

City of Sunset Hills Department of Parks + Recreation Adult Slow-Pitch Softball League Rules (Revised January 2025)

Welcome to the City of Sunset Hills and thank you for choosing our adult softball leagues for your enjoyment and recreation. All softball league participants and spectators are required to follow ALL rules and regulations described in the USSSA Softball Umpire Rule Book, USSSA St. Louis OMNIBUS rules, as well as ALL City of Sunset Hills Municipal Codes. Any rules found conflicting will default to the OMNIBUS Rules.

It is the team manager's responsibility to inform all players of league rules. All players must be at least 18 years of age.

• **DEFINITION OF LEVELS OF PLAY:**

When teams register for leagues, they should follow these guidelines for which league to register for. Sunset Hills has the right to move or remove a team from the league to balance the league or ensure levels of play are followed.

LOW REC- Teams competing at this level should be newly formed teams, some players with limited baseball/softball experience or some high school experience, or teams just looking to have fun playing. Teams that have played before in our leagues with records below .800 in LOW REC, or .300 records or lower in MID REC.

MID REC- Teams competing at this level should be teams that have been formed for a while, most of the players having high school or college level experience, or teams looking for some level of competition. Teams that have played before in our leagues with above .300 records in MID REC or above .800 records in LOW REC.

HI REC- Teams competing at this level should be teams that have been formed for a while, all players have high school or college level experience, or teams looking for competition. Teams that have played in our league before with undefeated records in MID REC. These teams should look for other competitive leagues if undefeated and are invoking run rules on other teams with records above .500.

Tournament- Teams that are assembled for outside tournaments, and championship level competition should not register for Sunset Hills leagues.

- **EQUIPMENT:**

The league will provide softballs for each game. The specifications on the balls we use are **USSSA stamp 375 compression and .47 COR**. The umpires will check balls that go into play.

Check the approved bat list at ussa.com. Umpires will inspect bats and there will be a list on hand at the concession stand. You may ask to have a bat checked at any point in the game.

Per USSSA Softball rules, no metal cleats or spikes may be worn. Cleats or spikes must be rubber or plastic.

Pitchers are highly encouraged to wear personal protective gear (face mask, shin guards, etc.)

- **TIME LIMIT:**

The first game of each double header will be played until the full 7 innings are complete, or a run limit is reached. Only in the second game of the double header will a 55-minute time rule be implemented from the beginning of the original scheduled game time.

(Example- game 1 starts at 6:30pm, 7 innings take 75 minutes to complete. Game 2 of the double header would begin at 7:45pm and only have until 8:25pm to finish as many innings as time allows.)

No inning, including extra innings, will be started after 55-minutes. Games that are tied at that point will result in a draw. In the event of a cancellation due to rain or other circumstances, a game will be considered complete after 4 innings.

- **EXTRA INNINGS:**

If a game is tied after 7 innings, 1 extra inning will be played unless the 55-minute time limit has been reached. Each batter will begin with a 3 ball 2 strike count, and each team will begin with a runner on second base. That runner will be last out of the previous inning. In the event of a tie after the extra inning, the game will end with that score and both teams will be awarded a draw.

- **RUN RULES: (ALL LEAGUES)**

The game is over when any one team is winning by 20 runs after 3 innings, 15 runs after 4 innings, 10 runs after 5 innings, or a 15 run differential by the visiting team in the 6th or 7th inning.

- **SCORE KEEPING:**

Both teams must keep score in case of discrepancies.

The umpire will keep the official score.

Both teams must sign the umpire's scorecard for the official end of the game score.

- **RAINOUTS:**

Check the rainout line status at: <https://rainoutline.com/search/dnis/3148283384>

Rainouts will be decided by the league manager and the rainout line will be updated before 8:00am for morning games, and 4:00pm for evening games, or 2:00pm for weekend evening games, based on current field conditions and future weather radar forecasts. After that time, it is at the umpire's discretion to call the games at any point.

If lightning is detected within 10 miles of the complex, the current games will be called off. If lightning is not seen again for 30 minutes, then games can be resumed starting with the next scheduled game. Games will be cancelled if a lightning delay goes past 10 minutes of the scheduled start time.

Once play begins on a series of games, rain outs and called games are determined by the umpires. No game is officially cancelled until the umpires declare games cancelled. When/if games are halted because of rain or lightning, all fields will stop play when the senior umpire makes the call to cease playing. Games will then be called by umpires after waiting the appropriate time.

One (1) week of rainouts are built into each session. The rainout will be played 1 week after the originally scheduled last game. The City of Sunset Hills will make every attempt to play these games based on field availability but reserves the right to cancel any session and/or credit an account for un-played games.

