**SOFTBALL DIVISION LOCAL RULES**

**SECTION 1**

**Softball Local Rules** -The Local League Softball Program adheres to the Little League. Inc.

Rule Books and Operating Manual. Where local options are allowed, the following Local

League Rules apply.

**SECTION 2**

**General (ALL LEAGUES)** -The following League Local Rules apply to all Leagues within

the Softball Program. Rules specific for an individual program are described in the

appropriate section below.

1. **Sundays** - No practices, scrimmages, and/or practice games are permitted on

Sundays. Only make up games are permitted.

1. **Home Team Responsibilities** - The Home Team shall:
2. Prepare the field for play, including but not limited to, raking, lines and

bases.

1. Use the field for pre-game preparation for 15 minutes, beginning 30

minutes before the scheduled start time.

1. The Home Team’s scorebook shall be considered the official scorebook.

Scorers shall confer every half-inning to ensure that the scorebooks agree.

1. Clean up their side of the field (dugout and fan area) after the game.
2. Report the game score and pitchers innings used

(both teams) to the League VP, immediately after the game.

1. **Visiting Team Responsibilities** - The Visiting Team shall:
2. Use the field for pre-game preparation for 15 minutes, beginning 15 minutes before the

 scheduled start time.

1. Clean up their side of the field (dugout and fan area) after the game.
2. Repair the field for next day, including but not limited to, raking, fixing holes, putting bases

away.

1. **Defense -** All team members must play a minimum of three innings defensively, in each game. The only exceptions to this rule are in the case of illness, injury, absence, disciplinary action, or an incomplete game (i.e.: 2 hour limit).
2. The penalty for violating the Minimum Playing Time Rule shall be as follows:

**First Offense**: A letter of warning shall be written to the offending Manager by the VP Softball.

**Second Offense**: Manager suspended for one (1) game.

**Third Offense**: Manager suspended for the remainder of the season by Disciplinary Board action.

1. **Offense** – All team members will bat in a continuous batting order. Order can be reset at the beginning of each new game. If a player is injured or leaves the game, that spot in the lineup will be skipped with no penalty of an out. An out will be recorded for every player that is injured or leaves the game after the 1st player.
2. The penalty for violating the Minimum Playing Time Rule shall be as follows:

**First Offense**: A letter of warning shall be written to the offending Manager by the VP Softball.

**Second Offense**: Manager suspended for one (1) game.

**Third Offense**: Manager suspended for the remainder of the season by Disciplinary Board action.

1. **Scheduling Games**
2. Special requests will not be made to avoid scheduling games on a certain night of the week

for a given team since scheduling options are limited. If the manager has an activity that conflicts with a game (e.g. golf, bowling, church), the assistant coach(s) wil manage the team for the game.

1. The absence of a certain player or the manager is not considered a valid reason for

rescheduling a game. If other activities (school or church) conflict with a game and a sufficient number of players will not be able to field a game, the game may then be rescheduled. All managers should work with Softball VP and Player’s Agent to call up players (who are deemed to have the ability to safely participate in the next level by their manager) to fill open spots for that game prior to game being rescheduled.

