



# **ADULT SOFTBALL RULES & REGULATIONS**

## **Welcome!**

We want to take this opportunity to welcome all coaches, participants and fans to the City of Avondale's Adult Softball Program. This recreational sports program is based on fun and exercise for all individuals involved. We hope you enjoy your recreational softball experience in our program and we look forward to cooperating and communicating with you throughout the season. The City of Avondale strives to provide a safe, healthy and enjoyable experience for all of the participants. Our staff would like to wish you the best of luck for the upcoming season.

The current ASA (Amateur Softball Association of America) rules apply to all league situations not covered in this handbook. The City of Avondale reserves the right to add, delete, modify or change any rules or regulations during the season for the greater good of the league. If a change is made, all team captains affected will be notified by the Recreation Coordinator.

All questions or concerns should be directed to Lisa Paulos, Recreation Coordinator, at (623) 333-2420, [lpaulos@avondale.org](mailto:lpaulos@avondale.org) or Melanie Rauscher, Recreation Assistant, at [mrauscher@avondale.org](mailto:mrauscher@avondale.org).

## **Registration**

Registration is based on first come first serve basis. Returning teams from the previous season will have priority in registration. Leagues are open until filled. A team may be eliminated from further play for non-sufficient funds or indebtedness in the program whether by check or electronically.

Online: [www.avondale.org/playnow](http://www.avondale.org/playnow)

In Person: Avondale Parks & Recreation Office, 11465 W Civic Center Drive.

Phone: 623-333-2400

Hours of Operation: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Days of Operation: Monday – Thursday

Closed Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays

## **AVONDALE GENERAL RULES**

All league rules are governed and interpreted by the League Coordinator, Field Supervisor and/or game officials, using City of Avondale League Rules and Official ASA Slow Pitch Rules as guidelines. General rules of play not outlined here, can be found in the current ASA Guide and Playing Rules. Teams will play 14 regular season games (7 double headers) followed by a single-elimination post season tournament. Tournament seeding will be based on final league standings.

## **ALCOHOL**

- The consumption of alcoholic beverages during a league or tournament game is strictly prohibited.
- No rostered players (regardless of playing status) may drink alcohol during or in between games.
- Violations of this rule will result in player ejection and forfeit of the game by the team.
- For more information, please see the alcohol policy at the end of the rules.

## **AWARDS**

- League champions will receive 15 shirts.
- Tournament champions will receive a registration discount or a trophy.

## **BATTING**

- All batters will begin each turn at bat with a one ball and one strike count with none to waste.
- Batting Order/Line-Up (Men's and Women's Division)
  - Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players to start and complete a game.
  - Line-up must be filled out and submitted to the umpire prior to the game.
    - Any player arriving late to the game is added to the bottom of the line-up.
  - If a player leaves a game due to injury and does not return, his/her spot can be taken by a bench substitute.
    - If a substitute is not available, the vacant position in the line-up will be counted as an out the first time then all subsequent batters will move up in the line-up.
    - There is no additional penalty.
  - If a player is ejected and a substitute is not available, that position in the line-up is an automatic out each time it appears throughout the game.
  - The Extra Hitter (EH) rule will be in effect. The "EH" rule allows a team up to bat their entire roster and play ten (10) players on defense.
    - Extra hitters may be used by any team, provided it is made known prior to the start of the game and his/her name is indicated on the score sheet.
  - The line-up will be continuous. For coed leagues, alternating order will be male - female or female - male throughout the entire game.
    - Male players are listed on the top half of the score sheet and female players are listed on the bottom half.
  - If a player is ejected and a substitute is not available, that position in the line-up is an automatic out each time it appears throughout the game.
- All substitutions must be reported to the umpire to acknowledge a player legally entering the game.
  - Any of the starting players may withdraw and re-enter once, provided the players occupy the same batting positions.
  - The original player and the substitute cannot be in the line-up at the same

time.