- **MINIMUM PLAYERS:**

All teams must have a minimum of 8 players.

Teams may play the entirety of the game with the minimum 8 eligible players with no penalty.

There are no automatic outs. If neither team can produce 8 players, then both teams will forfeit.

- **COED SUPPLEMENTAL RULES:**

1. The 10 defensive players on the field must be split evenly at 5 men and 5 women. It will be allowed to play more women than men but not more men than women, except if playing shorthanded. If shorthanded with only 4 women, then 5 men may still play in the field. It is never permissible to play more than 5 men on defense, even if shorthanded.

4 women must be always in the field, men and women can play any position at any time as long 4 women are on the field. No team may play with less than 8 players.

2. The batting order must alternate between women and men. No 2 men are allowed to bat back-to-back even in shorthanded situations. 2 batting orders will be implemented, 1 woman and 1 man, both alternating.
3. Any male batter that is issued a walk will immediately be awarded second base but must touch first base or be subject to an out if appealed. The next female batter may choose to hit or take the free base at first. The decision must be made before the next pitch. A pitch to the female batter implies the decision, by the batter, to hit and give up the free base.
4. Women may substitute for women as pinch runners and men for men.

• **ADDING PLAYERS AFTER START OF GAME:**

If the additional (eligible) players arrive after the start of the game, then he/she can enter the game immediately. Players entering after the start of the game must be placed at the end of the line-up.

• **SUBSTITUTIONS:**

Teams must bat all eligible present players, not just those who played in the defensive half of the inning.

Free defensive substitutions will be allowed. Any player may enter any defensive position at any time and as often as needed.

One courtesy runner per inning (one time) may be used. The courtesy runner will be any player selected by the manager. If the courtesy runner is still on base at the time of their turn at bat, that spot in the batting order will be an out. In Coed Leagues, the courtesy runner for a male will be the any male selected and the courtesy runner for the female will any female selected. If any additional courtesy runner of an inning enters the game, and the defensive team completes a proper appeal before the next pitch, illegal pitcher action, intentional walk, or before all fielders have left fair territory, the runner will be declared out. Any batter who is walked, must touch first base before getting a courtesy runner or is subject to be called out with a proper appeal

• **PLAYERS MOVE TO ANOTHER TEAM:**

Players may play on multiple teams in separate leagues. Any player on a Sunset Hills roster may “sub” for another team if that team has a minimum of 7 players from the original roster. The number of “subs” may not exceed half the number of rostered players.

- **RUNNERS:**

Any runner off the base struck with a batted ball will be called out.

Any ball striking a runner in contact with the base will be a live ball.

Runners may not leave (lead off) the base until the pitch crosses the plate. Any bases runners caught leading off before the pitch will be called out.

Stealing is not allowed.

Runners must slide or give themselves up. Any runner who does not and purposefully or accidentally collides with the defensive player will be ejected.

Base paths will be measured to 70 feet.

- **PITCHING:**

Every batter will begin with a 1-ball 1-strike count.

A foul ball with 2 strikes will result in a third strike and is a dead ball out, runners may not advance.

The pitching mound will be measured to 50 feet. The pitcher must be in contact with the pitching rubber when releasing the pitch. If not in contact with the pitching rubber, then the illegal pitch rules will apply.

Strike mats will be used to determine balls and strikes. Any legal pitch that falls on the mat is an unarguable strike. Hitting Home Plate is not a strike and will be considered a ball.

- **PITCHING ARC:**

The legal pitch arc will have a minimum floor of 6 feet and a maximum ceiling of 10 feet. Any pitch within those requirements will constitute a legal pitch.

Legal pitches are decided by the umpire and may not be argued.

An illegal pitch will be considered a delayed dead ball.

A batter can decide to swing at an illegal pitch rendering it a live ball and regular rules apply.

- **HOMERUN RULE:**

On field #4 homeruns will be all you can get.

On field #2 and #3 there will be a 4-homerun limit with the one up rule going into effect.

In any one game if a team hits 4 homeruns, every homerun after that point is considered an out until the other team "catches up" to the 4-homerun limit.

When both teams are at the 4-homerun limit, then the 1 up rule will go into effect. Any homerun hit beyond the 1 up will also be considered an out. (Inside the park homeruns do not count towards the homerun tally.)

If a fielder deflects a fly ball over the fence it is considered a homerun but does not count towards the tally.

- **OUT OF PLAY:**

Any ball beyond the dugout fence extended will be out of play and considered a dead ball.

If the ball is thrown or blocked out of play by the defensive team, then any base runners will be awarded 2 bases, the base they are approaching and the following base.

- **WARM-UP AREAS:**

Warm-ups are permitted in dead ball area (outside of the fence), but not in foul territory.

