

# ADULT SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

## League Rules & Regulations



CITY OF KEARNEY  
PARK & RECREATION



# Kearney Park & Recreation Department

## ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS (Rev. 8/25)

EACH TEAM CAPTAIN / COACH HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL TEAM MEMBERS ARE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING RULES AND REGULATIONS.

### League Management

- a. The league is coordinated by the City of Kearney Park and Recreation Department.
- b. Staff Contacts:
- c. Chance Wiarda, Recreation Coordinator, 233-5320  
Kiane Davidson, Recreation Superintendent, 233-3229  
Scott Hayden, Director of Recreation Services, 233-3228  
KPR Office: 237-4644, 1930 University Dr., Kearney, NE 68845
- d. Website (schedules, standings, tournaments, general information): [www.kearneyrec.org](http://www.kearneyrec.org)
- e. Social Media
  - a. Facebook. Follow Kearney Park & Recreation on Facebook and be the first to learn about events, park developments, and programs.
  - b. Twitter and Instagram. Follow Kearney Park & Recreation @kearneyparknrec.
  - c. Snapchat. Follow Kearney Park & Recreation on twitter @kprsports2019
- f. Softball Advisory Committee:  
  
Clayton Brown  
Elias Bules  
Amber Frasier  
Steve Halbert  
Shawn Lienemann  
Drew Perkins  
Mariah Seim  
(Vacant)

### Game Cancellation Information

- a. Cancellations due to bad weather and/or unplayable fields will be announced at 3:00pm when possible, on the Kearney Park & Recreation Facebook Page, on at [www.cityofkearney.org](http://www.cityofkearney.org) then click on the Bad Weather Cancellation button on the home page, and via TextMyGov (2.07b). Please do not call the KPR Office.

### League Divisions

- Men's Division: D, E, F
- Men's Church Division
- Coed Church Division
- Coed Division: D, E, F, F1

### Harvey Park Rules

**1.01 Warm-up Areas** – In order to avoid a spectator or child getting hurt, teams must stay within the designated boundaries to warm-up (catch) prior to playing. The warm-up areas are located between the fields and close to the outfield fence. A line and/or fence will help mark the boundary area. Enforcement of this rule will be conducted by league supervisors and umpires. Violation of this rule could result in the forfeiture of a game.

- a. Pregame Batting Practice – is allowed from 5:45-6:15pm. Players must hit from behind the chalk. Only the hitter

and the pitcher are allowed on the infield. Ground balls may be taken in foul territory.

- b. Pregame Infield Practice – Teams are to refrain from using infield surface prior to games. Groundballs may be taken in foul territory.

**1.02 Alcohol** – Alcohol is illegal at any facility used by the City. Consumption of alcohol at city facilities could result in expulsion of individuals or teams from the league. This includes the entire park area and parking lots.

**1.03 Litter** – After each game, teams are responsible for cleaning the refuse out of their dug-out.

## **General Rules & Regulations For All Leagues**

### **2.01 League Awards**

- a. USA Plaques will be presented at the end of the season to 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams in each division (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> if more than 10 teams in a division). Only 1<sup>st</sup> place will receive a plaque if there are less than 3 teams in the division. Shirts will be awarded to tournament champions. (maximum 18 shirts). For fall leagues, shirts will be the only award for regular season champions.
- b. Regular season standings are determined by overall record. Ties in the final standings will be decided according to which team won during their meeting in league play, then by winning margin head to head, followed by total winning margin in league play.

### **2.02 Umpires**

- a. All umpires are to be sanctioned by the USA and required to attend USA and league umpire clinics for training. No umpire will be allowed to umpire in the league in which they play or in which their spouse is participating, unless approval is granted by KPR.
- b. Prior to umpiring his/her first game, all umpires will be required to attend a league umpire clinic and pass a rules test.
- c. If a forfeit occurs and the teams want to play a practice game, the umpires will be required to umpire the practice game.
- d. Each game will be furnished with either one or two umpires. The games receiving one or two umpires will be determined by Kearney Park and Recreation.

### **2.03 Division Classification**

- a. Teams finishing a summer season with a winning percentage of .750 or better within their league will be required to move up to the next division if at least 5 players from their roster remains the same. Teams with a winning percentage of .200 or lower are encouraged to move down a division.
- b. Fall League is excluded. Team classification adjustments based on season standings only applies to the summer seasons.

