

2011 LOUYAA Girls Softball League

GENERAL RULES

1. League Operations & Governing Rules

- 1.1. In accordance with LOUYAA Bylaws, LOUYAA Girls Softball is a volunteer-based Community-focused organization established to organize and promote girls softball by providing opportunity, teaching the game and developing skills with emphasis on clean play and safety, while fostering sportsmanship at all levels. The core of LOUYAA Softball is our intramural program. All coaches, players, and families participating in the program are governed by the LOUYAA Softball Code of Conduct.
- 1.2. Rules for specific age groups have precedence over all other rules. Rules outlined in the LOUYAA Softball General Rules have precedence over rules defined in the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) rulebook. If a rule has not been set-forth or modified by the specific age group or LOUYAA General Rules, play is governed by the ASA rules for fast pitch softball.
- 1.3. It is the responsibility of each coach to be familiar with the rules, and to carry a copy of the rulebook with him/her to each game.
- 1.4. Starting time for games scheduled Monday through Friday is 6:00 p.m. Starting time for Saturday games should be between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Any team, home or visitor, not arriving at the playing field within 15 minutes past the scheduled game time, with at least seven (7) eligible players, will forfeit the game to the opposing team. There is a maximum 15-minute warm-up time for the team arriving late.
- 1.5. Teams must start and finish with at least seven (7) active eligible players or the game is forfeited to the opposing team. In games where a team begins play with at least seven (7) players but less than the maximum number of fielders allowed (due to a shortage of players), those players arriving late for the game are added to the bottom of the batting order and enter into vacant field positions upon their arrival at the game field. NO automatic outs are assessed to a team playing shorthanded due to lack of players.
- 1.6. Regulation games for 8 and Under (8U) and 10U Divisions are 6 innings while regulation games for 12U, 15U and 18U Divisions are 7 innings. All games have a 2-hour time limit. An inning that begins before the time limit is reached will be completed, unless game is called for darkness. A new inning is considered started at the time of the last out of the previous inning, and will be completed unless called for darkness. No new inning will start after

the time limit has expired. The time limit, or darkness without a weather delay, constitutes a complete game regardless of the number of innings played. The winning team should e-mail or phone in game results to the commissioner within 24 hours after completion of the game, so that wins, losses, and forfeitures are properly recorded. Exception being the 8U Division for which there are no league standings.

- 1.7. LOUYAA standings will use a point system for determining placement of teams in each age group except for the 8U for which there are no league standings. For each game played, three (3) points will be awarded for a Win (played or by official forfeit), two (2) points for a Tie, and one (1) point for a Loss. Regular season/makeup games that never get played and official Forfeit losses will be awarded zero (0) points.
- 1.8. Game play or practice must be suspended for at least 30 minutes immediately upon seeing lightning or hearing thunder. Players must take shelter inside vehicles or the storage container during this waiting period. Each new lightning strike and/or sound of thunder starts a new 30 minute delay. The game's total time limit is suspended during the delays.
- 1.9. Suspended games resume at the point they were suspended and game situation (batter, runners, count, time, etc.) should be noted by both teams in the scorebook.

2. Player Eligibility

- 2.1. Qualifying birth date for all age groups will be January 1. Limited exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by the Commissioner.
- 2.2. A player may only play in one LOUYAA age-group league during a season, unless approved by the LOUYAA Softball Commissioner.

3. Specifications (Equipment & Field)

- 3.1. Non-Restricted (fast-pitch) 12" softballs such as Worth Dream Seam or Dudley SB12 must be used for all 12U/15U/18U league games. 8U/10U teams will use a similar 11" softball. Once the game has started, the same style of ball must be used throughout the remainder of the game.
- 3.2. Only official fastpitch softball bats will be used, exception being use of T-Ball bats for 8U games.
- 3.3. Offensive players in the field of play are required to use NOSCAE-approved helmets with facemasks. This applies whether "on deck," at bat or as baserunners.

- 3.4. Uniforms will consist of shirts (numbered on the back) of the same color, style and trim. Regular uniform pants/shorts are optional. Team uniform for managers and coaches are optional.
- 3.5. Uniforms cannot be altered without the approval of the commissioner.
- 3.6. Bases will be at a distance of 60 feet for all league games, exception being 50 feet for 8U games. Safety bases (i.e., double-sized 1st base) are allowed but not mandatory.
- 3.7. Pitching will be from within a clearly marked 8-foot radius circle. The pitching distance is to be measured from the rear part of home plate to the center of the circle. For 8U and 10U league games pitching distance is 35 feet. For 12U league games the distance is 40 feet. For 15U and 18U league games the distance is 43 feet.

4. Game Play

4.1. Number of fielders:

4.1.1. For 8U, 10U and 12U intramural teams:

4.1.1.1. The minimum number of fielders (per team) in the game at all times is seven.

4.1.1.2. The maximum number of fielders (per team) in the game at all times is ten.

4.1.1.3. The maximum number of infielders (per team) in the game at all times is six, which includes the pitcher and catcher.

