

Bachman Sports Complex

2024 Spring Softball League Rules & Information

www.aacounty.org/recparks

Updated 2/24/24

2024 UMPIRE FEE CHANGE: \$46 PER TEAM PER DOUBLEHEADER / \$23 PER TEAM PER GAME.

1. All leagues are governed by the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks Guidelines and Reference Manual. USSSA rules will apply except as noted below. **The USSSA/GSL Approved Bat List will be used for all leagues. All bats must have the USSSA thumb print stamp to be legal. Wooden Bats are not legal for league play. The pitching arc will be 6 feet to 10 feet.** Pitchers must adhere to “standard” pitching regulations. Illegal pitches will be called.
2. **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN THE COMPLEX**
No Alcoholic beverages are allowed in the complex. Offenders will be required to leave the complex IMMEDIATELY and receive an automatic 2-week suspension from ALL leagues. Teams found to have/had alcohol in their dugouts will automatically receive a 2 week team-suspension from ALL leagues. They will also forfeit all games scheduled during that 2 week suspension, including games that are cancelled due to weather. Repeat offenders will be barred from the Complex. Tobacco products are allowed in the parking lot areas ONLY!
3. **ADULT SPORTS PLAYER’S PLEDGE**
 - I understand the importance of sportsmanship and fair play.
 - I understand the importance of respect for players, game officials, and league representatives.
 - I understand the importance of leaving the playing field in the same condition as I found it.
 - I understand the importance of league rules and guidelines.
 - Therefore, I will, at all times, respect the decisions of the game officials, park personnel and league organizers. I will not publicly criticize a game official’s ruling during or immediately after an athletic contest. I will through my words and actions display a high level of sportsmanship and fair play.

GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

1. TEAM ROSTERS

Team Rosters are due no later than the 2nd week of league play. Team schedules will only have the first 2 weeks games listed until completed Team Rosters are received in the office. **Failure to turn in the Completed/Signed Team Roster's by the 2nd week of the season will result in forfeits until Team roster is received.** Team rosters are found online and must be used for turning in your team's roster. **All Team Rosters must have all players' full names, address, phone number, birthdate and email address to be complete. Hand written team rosters will no longer be accepted.** Team rosters are limited to 20 players Maximum. **Use roster add/drop to add additional players or remove players from rosters!** The 5th week of play for a 9-week league and the 6th week of play for an 11-week league will be the deadline for roster additions. Dates will be listed on league schedules.

2. UNIFORM RULES

Teams must have JERSEYS with a minimum 6" NUMBER on the back of the shirt/jersey. Jerseys DO NOT have to match. Cut-offs and jeans are not allowed. During cold weather players are permitted to wear long sleeve shirts or hoodies during play but must have their jerseys on underneath the sweatshirt or jacket. **METAL SPIKES are Not Allowed in Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks sponsored leagues or tournaments.**

3. LINE UP CARDS

If writing line-ups, teams **must** use the first name or first initial, the last name and jersey # of each player. This applies to any and all substitutions.

4. BATTING PRACTICE

Teams are not allowed in the batter's box during their pre-game warm ups. **NO HITTING BALLS AGAINST THE FENCES AT ANY TIME.** A player may be ejected from the game(s) by the park staff for hitting balls against the fence.

5. APPROVED LEAGUE SOFTBALLS

12" Optic Yellow "USSSA Classic M" Stamped Ball Only will be legal for Men's & Coed divisions and 11" Optic Yellow "USSSA Classic W" Stamped Ball Only for women will be legal for Coed divisions. All softballs must go through the umpire at the plate to be put into the game. No softballs enter the game from dugout to pitchers! A team that hits the ball out of play shall have the responsibility of retrieving the ball or replacing it with a new ball or a used ball in good condition. **Each team will hit their own balls!**

6. PITCHER'S FACEMASKS REQUIRED **EFFECTIVE SPRING 2023**

Pitcher's in ANY/ALL adult softball leagues MUST wear a facemask to pitch. FACEMASKS ARE MANDATORY IN ALL LEAGUE GAMES AND IS NOT OPTIONAL! Shin guards and/or chest protectors may be worn but are not mandatory. **Umpires will be instructed to not let you pitch without a facemask. Mask must be NOCSAE approved for league play!**