### **2.04 Eligibility, Rosters & Protests**

- a. Age: Players must be 16 years of age or older by the start of the season in order to be eligible to participate, with the exception of Men's Church and Coed Church in which players may be 15 years of age or older to participate.
- b. Playing Limitations: Players may only be on a roster for one team per league division (league divisions are listed on page 1 of this rule book). However, any team can have up to 2 subs per game for league games with the restriction that the player cannot be on a roster of a team that is a higher or same division. The end of year tournament will not allow any subs to participate. The in-house sub must sign in with the umpire on the scorecard prior to the game. This is the captain's responsibility to make sure this is completed. Failure to do so is a team forfeit for that game. Out-of-league substitutes will sign a substitute waiver/roster and scorecard prior to the game. You may only sub on 1 team per night.

- i. In House Sub is a player from our league that is on a permanent roster. They are able to play on a higher division team if needed for an unlimited amount of games for the regular season.
  - ii. Out-of-league Substitutes is a player who can sign your roster to be a permanent player, or can sub for 5 games of the same or different team (regardless of division) before picking a permanent roster. You can sub on only one team per night.
  - iii. Double headers count as a 1-game substitution
  - iv. Substitutes will not be eligible to play in post-season tournaments.
  - v. This rule was implemented to help teams find substitutes who are not on a team in our league already; reduce forfeits; introducing lower division players to higher leagues, and hopefully attract more players and teams to softball. KPR has the right to add or remove this rule at any time if we feel like it is being taken advantage of.
- c. Switching Teams: Players may not switch teams without permission of both team captains and the approval of Kearney Park and Recreation. The ultimate decision will be up to Kearney Park and Recreation.
  - d. Roster/Waiver: All players must sign and complete the roster/waiver for their team prior to playing. The roster size is unlimited. Players may be added to the roster at any time during the regular season; roster's will freeze upon the start of a team's regular season game. Rosters will be kept at the field. Please find the League Supervisor or ask an umpire if your team needs to add a player to the roster. Players that are 17 or younger must have a parent signature.
  - e. Protests: Protests may only be made if an ineligible player participates. Protests must be made within 24 hours of the game in question. The game will be forfeited if a team plays with an ineligible player. Teams are encouraged to communicate any eligibility concerns to the umpire prior to the game starting.
    - i. Umpires, Supervisors and Captains of the game in question can issue a protest.
    - ii. Teams that are using an illegal player will forfeit the game and the illegal player will be suspended for their following league game in that division.
  - f. Gender: Women may not play in men's leagues and men may not play in women's leagues.

## 2.05 Uniforms & Equipment

- a. Uniforms: Teams in all leagues are encouraged to have like-colored shirts with numbers, but it is not required. Teams should keep in mind that identical uniforms with 6" numbers will be required for teams that participate in State Tournament play.
- b. KPR reserves the right to not allow any team name or uniform that is discriminatory, inappropriate, or disrespectful.
- c. Shoes: Softball shoes with rubber cleats or athletic shoes are required for all players. Open-toed shoes, boots, or **metal spikes (including metal tipped spikes) will not be allowed.**
- d. Jewelry: Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Medic alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, the medic alert bracelet/necklace must be an athletic brand or must be taped to the body so the medic alert information remains visible.
- e. Casts/Braces: Plaster or other hard substance casts may not be worn during the game (even if wrapped). Any exposed metal on leg/arm braces must be covered by soft material and taped.
- f. Softballs: USA tournament approved optic yellow, 12 inch red-stitched balls with a core of .52 and a compression rating of .300 are acceptable.
  - i. Softballs will be provided for all leagues except Men's D. If teams wish to hit their own ball it must be a

12 inch USA stamped .52/300.

- g. Bats: Bats must have a minimum of 10 inches of safety grip (no more than 15 inches from the knob), and have "official softball" stamped by the manufacturer. No electrical tape is permitted. Any bat that has a rattle when shaken will not be allowed. The bat barrel shall not have signs of excessive wear. Titanium bats will not be allowed. Fastpitch bats may be utilized by all leagues. A non-approved bat list will be available and enforced.
  - i. ***For safety purposes, all bats used in the league must go through a bat tester at the field (must pass 3 out of 5 times). A special metallic sticker with correct year will be issued for all approved bats.*** At any time during the season, if a bat is suspected to be altered, KPR staff has the right to test the bat again. Any player altering a bat after it has been tested will be suspended for 5 games. Any player caught twice for using an illegal bat will be suspended for the remainder of the season. A list of illegal bats can be found at [www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com).

