

Sun City Festival Tier III Community League Softball Rules

Approved by: Sun City Festival Softball Club Board February, 2023.

The Sun City Festival Tier III Community League plays under the rules of Senior Softball - USA with changes and additions as contained herein. Managers of all Community League Softball Teams can provide input and suggestions concerning the rules and any changes that may be made in the future to the Officiating and Rules Committee for review and possible submission to the Softball Club Board. These rules will apply for all games at the Del E. Webb Memorial Field. Final rule changes will be approved or denied by the Sun City Festival Softball Club Board. The web site for Senior Softball - USA Rules is: www.seniorsoftball.com

Code of Conduct:

1. Definitions

- a. "Individual" means a Coach, Manager, Player or Spectator
- b. "Official" means an Umpire or Board member
- c. "Ejection from the game" and "Suspension" means ejection from and suspension from using any area of the softball complex.
- d. "Probation" means that a Club Member is under scrutiny and can have his penalty increased to the maximum or beyond if another incident takes place.

2. Conduct – No individual shall:

- a. At any time lay a hand upon, strike or threaten an individual of official:
 - i. Minimum Penalty: Ejection from the game, plus removal from the lineup for one additional game, and referral to the SCF Softball Board.
- b. Be guilty of objectionable demonstration of dissent by throwing gloves, balls, bats, caps, or any other object.
 - i. Minimum Penalty: Warning by an official
 - ii. Maximum Penalty: Ejection from the game plus removal from the lineup for one additional game.
- c. Be guilty of using unnecessary rough tactics in the play of the game
 - i. Minimum Penalty: Ejection from the game plus removal from the lineup for one additional game.
- d. Be guilty of an abusive verbal attack upon any individual or official on or off the field of play
 - i. Minimum Penalty: Ejection from the game plus removal from the lineup for one additional game.
- e. Be guilty of any demonstration or unsportsmanlike conduct not specifically referred to elsewhere in these rules.
 - i. Minimum Penalty: Warning by an official
 - ii. Maximum Penalty: Ejection from the game plus removal from the lineup for one additional game.

3. Ejections:

- a. Umpires should submit a written report to the League Commissioner within 24 hours. The ejected player must leave the field within at least five minutes or the game will be forfeited to the opposing team. If the offender continues improper behavior after leaving the field/complex the matter will be referred to the league board.

4. Uniforms

- b. It is recommended that a Team shirt and a Club hat be worn. Neck chains, if worn, must be under the shirt at all times.

Organization, Rules and Procedures:

1. Organization of League

- a. Seasons of Play – Tier III Community League Softball games will be played from November thru March of each year.
- b. Selection of Managers – Managers will be identified and approved by the Board prior to the draft.
- c. The Tier III Community League will consist of teams of Tier III Club members.

2. Teams

- a. Team Organization – Teams will be formed based on number of players indicating that they want to participate in this League.
- b. Team Managers and the Tier III Commissioner will draft balanced teams based on the number of eligible players, skill levels, and the need to fill certain defensive positions.
- c. All players in the lineup should play at least four innings defensively and be part of the batting rotation, unless player injuries require otherwise.

3. Rosters

- a. Rosters will consist of 12 players, and the Manager will have 12 players available for each game. Exceptions can be made with the agreement of the Tier III Commissioner and the Team Managers.
- b. Players will consist of Softball Club member homeowners or renters in the SCF Community.
- c. Players are required to call the Manager or contact him/her in person within 48 hours of a scheduled game if they are unable to play. The only exception is for an emergency situation.
- d. At the discretion of the Manager, players who do not inform their Manager that they cannot play maybe suspended for their next scheduled game. The League Commissioner must approve any exception to this rule. The manager of the team will make the request to the Commissioner.

- e. **Player Tardiness:** At the discretion of the Manager, if a player shows up after the start of the game, the player shall not play.
- f. **Substitutes** – If less than 12 players are available to play on a team, the manager is allowed to contact a comparable skill level player from the designated Tier III sub list. The Manager shall make every effort to obtain a player first from this sub list. If no player is available from the sub list, the manager is allowed to contact a player from another Tier III team, of equal rating or below, with notification of the other Manager. If a team only has 10 players, the batting team will supply a catcher. If a specific defensive position is needed, considering safety, and no sub is available, a manager may use any player from another team, with approval of the Commissioner.
- g. **Sub List:** The Tier III sub list shall consist of players who make themselves available to play on any game day and fill-in on a Team's player roster. Players on the sub list should keep the Managers updated on their availability, including if they will be absent for extended periods of time. Sub list players may be dropped from the list if repeated attempts to play are made, and they are not available. If requested by a sub list player, the Commissioner may move that player to full-time on a team, if needed, due to a team's depleted roster or injury.
- h. **Courtesy Runners** – A player is limited to being a courtesy runner once per inning. Courtesy runners may be used at any time during the game regardless of what base they are on. A courtesy runner can only be used from home plate due to personal injury, or health condition, of the batter with approval of the opposing Manager. All other batters are expected to run to First Base. A courtesy runner from home plate can continue past First Base during the play of that inning. Managers shall use discretion when selecting a courtesy runner.