**Softball League Evaluation Process**

1. The Softball League is comprised of three divisions. The players who registered to play will be evaluated to determine which division they will participate in to ensure the player has the best experience possible within the upcoming softball season. Evaluations will be based on:
2. Safety
3. Ability
4. Social well-being
5. The ages of eligibility per softball division will be determined on January 1 of said season. The division breakdown is as follows:
6. Majors ages 10 to 12 year olds
7. Minors ages 8 to 11 year olds
8. Instructional 6 to 8 years olds
9. A parent can request to have his or her daughter evaluated for a particular division, but the evaluation committee will have the final say as to where the player is assigned (based on safety, ability, and social well-being).
10. The Evaluation Committee will be made up of the following:
11. POTENTIAL managers who have signed up at registration wanting to manage a team for the upcoming season. Managers WILL NOT be decided until after the Evaluation Process is completed. Once a list of qualified players is agreed upon by the evaluation committee, then the number of teams will be determined. This will determine the amount of managers needed.
12. Softball VP, Player’s Agent
13. Evaluation groups will be separated into two categories determined by age.
14. Group 1 will consist of players aged 12 to 10.
15. Group 2 will consist of players aged 9 to 6.
16. The Evaluation Committees will be determined as follows:
17. Group 1 will consist of POTENTIAL managers wishing to manage in the Major and Minor division.
18. Group 2 will consist of POTENTIAL managers wishing to manage in the Minor and Instructional division.
19. An evaluation form (used to rank skills) will be supplied to each potential manager for evaluation. It is the manager’s responsibility to do his or her best to evaluate the girls fairly and accurately as possible. This information will be used to determine the player’s ability and placement of softball division.
20. In a timely manner, the Evaluation Committee will discuss the assignment of players.
21. Once the players are assigned to a division, the draft and naming of the managers can take place.
22. Naming of the managers per division will go as follows:
23. The total numbers of girls assigned to each division will determine the number of teams and managers, minimum of 11 girls per team.
24. Softball VP will reach out to all Manager Candidates to discuss number of teams available. In the case that there are more Manager Options than Teams, the following process will take place.
	1. Returning Manager from that Division receives option to retain their team.
	2. A Returning Coach from that Division receives option to take over a team.
	3. Returning Manager from another Division receives option to take over a team.
	4. Returning Coach from another Division receives option to take over a team.
	5. New Volunteers receive option to take over team. If there are more New Volunteers than teams available, the League Board will vote on which candidate is to receive the option to take a team. (Each Board member vote is worth 1 point. The potential managers will have a chance to speak in front of the Board before the vote is taken.)
	6. The potential managers with the highest vote count will be awarded a team.
	7. In the event of a tie, the President, Player’s Agent and Softball VP will vote again on the Managers that tied.

**Softball Draft Procedure**

1. Each Softball Division (Majors, Minors, and Instructional) will have its own separate draft. The President, Player’s Agent, Softball VP, and the Managers and 1st Coach will be allowed to attend.
2. The Majors draft will be held first, then the Minors, followed by the Instructional League.
3. The draft procedure for all Divisions will goes as follows:

1. Each manager will have the option to pick one coach before the draft. The coach’s daughter will be an automatic draft pick on that team.

2. The draft order will be decided upon through the use of evaluations. The average score for each team will be decided by Manager’s Daughter and the 1st Coach’s Daughter. The Team with the lowest overall average will pick 1st, then the 2nd lowest overall average will pick 2nd and so on.

3. The manager with the last pick of the first round of pitchers will get the first pick of the second round, which will be catchers (often referred as the Snake Draft). Softball VP and CFLLN Board reserve the right to change the draft format in order to keep the teams as comparable as possible. Final draft order and format will be determined by President, VP, Softball VP and Player’s Agent.

**SECTION 3 - Softball Instructional Division**

Instructional (Coach-Pitch) League -The Instructional League shall operate under the guidance of the Softball Committee of Cuyahoga Falls Little League North. All rules and regulations will be followed as stated in the Official Little League Rules and Regulations manual unless stated below:

A. An eleven-inch softball (rubber softee) will be used in play.

1. The home team will sit on the third base dug out side.

2. Pitching Rubber will be 30’ from home plate.

B. The inning is over when:

1. Three (3) outs occur OR

2. Five(5) runs have accumulated in the inning

C. There will be continuous batting (every girl bats regardless if she is on the bench)

D. Base running rules are defined as the following:

1. One base allowed on an overthrow. If an attempt is made on the overthrow to get the runner out at the next base and that ball is overthrown, the runner will get one additional base.

2. When the ball is declared defensively “dead” and the runner is beyond the middle

hash mark between 1st& 2nd base, 2nd& 3rd base, or 3rd& home, the runner will be awarded the next base.

3. If the runner is not past the hash marks on said bases, the runner must go back to the previous base.

4. Sliding is encouraged to avoid collisions.

E. After five innings, given the six run limit per inning, games will be complete if it is not possible for opposing team to earn enough runs to win game.

F. If at any time a coach or manager is unhappy with the actions of another manager or coach, calmly ask to speak to each other away from the girls. Do not argue in front of them. This makes them uncomfortable and it’s embarrassing for everyone. This includes issue with the umpires.