4.1.2. Number of fielders for FCGSL-fielded teams are set by FCGSL rules.

4.1.2.1. For 15U and 18U the maximum number of fielders is nine.

4.2. There is no restriction on the number of innings any pitcher can pitch in league games. (Exception - Pitcher Development for 8U, 10U and 12U only - LOUYAA Softball's goal is to develop pitching skills and game experience for as many players as possible. 8U, 10U and 12U Players may pitch no more than two (2) innings in a row during a game. Players may continue in the game at other positions and may return as pitcher after at least one full inning).

4.3. There is no arc limit.

4.4. If a play is being made at a base, runners must avoid a collision with the fielder(s) by sliding, giving up, or running out of the baseline. Runners that collide with a fielder will be called out. Fielders are not permitted to block the base prior to controlling the ball; otherwise, the runner is safe and may be given extra bases by the umpire.

- 4.5. When a catcher is on base with two outs, a courtesy runner must be used, that runner being the player to make the last out.
- 4.6. If a runner is legally off a base when the pitcher has the ball in the circle, the runner may stop ONCE, but must either proceed to the next base or return to the previous base without stopping again. Failure to immediately return non-stop to the previous base or proceed non-stop to the next base will result in the runner being declared out. Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, she will be declared out if she leaves the base, with the exception being if a play is made on her or another runner, the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball in the circle, or the pitcher releases the ball on a pitch to the batter. NOTE: This rule is not applicable to the 8U Division since play is automatically stopped by the umpire once the pitcher has control of the ball within the circle.
- 4.7. ALL players must play a minimum of 3 innings in the field (8U, 10U, 12U intramural), or 2 innings in the field (15U and 18U FCGSL). This rule is suspended in the event of injury, sickness, disciplinary action taken by the coach before or during the game, or when games are shortened.
- 4.8. There are no limitations as to the number of times a player's defensive field position can be changed. **Player rotation is encouraged to the maximum extent possible for age appropriate player development at all positions.**
- 4.9. Scorebooks and/or lineup cards must include the player's name (first and last) and uniform number. Scorekeepers should also note game start time in their scorebook. It is suggested that scorekeepers compare notes between innings as games progress to ensure accuracy.
- 4.10. Players are not allowed to wear ANY exposed jewelry of ANY kind. Prior to the start of the game, these items must be removed or taped over in order to eliminate the risk of injury.
- 4.11. Home team responsibilities:
 - 4.11.1. Provide softball, as defined by LOUYAA General Rule 3.1 that is in new condition.
 - 4.11.2. Prepare the field for game play according to the LOUYAA Field Preparation Policy, including installing bases, setting pitcher's plate to proper distance, marking all lines, and raking field to proper game level.
 - 4.11.3. Assist Visiting team with post-game field maintenance (see 4.12.3).
 - 4.11.4. Follow the LOUYAA Game Cancellation Policy including notification of umpires about changes at least 1 hour in advance of game time.
 - 4.11.5. Notify the commissioner of any postponements and/or rescheduled game dates.

4.11.6. Pay umpire at the start of the game at the current LOUYAA rate.
(For FCGSL games, both teams provide payment at the current FCGSL rate).

4.12. Visiting team responsibilities:

4.12.1. Provide back-up game ball in good condition.

4.12.2. Assist the home team with pre-game field preparation (see 4.11.2)

4.12.3. Perform post-game field maintenance to return field to "game ready" level, including raking infield to fill any holes/low/wear areas to prevent puddling during weather, especially around home plate, pitcher's plate, bases and basepaths; removal of bases and any temporary pitcher's plates; replacing protective base plugs; securing all equipment and locking all storage containers.

4.13. Concessions - WKMS Field #1 - responsibilities

4.13.1. On Saturdays, teams will provide two workers at least 16 years of age for the concession stand.

5. Field Maintenance Responsibilities - ALL teams have direct responsibility for ensuring LOUYAA Softball fields and field equipment are ready for practice and games, and protected against damage/theft/weather. Each team returns the fields to "game ready" level after each use so facilities are prepared for the next scheduled event. This includes raking the infield to fill any holes/low/wear areas to prevent puddling during weather, especially around home plate, pitcher's plate, bases and basepaths; removal of bases and any temporary pitcher's plates; replacing protective base plugs; and securing all equipment and locking all storage containers. Skipping these minimal steps puts schedules at risk for all LOUYAA teams.

5.1.1. For practices - ALL teams must return fields to "game ready" level at the conclusion of weekday practices. This is particularly important if weather is expected. On weekends, this responsibility rotates to the last team using the field for the day. The last team at any field must secure all LOUYAA Softball equipment before leaving the fields.

5.1.2. For games - Pre/post-game responsibilities and procedures are covered in 4.11.2 and 4.12.3 above. The last team at any field must secure all LOUYAA Softball equipment before leaving the fields.