

Cuyahoga Falls Parks and Recreation Department

2022
***Girls' Slow Pitch
Softball Program***

“Policies and Procedures”



Cuyahoga Falls Parks and Recreation Department
2310 Second Street
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330-971-8225
www.cityofcf.com/parksandrec



GIRLS' SOFTBALL PROGRAM

ADMINISTRATION

Changes from the previous season are in **bold** print.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

Girls' softball is an eight-week program starting the second week in June. It is designed for girls 6 through **15** years of age with three separate age groups: 6-8, 9-11, and 12-15. The program begins with two weeks of practice to familiarize the girls with the game. During this time, volunteer coaches will provide instructional and recreation softball activities. After this, the schedule is set and league games begin. Coaches may practice one time per week once games begin if fields are available.

OBJECTIVES

- A. The objectives of this program shall be as follows:
1. To provide girls 6-15 years with the opportunity to learn to play softball.
 2. Through quality programming, develop within each girl, an interest in the sport of softball so that they will seek to pursue this activity in their future years.
 3. To develop skills so that each girl can achieve some measure of success and satisfaction in this activity.
 4. Using this activity as the medium, firmly implant in the girls of this community ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, good health, loyalty, and courage.
- B. These objectives can best be achieved by providing mature leadership of the highest type. All supervisors, coaches, and parents must keep in mind that the attainment of athletic skill, or winning of games, is purely secondary, and the provision for wholesome play and recreation is the primary purpose.

GOVERNMENT

- A. The government of this program shall be the responsibility of the Cuyahoga Falls Parks and Recreation Department. All requests for information or questions should be directed to this department at 330-971-8225, or contact Jason Pullin, Recreation Program Manager at 330-971-8228.
- B. A program supervisor, **Regina Warner**, is assigned to this program, and she is charged with the responsibility of coordinating this program in compliance with the objectives. It is also her responsibility to control the activities at the program site. **She can be contacted at 330-730-5702.**

LEAGUE REGULATIONS

AUTHORITY

A. Supervisor:

1. The supervisor has the responsibility of seeing that all activity at the program site is in the best interest of the program.
2. The supervisor has the responsibility of removing from the area any person (spectator, coach, or player) who does not conduct himself in an appropriate and orderly fashion.
3. The supervisor will reschedule rained-out games.
4. The supervisor is to schedule fields for practices.

B. Volunteer Coaches:

1. Head coaches are assigned by the Parks and Recreation Department.
2. Coaches are charged with the responsibility of leading and working with their team members and other teams in a mature manner that represents the objectives of this program.
3. Head coaches are to contact their team members for practices, games, and rescheduled games.
4. Coaches should clear practice dates and times through supervisors to be sure to have a field scheduled.
5. Coaches may contact the supervisor at the program site, by phone or email, or by calling Cuyahoga Falls Parks and Recreation.
6. Coaches may not register a player. If a non-registered player attends your practice, she should be sent to the supervisor or the Parks and Recreation Office to officially register.
7. Head coaches will be expected to attend mandatory meetings when called.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP

- A. To be eligible for this sport, a player must be either 6 years of age before June 30 or 16 years after June 1.
- B. Eligible girls will be placed on teams as determined by the program directors, and all events will take place at the **Keyser Park Fields**.
- C. The elimination of girls from the team through the practice of "cutting" is contrary to the philosophy of this program and is not permitted.

- D. Team rosters shall be prepared by the program supervisor immediately following the registration dates. Only registered girls are permitted to be placed on official rosters.
- E. A registration fee of \$35 for all age groups will be assessed each girl who wishes to participate in this program.
- F. Every effort should be made to retain all girls who show an interest in this program.

PRACTICE REGULATIONS

- A. All practices before the games officially begin will be scheduled by the supervisor and will be held at **Keyser Park Fields twice or three times a week during the week, based on a schedule that will be provided.**
- B. A coach may schedule practices once the season begins, although practices and games shall not exceed three times in any week.

SCHEDULE

- A. The league schedules shall be prepared by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- B. The number of games in each league will be determined by the number of teams registered in each league.
- C. League champions will be determined by the best record. If a tie exists:
 - 1. Then the team with the best won/loss record in the games played against the tied teams will determine the winner.
 - 2. If the tie is yet unbroken, the team with the most runs scored in the games played against the tied teams will be declared the winner.
 - 3. If the tie is yet unbroken, the tied teams will play one another in a playoff format.

UNIFORMS

Girls who officially register for this program will receive one white T-shirt with a softball insignia on it and her last name on the back. This is the team uniform and must be worn at all games. A player not wearing this shirt will be considered ineligible for her games. The shirt issued during the present season is the official uniform. Teams are permitted to alter the shirts (tie-dye, numbering, etc.).

