

Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation
Adult Softball League Rules and Regulations

Revised 8/5/19

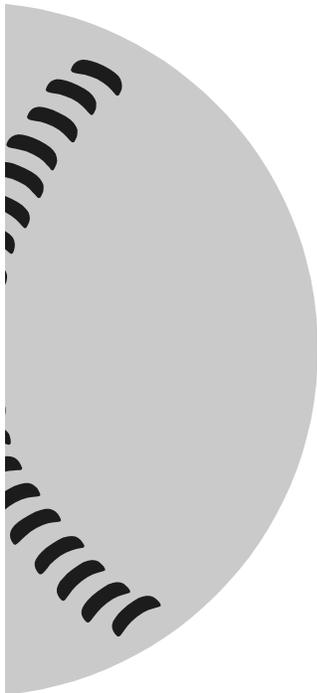


Table of Contents

General Information.....pg. 2

League Management.....pg. 2

Eligibility Requirementspg. 2

Conduct and Disciplinary Actions.....pg. 3

League Rules.....pg. 6

League Standing and Tournamentpg. 11

Awards and Prizes.....pg. 12

Officials and Staff.....pg. 12

Other Concernspg. 12

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Administration: Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation (OCDEAPR)
302 West Tryon Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Mailing Address: PO Box 8181
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Telephone: (919) 245-2660

Fax: (919) 644-3042

Inclement Weather: (919) 245-2669

Website: http://www.co.orange.nc.us/recparks/adult_softball.asp

League Management: Kevin Bradsher (919) 245-2672 kbradsher@orangecountync.gov
Lee Barnes (919) 245-2668 lbarnes@orangecountync.gov

Facilities: Cedar Grove Park (CGP)
5800 Highway 86 N
Cedar Grove, NC

II. LEAGUE MANAGEMENT:

The governing body shall be vested in the Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation.

The Superintendent of Recreation or designee shall serve as league commissioner.

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Registration

Registration is to be completed by the designated team captain. At the time of registration, each team must submit a team registration form, player waivers for at least ten (10) players, and program fee. The team registration form must identify team captain and contact information, uniform color, team name, and a preliminary roster of at least ten (10) players, of which five (5) must be male and five (5) must be female.

No refunds will be made for league fees for any circumstances.

Team Captain Responsibility

It is the Team Captain’s responsibility to be the primary link between league management and the team. He/she will be responsible for obtaining pertinent league information, notifying

players of changes, and maintaining control over team members in all circumstances including disputes.

Rosters

Each Captain is responsible on the first game to submit his entire roster. Rosters must contain a minimum of ten (10) players and may not contain more than a maximum of twenty (20) players.

Player Eligibility

All participants are required to sign a waiver form before participating in league play. A player's name, age, and telephone number will be required during league sign-in. All participants must be 16 years of age or older.

Copies of driver's license or photo ID will be made for each player. A player that does not have a photo ID on record and is listed on the roster will not be able to play until such condition is satisfied.

Roster will be final by the third week of the season, after which, no player may be added.

Each player must bring a photo ID to every game. Rosters may be checked periodically. A team may ask for a roster to be checked before the game starts.

Opposing teams may protest a player's eligibility by notifying the umpire and scorekeeper during the game in question. Additionally, the team captain must submit a written protest to the league office in accordance with Rule V.D. Any team playing with an ineligible player, or players, will automatically forfeit the game in which the infraction(s) occurred.

IV. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

(IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL OTHER OCDEAPR-ATHLETICS PROGRAMS)

All participants, captains, officials, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner in line with the goals and objectives of the Adult Softball League. Any individual found to be in violation of any rule and/or regulation shall be sanctioned according to the below explained chart for Penalties and Sanctions.

In addition to the rules explained in the Penalties and Sanctions, any participant, coach, or spectator that is ejected by an official is automatically suspended for the remainder of the current day's games, and subsequent following game in addition to ejection from the facility.

All penalties and sanctions levied by an official or Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation staff are determined on a case-by-case basis and are final. **No protest will be permitted.**

ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, PARKS AND RECREATION
PENALTIES AND SANCTIONS FOR COACHES AND LEAGUE OFFICIALS
 (Includes players for Adult League Programs)

INFRACTION	DIRECTED TOWARDS	PENALTY/SANCTION(S)
Use of alcohol or drugs	During game, practice or other league or team event where players are present	1 st offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Knowingly requiring or allowing a player to play while having a serious injury creating unsafe playing conditions. (Failure to notify staff at occurrence of injury.)	During game, practice or other league or team event where players are present.	1 st offense-Two game suspension and a meeting with league staff. 2 nd offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Foul or abusive language.	A player, coach, official or spectator	1 st offense-Ejection from current game and one game suspension. 2 nd offense-Two-game suspension and meeting with league staff.
Threatening/derogatory gesture or language.	A player, coach, official or spectator	1 st offense-Ejection from current game and two-game suspension. 2 nd offense-Suspension for remainder of season.
Knowingly permitting a player to participate in a game without having registered for the program.	League and league administrators	Ejection for the remainder of the league/activity season.
Striking or bodily assault resulting in contact and/or injury to	A player, coach, official or spectator	Lifetime suspension for all Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation sports.

ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, PARKS AND RECREATION
PENALTIES AND/OR SANCTIONS FOR PARENTS, LEGAL GUARDIANS, AND SPECTATORS

INFRACTIONS	DIRECTED TOWARDS	PENALTY/SANCTION(S)
Use of Alcohol or drugs	Within any County facility during the game, practice or other league or team event where players are present	1 st offense-Ejection from facility 2 nd offense-Two week suspension 3 rd offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Interference with the conduct of the game	Resulting in stoppage of play	1 st offense-Ejection from facility 2 nd offense-Two week suspension 3 rd offense-Suspension for the remainder of the season.
Foul or abusive language	A player, coach, official or spectator	Ejection from facility park and a mandatory meeting with league administrators.
Threatening/Derogatory gesture and/or language	A player, coach, official or spectator	Ejection from the facility or park, a one week suspension from OCRPD facilities and parks and mandatory meeting with league administrators.
Striking in any threatening fashion	A player, coach, official or spectator	1 st offense-Ejection from the facility or park, a one year suspension (from the date of occurrence). 2 nd offense- Lifetime suspension from all OCDEAPR Sports

Additional Conduct Rules

Communicating with Officials

Captains must control any discussion or comments to officials, from their bench or players, at all times.

Only team captains will be permitted to question a call with an umpire or ask for a ruling on the game. In the absence of the captain, one player representative designated prior to the start of the game may take this place.

Violations will draw a warning from the officials. Subsequent violations may warrant a warning and or expulsion from the facility.

Dugout Area

Only game players, managers, scorekeepers, league staff and officials are allowed on the dugout and playing area. Children are not permitted in the dugout. Teams are not permitted a bat boy/girl.

Fighting

There is absolutely no fighting! Any player who fights will be suspended for a period of one year from the date of suspension.

A physical or verbal threat to any league official will result in an immediate suspension for the remainder of the season.

Food/Drugs/Alcohol

Tobacco products or drugs are not allowed inside the playing area, including dugouts.

No intoxicating beverages will be permitted on Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation grounds before, during, or after a game. Any player seen drinking or suspected of being intoxicated directly before or during a game will be ejected. If the problem reoccurs, the player and/or team may be expelled from the league for a minimum of one (1) year.

Ejections/Suspensions

When a player is suspended or ejected from a league/game, that person is not permitted to be in the playing area (field and surrounding spectator areas) for the duration of the suspension/ejection. If that player does not vacate the premise in a timely manner or attempts to reenter the playing area, officials/staff can award the opposing team with a win via a forfeit. Any team player or manager ejected from a game will not be allowed to participate in the next league game.

There will be no refund to any player who has been suspended or dismissed from the league.

Role of the Official in regards to Conduct

Any matter not covered by the Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation shall be left to game officials and league staff.

Any game will be stopped if the umpire and/or league staff deems that the game is out of control, or the team captain is ineffective to control his/her team. Referee decisions are final.

V. LEAGUE RULES:

The official ASA Playing Rules shall govern all rules and regulations within the Orange County Adult Softball League unless otherwise stated.

A. League Format

- Regular Season games will be played on Sunday evenings at Cedar Grove Park. Games will be scheduled between 3:15 and 8:30 p.m.
- Tournament games may be played Friday, Saturday, and/or Sunday.
- Any schedule changes will not be made after the schedule has been printed. Games will not be rescheduled at the request of teams. No game shall be arbitrarily postponed, except in the cases of extreme emergency as approved by the league coordinator or whereby the playing surface or weather conditions shall be considered unfit for play.
- In the event of a forfeit, no make-up game will be permitted.

B. Equipment

- **Balls** – The Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation will furnish two new games balls for each game, one twelve (12) inch and one eleven (11) inch. Such balls shall be optic yellow in color and red-stitched. Women will bat ASA stamped with forty-four (.44) COR and three-hundred seventy-five (375) compression 11-inch softball. Men will bat ASA stamped with fifty-two (.52) COR and three-hundred (300) compression 12-inch softball.