- **FORFEITS:**

If your team needs to forfeit a game, call the Sunset Hills Community Center at 314-842-7265 as soon as possible and at least by Noon (12pm) of the day of the game to notify of the forfeit. The game is considered a forfeit if one of the teams cannot produce the appropriate number of eligible players by game time. No grace period will be given to teams unable to arrive on time with the proper players.

If your team forfeits without notice or after Noon (12pm) you will be charged a \$35 "No Show Fee" from the card that was used to register the team. This is meant to encourage teams to give notice that they will not be at the game. It saves everyone time and frustration of not showing up without notice.

Teams dropping out of the league after the scheduled start date will not be refunded.

Forfeiting teams concede 10 runs to the opposing team.

- **SPORTSMANSHIP**

The ump will record a grade for each team on the scorecard, each night on that night. Teams that finish the session with a sportsmanship rating lower than a 2.5 average will not be allowed in the future sessions that same year. A team that receives a 1 on any given night could be removed from the league immediately.

The grading scale is as follows:

4 = Excellent, Displayed good sportsmanship to even out the game. I.e. A runner was safe and they confessed they were out or a fielder trapped the ball instead of catching it.

3 = Nothing to report, the team/players conducted themselves properly.

2 = Minor issues, single player issue. Constant bickering or arguing for calls. (people are going to questions calls, it's what they continue to do after the question that gets them this)

1 = Major issue, multiple players, or an ejection. (Same as above but on a team basis)

• **EJECTIONS AND SUSPENSIONS:**

Harassment of the official(s) before, during, or after the game may result in the ejection of the individual(s) involved in the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. Every time an ejected player's spot comes up to bat it will be considered an out. Umpires have the authority to remove any ejected persons from the complex.

Vulgarity and profanity will not be tolerated. Managers are in charge of their players and fans' conduct. Players or fans ejected because of profanity or misconduct must leave the area surrounding the field of play or that team will forfeit the game. Any persons ejected are automatically suspended from the next team game (scheduled, rescheduled or championship).

Any player, coach, or fan that is ejected from a game for whatever reason will be reported to the Parks & Recreation office and will be suspended from attendance/participation in his/her team's next game (including scheduled, rescheduled and playoffs). The Parks & Recreation Department may lengthen a suspension for any length of time and may seek removal from leagues if circumstances so warrant.

• **REMOVAL FROM LEAGUE:**

Any player or spectator who strikes, attempts to strike or verbally threatens an official, player or spectator will be suspended from the league for one calendar year.

Any player or spectator ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time in one season will be suspended from the league for one calendar year.

The league director reserves the right to remove any team from the league and deny the opportunity for re-entry depending on the severity of the situation.

- **LEAGUE CHAMPIONS**

When possible, a top 4 team playoff will be held. Eligibility will be decided by overall record. In the case of a tie, the winner will be decided by head-to-head record, then run differential in the head-to-head games, then overall run differential, and finally most runs scored. If a playoff is not able to be played, the champion will be decided by the same tie breakers. League champions will receive \$100 credit off future league registration.

- **SUNSET HILLS ATHLETIC FIELD RULES AND PROCEDURES:**

1. Alcoholic beverages are allowed at the fields. NO GLASS BOTTLES. GLASS BOTTLES WILL BE CONFISCATED IF FOUND ON THE PREMISES. This includes all spectators. Observe city ordinances. No smoking or drinking on the field or foul territory will be allowed. Alcohol and all beverages must be kept behind the bench.
2. Per City Ordinance Sec. 2-9 Prohibition of smoking on City property.

The possession of lighted or heated smoking materials in any form, including, but not limited to, the possession of lighted or heated cigarettes, cigars, pipes, vapes, or other tobacco products and/or marijuana, is prohibited in buildings, within 100 feet of the City's playgrounds, within 100 feet of the City's sports fields, and within 100 feet of the exterior fenced perimeter of the City's aquatic facility.
3. Any roster changes must be made in writing to the park office.
4. Uniforms are not required but shirts must be worn at all times.
5. Protest must be made immediately with the umpire. Umpires will note all pertinent information. A protest must also be made in person and in writing to the park office within 1 business day. A protest fee of \$50 must accompany the written protest. The fee will only be refunded if the protest is ruled in your favor. The Park office will make a decision within 5 business days of receiving the written protests. All decisions are final.
6. The Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to add, omit, or revise any rules at any time. Managers and players will be made aware of rule changes either verbally or in writing. The Recreation Supervisor or Site Supervisor may interrupt any game at any time if he/she feels there is cause to do so. They may also eject any player or spectator at any time if he/she feels there is cause to do so.