7. **OPTIONAL COURTESY RUNNER FOR PITCHER'S:**
The pitcher, having reached base safely, will have the option to use a courtesy runner. The pitcher is defined as: The pitcher who threw the last pitch and/or recorded the final out of the previous or defensive half inning. The pitcher has the option to remain on base or get a courtesy runner. Substitutions may be made only when there is a dead ball and after the batter has touched a base. The optional courtesy runner can be any player on the roster. If the optional courtesy runner is still on base at the time his/her turn at bat comes up, that spot in the batting order will be an out.
8. **PITCHING RUBBER REQUIREMENT EFFECTIVE SPRING 2023**
Pitcher's must have contact with the Pitcher's Plate when the pitch is released.
9. **BACHMAN COMPLEX HOME RUN RULES**
The following Home Run Rules will be in effect for all leagues/divisions. **All Home Runs are walk off in all leagues. Homerun Rules are NOT negotiable and can not be changed by both team's agreement/field umpires.**
*****SPECIAL NOTE***If divisions must be combined there will be a special home run rule for that Combined Division.*****
Men's "D" Leagues – 1 Designated Home Run Hitter and 2 additional Home Runs. All other over the fence home runs are outs. Designated home run hitter (DHH) must be declared at the plate before each game. Umpire will record hitter's name and number on scorecard. If the DHH is walked (intentional or not) the next person to hit a homerun may do so without penalty until the DHH's spot comes back up in the lineup. If the DHH is substituted for, the team loses the DHH until the original DHH returns to the lineup.
Men's "E-Competitive" Leagues – 2 Home Runs. All other over the fence home runs are outs.
Men's "E-Recreational" Leagues – 2 Home Runs. All other over the fence home runs are inning ending outs.
Coed Leagues – 3 Home Runs. All other over the fence home runs will be outs.
County Coed Leagues – No Home Runs. All other over the fence home runs will be outs.
Church Coed Leagues – 3 Home Runs. All other over the fence home runs are Inning Ending Outs.
50 & Over Senior Leagues - 1 Home Run per inning. All other over the fence home runs are outs.
60 & Over Senior Leagues - 3 Home Runs per game. All other over the fence home runs will be outs.
65 & Over Recreational Senior Leagues - Unlimited Home Run Limit.
10. **COURTESY RUNNERS**
One Courtesy Runner per inning (any player who is used as a Courtesy Runner can only be a Courtesy Runner once during that inning) may be used. **Attempting to use a Courtesy Runner more than once in an inning**

will result in an automatic out. The courtesy runner can be any player in the lineup. If the courtesy runner is still on base at the time his/her turn at bat comes up, that spot in the batting order will be an out. In the Mixed/Coed Program, any male player in the lineup may run for any male, and any female player in the lineup may run for any female. Both a male and female player may opt for a courtesy runner in each inning.

11. **GAME TIMES**

Games will start at 6:00, 7:10, 8:20, and 9:30 p.m. or as indicated on your schedule. There will be an (1) hour and 10-minute time limit on all games, depending on the league composition. At the 55-minute point of the game the umpire will announce that we will finish the current inning and play one more inning if the game has not already reached the 7th inning. All tie games will be completed if they fall within the time limit. (Only 1 inning will be played to break the tie and if the game remains tied after the extra inning...the game ends in a tie) Tie games that exceed the time limit will end in a tie. A 15-minute grace period will be allowed for the 6:00 p.m. game only. This 15-minute grace period for the 6:00pm game is included in the 1 Hour and 10 minute time limit. A team that has 9 players (Coed 5 & 4) at 6:00 p.m. must start at 6:00 p.m. Forfeit time for all other games will be scheduled game time; 7:10 is forfeit time for 7:10 game, 8:20 is the forfeit time for the 8:20 game and 9:30 is the forfeit time for the 9:30 games.

12. **RUN RULE**

A 20 run rule will be in effect after the 3rd inning, 15 runs after the 4th inning and 10 runs after the 5th inning. The home team has the right to bat if they are behind by 10, 15 or 20 runs or more.

13. **SUSPENDED/POSTPONED GAME RULE**

All games must play a minimum of 4 innings to be considered a completed game. If weather/lightning stops play after the 4th inning has played and the game cannot be resumed it will be considered complete and the team winning at that point will win the game. Any game that is suspended before the 4th inning is completed will resume the game (on the rescheduled date) from the point of the game being suspended. If the game is suspended before to the 3rd inning is completed then the game (on the rescheduled date) will restart from the 1st inning.