## 2.06 Schedules

- a. Games will generally be played at **6:30, 7:30, 8:30 and 9:30pm** on weeknights and occasionally some Sunday nights at Harvey Park.
- b. Prior to the schedules Teams may request special scheduling considerations when they ***absolutely cannot*** make a day/time. Double headers, late games, no game on a certain date, etc. will be granted if the schedule allows, but there are no guarantees. Thus, teams must be able to play at all of the times and dates advertised for the particular league division.
- c. Games will not be rescheduled unless due to bad weather, scheduling error, or death of a team member.
- d. Forfeit Policy: Team captains are encouraged to call the KPR Office by 5:00pm if his/her team will not be at a game, so the opposing team can be notified. By calling ahead, a sportsmanship rating of 2 will be given to the team; if no call, a sportsmanship rating of 0 will be given. All forfeit scores are reported as 15-0.

## 2.07 Inclement Weather

- a. In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel and reschedule games will be made by Kearney Park and Recreation, League Supervisors and/or Umpires. If possible, a decision to cancel games will be made at 3:00pm (11:00am on Sundays). Check the KPR Facebook page or go to the City of Kearney website and click on the KPR weather button. An official game will be called after the completion of four innings (4.5 completed innings if the Home team is ahead).
- b. TextMyGov will be utilized to communicate inclement weather or other league notifications. Anyone can opt in to this season by texting "KPR ADULT SBALL 25" to 91896
- c. Games not considered regulation shall be resumed from the exact point where they were stopped.
- d. In instances where games have gone beyond four completed innings but teams have not had equal number of at-bats, the game reverts to the previous inning score.
- e. Home Team score book pages from all suspended games must be signed by the home plate umpire before leaving the Harvey Park complex.

## 2.08 Scorecards & Standings

- a. Scorecards will be completed by the Home Plate Umpire and initialed by each team captain at the conclusion of each game. Be sure to check the scores before signing.
- c. Standings can be viewed on the City of Kearney website at [www.kearneyrec.org](http://www.kearneyrec.org) under Park and Recreation Adult Leagues.

## **2.09 Music**

- a. No music will be allowed to be played from a speaker or boom-box in the park. If a team is playing music, they will be asked to turn it off. If music continues, first offense will result in an unsportsmanlike out, second offense will result in the forfeiture of their current or next scheduled game.

## **Playing Rules For All Leagues**

### **3.01 Game Time & Required Number of Players**

- a. All games will start promptly at the time scheduled. Play may begin with eight players. If a team does not field eight players **at the scheduled starting time, that team shall forfeit the game.**
- b. Absent players will be considered an "out" in the batting order.
- c. If playing shorthanded and a substitute arrives, the substitute may be inserted immediately into the vacant spot. In coed, if another player of the correct gender arrives, that player must be inserted into the line-up in the vacant spot by alternating genders.
- d. Any team losing a player during the game, due to injury, ejection, or any other reason, may continue to play provided the team still has eight players available. An "out" will still count for any vacant position in the batting order. Teams are encouraged to have more than 10 players at a game.

### **3.02 Scorebook**

- a. The home team will provide the official scorebook unless they do not have enough personnel to keep the book. In that instance, the home plate umpire will designate someone to keep the official scorebook.

### **3.03 Time Limit & Ties**

- a. A game will consist of seven innings, time permitting.
- b. A one hour time limit will apply for games. No new inning may begin one hour after the first pitch. If the time limit expires during extra innings the game will be completed.
- c. If a game is tied after seven innings, the International Tie-Breaker Rule applies. The player preceding the player in the lineup who is scheduled to bat first in the inning will start the inning on second base.
- d. Games can NOT end in a tie due to time limit.

### **3.04 One and One Count & Courtesy Foul Rule**

- a. Each new batter will enter the batter's box with a one ball and one strike count. No courtesy foul.