AWARDS

- A. Certificates of Participation will be presented to all participants.
- B. Teams finishing in first and second place in league play will receive awards.

INSURANCE

- A. The Cuyahoga Falls Parks and Recreation Department will take all the necessary precautions in the prevention of injury to the participants of this program. Past seasons have shown the incident of injury is extremely low.
- B. The department does not carry insurance on the participants in this sport; if the participant desires insurance, it is the responsibility of the individual to secure the same.

EQUIPMENT AND EXPENDITURES

- A. Most equipment and supplies (bats, balls [11"], helmets, catchers' gear, pitchers' face guards, bases, score books, etc.) will be furnished by the Parks and Recreation Department, except gloves, batting gloves, and rubber spikes. Batting gloves and rubber spikes are not mandatory. The program supervisor and coaches will be responsible for all equipment issued to them. Batting helmets with face guards are mandatory in all age groups. Players may wear their own helmet, but the helmet must have a face guard. Players sharing a helmet are encouraged to wear a baseball cap under the helmet for hygienic purposes. Catchers must wear a chest protector and a **face mask/helmet combination (goalie hockey style)** when on the playing field. **These will be supplied by the Parks and Recreation Department, or a catcher may wear her own.** A catcher may wear a batting helmet with a face guard or a defensive face guard instead of a **facemask/helmet combination if she chooses.**
- B. The use of defensive face guards is required in the 6-8 age group for the two players who stand in the pitching area as well as the first baseman, and for the pitchers **and first basemen** in the 9-11 and 12-15 age groups. Teams in the 6-8 age group will be provided three (3) face guards, and teams in the 9-11 and 12-15 age groups will be provided **two (2)** face guards. Players may wear their own. Other defensive players may wear a face guard, but they are not supplied by the Parks and Recreational Department.
- C. Safety bases will be used at first base in the 9-11 and 12-15 age groups.
- D. The financial operation of this program is the responsibility of this department. No purchases for equipment or services may be made by an individual that in any way obligates the City of Cuyahoga Falls.
- E. The solicitation from merchants or individuals for any purpose is prohibited.
- F. Any softball bat not issued by the Parks and Recreation Department must be approved by the umpires or supervisor. Tee ball bats are acceptable, but wooden bats **and other baseball bats** are not. For the safety of the pitcher, bats over 30 ounces will not be permitted.
- G. Participants are not allowed to wear jewelry other than post-type earrings. Sunglasses and hats/visors are permitted.
- H. A first-aid box is located in the field box behind each backstop.

FORFEITURE AND PROTEST

A. Forfeiture:

1. Any team failing to report at the scheduled game time shall forfeit the game. Both teams must be ready to play at the field at game time. No grace period!
2. A team will not be permitted to take the field with fewer than eight players. No exceptions.
3. Playing ineligible players shall result in forfeitures of games in which such players participated.
4. Meeting for practice or games more than three times during one week.
5. Not entering substitutions at designated times.
6. Abuse of the pre-game warm-up time.

B. Protest:

1. No game can be protested on a questioned point of judgment on the part of the umpire.
2. Any other questionable situation that warrants a protest because of a misinterpretation of a rule will be determined at the field with consultation between the supervisor and the umpire. Once the decision is made, it will be final.

C. Questioning a call:

1. The procedure for questioning a call begins with the head coach approaching the umpire to ask for the reasoning of the call. If the coach feels the umpire is mistaken, the supervisor will be consulted. If it is determined that the umpire was mistaken on a rule, the call will be overturned. There will be no questioning of a judgment call.

GAME REGULATIONS

AUTHORITY

The supervisor, umpires and coaches shall have the responsibility of making certain that all games are conducted in an orderly fashion and carry out the objectives of the program.

