



## I. GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

### A. TEAM PLAYING REGULATIONS

1. All softball games will be played in accordance with the USA Softball Association with the exception of any rule change stated in your specific league rules or on league schedules pertaining to specific league situations.
2. **Teams must supply and hit their own Restricted Flight 300/.52 COR Maximum ASA stamped optic yellow game ball. 375/.44 Ball will not be allowed.** Men's and Coed leagues use a 12" ball. Softballs may be purchased at the Softball Complex Office. Dudley Thunder Advance is illegal. Each team shall supply their own bats, gloves, team scorebook and back up balls. Bases and official score book will be provided.
3. **Players, Substitutes, Lineups:** USA rules for reentry and extra player (EP) will apply. Extra players may play defense at any time provided the total number of defensive players on the field at one time does not exceed the total allowed group.
4. Teams may choose to place all players present for the game in one big batting order and use free substitution in the field. If using this form of lineup, the opposing team Manager must be made aware prior to the game starting. **Coed Exception: An out will occur for men batting back to back.**
5. Official score keepers will be provided by the Department. The scorekeeper's book will be the official book. You must turn in your line up to the scorekeeper's table 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game. Full proper last names and first initials and shirt number of all players and substitutes must be legibly shown. In the case of a protest over an ineligible player any illegible line-ups or recognizable alterations will be construed as a decision against the offending team.
6. **GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME:** Umpires or official score keepers watch will be used as the official game time. If your team forfeits a game without notifying the Recreation Office 24 hours before game time you will need to pay **\$20** before you will be allowed to play your next game. The second forfeit will cost **\$40**. More than two forfeits in one season or if the entire team no shows, without notifying the Recreation Office will result in immediate release from the league with no refund of fees. Forfeit fees are to be paid to your site scorekeeper prior to your next game. All forfeit fees collected will be donated to WDM Human Services. Please call opposing team if you know before the game that you will be forfeiting.

7. Games will be 7 innings or 55 minutes. An official game will be after 4½ innings. 55 minutes will be put up on scoreboard at the beginning of the game. The scoreboard horn sounding as this time expires will signal that no additional inning will start from that point. Any inning started before the horn, will be completed if the home team is behind. If the game is tied it must be played until the tie is broken. Game clock will only stop when directed by an Umpire or Softball Staff.
8. 5 warm up pitches will be allowed in the first inning and two warm up pitches will be allowed between innings. Any warm up pitches taken that exceed the allowed number shall be considered a ball on the batter. Infield practice or throwing the ball around-the-horn will not be allowed at any time. **Men's & Coed Leagues will have a 70 foot base path.** All Leagues will use a 50 foot pitching distance.
9. Starting pitcher may reenter as pitcher unless they have been removed for pitching with excessive speed.
10. The only players allowed on the field while on offense are the base coaches, the on deck batter and the batter. It is the responsibility of the manager to keep all other persons in dugout or off the field. Only rostered players allowed on fields and in dugouts. **Children are not allowed in the dugout.**
11. The batter will start each at bat with a count of 1 ball and 1 strike. 1 courtesy foul will NOT be allowed after the second strike.
12. The pitch must have a minimum arc of 6 feet from the ground and a maximum arc of 10 feet from the ground. **50 & 60 Plus** – Minimum arc 6 feet from ground maximum arc of 12 feet from the ground.
13. Over the fence home runs will be ruled an out for the batter after the following limits are met:
 

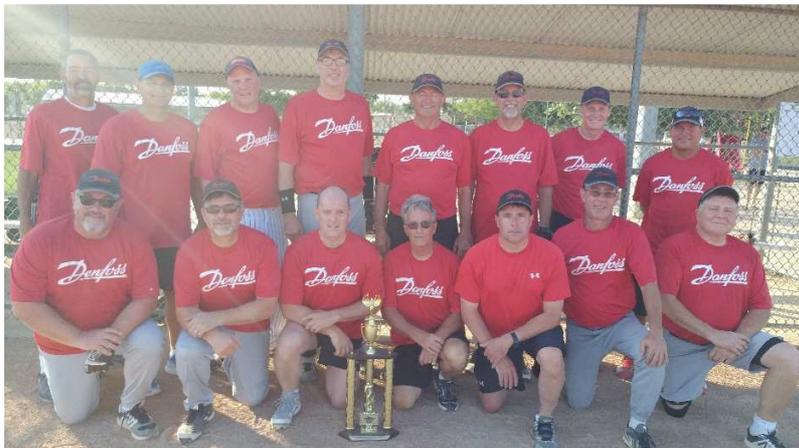
|                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Men's Recreation and Coed Recreation | <b>3</b> |
| Men's Commercial "50+" and "60+"     | <b>3</b> |
| Men's and Coed Commercial "C"        | 4        |
| Men's and Coed Commercial "B"        | 6        |
| Men's Commercial "A"                 | 10       |