- All courtesy runners must be the last out recorded and must be used before the first pitch to the next batter.
  - In the event there are no outs in the first inning, the courtesy runner will be the last person in the batting order.
  - A rostered non-player may also serve as the courtesy runner.
  - Teams may use one (1) courtesy runner per inning.
- All players for the hitting team must remain in the dugout. Only the batter, the player “on deck” and the base running coaches are allowed on the field.
  - Children are not allowed in dugouts or on the field of play. Game will be delayed and clock will continue to run until children have left the dugout.

### **COED MODIFICATIONS**

- When playing defense, the following maximum ratios must be kept.
  - The catcher and the pitcher can be of the same sex,
  - There is a maximum of two men and two women in the infield, and
  - There is a maximum of two men and two women in the outfield.
- If playing with nine (9) players:
  - You may play with 5 men/4 women or 5 women/4 men
  - In the field you may play down one gender in the infield OR outfield (2 men/1 woman or 2 women/1 man).
- If playing with eight (8) player, it must be 4 men and 4 women.
- Teams may play with 6 males and 4 women with permission of the opposing coach.
- Teams may play with 6 females and 4 men. No permission is required.
- On a walk to a male hitter, intentional or not, he is automatically awarded second base.
  - With less than two (2) outs the upcoming female hitter must hit (no exceptions).
  - When there are two (2) outs the female hitter has the option of hitting or taking a base on balls.
- Coed teams may use two (2) courtesy runners per inning, one male and one female
  - A male runs for a male and a female runs for a female.

### **COMMUNICATION/GAME CANCELLATIONS**

- The City of Avondale Parks and Recreation Division reserve the right to adjust league format during the season.
  - Unavoidable game cancellations due to rain, irrigation, and other factors will be rescheduled by the recreation coordinator.
  - Make-up games may be played on a night different than that of your league.
  - Decisions on rain-out games can be obtained after 3:00pm by phoning the rain-out information hotline at 623-333-2420.
  - Rain out information will also be available on our Facebook page and or you can sign up with us on [rainedout.com](http://rainedout.com)
- It is the responsibility of each manager to maintain regular communication with the recreation coordinator for newsletters, flyers, rescheduling of games, tournament brackets, rulings, and standings.

## **PARTICIPANT CONDUCT/EJECTIONS**

- The field supervisor, recreation coordinator and/or official have the authority to forfeit any game, eject players, coaches or fans **WITHOUT WARNING** from the game for any conduct deemed unbecoming or detrimental to the game.
- ALL CAPTAINS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF ANY PLAYERS, ASSISTANTS, OR FANS IN ATTENDANCE.
- The players' **Code of Conduct** is strictly enforced and will govern incidents and occurrences.
  - Players' **Code of Conduct** can be found at the end of these rules.
- A player that has been ejected from a game, for any reason, will also receive a minimum of one-week suspension.
- Players that have been ejected must exit the facility and grounds immediately. Players are not allowed onto the facility until the completion of their suspension.
- If a player is ejected during tournament play, they will be suspended for the remainder of the tournament.
- All conduct matters will be presented to the league coordinator for further consideration.
- Outburst of foul language will not be tolerated. Any participant assaulting an official or City employee will be automatically suspended for the current season and the incident may result in legal action.
- Threats to an official or City employee will result in multiple game suspensions. Comments such as "I will take care of you later" or "I'll meet you in the parking lot" will be considered as threats and will be taken seriously. All captains are responsible for the behavior of any players, assistant coaches, or fans in attendance. The players' *Code of Conduct* is strictly enforced and will govern incidents and occurrences.
- **NOTE:** There is no arguing with the official over calls. There is no exception to this rule. Any player, coach or observer whose temper gets out of control over a judgment call, or who by vulgarity, intimidation or yelling confronts an official, will be warned or ejected. If warned and the infraction is repeated, the offending person can be dismissed from the game, asked to leave the park, and/or not be allowed to continue playing the remainder of the season, depending on the severity of the infraction.
- Some forms of unsportsmanlike conduct will warrant automatic ejection with no warnings given. Two reprimands or warnings to an individual or team for unsportsmanlike conduct will warrant automatic ejection of said player or team, or spectator from the courts and premises. A third reprimand to any other player or spectator of said team will warrant termination of match, with said match to be forfeited to the opposing team.
- Once the behavior has been reviewed and all parties involved have submitted a written statement, a decision will be made as to any penalties or suspensions based on the infraction. This decision will be communicated in the form of a letter and/ or email and will be addressed to the coach of the given team and the individual.