GROUND RULES

- A. Unless otherwise stated, the rules and policies of OneNation will be followed.
- B. Smoking will not be permitted by team members or coaches on or around the playing fields. This includes the bench area.
- C. Spectators are to remain in the bleacher area or well out of the playing area. Only coaches will be permitted to stand at the fence. In addition, no sitting or standing **behind the backstop** will be permitted.
- D. The home team bench is along the first-base line.
- E. Opposing coaches and/or designated scorekeepers are to meet with each other prior to all games for line-up exchanges.
- F. Coaches and umpires are to meet prior to the start of each game to establish ground rules.
- G. The home team will be designated as the official scorer. It will be the responsibility of the visiting team to check in with the home team scorer throughout the game on substitutions and other game occurrences, although the home team needs to inform the visiting team of any changes occurring with the home team's lineup, etc.
- H. If a player arrives after her first scheduled appearance at the plate, she must be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
- I. Players on the bench may chant for their own players; however, negative chanting against the other team is not permitted, and no chanting is allowed from the time the pitcher gets set to deliver the ball to the time the ball is delivered.
- J. Any thrown ball that sticks in the backstop is a dead ball and runners automatically advance one base, except the runner on third base cannot score. If there is a runner on second, the third base runner is forced home and does score.
- K. No new inning may begin after 80 minutes in a 90-minute game, with time beginning from the end of the last inning. If, for example, the previous inning ends at 79 minutes, the game will continue. The new inning doesn't have to begin before the 80 minutes. In event of a tie after the game's regulation innings have been played, the two teams will play a full inning to break the tie as long the inning doesn't begin after the 80-minute time limit. If this is not possible, the tie will be broken by the previous inning played. The team winning at that point will be declared the winner. If the score is 0-0 after all tie-breaking procedures have been exhausted, the game will end in a tie; however, if the tie

1-0 affects the final team standings, a tie-breaking game will be held. If the score is still 0-0, the tie will be averaged in the final team standings.

- L. Pitchers are allowed five warm-up pitches before the game and one between each inning. No infield ball after the first inning. Pitchers entering the game for the first time are allowed five warm-up pitches.
- M. The coaches must record the game score on the official scorecard immediately following the game. The line-up portion of the card (on the reverse side) does not need to be filled out.
- N. No team will be permitted to warm up on the infield within a half hour of the start of the game.
- O. Base coaches may not touch a player on the bases while the ball is in play. Result: Automatic out.
- P. The supervisor may change a call of an umpire if it is incorrect and not a judgment call.
- Q. In the interest of fairness, the supervisor has the authority to amend any of the rules during the season as needed.

TRANSPORTATION

Players are to be transported to and from games by their parents or a person designated by their parents. This is not a responsibility of the coaching staff.

PLAYING RULES

In addition to the preceding rules, please note the following rules as they pertain to your respective division. Any softball rule not covered in these policies will be governed by the current OneNation ruling.

ALL DIVISIONS

- A. A pitched ball must be pitched underhand at a slow speed. A pitcher must touch the pitcher's rubber at some point in her release, but can take only one step beyond the rubber in the direction of home plate during her release. The pitched ball in all leagues, except in the 6-8 year old league, must arc at least 3 feet at its highest point from the ground and no higher than 10 feet after leaving the pitcher's hand and before it passes any part of home plate. A pitched ball in the 6-8 year old league should have an arc of at least 3 feet from the ground, and the pitched ball should not reach a height of more than 6 feet at its highest point from the ground. No wind up pitches are allowed. In the 6-8 year old league, a coach-pitch rule is in effect. Refer to the 6-8 rules for specifics.
- B. All players present at the game shall be placed in the batting order and remain in the same batting slot for the entire game (whether or not she is playing defense).
- C. Substitution: Players may enter the game no more than twice.
 1. Players must play two defensive innings, but not necessarily consecutive innings.

2. Once removed, the player must remain out of the game for one full inning except the pitcher, who may re-enter as a pitcher one time during any part of the game, including the inning she was removed.
 3. A full inning is defined as 3 outs on defense, and 3 outs on offense.
 4. Substitutions should be made no later than the following format: 6-8 and 9-11 divisions - at the start of third inning; 12-15 division - at the start of the fourth inning.
- D. A runner may not leave the base until the pitched ball has passed the plate, or the batter hits it.
- E. A courtesy runner will be allowed in case of injury during the play. The courtesy runner will be the player who made the last out. If there are no outs, it will revert back to the previous inning. This will not count as a substitution. If a player is injured during a play and cannot continue the game, it will not be an automatic out on her next scheduled plate appearance. However, if the injury or sickness is not game-related but she still cannot continue, it will be an automatic out on her next scheduled appearance in accordance with OneNation rules.
- F. A batter does not advance to first base if she is hit by a pitch. Furthermore, there is no bunting, stealing, or sliding at any time in the game. Diving to a base is considered a slide.
- G. Catchers are required to wear a catcher's mask, a defensive ace guard, or a batting helmet with a face guard, and a chest protector at all times they are on the field. Helmets are not required for the catcher, but are encouraged, especially in the 6-8 division.
- H. The use of defensive face guards is required for the pitchers **and the first basemen** in all age groups. Teams in the 9-11 and 12-15 age groups will be provided **two (2)** face guards, and teams in the 6-8 age group will be provided three (3), although the designated players who must wear face masks may wear their own.
- I. All offensive players in the field of play - batters and runners - will be required to wear a batting helmet with a face guard. Helmets are provided by the Parks and Recreation Department; however, for hygiene purposes, players are encouraged to wear a hat under their helmets, or, if they choose, wear their own helmets with face guards.
- J. Any player throwing the bat intentionally will be ejected from the game. Any batter unintentionally letting go of the bat may be called out. If any batter unintentionally throws the bat, it is up to the umpire to give either a warning or an out. All players who throw unintentionally but after the warning will be called out.
- K. A team may intentionally walk any one batter only one time per game. If this same batter is walked a second time intentionally, in the umpire's judgment, the penalty will be the walk, plus a base.
- L. The halfway-line commitment rule will be in effect. A line perpendicular to the 3rd base line halfway between 3rd and home will be called the halfway line. Once a player is on or over this line, she is committed to going home. If she tries to score, the play at the plate will be a force out only. If she returns to 3rd base, she can be put out by tag, stepping on home with the ball, by appeal, or by the umpire's decision.