Teams are not required to run the bases following a home run. Teams are required to retrieve their own home run and foul balls in a timely manner.
14. Foul Poles: Any ball which hits any part of the foul pole wing on the fly will be ruled an over the fence homerun.
15. Mercy Rule: The 15 run will be in effect after 5 innings.
16. Slide Rule: If there is a play at a base you must slide or avoid contact. No running over or crashing into another player. When a defensive player has the ball or is about to catch a thrown ball and the runner remains on his feet and crashes into the defensive player, the runner will be declared out. If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.
17. COURTESY RUNNER: Any rostered players on the official line-up including substitutes may be used as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner may be used once per inning.
18. The Department reserves the right to make any schedule changes necessary and will reschedule any game(s) that we postpone. The Department **WILL NOT** reschedule any games for teams once schedules have been distributed with following exception.
  - A. The Department will reschedule a maximum of 1 game per season if your team has a direct conflict with an USA sanctioned State, District, Regional or National game

during the season. Any other rescheduling will be handled at the team's own time and expense.

B. **RAINOUT POLICY: Hotline # 222-3500** (if not updated games are being played as scheduled)

- Scheduled rain date (only used if all games that night are rained out.)
- Add a day to the end of the season on a regular scheduled night of play for your league.
- Play a doubleheader on another field on your regular scheduled night of play later in the season.
- Make up later in the season on a non-regularly scheduled night of play for your league.
- Make up information will be mailed to Managers, posted at complex and posted on our website.



19. League Tournaments: A League Tournament will be held only for leagues who did not receive adequate number of league games due to low or high registration in their specific league. Not every League will have a League Tournament. A large majority of money budgeted for awards will go toward League 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers and a small plaque will go to League Tourney winners. Please do not over emphasize the importance of League Tourneys. Scheduling some leagues with Tourneys allows the Department flexibility to accept the proper levels of teams in the appropriate leagues without being handcuffed to a certain # of teams in each league.
20. Team trophies will be presented to the first and second place teams in the league. League champion t-shirts will be awarded to all players on 1st place teams in each league. A plaque will be awarded to League Tournament Champions.
21. Tie Breaker Rule: In the event of identical records, head to head competition will be used to determine the winner. If the teams split the games, the team with the highest run differential in the head to head games shall be declared the winner. If a tie still remains, the team with the most total runs throughout the season will be declared the winner.
22. Metal spikes and metal tipped soccer shoes will not be permitted.

23. Double First base Rule: The orange portion of the base may only be utilized by the offensive player and the white portion by the defensive player. EXCEPTION: On extra base hits or balls hit into the outfield when there is no play being made at the double base, the runner may touch the white portion.
24. Only bats which bear an ASA approved certification mark or those included on an approved list published by the USA national office will be allowed for use in all leagues. Visit [www.softball.org](http://www.softball.org), under “Approved Bats”, for a list of approved bats.



## **B. BAT CERTIFICATION**

All bats used in West Des Moines Parks and Recreation League play must be inspected and stamped with an approved sticker by designated Parks & Rec Staff. All bats must bear 2000, 2004 or 2013 ASA stamp and also must be on the ASA approved bat list [www.asasoftball.com/about/certified\\_equipment.asp](http://www.asasoftball.com/about/certified_equipment.asp) to receive the approval sticker. Any player caught using a noncertified bat will be removed from the game immediately and will receive an automatic one (1) game suspension to be served in the next consecutive game. Any player caught twice in 2019 season using a noncertified bat shall be suspended for the remainder of the year.

