



## 2025 Sampson County Parks and Recreation Competitive Softball Rules

**High School Rules** will be used with the exceptions listed below.

### 1:00 **DIVISIONS:**

**Ponytails Division Softball:** Ages 10-12 years

### 2:00 **AGE REQUIREMENTS:**

2:01 Ponytails Division Softball

**Minimum Age:** Ten (10) years old – players must be Ten (10) years old prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year

**Maximum Age:** Anyone whose (13<sup>th</sup>) birthday is after the April 1<sup>st</sup> cutoff date.

Max Roster Size of 13 kids per team.

### 3:00 **FIELD SIZE:**

<b><u>Ponytails</u></b>	
<b>Mound:</b>	<b>35'</b>
<b>Base:</b>	<b>60'</b>
<b>Defensive Players:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Stealing:</b>	<b>Ball crosses the plate</b>



#### 4:00 **PARTICIPATION RULES**

4:01 All players shall be required to play at least **(6) defensive outs**.

4:02 **All Bat Policy** – Coaches may freely substitute on defense, but the batting order will not change in any league. Every Participant must bat each time through the order.

**\*Note:** Batting Line Up: **Only players present at the start of the game may be recorded on a team's batting line up sheet.** If a player arrives after the continuous batting order has been submitted to the scorer, the player must be added to the end of the continuous batting order. Before the player can be added, the arrival of the player must be announced to the Plate Umpire, the Official Scorer, and the Opposing Teams Manager. Coaches having listed a player on the line up even though that player is not present for the game will be subject to the following penalties.

Penalty:

- (a) First offense – Coach warning.
- (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – Coach will receive a two-game suspension.
- (c) 3<sup>rd</sup> offense – Coach will be asked to step down from coaching team.

4:03 **ALL PLAYERS PRESENT FOR THE GAME MUST PLAY** - All players in good standing will play the minimum time required for their league. **FAILURE TO COMPLY WILL RESULT IN A TWO (2) GAME SUSPENSION FOR THE HEAD COACH. A SECOND OFFENSE WILL RESULT IN THE REMOVAL OF THE COACH FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON AND TOURNAMENT.**

Coaches are not obligated to play an individual the minimum time under the following conditions.

- 1. Player late for start of game or a no-show.
- 2. Player with unexcused absence from practice in the week before the game. (Disciplinary meeting required).
- 3. Player who has been a discipline problem. (Disciplinary meeting required).

A coach who suspends a player according to rule must notify the opposing coach, field supervisor, prior to the start of the game (exception - player injured or ejected during the game).

**\*Coaches who use the exceptions to all play rule to gain an advantage over another team will be removed from the coaching staff.**



4:04 Only 3 coaches will be allowed in the dugout. At least one adult coach must be always in the dugout possibly limiting the number of adult coaches allowed to coach on the baselines.

4:05 No person should be allowed on the playing field/dugout during the game except uniformed players, managers, coaches, and umpires.

## 5:00 GAME PLAY

5:01 **Ponytails:** Teams will be required to field a maximum of Ten (10) players on defense including catcher, pitcher, four (4) infielders and four (4) outfielders. If a team does not have nine (9) players, a minimum of 8 players will be required to begin play or continue play. 6 innings will be played.

- a) Teams will be given a 10-minute grace period for the first game of an evening **ONLY**. (If they are unable to place required number of players on the field at the official game time)
- b) If a team is unable to place eight players on the field before the game begins or after the allotted 10-minute grace period, for the first game of the day **ONLY**, the game will be ruled an automatic forfeit by the field supervisor and then declared by the umpire.

5:02 Time Limit: 1 Hour 15 Minutes. (Finish the batter, a new batter must be in the batter's box before time expires.)

5:03 The official time will be kept at the scorer's table by SCPR staff.

5:04 The start time begins after the first official pitch of the game not a warmup pitch.

5:05 Prior to the established time to begin the game, managers shall give batting order to the official scorer.