After three (3) outs, the ball remains in the game at the pitching rubber or in the possession of the home plate umpire.

If a team fouls off a pitch, the ball should be returned to play promptly. In the event that the ball cannot be returned to play in a timely fashion, a gently-used game ball meeting all other above criteria will be provided by Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation. If the original game ball becomes available, it must be promptly returned to play.

- **Bats** – All bats should have the ASA stamp. Bats may be a maximum of thirty-eight (38) ounces in weight and thirty four (34) inches in length. Titanium and cone grips are not permitted. For a listing of bats that meet these requirements, visit www.asasoftball.com. The user of an illegal bat used in a game will be expelled for the remainder of the season and the game will be declared a forfeit in favor of the opposing team.
- **Catcher's Gear** – All catchers are urged, but not required, to wear a face mask with throat protector. One will be provided at the field. Neither ASA nor local league rules require the use of either.
- **Footwear** – Some type of shoe must be worn. Bare feet are not allowed. Sneakers or rubber cleats are allowed, but metal cleats are strictly prohibited.

- **Uniform** – Each player must have a team-colored shirt with a permanent number by the first game. Numbers must be permanent or iron-on; tape or temporary numbers are not permitted. No duplicate numbers are permitted. Players, even if registered with the league, will not be permitted to play without team-colored uniforms and permanent numbers.

Team shirt colors must be decided prior to the first game. All teams will be responsible for securing their own shirts/uniforms.

In cooler weather, players may be allowed to wear sweatshirts, sweat suits, etc. during games. However, team jerseys must worn by each player. Jerseys may be displayed over top of garments or underneath another garment, but they must be worn. Any player questioned and not having a team jersey will be ruled ineligible.

The field supervisor will be responsible for judging any jersey in question.

Restricted Dress – The officials shall not permit any team member to wear equipment or apparel which in his/her judgment is dangerous, confusing to other players, or inappropriate. Examples of such clothing include but are not limited to:

- Jewelry such as watches, bracelets, chains, and earrings.
 - Head caps.
- The penalty for use of illegal equipment shall be forfeiture of any and all games in which said equipment is used. Opposing teams may protest the use of illegal equipment following the protest procedures set forth below.

C. Playing Rules

Local league rules as follows will take precedence over any ASA Playing Rule.

Players

- **Number of Players** – A team is considered ten (10) players. A minimum number of eight (8) players is required to begin any game. In the event that eight (8) players have not arrived for a game by the scheduled start time, that team shall forfeit the game.

If playing with nine (9) players, one (1) position in the batting order will be an automatic out (either the ninth or tenth batter, depending on gender). If playing with eight (8) players, two (2) positions in the batting order will be automatic outs (both the ninth and tenth batters). Each time the vacant position is scheduled to bat, the team captain and the scorekeeper should notify the home plate umpire of the vacancy.

A ninth and tenth player, if of appropriate gender, can enter the game upon arrival by being inserted into the bottom of the line-up provided:

- 1) The lead-off batter has not batted a second time and/or
- 2) The fourth (4th) inning has not begun.

Such players may enter the field defensively with the permission of the home-plate umpire.

- **Acceptable Ratios** – Teams may play with gender ratios of 4-4, 5-4 (if playing 9 players), 5-5, 6-6, 7-7 or 8-8 if the Extra Player rule is being used. If playing with eight (8) players, teams may not play with a ratio of 5-3.

Teams may bat 8, 9, 10, 12, 14 or 16 with a maximum of 10 players playing in the field at any given time.

Once a player occupies a position in the batting order, he/she may only bat in that position during the game. No player may occupy multiple slots in the batting order.

All players playing in the field must be substituted into the line-up through the scorekeeper prior to participating in the field.

Teams may NOT elect to play 9, 11, 13 or 15 players and take an automatic out intentionally.

- **Extra Player (EP)** – Teams may make use of an extra player (EP), not a designated hitter (DH). In the Co-Rec leagues, up to three (3) male and three (3) female extra players may be used in equal ratios (ex. 1 male and 1 female, 2 males and 2 females, or 3 males and 3 females). If an EP is used, it must be made known prior to the start of the game and be listed on the line up sheet in the regular batting order. When an EP is used in the Co-Rec league, all 12, 14 or 16 on the starting line up must bat and any 10 of those may play defense (five male and five female). The EP may be substituted at any time but the batting order must stay the same. The substitute must be a player who has not yet been in the game.
- **Defensive Positioning Requirement** – Teams may bat 8, 9, 10, 12, 14 or 16 players with 8, 9 or 10 players playing in the field at any given time. There are no rules requiring a specific number of males or females in the infield.
- **Losing a Player** – If a team loses a player during the course of a game for any reason (including injury, illness, or ejection) and there are no legal substitutes, the player's batting position will be declared an automatic out each time his/her turn arrives. The position could be filled by the player returning (later) or by a late-arriving, legal substitute if the situation allows. Failure to complete the game with all batters listed on the line up as a result of an ejected player results in an out being scored each time the vacated position comes to bat.