### **3.05 Delay of Game**

- a. No around the horn is allowed after an out. The umpire will first give a team a warning, and on the second violation will award the next batter first base.
- b. If an umpire feels that a team is intentionally stalling to prolong a game, a warning will be given to the offending team. A second warning will mean forfeiture of the game by the offending team.

### **3.06 Run Ahead Rule**

- a. The 20-run rule will apply after three innings, 15-run rule after four innings, and the 10-run rule will apply after five innings.
  - a. If game involves a run spot, Rule 3.13, the spotted runs do not count toward a Run Ahead shortened game.

- i. Ex. For an E league team to run rule a D League team, it would be 30 after three, 25 after four or 20 after five.
- ii. Ex. For an F1 league team to run rule an F league team, it would be 25 after three, 20 after four, or 15 after five.

### **3.08 Home Run Rule**

- a. Team's in Men's D, E, Coed D, E, and Men's Church will be allowed 4 home runs per game.
- b. Team's in Men's F, Coed F, F1, and Coed Church are allowed 2 home runs per game.
- c. In games between teams with different classifications, teams will use the rules of the lower league.

### **3.09 Extra Players**

- a. Teams have the option of up to 14 players batting and any 10 may play in the field.

### **3.10 Sportsmanship**

- a. Fair play and sportsmanship are important concerns in Kearney Park and Recreation Department Adult League Sports. The success of the league is largely based on how much fun the league is. Please keep the games in perspective and act maturely.
- d. Each team captain / coach is the spokesperson and is responsible for the conduct of his team before, during, and after all games.
- e. Any player ejected from a game will automatically be suspended for the next scheduled game. Multiple incidents in a season can result in suspension for the entire season.
- f. Physically touching an umpire, staff member, opposing team member, or spectator will result in immediate removal from the game and suspension from the program for the entire season.
- g. Any player ejected from a game must leave the fenced-in area of the Harvey Park Complex.
- h. Un-Sportsmanlike Out: The umpire has the authority to assess one out against the offending team for excessive protests, profanity towards an umpire, arguments, complaints or behavior not appropriate in a recreation sports setting. Such conduct exhibited by a player or coach can be penalized as an "out". All outs will be assessed against the offending team during their turn at bat. An "un-sportsmanship out" can be assessed as the third out of an inning or the last out of a game. Incidents of continued excessive unsportsmanlike conduct will subject an individual responsible to be ejected from the game. The "un-sportsmanship out" will not affect any batter or base runner.
- i. Casual Profanity Rule: If a player uses loud profane language, one formal warning will be issued to the team. A second use of loud profane language will result in one out to the offending team. Casual profanity shall be defined as expletives (vulgar or profane language) not directed at umpires, opposing players, coaches, uttered by a player, on the field or within the dugout involved with the play of the team, frustrated with themselves, a teammate or a fan. All outs will be assessed against the offending team during their turn at bat. A third use of casual profanity from anyone on the team will result in ejection from that game and the next scheduled game. The casual profanity penalty "out" will be assessed as a team and will not affect any batter or base runner.
- j. Umpires will rate the sportsmanship of teams at the conclusion of each game. The Team Sportsmanship Award has been implemented in order to reward teams for demonstrating positive actions, self-discipline during adverse situations, and mature behavior during league play. The highest rated team in each league at the end of the season will receive a \$50 KPR coupon to be used towards future entry fees. Ratings will be between 0-4, with 4 being the highest.

#### **Sportsmanship Rating System:**

**FOUR:** All team members demonstrate a high level of sportsmanship.

**THREE:** All team members demonstrate a reasonably high level of sportsmanship, but some minor unwarranted actions, profanity, complaints, or arguments occur, possibly requiring a warning from an umpire/supervisor.

**TWO:** Most team members demonstrate a reasonably high level of sportsmanship, but excessive profanity, complaints or arguments occur. An "un-sportsmanship out" is assessed or a team calls the KPR office by 3:00pm to notify staff of a forfeit.

**ONE:** A team member is ejected and some additional unwarranted actions, profanity, complaints, or arguments occur.

**ZERO:** A forfeit by a team who did not call the KPR office.

\*Ties will be broken by the team with the poorer record being declared the Team Sportsmanship winner.

\*Teams with full-time Recreation Division staff members are not eligible for the Team Sportsmanship Award.

