
- A nose brace is illegal and may not be worn.
- Metal finger splints are illegal and a player wearing one may not play.
- Anyone wearing a brace with exposed metal parts must cover the metal surface with tape, elastic bandage, etc.
- Jewelry may be worn if it is not loose hanging or a safety hazard to the player or players around them.
- A player with a rigid cast may not play.

USA Softball Bat Testing & Certification Program

***** Information on non-linear bats with unique barrel compression thresholds can be seen on the Non-Linear Bat Compression Thresholds page.**

CERTIFIED/APPROVED: The official bat for USA Softball Championship Play must meet all the USA Softball specifications and the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1, The official bat, made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burs, dents cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The official bat must bear either the 2000 Certification Mark, 2004 Certification Mark, or 2013 Certification Mark (Slow Pitch, Men's Adult Fast Pitch, Junior

Olympic Boy's Fast Pitch and Men's Modified only), as shown below and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with 2000 or 2004 Certification Mark.



NOTE: USA Softball has begun transitioning to the new USA Softball Certification Marks for the 2020 calendar year. On behalf of equipment manufacturers, the USA Softball Equipment Testing and Certification Committee requested that the new certification marks be approved for the 2019 calendar year and the USA Softball Board of Directors approved the new marks (seen here) for 2019 USA Softball Championship Play. The Official Rules of Softball, Rule 3, Sections 1 and 3 will be updated for 2020 to identify the new Certification Marks for Championship Play.



All Games



Adult Fast Pitch/All Slow Pitch

BANNED BAT LISTS-

<https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>

https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/build_batlist_w_pics_2000.asp

https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/build_batlist_w_pics_2004.asp

****ALL BATS ARE TESTED PRIOR TO USE IN ANY GAME IN STERLING HEIGHTS****

All tested bats will have a piece of tape placed around the neck to indicate the bat is legal and is not on the banned bat list.

Any player entering the batter's box or has been discovered using a non-approved bat will be called out **AND EJECTED** from the contest. Any future infraction may result in longer suspensions and or expulsion from the league.

BATTING

We will be using a 3-2 count. In the event the second strike is a foul ball, the batter will be awarded one additional strike. Any subsequent foul ball will constitute an out.

COURTESY RUNNER

There shall be two runners allowed per inning. The runner must be the last out or the least likely to bat that inning (in the event that there is not a "last out"). THERE ARE NO COURTESY RUNNERS FOR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES. If a courtesy runner's batting spot comes up and they are on base, the out is recorded in the batters spot and the courtesy runner remains on base.

COED ONLY- Courtesy runner must be the same sex as the runner they are running for.

HOME RUN LIMIT

A batted ball that goes over the fence in fair territory without first touching the ground will result in a home run. A batted ball that goes under, through or gets lodged in the fence will result in a ground rule triple.

A limit of 3 home runs will be in place for all games played at Baumgartner Park. In the event that a 4th home run is hit no runs will be awarded and the batter will be considered out.

RUN AHEAD RULE (FORMERLY MERCY RULE)

The Mercy Rule of 12 runs after five innings or 15 runs after 4 innings will be in effect for all Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation softball leagues.

This rule will be in effect for all games including playoffs/championships.

EXTRA HITTER RULE

Please learn this rule as improper use will result in ejection of illegal player and manager. EACH TEAM MAY USE A MAXIMUM OF FOUR (4) EXTRA HITTERS. Use of an extra hitter/hitters remains optional. If players are at the field prior to the start of the game, the extra hitter may appear anywhere in the line-up. Extra Hitters may be added to the lineup at any time during the game at the bottom of the lineup They are allowed to enter the game when ready to play.

COED ONLY LINE-UP-

Batting order - A 1:1 ratio of male to female batters should be maintained at all times.

A. Should a team elect to begin the game with two same sex hitters in a row, the out will be waived until a sub arrives. The back to back must be placed at the end of the lineup. This spot can remain vacant throughout the game. If players arrive to the field via the extra hitter rule, they must be placed into the position between the two same sex batters first. There will be only one occurrence of the vacated batter allowed. Three same sex batters will never be allowed to bat in a row.

a. Effect: If two same sex hitters are batting back to back and the first one walks, the award is only 1st base

- B. If there is an event where a player has to leave for any reason, creating a situation where two same sex batters should bat in a row, an out will be recorded in between..

Men's and Women's Line-up Rule-

If you begin the game using extra hitters (eleven or more players), and an injury does occur, you may finish the game penalty free with one less player. If all extra players are added after the first pitch, the penalty free does not apply and an out is recorded in the open spot. Any 10 players listed in the offensive lineup can play defense. In the event that two or more people must leave the game due to injury, ejection, or any other circumstance, the player's team will have to forfeit the game, and a win will be awarded to the opposing team. If you begin the game using extra hitters (eleven or more players), and an injury does occur, you may finish the game penalty free with one less player. If all extra players are added after the first pitch, the penalty free does not apply and an out is recorded in the open spot. Any 10 players listed in the offensive lineup can play defense. In the event that two or more people must leave the game due to injury, ejection, or any other circumstance, the player's team will have to forfeit the game, and a win will be awarded to the opposing team.

RE-ENTRY RULE

Any player may be substituted or replaced, and re-entered once, providing players occupy the same batting positions whenever in the lineup.

SCOREBOARD USAGE

The electronic scoreboards at L.W. Baumgartner Park are provided for your convenience. Most umpires have the app for the scoreboard on their phone. Some do not, please assist them keeping score when possible.

STERLING HEIGHTS PARKS AND RECREATION ALSO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT ARE DEEMED TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE LEAGUE AND PROGRAM.



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