4. Equipment:

- a. Only softballs with a 44 core 375 compression will be used. Men batters will use the 12 inch ball and women batters may use the 11 inch ball.
- b. **Bats:** Tier III players can use all bats marked "1.20 bpf/1.21.bpf" with a SSUSA or ASA stamp, with the following exception: When playing against the Fireballs team, all 3A rated players must use a bat marked "1.20 bpf" with an ASA stamp. The umpire will call the 3A batter out if found to have used an illegal bat.

Any attempt to use a non-approved bat or altered bat will result in the batter being called out and may be ejected from the game. Base runners will be instructed to return to the base(s) occupied at time the illegal bat was used, providing there are fewer than three (3) outs.

5. Ground Rules/Misc.

- a. **Pitchers Protection Rule:** It will be required that pitchers wear a protective mask when pitching. It is also strongly suggested that pitchers wear additional protective safety gear when pitching.
- b. **Pitcher Protection Screen:** Use of this device is optional for any team, but will be required for the Fireballs team. The following rules will apply:
 - (1) The screen will directly face home plate and positioned in front of the pitcher's position.
 - (2) The pitcher must move 100% behind the screen after tossing the ball to home plate, and remain behind the screen after the ball is hit. If the pitcher does not, the pitch will be called a ball. The batter may elect to swing at this pitch and if hit, normal play will continue.
 - (3) Batted balls that hit the pitching screen will be considered a dead-ball foul ball. If two consecutive batted balls hit the screen, or if on the third strike, the batter is out.

- (4) Any thrown ball that strikes the screen during normal play will be considered a live ball, play continues, and runners may advance at their own risk.
- (5) After the ball is hit, the pitcher will be allowed to move from behind the screen and field a ground or fly ball, no penalty.

- c. Home Run Over Fence Rule: No limit
- d. Sliding – If in the umpire’s judgment the runner initiates contact for the sole purpose of upending the fielder or physically taking the fielder out, the umpire shall call the runner out. In a double play situation, the double play will be awarded.
- e. Foul Tips: Any foul tip caught on the fly by the catcher is an out.
- f. Game Time: Games will last seven (7) innings, no game clock, unless the Mercy rule applies. If the game is tied after the seventh inning, one extra inning will be played using the Senior Softball rules. The games may end in a tie.
- g. Game Runs: There will be a limit of four (4) runs per inning.
- h. Ball and Strikes: The batter will be given the full-count of 4 balls and 3 strikes. After the count reaches 3 balls, 2 strikes, a subsequent foul ball is considered the third strike and batter is out.
- i. Mercy Rule: No mercy rule, unless agreed upon between the two Managers.
- j. Outfield Restriction Line: a 160 ft arc will be utilized in the outfield for all batters. At the discretion of the umpire, the penalty for a violation will be the batter and all base runners awarded 1 base (unless each has already advanced 1 or more bases safely),
- k. Protests and Appeals – Only a manager may appeal an umpire’s call. Judgment calls such as balls and strikes are not grounds for appeals. Rule interpretation will be the only grounds for a protest, and should be resolved on the field between the two managers and the umpires. If a protest absolutely cannot be resolved, the League Commissioner with both managers and both umpires will meet to come to resolution.
- l. If an injury occurs to a player during a game, play will be suspended until the injured player has been treated. An injury report will be completed, as required by the SCF Softball Club procedures.

6. Responsibilities

- a. Team Managers: The Home Team Manager of game one (1) will oversee the opening of the field following the documented procedures. The Home Team Manager of the final game is responsible for closing the field, in coordination with the Field Prep crew.
- b. Neglect of duties: A player that has four (4) unexcused absences may be released to the sub list and replaced on a roster by a player of the sub list. A player that does not fulfill their non-game volunteer duty of Umpiring, Scorekeeping, and Field Prep may be suspended one game day and brought to the attention of the Club Board. It will be the responsibility of the player to find a replacement Club member if he/she is unable to meet their scheduled assigned duty.

Resignations: If a player quits a team, he/she will be out of the league for the rest of the season.