

CITY OF LARGO



SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

CITY OF LARGO RECREATION, PARKS and ARTS DEPARTMENT
Athletics Division
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MEN'S AND COED ADULT SOFTBALL BYLAWS

The object of these leagues shall be: To develop character, skill, sportsmanship and good will among teams and individuals participating

I. AGE REQUIREMENTS:

- A. Men's, Coed Leagues: Players must be at least 16 years old.

II. PLAYER ROSTER ELIGIBILITY AND CONTRACTS:

- A. Rosters are frozen after the 3rd game. If after the 3rd game a team needs to use a player not on your roster, inform Largo Staff and that player must sign the roster. The newly added player must then play in three (3) games to be eligible for playoffs. The player MUST check in with Largo staff before every game for that game to count towards the total.*If a player plays in a doubleheader, both of those games count towards the three game total.
- B. The legality of all players is the responsibility of each manager.
- C. If a player plays on more than one team, that player must be in a different division to do so and on the roster of both teams.
- D. In order for a player to switch teams, he/she must do so before the 3rd game and contact the Athletics office for approval. After the 3rd game, all rosters are frozen and players will not be allowed to switch teams.
- E. All players must COMPLETELY AND LEGIBLY sign their team's roster.
- F. Teams are NOT required to have uniforms. However, they are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED and RECOMMENDED, as it makes for a more professional look and feel to the league. It also helps scorekeepers and umpires in regards to keeping track of players, subs, etc.

III. SCHEDULING OF GAMES:

- A. Games will be played in accordance with the schedule produced by the Athletics Department with the diamonds and time of games distributed as equally as possible. Furthermore, all teams will be grouped together by skill level as evenly as possible by the Athletics Department. All department decisions regarding this are final.
- B. The department reserves the right to arrange postponed games at its convenience in order to catch up with the schedule. The department also reserves the right to cancel games, if necessary, due to excessive rain or conditions beyond our control. In the event of any misunderstanding or error, managers are urged to contact the department.

- C. If a team forfeits 2 games in succession or 3 games overall in a season for not having the required number of players, the team may be dropped for the from the league for the remainder of the season.

IV. STANDARD GAME PROCEDURE:

A. Starting time of games:

1. Game times are 6:45, 7:45, and 8:45pm, lasting 70 minutes in length. Games may start earlier if BOTH managers comply and agree that BOTH teams are ready to play; if both teams are not ready, the game will not start until the designated time on the schedule.

2. A 10 minute grace period will be in effect for the first scheduled game ONLY. Teams with not enough players will receive an automatic out their 1st time at bat. If both teams do not have enough players to begin the game, 1 out will be taken by both teams their 1st time at bat.

3. Lineups are due to the scorekeeper prior to the 1st pitch of the game. If one or both teams do not have their lineups in at this point, the game will be halted (with clock running) until the lineups are in. Lineups are finalized at 1st pitch and cannot be changed then. If a batter is not present and his spot comes up, he will be an automatic out. The coach may add the 10th player at any time of the game. The 11th player must be present at the start of the game in order to be in the lineup.

V. PLAYING RULES AND EQUIPMENT:

ALL GAMES WILL BE PLAYED UNDER ASA RULES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ON LEAGUE SCHEDULE OR LISTED IN THESE BYLAWS.

- A. The scorekeepers time is the official time. The managers will meet with the umpires prior to the start of the game to go over ground rules and procedures. Once the manager's meeting has concluded, the umpire will announce that the time will start, and the scorekeeper will then activate the clock. Major injuries will stop the clock (once 5 minutes has passed), otherwise, the clock will continue for the full 70 minutes.
- B. **The home team will supply 2 NEW softballs, with a .52 core and a 300 compression. Balls must be certified ASA. Any sanction other than ASA is not allowed. Softballs will be available and sold at the complex for \$5.**
- C. All players are required to have ASA legal equipment/bats. All coaches and players must follow the ASA sanctioned non-approved bat list. An updated list will be supplied to each scorekeeper at the scores-table. The umpires will check all bats before the game. The coaches will receive the 1st warning at the coaches meeting for any use of an illegal bat. After the coaches meeting an automatic ejection of the player and the coach will occur if an illegal bat is brought into the batters box.
- D. All games will be played using a hitting net. The hitting net will be 6'6" tall and 3' wide. The net will be placed directly in front of the first rubber. The following rules will govern the game play effects of the hitting net:
 - 1. The City of Largo will provide the hitting nets used in play. Largo staff or

umpires will set up and take down the hitting nets.

2. After throwing a pitch, the pitcher must immediately stand behind the net. After the first pitch where the pitcher does not stand behind the net, he/she will receive a warning. After the second incident, that player will no longer be allowed to pitch in that game, but they remain in the game.