**G. PITCHING**

1. Teams will be allowed to have their Pitcher throw Three (3) Pitches to each batter. If after Three (3) pitches the batter is still up, a coach will then take over for three (3) strikes or six (6) pitches will be the maximum amount of pitches a batter will face. The sixth (6th) pitch can befouled off as many times it takes to put the ball in play.

2. Pitchers MUST wear a face mask. It is HIGHLY recommended everyone playing defense do the same.

**H. DEFENSE**

1. Girls will be rotated every two (2) innings defensively. The rotation MUST BE two (2)innings infield then two (2) innings outfield (or vice versa).

2. Traditional softball positions will be required (one pitcher, one short stop, etc.). The four outfields must start play with both feet in the grass (approximately 20 feet off the base line).

3. The play is considered “dead” or stopped when an infielder has the ball and holds it up to show that no other plays will be made.

4. The ball MUST be thrown in from the outfield.

5. The “seven foot” rule applies to all bases in the infield. This means a ball can ONLY be run to a base if it is fielded within seven feet of the base. Anything outside of seven feet requires the ball to be thrown (example: the pitcher cannot run the ball to home for a force out if it’s not fielded within seven feet of the base).

**I. Games** - will be five (5) innings or two (2) hours long (innings must be complete). No new inning shall start after the two-hour time limit has been reached.

**J. Player Pool**

1. Every manager will do what is necessary to fill a roster on game day. The ultimate goal is to play the game.

2. In the event a manager knows he or she will not be able to field eight (8) players, he or she must immediately contact the opposing manger to see if the manager can “borrow” players to proceed with the pending game.

3. In the event an opposing manager does not have players to spare, then the manager can make arrangements for other players WITHIN the division to substitute in for them.

4. “Sub” players will be put at the end of the batting order. They will also be stationed in the outfield during the game.

**K. Substitutions** - Free substitutions shall be permitted in Instructional League games.

**L. Marking the field** - When lining the field a pitching circle: sixteen (16) feet in diameter; Eight (8) foot radius shall be drawn from the center of the pitchers plate. Place a special 6’ long “halfway chalk line,” perpendicular to the baseline, midway between 1st base and 2nd base, 2nd base and 3rd base, and 3rd and home plate.

**M. Adult Pitcher** - Each team shall supply an adult to pitch to its own players.

1. The adult pitcher may not interfere in any fashion with the play of the team. The adult pitcher is entitled to deflect or temporarily catch a hard line drive ball for his/her own protection without being charged with interference and the ball must be immediately dropped near the pitcher-player. Any attempt to make the ball difficult to handle on the part of the adult pitcher shall be deemed interference.

a. PENALTY: The batter shall be declared out and runners shall be returned to the bases they occupied before the pitch.

2. If interference with a thrown ball is ruled, such as the obstruction of an inadvertent movement on the part of the adult pitcher, the play shall be voided and play shall resume when the players are returned to the situation of the previous pitch unless the defense was successful in spite of the interference.

3. In the case of deliberate interference of any kind, the adult pitcher shall be ejected from the game. This is an Umpire’s judgment call. (Anyone (Player, Manager, Coach or Parent) Ejected during an Instructional Game shall appear before the Disciplinary Committee for further Review.

**N. Fielder Pitcher** -One (1) defensive player shall be assigned to field the pitcher’s position.

O. **The pitcher**-player shall be within the pitching circle when the pitch is made.

P. At the end of each play or attempted play, the ball shall be returned to the pitcher-player, who will then return it to the adult pitcher.

R. Balls and Strikes -No walks shall be awarded in the Instructional League. Strikes shall be called only when a player swings and misses. After the 6th Coach’s Pitch, the player is OUT.

**S. Coaches** -Adults shall be permitted to occupy the Coach’s boxes. Batting helmets are not required for adult Coaches. No Player in Instructional League should occupy the coach’s box at any time.

**T. Infield Fly Rule** -The Infield Fly Rule shall not apply to the Instructional League.

**U. Special Grace Period** -During the first two (2) games of the season, the Umpire shall warn any player who throws a bat after hitting a ball. After the second game, a player may be called out for throwing a bat.

