



## 2021 Minor (AAA) League Softball Rules

### *A Softball Division for 9 - 11 year old girls*

**Rosters:** Official rosters of each team will be filed with the Little League Softball Assistant District Administrator before the first game. Rosters may be of any size. Roster changes will be submitted to the Little League Softball Assistant District Administrator within three calendar days.

**Number of Players:** Teams may begin and continue games with only eight players. The ninth spot in the batting order will be skipped over and no out recorded.

**Home Team:** The team listed second on the scheduled playing date is the home team and shall have the playing field for ten minutes at twenty minutes before game time for their warm ups.

**Visiting Team:** The team listed first on the scheduled playing date is the visiting team and shall have the playing field for ten minutes at ten minutes before game time for their warm ups.

**Playing Field:** Prior to the start of the Minor League Softball season, each participating league will prepare ground rules that are unique to their fields. A copy of these ground rules will be supplied to the Little League Softball Assistant District Administrator. These ground rules shall be covered at the pregame conference with the umpires. Each league is responsible for the preparation of the fields.

**Softball:** Softballs will be 11", white or optic yellow, leather or synthetic leather and normal flight.

**Umpires:** The home team shall provide a minimum of two umpires, preferably 16-years or older. Whether adult or youth, non-vaccinated plate umpires will be stationed behind the pitcher. Vaccinated plate umpires may be positioned behind the catcher or pitcher, depending on their preference or the host league's Covid protocols. Rule 9.00 (d) will not be in force. (stealing signs and automatic ejection).

**Starting Time:** Weekday games will start at 6:00PM. (Unless prior arrangements have been made.) Weekend games will start at the scheduled time. Every effort should be made to reschedule games not played due to weather. Coaches will ensure the game keep moving by supplying a player with a catcher's helmet and dangling throat guard to warm up their pitcher between innings.

**Ending the Game:** No NEW inning shall start after 1 hour and 45 minutes, including Saturdays. A new inning starts when the third out of the previous inning has been made. Once an inning starts, it shall be completed unless halted by an umpire or if the home team is ahead at the conclusion of the visiting teams at bat or when the home team scores the winning run in their half of the inning. All games called for the time limit will be regarded as regulation, no matter the number of innings played, and even if they end in a tie score time-limit games will not be resumed at a later date. If a team is down by 15 runs after 3 innings or 10 or more runs after 4, the game will be halted.

**Half Inning:** A half inning shall end when the defensive team has recorded three outs, or when the offensive team has scored 5 runs. (If more than five runs are possible due to a hit ball put into play, only the fifth run will count and all subsequent runs are not counted.) The 6th inning and any inning thereafter shall be played with no restrictions.

**Regulation Game:** A regulation game shall consist of two innings, unless ended by time limit. All games ended due to time limits are regulation games, no matter how many innings played.

**Darkness:** Calling the game due to darkness is the sole judgment of the umpires and not any local league rule.

**District Tournament of Champions:** The team from each league with the best record will represent their league in the District 4 Tournament of Champions.

**Outfielders:** All outfielders shall remain in the outfield until the ball is hit. Only nine players may be used on defense.

**Batting:** All members of the offensive team will make up the batting order. Late arrivals, at the discretion of the manager, can be added to the bottom of the batting order.

**Runners:** During the first half of the season, Base runners may only advance one base per steal attempt. This applies to all runners on base at the same time.

**Courtesy Runner:** The new courtesy runner rule will NOT be used.

**Pitching:** During the first half of the season, the pitcher shall be a player. The pitcher shall be allowed to pitch until the batter A) hits the ball into fair territory, B) strikes out, C) bases are loaded and the batter has a 4-ball count. When the bases are loaded and there are 4 balls to the hitter, the adult pitcher (from the offensive team – either the 1st or 3rd base coach) shall pitch, with the existing strike count on the batter. The adult will then pitch until the batter either hits the ball into fair territory or strikes out. In order for a run to be scored, the batter must put the ball in fair play. If the bases are loaded when a pitcher hits a batter, the adult pitcher (from the offensive team – either the 1st or 3rd base coach) shall pitch, with the existing strike count on the batter, so as not to walk in a run.

There shall be no walks into home in the first half. No bunting or stealing is allowed when an adult is used as a pitcher.

A pitcher can only pitch a maximum of three (3) innings in any game, 21 innings in a week. 12-year-olds may not pitch. The pitchers plate will be 35' from home plate.

It is recommended that if a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning or 5 batters in a game, the pitcher will be replaced for the remainder of the game. Batters must make an honest effort to avoid the pitches. An “honest” effort is at the discretion of the umpire.

In the 2nd half of the season only a player will be allowed to pitch.

Representatives from those leagues combining their programs to form one league shall agree upon the 1/2 marks for teams playing in the league.

**Protest: There are no protests in Minor (AAA) Softball. The decision of the umpires will be final.**

**Any rule not specifically mentioned here is covered by the rules of Little League Softball 2021.**