## **C. ROSTERS**

1. Each player must read and complete the information requested on the team roster.
2. No player is allowed to play on more than one team within the same league in West Des Moines, in the same season. Any violation of these rules will result in suspension.
3. Players may be added to a team roster any time prior to and the day of the specified deadline on your league schedules. All rosters are frozen after this deadline.
4. Players wishing to be added to a team after the rosters are turned in must complete an Add-a-Player form. This completed form plus all appropriate fees must be turned in to the site scorekeeper prior to playing. Add-A-Player forms can be picked up from site scorekeepers at the field. Remember you are allowed only 5 roster changes/additions during a season.
5. The roster must have a minimum of 13 players and may have a maximum of 20 players. All players must be 18 years of age and out of high school.
6. Roster Protest: If a team or the Department has a question about a player’s eligibility, the following procedures must be followed:
  - A. Player in question must be protested upon recognition and before the game ends.

- B. Notify the Umpire, the scorekeeper and the opposing team manager.
- C. Player must produce a legal picture I.D. to the scorekeeper and must sign and print his/her name on the score sheet.
- D. No I.D.-----No Play.
- E. If I.D. and score sheet match, game will resume.
- F. Score sheet will be turned into Recreation office. If name does not appear on roster, it they use another name or if signatures do not match, the team will forfeit the game (and pay all appropriate fees) and all other games in which the player in question participated.
- G. No fee for Roster Protest.

#### **D. GAME PROTEST**

1. Game protests must be CLEARLY AND DEFINITELY stated to the home plate umpire, the opposing team manager and noted in the official score book by the score keeper at the time of the alleged infraction and prior to the next pitch.
2. If no decision can be reached in (1) above, the protesting team must submit a written protest to the Parks and Recreation Office within 24 (working) hours of the scheduled start time of the protested game. All protests must be accompanied by a \$20 protest fee which will be fully refunded if the protest is upheld. Protest will be decided on by a Protest Committee consisting of the Umpire-in-Chief, Recreation Program Facility Supervisor and one of the following two; Player Representative or Sports Coordinator.
3. Game protests will be accepted regarding rule interpretations only. Judgment calls are not open to protest.
4. GAME protests will be considered only when the play in question had a "Significant Effect" on the outcome of the game.

#### **E. BEER RULE**

1. The following regulation applies to league teams using City of West Des Moines facilities at Raccoon River Park Softball Complex: No player shall possess or consume beer on the field or in the dugout. If a team member violates these regulations, the individual will receive an automatic one (1) game suspension.

#### **F. COMPLEX RULES**

1. No outside food, beverages, coolers and water jugs allowed inside complex and no beer is to be taken outside of complex.
2. When front gates are locked, admittance within the complex is restricted.
3. All animals must be licensed and under control by owner by a leash not more than 10' in length. Owner must remove any droppings by the animal on the property.

#### **G. RULES OF CONDUCT**

1. The City reserves the right through its representatives to control all activities and to eject any person(s) from the Facility who deviates from the rules and regulations of said facility or league, deviates from Department Rules of Conduct which can be viewed at <http://www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/parks-recreation/adult-sports/softball> or poses a threat to the safety of self or others. In such case, there will be no refund of user fees or deposits.

2. Each Manager will be held responsible for the conduct of his/her team players and is responsible to see that all rules are observed. The manager must maintain complete control of him/herself and his/her team members at all times; this includes before, during or after a game and any other time involved with the softball program. If you are not going to be at the game, assign a responsible person to take your place. The key to a successful program is in the hands of the manager and, in turn, his/her players. Good leadership will ensure a good program.
3. Officials and their decisions will be respected and not interfered with at any time. Unsportsmanlike conduct, disrespect, vulgarity, or profanity will not be tolerated at any time. Any manager or player removed from a game for breaking Rules of Conduct will receive an automatic one (1) game suspension to be served in the next consecutive game. A longer suspension may be given by the Recreation Program/Facility Supervisor, depending on the severity of the offense or frequency of misconduct. Any player or manager that is ejected from a game in this manner must leave the Complex.
4. Casual Profanity Rule-The umpire has the authority to assess ONE OUT per play against the offending team for the use of CASUAL PROFANITY which shall be defined as expletives (Vulgar or Profane Language), which is not appropriate in a recreational sports setting. All outs (charged either while on offense or defense) will be assessed against the offending team during their term at bat.