V. NO stealing or leading off is permitted.

W. The Home Team is responsible for Supplying the Home Plate Umpire.

 X. The Visiting Team is responsible for Supplying one (1) Field Umpire.

**SECTION 4 – Softball Minor Division**

**Minor League** –The Minor League shall operate under the guidance of the Softball Committee of Cuyahoga Falls Little League North. All Rules and Regulations will be followed as stated in the Official Little League Rules and Regulations Manual unless stated below.

A. The inning is over when:

1. Three (3) outs occur OR

2. Five (5) runs have accumulated in the inning

 B. An 11” Softball will be used for all games

C. There will be continuous batting (every girl bats regardless if she is on the bench).

D. There are unlimited defensive substitutions (exception: if a pitcher is substituted, she cannot return in that same inning as a pitcher; but she can remain in the game in a different position). The pitcher may return in subsequent innings.

E. Base running rules are defined as the following:

1. There are unlimited advancements on bases on overthrows when the ball is in the field of play.

2. Teams are not allowed to steal home on a pitch. If a catcher or any player attempt to pick off a runner on a different base after the pitch, the runner on 3rd may attempt to run home.

3. When the ball is thrown into the circle, the runner must decide immediately whether to return or advance at her own risk (either way). If she does not make a decision, then she is out.

4. A runner shall not leave their base until the pitched ball has crossed home plate. A runner that leaves a base early will be declared “Out”.

F. During the 6th Inning, there is NO Run Limit. You must gain three (3) outs to end the ½ inning.

G. If at any time a coach or manager is unhappy with the actions of another manager or coach, calmly ask to speak to each other away from the girls. Do not argue in front of them. This makes them uncomfortable and it’s embarrassing for everyone. This includes issues with the umpire.

**H. PITCHING** :

1. Pitchers have a six (6) innings per week limit. The week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Any Pitcher that pitches one (1) inning may not pitch the next day.

2. Pitchers may not pitch more than four (4) innings in a game.

3. Pitching rubber will be 35 feet from home plate.

4. Pitchers MUST wear a face mask. It is HIGHLY recommended everyone playing defense do the same.

5. At least two (2) pitchers MUST be used per game.

a. Each pitcher must pitch a minimum of three (3) outs. For example, once your starting pitcher is removed, your second pitcher or a collection of pitchers must record at least three (3)outs in said game before the time limit is up or game has ended.

6. In the event three (3) batters are hit by a pitch in the same inning, the pitcher will be removed on the third hit batsman and will not return to pitch that game.

I. Games will be six (6) innings long or a maximum of two (2) hours. No new inning shall start after the two (2) hour time limit has been reached.

J. The home team will sit in the 3rd Base Dugout

**K. Player Pool**

1. Every manager will do what is necessary to fill a roster on game day. The ultimate goal is to play the game.

2. In the event a manager knows he or she will not be able to field eight (8) players, he or she must immediately contact the Softball VP in order to call up players from the Instructional League.

3. In the event there are no available players to come up from the Instructional League, the Manager will contact the opposing manager to borrow players.

4. In the event an opposing manager does not have players to spare, then the manager can make arrangements for other players WITHIN the division to substitute in for them.

5. “Sub” players will be put at the end of the batting order. They will also be stationed in the outfield during the game.

**L. Defense** -Nine (9) players shall play defense, with at least (3) defenders in the outfield grass area; with the intent of teaching the game properly, all defenders should be placed in somewhat the traditional fielding positions.

**M. Pre-Game Pitchers Warm-Up** -Only players in uniform and wearing the required protective gear may warm up a pitcher during the preliminary period before a game. The preliminary period shall be defined as the thirty-minute interval prior to the starting time of the game.

**N. Substitutions** –Free substitutions shall be permitted in Minor League games.

**O. Marking the field** -When lining the field, a “pitching circle” sixteen (16) feet in diameter, eight (8) foot radius shall be drawn from the center of the pitchers plate.

**P. Coaches** -Two adults shall be permitted to occupy a Coaches box. Batting helmets are not required for adult base coaches. No players shall occupy those positions, ever.

**Q. In-field Fly Rule** -The In-field Fly Rule is in effect.

**R. Throwing a Bat** -During the first two (2) games of the season, the Umpire shall warn any player who throws a bat after hitting a ball. After the second game, a player may be called “Out”. Further action by the same batter to throw their bat may lead to an Ejection for “Unsafe Actions by a Player”.