5:06 Once umpire enters playing field, the umpires are in charge of the playing field. No judgement calls can be appealed. Umpires' decision is final.

5:07 A player who is bleeding, or has an open wound, or has an excessive amount of blood on his or her uniform, must leave the game and may not return prior to the first opportunity for such player to re-enter. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before the player can re-enter.



**5:10** Each team will be allowed to score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning.

**5:11 Hitting Rules**

Continuous batting order must be used the entire game. Each child will bat every time through the lineup.

**All divisions:**

The penalty for a thrown bat will be as follows:

1 - Incidental:

(a) First offense – team warning.

(b) 2<sup>nd</sup> offense – dead ball, batter out, runners may not advance.

2 - Flagrant (intentional)

(a) Dead ball, batter out, runners may not advance. - No Warning necessary

**Note:** It will be up to the official to determine if a player intentionally throws a bat.

**5:12 Softball Pitching Rules**

- A pitcher that is removed from the mound for any reason shall be allowed to return to the mound one (1) time in the same game.

**5:13 Base Running**

Runners must wait until the pitch has reached the plate. Base runner leaving a base too early will be - called "OUT" – ball will be dead, No pitch.

**No Drop-Third Strike, Batter is automatically out. (The play is still live)**



## 6:00 EQUIPMENT

6:01 The Recreation Department will provide game/practice balls, catcher equipment and game uniforms for each team.

6:02 All batters are required to wear batting helmets with faceguards.

6:03 All infield players are required to wear facemask.

6:04 Each player will furnish their own pants, socks, shoes, and facemask. Shoes must be tennis shoes or rubber molded cleats. **Screw-in, metal, or steel cleats are not allowed.**

6:06 The head coach of each team must sign for any equipment that is issued by the Recreation Department and is responsible for maintaining and returning that equipment.

6:07 All equipment worn by players must conform to local or official softball rules.

6:08 All equipment will be purchased by the Recreation Department. No coach or parent has the authority to obligate the team, league, or Sampson County Parks and Recreation Department.

6:09 The bat shall be no more than thirty-four inches (34") long and not more than two and one-fourth inches (2 1/4") in diameter at its largest part. The bat, in its entirety, shall not exceed thirty-eight ounces (38 oz.) in weight. The bat shall have a safety grip of cork, tape, or composition material. The safety grip shall not be less than ten inches (10") long and shall not extend more than fifteen inches (15") from the small end of the bat.

## 7:00 PRACTICE

7:01 Coaches are expected to observe their players closely always to be certain that the players do not become overly fatigued.

7:02 Coaches shall refrain from using exercises that may be harmful to the player's physical welfare.

7:03 Practices will be limited to maximum 90 Minutes in length **(when and where time permits).**

7:04 **Teams cannot require players to attend more than 2 practices per week.**



7:05 If the League is notified that a coach is in violation of a league policy, the coach will be notified, and the violation will be investigated by the league board.

7:06 Penalty for violation: 1 game suspension of the head coach.

**8:00 COMPLAINTS / INELIGIBLE PLAYERS**

8:01 Complaints concerning officials, supervisors & other aspects of the youth program can be made in writing within 24 hours after a game has been played. Please contact the field supervisor for a comment form.

**9:00 POSTPONED GAMES/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

9:01 In case of inclement weather, coaches and parents should call the following number after 3:00pm for a decision as to whether the game will be played:

***Sampson County Parks and Recreation 910-299-0924***

If no cancellation is listed, teams must report to the field and wait for the officials or field supervisor's decision.

9:02 Prior to the start of the game, the field supervisor or Recreation Department staff on duty will have sole authority to postpone or play the game. After the game begins, the officiating crew chief will have the sole authority to postpone or play the game.

9:03 Make-up and unfinished games with less than 4 completed innings may be rescheduled by the Recreation Department at the earliest convenient opportunity.