- M. In the interest of safety, no tag is ever necessary at home plate. It is a force-out only.
- N. Any player or coach not participating in the program in the spirit under which it was designed will be suspended from the game and the next played game. Any player or coach under suspension for an ejection is not permitted at the playing site for the duration of the suspension. A second occurrence will result in the ejection of the individual from the program.
- O. There are unlimited foul balls.
- P. The infield fly rule is not in effect in any division.
- Q. In accordance with OneNation rules, a batter may switch sides of the plate (batting right-handed to left-handed, for example) any time during her time at the plate provided that she is not switching during the delivery of a pitch.

6-8 YEAR OLD DIVISION

- A. An inning is defined as three outs by the defensive team or 6 runs by the offensive team, whichever comes first.
- B. The length of the game will be 5 innings or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. A new inning cannot begin after 80 minutes.
- C. There is no mercy rule in this division.
- D. Distances: Bases - 50 feet; Pitcher's mound - 28 feet
- E. All offensive players in the field of play, including runners, will be required to wear a batting helmet with a face guard. Helmets are provided by the Parks and Recreation Department; however, for hygiene purposes, players are encouraged to wear a hat under their helmets, or, if they choose, wear their own helmets with face guards.
- F. No defensive player can position herself at the time of the pitch closer than 28 feet to home plate (lines are marked on the field), although she may pass the marked line after the ball is hit. If she is in violation of this rule at the time of the pitch, the play will be considered a dead-ball situation (play stops), and the umpire will award the batter first base. Any runners on the bases will not advance unless the batter's advancement advances them also.
- G. When a defensive player in the infield has control of the ball as judged by the umpire, the base runner may advance only to the base in which she is headed provided she is more than halfway to that base (in the umpire's judgment); otherwise, she will be returned to the last-touched base. The defensive player does not need to hold up the ball to show that she has control. Please note that the defensive player does not need to be an infielder. The player could be an outfielder who has control of the ball in the infield.
- H. Up to two designated coaches from the defensive team may stand in the field of play to deliver verbal

instructions to the defensive team. They may not touch a player; if this happens, the play is considered a dead-ball situation (play stops), and the umpire will award the batter first base. Any runners on the bases will not advance unless the batter's advancement advances them also, unless the umpire rules that the designated coach touched a player deliberately to deter the continued advancement of the runners.

- I. A coach-pitch rule is in effect. The designated coach pitcher from the batter's team will pitch up to 6 pitches to the batter. If the player has not hit a ball in fair play by then, she will be called out. There are no walks or strike outs. The pitched ball should arc at least 3 feet after leaving the pitchers hand and before it passes any part of home plate. The pitched ball should not rise higher than 6 feet.
- J. The designated coach pitcher will not play defense. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the coach pitcher fields a ball - whether intentionally or unintentionally, the play will be considered a dead-ball situation, and the batter will be awarded first base. Any runners on the bases will not advance unless the batter's advancement advances them also. If the coach pitcher becomes part of the play by being hit by a ball, he or she is considered part of the field, and play continues. Any unforeseen irregularities will be determined by OneNation rules.
- K. No extra base will be given to the batter/runner on an overthrow to first base if the initial defensive play is at first base. The ball is considered dead, and no other runner on any of the other bases can advance beyond the base they have already reached.
- L. Teams may continue "practice play" at the end of a game provided that both teams agree to play and that play begins before the 80-minute limit. The "practice play" must end 90 minutes after the game began.