In the case of losing a player, acceptable player ratios must be maintained, with no more than one additional player of either gender. (For example, if a team elects to use the EP rule beginning play with 12 players and subsequently loses a player, their ratio becomes 6-5. If the team loses a second player of the same gender, bringing the ratio to 6-4, the game will be declared a forfeit at that point.)

Due to safety for all participants, no game will be permitted to continue without eight (8) players in the line-up for each team at all times. If injury, illness, or other circumstances cause a team to drop below eight (8) registered players, the game will be declared a forfeit.

- **Substitutions** – Any starting player who has been substituted for may re-enter once, provided he/she occupies the same batting position in the batting order. Once a substitute is removed from the game he/she may not re-enter. If the starting player re-enters the game a second time, a substitute removed from the game re-enters, or a player re-enters the game in a position in the batting order other than their original starting or substitute position, this is considered an illegal re-entry.
- **Courtesy Runner** – A courtesy runner may be allowed for an injured player whose injury occurs during the game currently being played. The following stipulations apply to the use of a courtesy runner:
 - A) One courtesy runner is allowed for one injured player per team per game provided that the injury occurs during the game currently being played.
 - B) To request a courtesy runner, the batter/runner must first safely reach base. A team must then ask for time due to injury and request the runner through the umpire. The umpire crew will allow a courtesy runner in the event of an injury only. The umpire shall then confer with the scorekeeper who will record the use of the courtesy runner on the official score sheet.
 - C) The courtesy runner is only allowed if no legal substitutes are available. If substitutes are available, the injured player must be replaced via a legal substitution as defined by ASA rules.
 - D) The courtesy runner may run for the injured player for the remainder of the game. If the injured player cannot continue in the field and continue to bat and the number of eligible players drops below the required minimum of 8 or below acceptable gender ratios, a forfeit will be declared.
 - E) The courtesy runner must be of the same gender as the injured player and shall be selected by choosing the player furthest from the injured player's batting slot who is not currently occupying a base.

Game Preliminaries

- **Line-ups** – Each team must submit a copy of their line-up to the scorekeeper no later than five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled game time. If the preceding game is still in progress at the scheduled game time, the line-up must still be submitted to the field supervisor at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled game time.

After a line-up is submitted to the scorekeeper, the change from one player to another will result in a substitution being made.

- **No Grace Period** – The game time is designated on the schedule. The official time will be kept by the scorekeeper. If a team cannot field the appropriate minimum of eight (8) players at game time, the game shall be declared a forfeit. Players must be in the dugout and ready to begin the game. Line-ups must still be submitted no later than five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled game time.

- **Pre-Game Warm-Up** – Warm-ups for each game are handled as follows:
 - 1st Game – All warm-ups should occur in the outfield area or in the large open areas outside of the fence and away from the bleachers. Teams will not be permitted on the infield until the game is ready to begin. No batting practice will be permitted on the infield.
 - Remaining Games – Same as first game, if time allows and as approved by the official scorekeeper. Otherwise, all warm-ups must occur outside of the fence and away from the bleachers and automobiles.

- **Regulation Game** – A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings or the following:
 - Rain or Darkness – The losing team must have been at bat at least five (5) innings for the game to be declared regulation. EXCEPTIONS below:
 - Run Ahead Rule – The run-ahead rule will be in effect after the following:
 - A team is ahead 20 runs or more after the losing team has batted at least 4 times.
 - A team is ahead 12 runs or more after the losing team has batted at least 5 times.

NOTE: ASA Rule 5, Section 9, B. – Complete innings must be played unless the home team scores the run ahead limit while at bat. When the visiting team reaches the limit in the top half of the inning, the home team must have their opportunity to bat in the bottom half of the inning.

NOTE: The run-ahead rule will still be in effect in post-season tournament play.

- Time Limit – All games, with the exception of the semi-finals and finals of the post-season tournament(s), will have a time limit of ONE HOUR & TEN MINUTES.

Applications of the time limit include the following:

- The time limit shall start on the first pitch of the game.
- No new inning shall begin once the time limit has expired.
- No game shall be complete due to the time limit unless it ends on a complete inning or unless the losing team has completed its at bat.
- Tied scores will continue with each additional inning being considered an extra-inning situation.
- Any game called by the time limit shall be considered a regulation game (regardless of the number of innings played).