- An appeal may be made by submitting a letter to the Recreation Coordinator within one (1) week of notification. Appeals will be presented to the Avondale Parks and Recreation Board as required.

### **ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS**

- A team captain may request an eligibility check of any player during a game. An official will make a stoppage of time and the request must be made known to the field/league supervisor.
- A player is illegal/ineligible if:
  - The player does not have a valid ID in possession (on bench),
  - The player's name does not appear on the roster or drop/add forms,
  - The player does not meet the age requirements, or
  - The player appears on more than one roster on the same league night.
- Avondale Staff reserves the right to check player eligibility at any time without protest.
- Teams may use up to one player from another team with permission of the opposing coach and recreation staff.

### **PENALTY:**

- The illegal/ineligible player is automatically ejected from the game and the team using the illegal/ineligible player forfeits the game. A second ejection for the same player during the season **may** result in a suspension for the remainder of the season. All decisions made by the field supervisor in this matter are final.

### **EQUIPMENT AND FIELD**

- The City of Avondale reserves the right to withhold or withdraw approval of any equipment which significantly changes the character of the game, affects the safety of participants or spectators, or renders a player's performance more a product of his/her equipment than individual skill.
- Only ASA or USSSA approved bats will be allowed for play.
- Base distance for all leagues will be 70 feet.
- There will be no infield practice between or before games.
- Soft toss against fences is prohibited.
- Any player that deliberately throws a bat may be ejected from the game. In the case of an accidental bat throwing the umpire will issue a warning.
- Metal Cleats are not allowed during play.
- Music played in the dugout must only be audible to those inside the dugout. At any time, an umpire or league staff member can ask a team to turn the music down or turn it off.
- Captains and Players should not leave any litter in the dugout.

### **END OF GAMES**

- During the regular season, all games that end in a tie will remain a tie.
- In tournament play, the international tie-breaker rule will be used.

- Run Rule: All games will be called at the conclusion of:
  - 5 innings (or 4 ½ if the home team) is ahead by 10 runs.
  - 4 innings (or 3 ½ if the home team) is ahead by 15 runs.
  - 3 innings (or 2 ½ if the home team) is ahead by 20 runs.

### **GAME BALLS**

- Game balls will be provided by the league. The size of the ball will be:
  - Men's League - 12 inch;
  - Women's League - 11 inch
  - Coed Leagues - 12 inch and 11 inch

### **GAME TIME/FORFEIT TIME**

- There will be a five (5) minute grace period for a team's first scheduled game of the night only. Those five (5) minutes are part of the official game time. The umpire's time will be the official time for determining forfeits/game time. Game time is forfeit time for league and post season tournament games. Three forfeits or no shows may cause a team to be dropped from the league.
- There will no new inning after 55 minutes of play.

### **FORFEITS**

- Any team that forfeits two games (no call or no show) for any reason will incur a \$20 fee that must be paid prior to playing their next scheduled night of games.
- Any team that forfeits a game due to violation of the code of conduct will incur a \$20 fee that must be paid prior to playing their next scheduled night of games.
- The score of a forfeited game shall be seven (7) to zero (0) in favor of the team not forfeiting

### **HOME RUNS**

- Each team is allowed four (4) over the fence homeruns per game. Homeruns after the limit are considered outs.
- When a homerun is hit, the batter only needs to touch first base.
- Any other individual(s), thereafter, that hit the ball over the fence in excess of the designated limits will be ruled an out.

### **LEAGUE STANDINGS**

- Standings will be available at [www.avondale.org/sports](http://www.avondale.org/sports) and will be updated weekly.
- All teams will be seeded for the tournament, based on their regular season record. In the event of identical records, the following tie breaker system will be in effect:
  - 1st tie breaker: Head to Head records
  - 2nd tie breaker: Scoring differential between head to
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> tie breaker: Runs scored throughout the season
  - Any team that has forfeited a game to any team they are tied with will automatically take the lowest ranking.