**10:00 ROSTERS AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

10:01 No player will be allowed to participate in a game or practice without a signed registration form and a birth certificate submitted for review by the Recreation Department.

**11:00 COACHES AND CONDUCT**

11:01 **ALL COACHES, TRAINERS/MANAGERS MUST ANNUALLY COMPLETE A COACH'S VOLUNTEER APPLICATION TO BE ELIGIBLE TO COACH. VOLUNTEERS ARE SUBJECT TO ANNUAL BACKGROUND CHECKS. THIS FORM IS TO BE TURNED IN BEFORE THE**



**SEASON STARTS. INDIVIDUALS REFUSING TO COMPLETE THIS FORM OR TO BE CHECKED, AUTOMATICALLY FORFEIT THEIR COACHING ELIGIBILITY.**

- 11:02 All coaches must understand and agree to carry out the duties, responsibilities, and policies as established by Dixie Youth Baseball and the Sampson County Parks and Recreation Department.
- 11:03 Coaches must set good examples of sportsmanship. We will not tolerate poor conduct in practice or in a game.
- 11:04 Each coach will hand out the team rules (attached on the last page) and have a parent meeting prior to the start of the first practice.
- 11:05 No alcoholic beverages are allowed on school or recreation property. This includes athletic fields. This is a **STATE LAW**. If necessary, proper legal action will be taken to enforce this rule. **NO TOBACCO PRODUCTS (SMOKING, CHEWING, DIPPING, ETC) ARE ALLOWED ON THE PRACTICE OR PLAYING FIELD.**
- 11:06 A coach, player, or spectator with the presence of alcohol on their breath will be asked to leave the recreation facility.
- 11:07 Any coach or player or spectator who is ejected from a game will be suspended **for the remainder of that game and the next scheduled game**. The suspension could be longer depending upon the severity of the infraction. Persons guilty of a second offense causing their ejection during the same calendar year shall be suspended for minimum of 365 days or longer depending on the infraction.
- 11:08 When a manager, coach, player, or spectator is ejected from a game, they shall leave the facility immediately and take no further part in the game.



## **Sampson County Team Rules**

1. **Practices/Games:** Players are expected to attend all practices and games. If you cannot attend, please let the coaching staff know as soon as possible. (Playing time may vary by attendance)
2. **Respect your opponent:** Good sportsmanship starts with respecting your opponents. Remember: without opponents, there would be no game at all! Players should always shake hands after each game and always respectful of their opponents.
3. **Respect your coach:** Parents and players should respect coaches. Please refrain from yelling questions or comments to your coaches and instead please speak to them calmly and at the appropriate times.
4. **Respect your teammates:** Regardless of their skill level, you cannot play the game without them.
5. **Respect the officials:** Remember they are human, and they are doing their best to make youth sports fair and fun. Coaches, parents, and players shall refrain from yelling at officials, please teach our children how to overcome miscalls that do not include yelling or arguing with the officials.
6. **Be a team player:** The game is not about how good you look or how much you score. A true team player knows how to put the team first and make sacrifices for their teammates.
7. **Safety, Sportsmanship, and Skill Building: The priority for our team will be safety, sportsmanship, and skill-building. All coaches, parents, and players will prioritize this over winning.**
8. **Have Fun:** Even with the hard work of practice, having fun and loving the game is a key to long term success.
9. **Parents/Spectators:** Should allow the coaches to coach the kids and refrain from "sideline coaching" it can be very confusing for children if multiple people are yelling instructions. Spectators are encouraged to cheer for both teams and ensure all the kids are having fun. No derogatory comments or foul language will be tolerated. Parents will be responsible for informing any guest of the team rules.
10. **Background Checks:** No one without a background check shall help in any capacity, enter a practice, or game area. If there are no boundaries spectators shall stay twenty yards away from all team activities. Please get the coaches or staff members attention if you need to speak to your child or a coach.

**Any Violation of the Team Rules/Expectations will result in removal from the facility and a suspension.**