Game Rules

- **Field** – Pitching distance will be set at fifty (50) feet. The base length distance will be set at sixty five (65) feet.

- **Pitch Count** – All batters go to the plate with one ball and one strike. An out is called after a third strike.

- **Two-strike Fouls** – After two strikes, a batter is allowed one courtesy foul ball; a second foul ball shall result in the batter being declared out. Any foul balls hit in the field of play are considered live balls – if caught, runners may tag up and advance at their own risk.

- **Walks** – Walks are awarded on four (4) balls with less than three (3) strikes. Pursuant to ASA rule 8, section 1:

When four balls have been called by the umpire. The batter-runner is awarded first base.

EFFECT:

(Co-Ed) The ball is dead. Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award. The next batter (a female) will bat.

EXCEPTION: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat. Should the female batter-runner pass a male batter-runner when choosing to walk, no out shall be called during a dead ball period. A male batter-runner advancing to second base without touching first base shall be called out if properly appealed.

- **Home Run Rule** – Home runs hit over the fence by a team are limited to three (3) per game. Any home run hit over the fence in excess of three (3) will result in the batter being declared OUT and the ball will be dead and runner will return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch.

This rule will not apply to “inside the park” home runs, balls that go over the fence as a result of an error, or any other circumstance where the batter scores without the ball clearing the outfield fence. Such occurrences do not count against the “Home Run Rule.”

- **Defensive Arc** – When a female is at bat, the following applies: A 185-foot restraining line painted on the outfield will be utilized. Outfielders must be behind the line until the ball is hit. Infielders must stand with both feet on the clay. PENALTY: Dead ball, batter-base runner and all preceding base runners will be awarded one base.
- **No Stealing**
- **Mandatory Slide Rule** – Runners will be called out if they remain on their feet and crash into a defensive player attempting to make a play on the runner and holding the ball or receiving the ball.

D. Protests

Protests are allowed on player and equipment eligibility rulings only. Judgment calls cannot be protested, (i.e. balls/strikes, out/safe, etc). Protests must be announced to the scorekeeper at the time of the game *and* submitted in writing to the Recreation Division within three (3) business days of the incident, and accompanied by a \$10.00 check made payable to OCDEAPR. If the fee does not accompany the protest, said protest will not be considered. If the investigation rules in favor of the protesting team the check will be returned, if not, the check will be deposited by the County.

VI. LEAGUE STANDING AND TOURNAMENT

A single-elimination tournament will be played at the end of the season. Tournament games will be played under the same rules as regular league play with the following exception: The time-limit rule will be waived for the tournament semi-final and final.

For the purpose of tournament seeding, league standings will be determined as follows:

- 1) Overall win/loss record
- 2) Head-to-head record
- 3) Head-to-head run differential (with forfeited games recorded as 7-0 per ASA rule 5, section 6.C)
- 4) Overall run differential
- 5) Coin toss

Unlike for the regular season, tournament games may be played Friday, Saturday, and/or Sunday.

Tournament Eligibility

Any player who is listed on the roster must play in at least three (3) games to be eligible for the playoffs and championship game.

If a player is present for a game and the game is subsequently cancelled due to a forfeit or inclement weather, the player still gets credit for attending the game and may use that game towards the required three (3) games for tournament play. This is determined based on the line-up submitted by captains; captains are responsible for ensuring that the scorekeeper has a line-up of players in attendance.

Should a team forfeit three (3) games during the overall season the team will be eliminated from playoff competition.

VII. AWARDS/PRIZES

Certificates to a local establishment will be distributed as follows:

- Regular Season Champion \$70
- Tournament Champion \$50
- Tournament Runner-up \$40

VIII. OFFICIALS AND STAFF

All officials/supervisors/scorekeepers will be assigned by the Orange County DEAPR Recreation Division.

All game officials will be responsible for rules enforcement on the field during all games. DEAPR Recreation Division staff shall be responsible for overseeing all activity within the facility.

Scorekeepers shall maintain official time, especially with regards to:

- Submission of line-ups five (5) minutes prior to scheduled start time.
- Official game time.
- Enforcement of time-limit.

IX. OTHER CONCERNS

Insurance

The Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks and Recreation is not responsible and does not provide any insurance to any teams or individuals in the league.

Cancellation Hotline

On days when inclement weather or otherwise unforeseen circumstances may necessitate canceling games, a decision will be made when possible no later than two hours prior to the first scheduled game of the day. A good faith effort will be made to notify captains of such a cancellation. However, captains and players should call the weather hotline for cancellation information at (919) 245-2669.