5. Sportsmanship Rule- The umpire has the authority to assess ONE OUT per play against the offending team for excessive protests, arguments, complaints or behavior not appropriate in a recreation sports setting. Throwing a bat, glove, rude gestures, insulting or disparaging remarks, or baiting or taunting opposing players or game officials would be examples of such actions.
6. A game will be forfeited in the event a team fails to respect the official's authority or decisions; one warning will be given prior to such action. If a team receives a forfeit win or a forfeit loss, this will count as a game played. A report will be submitted to the Sports Supervisor whose disposal of the matter is final.
7. In any discussion on the playing field with an official, only the manager (or designated manager) will be permitted to enter the discussion. Any other players approaching the official or questioning calls will be subject to ejection for unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - A. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated.
  - B. Threatening of official will have an automatic removal for the season. Personal Harassment of officials (umpires, Scorekeepers, Supervisors, Directors) may be cause for either team or individual to be suspended from league play. A player does not have to be in the game for this

rule to be in effect. He/she could be a spectator of a team. Teams are responsible for their own spectators.

8. Any managers or player that is involved in a fight or making physical contact with an umpire, staff or another player shall be suspended from ALL West Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department Adult Sports Leagues for one (1) calendar year.

## II. COMMERCIAL SOFTBALL RULES MEN'S AND COED

### A. LEAGUE PLAYING RULES

1. A team will be comprised of 10 players or 11 if using an extra hitter. Coed teams will consist of 5 male and 5 female players. A team may start with 9 players. **An out will not occur when playing shorthanded.** Coed teams who are shorthanded may begin a game with 1 less female or 1 less male in the line up. **In Coed an out will occur for men batting back to back.** If a 10th player shows up he/she may be inserted into the line up.
  - A. Shorthanded Rule A team may continue a game with one less player than it starts with, whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. If the player leaving the game is a base runner, he/she shall be declared out. The player who has left the game under this exception cannot return to the line up.
  - B. Exception A player who has left the game under the "Blood Rule" may return.
  - C. Coed defensive positions shall be 2 males/2 females in the out-field, 2 males/2 females in the infield and 1 male/1 female in the pitcher/catcher positions.
  - D. Coed Commercial Extra Hitter If you elect to use the extra hitter, you must use 1 male and 1 female EH. You must decide to use the EH when you turn in your line up at the scorekeepers table. Any 10 of the players may play defense.
  - E. Coed Commercial Walk Rule A walk to a male batter will result in a two- base award. The next batter (a female) must bat if there are fewer than 2 outs; with 2 outs the female batter has the option to take a walk or bat. If there is ever a runner (s) on 2nd & 3rd base with 1st base empty and a male batter is walked to 2nd base, runners advance only 1 base. If runner is on 3rd alone and a male batter is walked to 2nd he/she cannot advance.
2. Men's Commercial Stealing Rule:(optional-Home teams preference) Runners may advance when the ball reaches home plate, or if the pitcher has the ball and is not in the vicinity of the pitching plate.
  - A. If a runner stops or is clearly not advancing when the catcher releases the ball to the pitcher (who is in the vicinity of the pitcher's plate) and the pitcher catches the ball, the play is ruled dead and all runner(s) are returned to the last base legally touched.
  - B. If the pitcher does not catch the ball or have possession of the ball while in the vicinity of the pitcher's plate, the ball remains live and the runner(s) may advance.
  - C. Runners may not advance if the pitched ball hits the batter, the ground before reaching the front edge of home plate, or home plate. The ball is dead and a ball is awarded to the batter.
  - D. The above will apply for both legal and illegal pitches.
  - E. A pitched ball that hits behind home plate and strikes the umpire, or a thrown ball by the catcher that hits the umpire, remains live and runner(s) may advance.
3. SHIRT RULE: Each shirt must have a permanent (not taped) identifying number on the back of the shirt. No duplicate numbers allowed. All teams must comply with this rule before the start of you first game. It is highly recommended that all commercial team members have identical shirts. If a team manager has a question about the legality of their shirts, they must bring the shirts to the Parks and Recreation office (please call first) prior to game time and we will check them to see if they are acceptable. If the shirts have not been ok'd and the umpire or score keeper rules the shirts are not legal,

those individual player(s) will not be allowed to participate or the game will be forfeited if not enough players have identical shirts.