3. If the pitcher does not get behind the net after throwing the pitch and then makes a play on the ball, the umpire shall call "Dead Ball" and award the batter first base. All runners on base will advance one base. This will also count towards the pitchers warning to get behind the net after the pitch. If the pitcher has already been warned, they will no longer be allowed to pitch.

4. At the beginning of each half-inning and when a new pitcher starts pitching, the pitcher may adjust the net to their liking for their pitching. This can include sliding it forward, to the left or right. Once the half inning has started, the net cannot be adjusted unless a new pitcher comes in or the inning ends. If the pitcher moves the net after a pitch has been thrown, the batter at the plate will be given first base and all runners on base will advance one base.

5. All batted balls that make contact with the net will be a foul ball. If a batter has used their courtesy foul and they hit the net, they will be called out.

6. The pitcher must stay behind the hitting net until the batter has made contact with the ball. Once the batter has made contact, the pitcher can leave the hitting net area to make a play on the ball. The pitcher can run in front of or to the side of the net to catch a fly ball or field a ground ball, provided they stayed behind the net until the batter made contact with the ball.

7. Pitchers are not required to wear a helmet, but can if they choose to.

8. After the batter has made contact and the ball has passed the hitting net, the hitting net will become part of the playing field. If the ball hits the net after it has been thrown, it will be a live ball.

9. Fielders cannot move the net in order to make an attempt on a ball in play. If a player moves the net during a live ball scenario, a dead ball will be called and the batter will be awarded first base. All runners on base will be awarded the next base.

10. Stealing will still be allowed in Men's leagues only. Balls thrown into the net in an attempt to throw the runner out will be live balls.

E. Teams may start with 8 players.

If a team loses a player for a reason other than ejection then team rosters will be consolidated and they will not have to take an out. If a team has an ejected player and they do not have a substitute they must take an out for that ejected player.

Once a team falls to 7 players it is a forfeit.

F. Home Run Limit – Progressive Home Run Rule: Hit and Sit

3 Home Runs and Progressive (ALL Leagues). Once reaching the limit, home runs will be an out or can increase on a progression. For example, if both teams reach their three home run limit, they are each permitted another home run. Each team will be allowed one more whenever their opponent has matched the number they have hit. Example: If your team has hit 4, and your opponent has hit 3, your team will not be allowed another home run until your opponent hits their 4th. After a home run is hit, the player returns to the bench, without touching the bases. (Hit and Sit Rule). The team that hit the home run must put another ball in play or retrieve the home run ball. Scenario: If a team is batting and their opponent has hit four home runs while they have hit three,

the team that is batting is permitted to hit two home runs that inning. Any additional home runs will be an out.

NOTE: On a four base error, USA Rules state that the runner must touch first base. In the interest of saving time, the batter is allowed to hit and sit in the event of a four base error.

- G. In the last inning, whether the 7th or an earlier inning ending due to time or extra innings, the home team WILL NOT be allowed to go one up if it came into the inning either (1) below the home run limit or (2) 1 home run behind the visitor. Example: If the visitor has 2 more home runs and the home team has 0 going into the last inning of play, the home team can hit its 2 home runs but can not hit a 3rd as the visiting team was not given the same opportunity. Similarly, if the visiting team has 3 home runs and the home team has 2 going into the last inning of play, the home team can hit its 3rd home run but can not hit a 4th as the visiting team was not given the same opportunity. If both the visiting and the home team have the same number of home runs going into the last inning of play, the home team will be allowed to hit 1 additional home run as the visiting team was given the same opportunity.
- H. There will be open substitution by defense; any 10 players may play defense at any time. The EP (extra player) may also play the field; he is not restricted to batting only. A substitution only occurs when there is a change in the batting line-up.
- I. Courtesy Runners: A courtesy runner may be used throughout the game. The runner may be any legally rostered player. Any eligible player on the official line-up including available substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner may be used once per inning.
NOTE: Any Courtesy Runner used in Coed must be gender specific. Only one courtesy runner per inning is allowed in Coed.
- J. Run Rule: A 15 run rule will be in effect after 4 innings. A 10 run rule will be in effect after 5 innings.
- K. Pitch height will be a 6 to 12 foot arc.
- L. The pitcher is given up to 6 feet to stand behind the rubber and pitch from that spot. There is now a 2nd pitching rubber at the 6 feet mark. The pitcher must be behind the rubber at the time of the pitch; this will allow for more reaction time due to a line drive.
- M. Base runners will be allowed to steal (Men's Leagues ONLY) after the pitch passes the front edge of the plate legal or illegal. The exception to this will be if:
- The pitch hits the batter
 - The ball lands in front of home plate
 - The batter makes a swinging strike
 - The batter causes the catcher to hesitate/freeze (ex.check swing)
 - The ball hits the plate
 - Ball 4
 - Stealing is allowed on an illegal pitch; live ball situation.