**S. Player Movement** -No players shall be moved between the Instructional League and Minor League after the Minor League Draft, without approval of the President, Player’s Agent and Softball VP.

**T. Umpires** – Umpires will be supplied by the league.

**U. Equipment** – All batters will wear Helmets with Face Guards whether playing at our Complex or at any other field.

**SECTION 5 – Softball Major Division**

**Major League** -The Major League shall operate under the guidance of the Softball Committee of Cuyahoga Falls Little League North. All Rules and Regulations will be followed as stated in the Official Little League Rules and Regulations Manual unless stated below.

A. The inning is over when:

1. Three (3) outs occur

2. There is NO run limit for Major League

B. There will be continuous batting (every girl bats regardless if she is on the bench).

C. There are unlimited defensive substitutions (exception: if a pitcher is substituted, she cannot return in that same inning as a pitcher; but she can remain in the game in a different position). The pitcher may return in subsequent innings.

D. Base running rules are defined as the following:

1. There are unlimited advancements on bases on overthrows when the ball is in the field of play.

2. When the ball is thrown into the circle, the runner must decide immediately whether to return or advance at her own risk (either way). If she does not make a decision, then she is out.

3. A runner shall not leave their base until the pitched ball has been released by the pitcher. A runner that leaves a base early will be declared “Out”.

F. If at any time a coach or manager is unhappy with the actions of another manager or coach, calmly ask to speak to each other away from the girls. Do not argue in front of them. This makes them uncomfortable and it’s embarrassing for everyone. This includes issue with the umpires.

**G. PITCHING:**

1. Pitchers have twelve (12) innings per week limit. The week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

1. Pitchers cannot pitch back to back days if they have pitched more than two (2) innings the previous day.

b. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of six (6) innings in any given game or day.

2. Pitchers MUST wear a face mask. It is HIGHLY recommended everyone playing defense do the same.

3. In the event three (3) batters are hit by a pitch in the same inning, the pitcher will be removed on the third hit batsman and will not return to pitch that game.

4. A 12 inch softball will be used in this division.

5. The pitching rubber will be secured 40 feet from home plate.

6. No more than five (5) Pitchers may be used per game.

H. Games will be six (6) innings long or a maximum of two (2) hours. No new inning shall start after the two (2) hour time limit has been reached.

I. The home team will sit in the 3rd Base Dugout.

**J. Player Pool**

1. Every manager will do what is necessary to fill a roster on game day. The ultimate goal is to play the game.

2. In the event a manager knows he or she will not be able to field eight (8) players, he or she must immediately contact the Softball VP in order to call players up from the Minor League.

3. In the event the Softball VP does cannot bring up any players, the

manager will contact the opposing manager to see about borrowing players.

4. In the event the Manager cannot borrow players from the opposing team, he or she can make arrangements for other players WITHIN the league to substitute in for them.

5. “Sub” players will be put at the end of the batting order. They will also be stationed in the outfield during the game.

**K. Pre-Game Pitchers Warm-up** -Only players in uniform and wearing the required protective gear may warm up a pitcher during the preliminary period before a game. The preliminary period shall be defined as the thirty-minute interval prior to the official starting time of the game.

**L. Defense** -Nine (9) players shall play defense, with at least (3) defenders in the outfield grass area; with the intent of teaching the game properly, all defenders should be placed in somewhat the traditional fielding positions.

**M. Substitutions** –Free substitutions shall be permitted in Major League games.

**N. Marking the field** -When lining the field, a “pitching circle” sixteen (16) feet in diameter, eight (8) foot radius shall be drawn from the center of the pitchers plate.

**O. Coaches** -Two adults shall be permitted to occupy a Coaches box. Batting helmets are not required for adult base coaches. No players shall occupy those positions, ever.

**P. In-field Fly Rule** -The In-field Fly Rule is in effect.

**Q. Throwing a Bat** -During the first two (2) games of the season, the Umpire shall warn any player who throws a bat after hitting a ball. After the second game, a player may be called “Out”. Further action by the same batter to throw their bat may lead to an Ejection for “Unsafe Actions by a Player”.