### **III. RECREATION SOFTBALL RULES MEN'S AND COED**

#### **A. LEAGUE PLAYING RULES**

1. All USA rules apply with the exceptions stated as follows. Any deviation from these League or USA Rules must be mutually agreed upon and reported to official scorekeeper by both Managers prior to the start of the game. Rules ensuring player safety cannot be deviated from.
2. Games may be played with a minimum of 8 players in the line up. Outs will not be charged for less than 10 players. **In Coed an out will occur for men batting back to back.**
3. We will be using a strike zone mat provided by the Department. If the ball hits any part of the mat or home plate, the pitch shall be declared a strike. Home team shall provide the plate umpire and the visiting team shall provide base umpires. But any agreed upon method is OK.
4. Coed Recreation: You must alternate male/female in the batting order. Coed defensive positions shall be 2 males/2 females in the outfield, 2 males/2 females in the infield and 1 male/1 female in the pitcher/catcher positions. Teams who are shorthanded may begin a game with 1 less female than male in the line up.
5. Walk Rule- A walk to a male batter will result in a two- base award. The next batter (a female) must bat if there are fewer than 2 outs; with 2 outs the female batter has the option to take a walk or bat. If there is ever a runner(s) on 2nd & 3rd base with 1st base empty and a male batter is walked to 2nd base, runners advance only 1 base. If runner is on 3rd alone and a male batter is walked to 2nd he/she cannot advance.

### **IV. MEN'S "50 PLUS" AND "50 PLUS DRAFT" SOFTBALL RULES**

#### **A. LEAGUE PLAYING RULES**

1. Games may be played with a minimum of 8 players and a maximum of 11 players in the line up. Outs will not be charged for less than 11 players. ASA rules for reentry and extra player (EP) will apply. Extra players may play defense at any time provided the total number of defensive players on the field at one time does not exceed the total allowed group.
2. We will be using the carpet for the strike zone. If the ball hits any part of the carpet or home plate, the pitch shall be declared a strike. The Department will supply the game carpet.
3. COMMITMENT LINE: A three foot commitment line shall be marked perpendicular to the foul line and placed 32 feet and 6 inches from third base. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner may NOT recross it in the direction of 3rd base, i.e., the runner MUST continue on toward the scoring plate. Violations will result in an out.
4. SCORING PLATE: A scoring plate shall be placed 8 feet from the back tip of home plate on an extended line from 1st base. A line shall be drawn from 3rd base to the scoring plate. The scoring plate is for use by the offensive player only.

5. **MERCY RULE:** There will be a 5 run per inning maximum or Catch Up Rule- teams will be allowed to tie the game if they are behind by more than 5 runs. The last 10 minutes of game time or the 7<sup>th</sup> inning will be no run limit. No run limit will begin at the start of a new inning. No 15 runs after 5 innings Mercy Rule.
6. **SLIDING OR DIVING:** Sliding or diving into 1st base or home plate when scoring is NOT permitted and such players will be called out; however, a player may slide or dive into 2nd or 3rd base and when returning to ANY base. Runners shall be called out for contact with a defensive player if, in the umpires judgment, the contact was deliberate OR the runner could responsibly have been expected to minimize or avoid contact under the circumstances and failed to do so.
7. **PITCHER'S BOX-**A pitcher's box, consisting of the area from the front of the pitcher's rubber, 50' from home plate, and extending back ten feet parallel to the pitcher's rubber, shall be used. The pitcher must release the ball after coming to a complete stop with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's rubber or within the pitcher's box.
8. **AVOIDING COLLISIONS:** A runner must make every effort to avoid colliding with opposing players while running the bases. If a runner misses a base to avoid a collision, the runner will not be called out (umpire's judgment)
9. **50 & 60 Plus** – Minimum arc 6 feet from ground maximum arc of 12 feet from the ground.