- N. Base runners advancing are consistent with ASA slow pitch rules.
- O. Time Limit: 1 hour and 10 minute time limit for all leagues/games. Must start a new inning if any time is left. Any inning started must be completed. No new inning will be started after the time limit. Extra innings can be played if the game is tied with the following restrictions: The last batter from the previous inning will be placed on second base to start the extra inning. Also, there is a 2 extra inning limit. If the game remains tied after 2 extra innings, the game will be a tie.
- P. There is 1 minute allowed in between innings. This is to move the game in order to try to get more innings played.
- Q. Shoes: Metal spikes will NOT be allowed in any adult league. Only shoes with rubber soles or plastic molded soles will be allowed. NO FOOTBALL CLEATS WILL BE ALLOWED.
- R. One and One Count: Each batter will have a 1-1 count upon entering the batter's box. There is a courtesy foul after the 2nd strike. For example, a batter steps up to the plate and fouls each of the first 2 pitches. The batter is not out, and has 2 strikes. Any foul balls hit after the courtesy foul is used will result in an out.
- S. Double Base at First: A white base with an orange base attached will be used at first for all games. The white base is in fair territory and the orange base in foul territory. Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner the defense must use the white portion and the batter-runner the orange portion. The batter-runner is out when there is a play being made at first base and the batter-runner touches only the white portion (No longer an appeal play before runner comes back and touches white base). The only exception is when a force out attempt from the foul side of first base or an errant throw pulls the defense off the base into foul ground. In this instance, the defense and batter-runner can use either the white or orange portion. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield when there is no play being made at first, the batter-runner may touch the white or orange portion. The double base is used as a **"SAFETY BASE"** and is strictly the umpires judgement.

VI. REGULATION GAMES:

It will be a regulation game when 7 innings have been played and the game is not tied or time limit has elapsed. Once an inning has started, it must be completed.

A game will also be regulation if it is called by the umpire on account of darkness, rain, or other causes within the umpire's judgement interferes with further play, provided 5 or more innings have been played. 4 1/2 innings will constitute a regulation game if the home team is ahead at that point in the game. **Games will be picked up where suspended if the game has reached past the first inning and there is a score, and prior to the 5th inning. Any game suspended in the first inning, without a score will be STARTED OVER.**

VII. PLAYER/TEAM CONDUCT:

NO SMOKING OR PROFANITY

Players, coaches and managers will not be permitted to smoke on the coaching lines, dugouts or playing field. The use of loud and obvious profanity will also not be tolerated. If a player at bat is heard yelling profanity, the on deck batter will be declared out (Dakota Rule). An umpire is empowered to eject any player that flagrantly ignores warnings about their use of offensive language. In coed league play the next male batter will be the declared out. The umpire has complete discretion on which profanity words are deemed inappropriate based on each scenario.

NO DRINKING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON OR AROUND THE DIAMOND BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER A GAME. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE PROHIBITED BY LAW ON ALL CITY PROPERTY. (City ordinance #75733 includes team's spectators)

Managers will be held responsible for their teams, so please notify all members of your teams and their followers of this rule. Please keep our diamonds and parks free of cans and bottles.

- A. Violations will result in a 1 game team forfeiture and 1 game suspension of individuals.
- B. Repeated violations will result in the team's expulsion from the league.

VIII. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:

- A. Any player or coach ejected from the game by an official will be suspended by the league director. The league director has sole discretion to determine the length of the suspension. Please note that umpires or staff have the right to eject a player up until the time that the umpires or staff leave the facility (the game does not need to be in progress for an ejection to take place). In the event a player or coach deviates from this ruling, it will constitute a forfeit and the team not at fault will receive credit for a win.
- B. Any player(s) or coaches ejected from the game by an official for fighting will automatically be suspended. In the event of a player or coach deviating from this ruling, it will constitute a forfeit and the team not at fault will receive credit for a win.
- C. If ejected from a game, this means that this player is not allowed to participate in ANY games during that time of suspension.
- D. A player who is suspended is not allowed on ANY City property during the time of suspension. A player may be suspended for a longer period of time by the Athletics Director if this behavior is considered serious. A player receiving 2 suspensions in 1 season will be suspended for the remainder of the season at minimum. Any player who plays while under suspension will be eliminated

from further play for a period of 1 year, and his/her team will forfeit each game which he/she played under suspension.

- E. Any player, or spectator, who is guilty of striking an official or staff member in any manner on City property during or after a game shall automatically be suspended indefinitely from participating in all leagues sponsored by the Recreation Department. Striking an official in the State of Florida is considered a felony.