## **PITCHING & HITTING**

- The pitcher must come to a complete stop in the pitching area before delivering the pitch to the plate.
- The pitch must be delivered with perceptible arc and reach a minimum of six (6) feet and a maximum of twelve (12) feet from the ground.
- The pitcher's plate will be placed at 53 feet.
- The pitching area is a box bordered by the front edge of the pitching rubber extending back six (6) feet and three (3) feet wide centered on the pitching rubber.
- Any batted ball that passes in a vertical plane through the pitching area, but no more than 2 feet above the pitcher's head, is considered a dead ball with the batter declared out and runners return to the last occupied base.
  - This rule applies whether the pitcher touches the ball or not and is still in effect if the pitcher leaves the pitching area.
  - Rule is in effect for both Men's and Coed divisions.

## **PROTESTS/UMPIRE EVALUATION**

- During League Play:
  - All protests/complaints shall be made by a team captain.
  - Only misinterpretations of the rules or player eligibility may be protested.
    - Official's judgment decisions cannot be protested.
  - The team captain must call time and bring the protest to the official. The official and field supervisor will confer to make a decision.
    - A notation must be made on the official score sheet about the protest.
      - Circle the at bat when the protest occurred.
  - All decisions are final.
  - The captain has the option of playing the game out under protest.
    - This decision must be announced to the field supervisor before player resumes.
    - A protest card form must be submitted in writing to the Recreation Coordinator by noon the following business day.
      - All protests must be submitted with a \$25 fee. If the protest is upheld, the \$25 is refunded. If the protest is denied, the fee will go to the league fund.
- During Tournament Play:
  - All protest will be resolved immediately by the Recreation Coordinator or field staff and Official before play resumes.
- Team captains have the option of filling out an umpire evaluation card (**Blue Card**). There is no charge to fill out a **Blue Card**.

## **ROSTERS**

- Players must be at least 18 years old prior to the start of the season.
- Each team roster is to be submitted by the captain at the time of registration. A team must have a minimum of ten (10) players and a maximum of eighteen (18) players on its roster to start the season. The captain must be listed on the roster if he/she intends to play in ANY games.
- No additions will be allowed during the tournament. All players must be listed on

the roster by the second to last night of regular season play (typically week 6).

- Roster changes must be done at the field— see the field supervisor.
- If you are in need of extra players for your roster you can contact the Recreation Coordinator for a list of names.
- Using players from teams without permission, playing before or after your game on a given night constitutes use of an illegal player and will result in a forfeit of your game.
- Players without may be suspended for playing on a different team.
- A player may play on one or more teams as long as it is in the same division, but not on the same night. *Example:* If a player plays in a “D” League on Tuesday night, he/she can play on another team in another league on a different night such as a “D” League on Sunday or Friday nights.

### **SAFETY BAG/COMMITMENT LINE**

- Due to safety concerns, 1<sup>st</sup> base double bags will be used at levels in all divisions for Men and Coed play.
- Runners must use the orange portion of the bag and defensive players must use the white portion (See A.S.A. rule book for exceptions).
- Safeties will be allowed at first and third base.
- Coed Division runners will also use a home plate commitment line. Once a player crosses the Commitment Line between 3<sup>rd</sup> Base & Home Plate they must continue through to Home.
- A player that touches Home coming from 3<sup>rd</sup> Base due to a walk or homerun is not called out.
- The act of crossing the Safety Line (Home Plate to backstop) will now act as Home Plate, whereas any player running Home that touches Home Plate will be considered out unless it's a dead ball play i.e. walk.
- All plays at Home Plate will be force outs (i.e. once a player crosses the Commitment Line they can be forced out at Home).

### **SCORE SHEETS**

- Both teams are responsible for keeping the official score.
  - An official game score sheet will be used by both teams throughout the game.
  - The batting team will keep score and hand the clipboard to the opposing team when teams switch sides.
- All players must be listed on the score sheet.
- Both visitors and home team captains are required to sign umpires score sheet after game for verification of correct scores reported.

### **UNIFORMS**

- Uniforms are not required, but shirts must be worn.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Any questions regarding league rules should be directed to the park staff or the recreation coordinator.