14. **MINIMUM PLAYERS**

A team may start the game with 9 players, with an out recorded when the 10th player is due up. (9 players is the minimum number of players that a team can play the game with) The 10th player may be inserted in the lineup when he/she shows up, but must bat in the 10th batting position. A team may bat the entire lineup. (I.E. If you have 14 players at the game you can bat all 14 players but can only field 10). In the event of an injury and there is no available sub an out is recorded in that spot for the remainder of the game. If there is an ejection and there is no available sub the game is a forfeit at that time. Teams cannot play with less than 9 players at any time during a game. Any team that goes below 9 players at any point of the game will result in the game being

declared a forfeit at that time because 9 is the minimum number of players that a team can have and still participate no matter why the number of players goes below 9. (Injury/Ejection)

15. **BASES**

A double bag will be used at 1st base in all leagues. If there is a play on a batter/runner going to 1st base, the batter/runner **must** touch the portion of the double bag (orange portion) extending into foul territory. He/she will be called out if he/she fails to do so. **EXCEPTION:** If a defensive player has to move onto the bag in foul territory to make the play, the runner may touch either bag if, in the judgement of the umpire, the runner touched the inside bag to avoid a collision. **IMPORTANT:** The defensive player must use the white base inside fair territory to make the putout. Runners may advance from the orange bag.

16. **BALLS/STRIKES COUNT**

A 1 + 1 count will be used in all leagues. A courtesy 3rd strike foul ball will also be implemented. **EXCEPTION: Tuesday 65 & Over Rec League will use the 1 + 1 count with no courtesy 3rd strike foul ball allowed.** Strike Mats will be used in all leagues. If ball strikes any part of the mat, it will be ruled a strike.

17. **RAIN OUT/GAME CANCELLATION LINE**

To determine if games are cancelled, please call the appropriate **Rain Line** after 4:00 P.M. **If games are not cancelled at 4:00pm then a game time field decision will be made by the umpires!**

*****Bachman Sports Complex Rain Line - 410-553-8996*****

If the Rain Line is not updated for the current day then games are still on as scheduled. Make-up games will be posted on the website on the schedules. In addition, teams may be notified by e-mail, handouts or phone with schedule changes.

18. **UMPIRE FEES**

INCREASED TO \$46.00 PER TEAM PER DOUBLEHEADER \$23.00 PER TEAM PER GAME. Each team is responsible for paying the umpire cash on the field prior to each game. The **umpire fee is \$46.00 Per Doubleheader** and is listed on the league schedule. **If a team forfeits, that team is responsible for both umpire fees for all forfeited games and will not be allowed to play until forfeit fees are paid.** If a team decides they need to cancel a game, the team canceling must first get the opposing team to agree to the cancellation. Next, both teams involved must contact the Complex Office personnel. Then, the team requesting the cancellation **must notify the Bachman Sports Complex Office** personnel **at least FIVE WORKING (5) days in advance. The games will be rescheduled only if time permits. If the Bachman Sports Complex Office personnel are not notified five days in advance, the team canceling the games will be charged with forfeits. These games will not be rescheduled.**

19. **RESCHEDULING OF CANCELLED GAMES**

Cancelled games will be made up using 1 or more of the following formats. All cancelled/rescheduled games will be moved to the end of the season

and could result in teams having to play up to 4 games.

- As part of a 5 game format, added to the end of the session
- Or on other nights during the week when possible.

LIGHTNING/THUNDER RULE: As a matter of safety and precaution, all activities must come to a stop upon the first sign lightning/thunder. **Everyone must leave the fields and playing area and go to the parking lot.** Activities may be resumed only after the lightning has stopped or a **30 minute delay beyond the last sign of lightning. Additional lightning strikes restarts the 30 minute delay time.**

20. **FORFEITS**

Any team that forfeits 6 or more games for any reason may be disqualified and removed from the schedule. Any team that is removed from the league for excessive forfeits may be disqualified from playing the next session. If a team is disqualified during the Fall Session due to forfeits then that team could result in being disqualified for the Spring session the next year!

21. **LEAGUE TIE BREAKER RULE**

For normal leagues the tie breaker will be **Head to Head** records will be used to determine the division champions providing all teams played each team in their division. Divisions that are re-evaluated after 3 or 4 weeks will not play all of the same teams due to teams moving to other divisions and a **three (3) game playoff tie breaker** will be used to determine a league champion.

22. **CHAMPIONSHIP SHIRTS**

Each 1st place team will receive 20 League Championship shirts.

23. **DUGOUT/FIELD REQUIREMENTS**

ALL PLAYERS OTHER THAN THE 1ST & 3RD BASE COACHES AND THE ON-DECK BATTER MUST REMAIN IN THE DUGOUT.

CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 16 YEARS OLD ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE FIELD OR IN THE DUGOUT BEFORE OR DURING GAMES FOR SAFETY REASONS.

ADULT SPECIFIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

1. Unless stated otherwise, **participants in adult sport programs must be at least 18 years of age to participate.**
2. Adult participants must be able to show proof of identification at all times. A Driver's License, Military ID card, Passport and/or State ID card with photograph are accepted as proof of identification.
3. Adult teams located in Anne Arundel County will have priority over non-County teams. Non-County teams may join when openings occur.

SUSPENSION/PROTESTS/ILLEGAL PLAYERS

1. **Cursing, bat throwing, use of illegal bats; harassment of umpires or park personnel before, during, or after games will not be tolerated. The penalties have been and will continue to be harsh. Please note that**

when the players signed the Adult Sports Roster form, they agreed that they have read and understand the Adult Sports Players Pledge, which is part of the roster form and noted in rule 3 above. Flagrant misconduct may result in a suspension for the session or longer.

2. A player, coach or spectator who makes or attempts to make physically aggressive contact with a game official/umpire will automatically be suspended from all County-sponsored sports for a minimum of **two (2) years** from the date of the incident.
3. A player, coach or spectator who makes or attempts to make physically aggressive contact with another individual, other than a game official, will automatically be suspended from all County-sponsored sports for a minimum of **one (1) year** from the date of the incident.
4. Anyone ejected will automatically receive a **two-week suspension** from all scheduled games in all leagues. The second occurrence by the same person will result in a **three-week suspension** from all leagues, and the third occurrence will result in **suspension from all leagues for one year** from the date of the third ejection.
5. Players, coaches or spectators ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct by departmental personnel or game officials will be suspended for a minimum of **two (2) weeks**, including playoffs and tournaments at departmental facilities.
6. Ejections occurring at the end of the season will result in the suspensions being carried over to the next sport or season. The suspended individual may be barred from all sites where County – sponsored activities are being held.
7. Any coach who refuses to provide the full name of an ejected player and/or coach to departmental personnel or game officials will be subject to **2 week suspension up to additional disciplinary action**. Coaches or team representative must notify sports supervisor of ejected player with 24 hours of ejection.
8. Anyone suspended for any reason will not be permitted on the premises of the Bachman Sports Complex. This rule applies to all activities at any sports activities, including tournaments.
9. In accordance with the Mid-Atlantic Recreation & Parks Sports Alliance, Anne Arundel County will uphold any suspension of 1 year or longer from various jurisdictions. For a complete list of the jurisdictions, please visit our web site: www.aacounty.org/recparks , and view the **“Disciplinary Actions”** section of the **“Guidelines and Reference Manual”**

PROTESTS

If a player is challenged for eligibility and/or age anytime during the game, the manager must present the Anne Arundel County Roster Sheet, and the suspected player must sign their name in the protesting

teams' scorebook when requested by the umpire, and produce a valid Maryland State Driver's License. Failure to do so is an admission of guilt, and the game is forfeited at that point.

1. When ineligibility is discovered, all games the suspected player played in and including the game discovered will be forfeited.

ILLEGAL BALL PLAYERS

Penalty: Automatic forfeiture of all games the illegal player(s) participated in. Any player that is discovered playing illegally will be **suspended for a minimum of 30 days from all leagues**, from the date of discovery. An illegal Ball Player is someone who:

- **Is not legally on the roster.**
- **Plays for 2 teams in the same league.**
- **Plays while suspended.**

1. **Any manager or team representative that plays an illegal ball player will receive an automatic 2-week suspension from all leagues.**
2. Any employee of the Recreation and Parks Department employed at the Bachman Sports Complex will have the responsibility and authority to suspend and forfeit any game in which they observe an ineligible player participating.

INJURIES AND BLOOD RULE

Neither the Department nor members of its staff will be responsible for injuries incurred during softball leagues, championship or exhibition games.

1. A player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on his uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgement.
2. Uniform rule violations will not be enforced if a uniform change is required. The umpire shall:
 - **Stop the game and allow treatment if injured person would affect the continuation of play.**
 - **Immediately call a coach, trainer, or other "Authorized person" to the injured player.**
 - **Apply the rules of the game regarding substitutions, re-entry, and short-handed player if necessary.**
 - **Request park personnel to call "911"**

BACHMAN COED LEAGUE RULES

- **When playing with 10 players, 5 males & 5 females must be in the lineup. 6 males & 6 females when playing with an E/H, and 5 & 4 (5 males & 4 females or 5 females & 4 males) when playing with 9 players. **When playing with only 9 players the 10th player would be an out.****

Male and female must alternate in the batting order.