IX. PROTEST PROCEDURE:

Protest of rules must be decided before the next pitch. Protest of illegal players must follow the following steps:

- A. Protest concerning rule interpretations must be handled in the following manner:
 1. Protest the game to the scorekeeper and home plate umpire BEFORE the next pitch and make sure he/she notes on the scorecard the protest. The umpire is to notify the other team of the protest
 2. An appointment must be made with the Athletics Supervisor within 24 hours by the manager. Call and leave a message for the reason of your call if the Athletics Supervisor is out of the office.
 3. A fee of \$20.00 cash is due at the appointment. If the protest is awarded, the cash is returned, if the protest is denied, the cash is forfeited.
 4. Protest concerning illegal players must be made before the final out of the game. If it's found that an illegal player participated in any games during the season, those games will become forfeits also.
 5. Protests – complaints will be handled by the team manager only.
 6. Protest based on a decision, which involves the accuracy and judgement on the part of the umpire shall not be considered.
 7. Not following correct procedure will result in a denied protest.

X. RAIN-OUTS:

- A. In the event of rain during the day, the Athletic Department personnel will check the condition of the diamonds, whenever possible, prior to 5:00 pm. The decision as to the condition of the diamonds will be final.
- B. The department and its personnel cannot assume the responsibility for notifying all managers as to the condition of the playing fields. Managers of teams involved may call 727-587-6740 ext. 5013 and information will be given. DO NOT CALL BEFORE 5:00 pm. Players are requested to call the managers and not the above number. GAMES WILL NOT BE CALLED BECAUSE OF THREATENING WEATHER.

- C. After 6:30 pm, the umpire will make the decision on whether or not the fields are playable. The decision of the umpire will be final and managers and teams will accept his/her decision without question. If one game is postponed on one field, then all fields will be postponed. If a game is called off, please keep off the diamond as it must be protected for play the next night.
- D. If the first game is called off because of field conditions all games on that field are automatically called off and will be made up at a later date. This applies also if the first game is in progress and is halted by rain. It is the manager's responsibility to find out when rain out make up games are scheduled. The athletics office will make a reasonable effort to inform managers of the re-scheduled games. Make up games may not be on the same field or at the same time as the original games. Also, double-headers may be scheduled. Please read the make up schedule carefully.
- E. Once a game is started, the condition of the diamond and weather conditions will be determined by the umpire and his/her decision will be final. In the event the game is halted, the teams will not leave the immediate area for a period of 15 minutes. After this period, the umpire will make a definite decision as to whether the game will continue or be called off.

XI. INSURANCE/IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- A. Players participating in the league should have accident insurance coverage. This is your responsibility. The department does not provide insurance in case of injuries for the players or coaches.
- B. It is to be understood that the Recreation Department will not be held liable for injuries sustained by any person, or group participating in our program while they are playing, practicing or traveling to and from games or practice.

XII. AWARDS AND STANDINGS:

- A. If there is a tie at the end of a season, the tie-breaker system will go as follows:
 - 1. Head to head competition from league play.
 - 2. Run differential from head to head competition in league play.
 - 3. Total runs against among tied teams.
- B. Standings can be seen at www.largosports.com
- C. Divisional awards will be given as follows:
 - 1. First Place Tournament – T-Shirts*, Team Trophy, OR Team Plaque* T-Shirt quantities are limited to the number of players on the team's official roster.

COED SOFTBALL:

All Men's league rules will apply as stated before, unless noted below:

- A. Each team may play with 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 players. If 8 people play, the combination must have 4 men and 4 women to avoid an out. If 9 people play, the combination must have a least 5 women to avoid an out. If 9 people play and there are 5 men and 4 women, the 10th spot in the batting order will be an automatic out throughout the game.
- B. Players defensive positions are not designated.
- C. Outfielders must remain at or behind the dotted line painted in the outfield when a female player is up to bat until the batter makes contact with the ball. If the defense is found to be above the line while a female player is up to bat, the player may either take a base hit or take the result of the play.
- D. The batting order must alternate male, female or female, male. The only exception to this will be if 9 or 11 people play. The order will be 2 men or 2 women (whichever sex has more) batting together at the end of the lineup.
- E. If a male batter is walked, he takes 2 bases rather than 1. Also, the female following him in the order has to bat unless there are 2 outs. With 2 outs, the female after him may automatically go to the open first base.
- F. Coed leagues will use a double home plate with all ASA senior play rules in effect. Defensive players can only touch the original home plate and runners can only touch the second home plate. Runners tagged by the defensive team will not be out. If the runner touches the original home plate, the runner will be out and the ball will remain live. Once a player crosses, or touches the commit line, they must continue to home and may not return to 3rd base.

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