9-11 YEAR OLD DIVISION

- A. An inning is defined as 3 outs by the defensive team or 8 runs by the offensive team, whichever comes first.
- B. Length of game will be 6 innings or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. A new inning cannot begin after 80 minutes.
- C. The 12-run mercy rule will be in effect after 4 complete innings. The home team, if behind, will bat last.
- D. Distances: Bases - 55 feet; Pitcher's mound – 32 feet
- E. A safety base is used at first base. In accordance with OneNation rules, the first baseman and other defensive players are allowed to touch only the white portion of the safety base during play. If a defensive player's foot touches the orange portion of the base, the umpire may call interference and award the runner a free base. This is an umpire's judgment call. On offense, the runner may touch only the orange portion of the base during close plays. Because a runner is allowed to run through first base, she may run straight through the orange half, remaining in foul territory. If she touches the white half on a play at first, the defensive team may appeal the play. If the umpire notices the runner's foot placement on the white half, the runner will be called out. If there is no play to be made at first base, such as on a hit that will result in a double, the batter-runner may touch the white half of the base

while making her turn toward second. Batted balls that hit the white portion of the base are fair, while balls that hit the orange half are foul.

- F. The pitcher **and first baseman** must wear a face guard during every pitch. **They** may wear one provided by the parks department, or **they** may wear **their** own.
- G. All offensive players (batters and runners) must wear a batting helmet with a face guard. They may wear one provided by the parks department, or they may wear their own.
- H. In adherence with OneNation rules, when a defensive player in the infield has control of the ball as judged by the umpire, the umpire may call “time” as long as a base runner, in the umpire’s judgment, is not already advancing to the next base. The defensive player does not need to hold up the ball to show that she has control. Please note that the defensive player does not need to be an infielder. The player could be an outfielder who has control of the ball in the infield. In a playing field in which the outfielders tend to play their position in the infield dirt, the infield will be considered to be approximately in the extended area of the traditional running paths of the offensive team with several feet on either side. What is considered to be the exact infield on any given call, however, is determined by the umpire.
- I. The pitched ball must arc at least 3 feet after leaving the pitchers hand and before it passes any part of home plate. The pitched ball shall not rise higher than 10 feet.
- J. Teams may continue “practice play” at the end of a game provided that both teams agree to play and that play begins before the 80-minute limit. The “practice play” must end 90 minutes after the game began.

12-15 YEAR OLD DIVISION

- A. An inning is defined as 3 outs by the defense team or 8 runs by the offensive team, whichever comes first.
- B. Length of game will be 7 innings or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. A new inning cannot begin after 80 minutes.
- C. The 12-run mercy rule will be in effect after 5 complete innings. The home team, if behind, will bat last.
- D. Distances: Bases - 60 feet, Pitcher’s mound - 38 feet
- E. A safety base is used at first base. In accordance with OneNation rules, the first baseman and other defensive players are allowed to touch only the white portion of the safety base during play. If a defensive player's foot touches the orange portion of the base, the umpire may call interference and award the runner a free base. This is an umpire's judgment call. On offense, the runner may touch only the orange portion of the base during close plays. Because a runner is allowed to run through first base, she may run straight through the orange half, remaining in foul territory. If she touches the white half on a play at first, the defensive team may appeal the play. If the umpire notices the runner's foot placement on the white half, the runner will be called out. If there is no play to be made at first base, such as on a hit that will result in a double, the batter-runner may touch the white half of the base

while making her turn toward second. Batted balls that hit the white portion of the base are fair, while balls that hit the orange half are foul.

- F. The pitcher **and first baseman** must wear a face guard during every pitch. **They** may wear one provided by the parks department, or **they** may wear **their** own.
- G. All offensive players (batters and runners) must wear a batting helmet with a face guard. They may wear one provided by the parks department, or they may wear their own.
- H. In adherence with OneNation rules, when a defensive player in the infield has control of the ball as judged by the umpire, the umpire may call “time” as long as a base runner, in the umpire’s judgment, is not already advancing to the next base. The defensive player does not need to hold up the ball to show that she has control. Please note that the defensive player does not need to be an infielder. The player could be an outfielder who has control of the ball in the infield. In a playing field in which the outfielders tend to play their position in the infield dirt, the infield will be considered to be approximately in the extended area of the traditional running paths of the offensive team with several feet on either side. What is considered to be the exact infield on any given call, however, is determined by the umpire.
- I. The pitched ball must arc at least 3 feet after leaving the pitchers hand and before it passes any part of home plate. The pitched ball shall not rise higher than 10 feet.
- J. Teams may continue “practice play” at the end of a game provided that both teams agree to play and That play begins before the 80-minute limit. The “practice play” must end 90 minutes after the game began.