- When there are less than 2 outs; if a male walks, he will take 2nd base and the female must bat. When there are 2 outs; if a male walks, he will take 2nd base and the female may choose to either bat or take the walk. Runners awarded 2nd base may go there directly. Batter is out after the 2nd foul ball with two strikes on him or her. A man may pitch and a woman catch or vice versa but there must be one person of each sex in those two positions. The league does not regulate where the remaining players play in the field.
- Each team must have one new optic yellow 11 inch (Women's USSSA Stamped Classic W) restricted flight ball and one new optic yellow 12-inch (Men's USSSA Stamped Classic M) restricted flight ball for each game. Men must hit the USSSA Classic M ball and women must hit the USSSA Classic W ball. NO EXCEPTIONS TO THE COED BALL RULES.

SENIOR LEAGUE RULES

50 & OVER AND 65 & OVER DIVISIONS - MUST USE APPROVED USSSA BATS ONLY IN LEAGUE PLAY! NO SENIOR BATS ARE ALLOWED IN ANY SENIOR LEAGUE PLAY! **MANDATORY PITCHER'S MUST WEAR A FACEMASK TO PITCH.**

1. Teams with **9** players at game time will be given a catcher from the opposing team until the **10th** player arrives. **This player from the opposing team will be a defensive player for that team only! The team with 9 players will be required to take an out for the 10th batter the first time at bat only.** The 10th batter may be entered into the game at any time but must be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
2. **Pitcher's must pitch from inside the pitcher's box. Pitcher's box extends 10' back perpendicular to the pitcher's plate/rubber.**
3. Strike Mats will be used in all leagues. In SENIOR LEAGUES if a ball strikes any part of the strike mat or home plate it will be ruled a strike.
4. **GAME TIMES/TIME LIMITS**
50 & Over games will start at 6:15pm/7:25pm. 65 & Over will start at 6:00pm/7:10pm. **ALL GAMES WILL HAVE A ONE HOUR & 10 MINUTES TIME LIMIT.** At the **55 MINUTE POINT** of the game the **UMPIRE WILL ANNOUNCE** that we have reached the **55 minute point** in the game. We will finish the current inning and play one more inning if the game has not already reached the 7th inning. **Games that end in a tie at the end of the last inning may continue for one (1) extra inning providing there is game time remaining within the one hour & ten minute time limit)** using the International Rule which puts the last batter who made the last out the

previous inning on second base to start the extra inning. This runner cannot get a courtesy runner until he reaches third base. If at the end of the one (1) extra inning the game is still tied then the game will end a tie. **The extra inning will also have a 5 run limit.** Senior leagues use a 6' to 12' arc on pitching. All senior leagues must use **optic yellow .44 core 400 or less compression softballs** in any and all senior league games. Umpires must call illegal pitches verbally in senior games.

50 & OVER LEAGUE DIVISION

All players must be **45 years old** during the calendar year to be eligible to participate in this league.

60 & OVER DIVISION

All players must be **55 years old** during the calendar year to be eligible to participate in this league.

65 & OVER DIVISION

All players must be **60 years old** during the calendar year to be eligible to participate in this league. Pitching screens will no longer be used for league games. A **220' outfield line** will be painted in the outfield grass and all outfielders must remain behind the 220' line until the batter makes contact with the ball. **If any team violates this rule, a dead ball is called and the batter will be awarded first base.** **Senior leagues use a 6' to 12' arc on pitching.** The 65 & Over Division plays with a 1+1 count with no courtesy foul.

5. PRE-GAME/BATTING PRACTICE

Pre-game batting practice, if time is available, will be completed at least 10 minutes before game time. Also, if time is available, infield/outfield practice will be completed 5 minutes before game time. This will allow managers and umpires to conduct their pre-game conference in a timely manner.

6. SENIOR DIVISIONS USE A 5 (FIVE) RUNS PER INNING RULE EXCEPT IN THE 7TH OR LAST INNING RUNS ARE UNLIMITED.

7. RUN RULE

Since senior leagues play 5 runs per inning limit except the last inning there will not be a "Run Rule" used in any/all senior division!

8. FLIP-FLOP RULE (SENIOR LEAGUES ONLY)

If the home team is behind by 10 or more runs after the last "5- run limit" inning, the home team will take their at-bats in the top half of the "unlimited" inning. Only if they tie or go ahead will the visitors bat in the "unlimited" inning.

****Updated 2/24/24****