**R. Player Movement** -No players shall be moved between the Minor League and Major League after the Major League Draft, without approval of the President, Player’s Agent and Softball VP.

**S. Umpires** – Umpires will be supplied by the league.

**T. Equipment** – All batters will wear Helmets with Face Guards whether playing at our Complex or at any other field.

**SECTION 6 – Softball Junior Division**

**Junior League** -The Junior League shall operate under the guidance of the Softball Committee of Cuyahoga Falls Little League North. All Rules and Regulations will be followed as stated in the Official Little League Rules and Regulations Manual unless stated below.

A. The inning is over when:

1. Three (3) outs occur

2. There is NO run limit for Junior League

B. There will be continuous batting (every girl bats regardless if she is on the bench).

C. There are unlimited defensive substitutions (exception: if a pitcher is substituted, she cannot return in that same inning as a pitcher; but she can remain in the game in a different position). The pitcher may return in subsequent innings.

D. Base running rules are defined as the following:

1. There are unlimited advancements on bases on overthrows when the ball is in the field of play.

2. When the ball is thrown into the circle, the runner must decide immediately whether to return or advance at her own risk (either way). If she does not make a decision, then she is out.

3. A runner shall not leave their base until the pitched ball has been released by the pitcher. A runner that leaves a base early will be declared “Out”.

F. If at any time a coach or manager is unhappy with the actions of another manager or coach, calmly ask to speak to each other away from the girls. Do not argue in front of them. This makes them uncomfortable and it’s embarrassing for everyone. This includes issue with the umpires.

**G. PITCHING:**

1. Pitchers have No innings per week limit. The week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

2. Pitchers MUST wear a face mask. It is HIGHLY recommended everyone playing defense do the same.

3. In the event three (3) batters are hit by a pitch in the same inning, the pitcher will be removed on the third hit batsman and will not return to pitch that game.

4. A 12 inch softball will be used in this division.

5. The pitching rubber will be secured 43 feet from home plate.

6. No more than five (5) Pitchers may be used per game.

H. Games will be seven (7) innings long or a maximum of two and a half (2 1/2) hours. No new inning shall start after the two and a half (2 1/2) hour time limit has been reached.

I. The home team will sit in the 3rd Base Dugout.

**J. Player Pool**

1. Every manager will do what is necessary to fill a roster on game day. The ultimate goal is to play the game.

2. In the event a manager knows he or she will not be able to field eight (8) players, he or she must immediately contact the Softball VP in order to call players up from the Major League.

3. In the event the Softball VP does cannot bring up any players, the

manager will contact the opposing manager to see about borrowing players.

4. In the event the Manager cannot borrow players from the opposing team, he or she can make arrangements for other players WITHIN the league to substitute in for them.

5. “Sub” players will be put at the end of the batting order. They will also be stationed in the outfield during the game.

**K. Pre-Game Pitchers Warm-up** -Only players in uniform and wearing the required protective gear may warm up a pitcher during the preliminary period before a game. The preliminary period shall be defined as the thirty-minute interval prior to the official starting time of the game.

**L. Defense** -Nine (9) players shall play defense, with at least (3) defenders in the outfield grass area; with the intent of teaching the game properly, all defenders should be placed in somewhat the traditional fielding positions.

**M. Substitutions** –Free substitutions shall be permitted in Junior League games.

**N. Marking the field** -When lining the field, a “pitching circle” sixteen (16) feet in diameter, eight (8) foot radius shall be drawn from the center of the pitchers plate.

**O. Coaches** -Two adults shall be permitted to occupy a Coaches box. Batting helmets are not required for adult base coaches. No players shall occupy those positions, ever.

**P. In-field Fly Rule** -The In-field Fly Rule is in effect.

**Q. Throwing a Bat** -During the first two (2) games of the season, the Umpire shall warn any player who throws a bat after hitting a ball. After the second game, a player may be called “Out”. Further action by the same batter to throw their bat may lead to an Ejection for “Unsafe Actions by a Player”.

**R. Player Movement** -No players shall be moved between the Major League and Junior League after the Junior League Draft, without approval of the President, Player’s Agent and Softball VP.

**S. Umpires** – Umpires will be supplied by the league.

**T. Equipment** – All batters will wear Helmets with Face Guards whether playing at our Complex or at any other field.