### 3.11 Thrown Bat Rule

- a. In the event of a thrown bat deemed reckless by the umpire, the ball will be dead and the batter out. The penalty is the same for the second offense but the batter will be disqualified from batting for the rest of the game.

### 3.12 Stealing

- a. Only Men's D & E League will have base stealing. Runners can not leave their base until the ball is hit or crosses the front of the plate.

### 3.13 Run Spot Rule

- a. A run spot rule may apply in certain leagues. If there is a one division difference 5 runs will be spotted, if there is two or more divisions difference, 10 runs will be spotted. If a F1 team plays a F team 3 runs will be spotted. Run spot will be added at the beginning of the game.

### 3.14 Legal Pitch

- a. The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc of at least six feet from the ground. The pitched ball must not reach a height of more than ten feet at its highest point from the ground. The pitcher must take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and with one or both feet within the 'pitcher's box' and come set presenting the ball in glove or in hand. This is the proper pitching position prior to the delivery of the pitch.

Note: The pitcher's box is defined as 24 inches in width and 6' long. The pitcher's box is a rectangle starting with the 24" X 4" pitching plate at 50 feet and extending directly behind that pitching plate a distance of 6 feet.

### 3.15 Bases

- a. Double first bases will be used at all fields. The purpose of a double safety first base is to allow the runner and the fielder to both have room on the base and helps eliminate obstruction calls on the first baseman at least on a batter/runner acquiring the base. Whenever a force play is being made on the batter/runner, the defense must use the white portion and the batter/runner the orange portion. The batter/runner is out when there is a force play being made at first base and the batter/runner touches only the white portion, providing defense appeals prior to the batter/runner returning to first base. Once the runner returns to the base (white or orange), no appeal can be made.
- b. No one other than another runner may assist a base runner while the ball is in play.
- c. When a runner is obstructed (this includes blocking the bases) while advancing or returning to a base by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted ball, or a fielder without the ball fakes a tag, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner and each other runner affected by the obstruction the bases they would have in his/her opinion reached, had there been no obstruction.

### 3.16 Courtesy Runners

- a. USA Rules will apply (Please see Rule 8, Section 9 in the USA Rulebook for full explanation)
  - i. Any eligible player on the official roster line-up including available substitutes may be used once per inning.
  - ii. A courtesy runner may be used once per inning.
  - iii. The active pitcher may utilize a courtesy runner that will not count as the teams one per inning.

iv. In Coed, **two courtesy runners are allowed, one male and one female, must be of the same gender.**

b. Players over 50 years of age may use unlimited courtesy runners. Any eligible player on the official roster may be used as a courtesy runner. A courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base will be called out.

### **3.17 USA Rules**

a. Unless otherwise stated, USA rules will be followed in all leagues.

## **Coed League Specific Rules**

### **4.01 Players**

- a. Each team shall consist of ten players, five men and five women. A team may play with eight or nine players. There will be an automatic out anytime two players of the same gender bat in a row. A team can bat up to 14 players, but must be equal number of men and women.
- b. If a team fields only eight or nine players, the ratio of men/women does not have to be even but no more than five of either gender can play at one time.
- c. The coed defensive positions shall consist of no more than two males and two females in the outfield, two males and two females in the infield, and one male and one female in the pitcher-catcher positions.
- d. Due to the high risk of injury, teams are encouraged to use caution in the selection of your pitcher.
- e. The batting order for coed shall alternate male/female of nine.
- f. With less than two outs, if a male batter walks, he will be awarded second base. The female batter following will bat. If there are two outs, the female can choose to bat or go to first base.
- g. Outfielders must remain behind a mowed/chalked line in the outfield until the ball is hit. The line will be 200 feet from home plate. Violation of this rule will result in a delay dead ball. The batters then will be awarded first base, or the result of the play.
- h. If extra players (EPs) are used, all must bat and any five males and five females may play defense. Defensive positions may be changed as long as the two male/two female ratio is used. The batting order must remain the same throughout the game.

### **4.02 Softballs**

a. A 12-inch 52/300 ball will be used for both men and women at bat.

## **Church League Specific Rules**

### **6.01 Prayer**

a. Before every game both teams will meet on the infield for prayer.

### **6.02 Player Eligibility**

- a. A player must be in good standing with his/her church. Attendance requirements will be set by each church. A Church League team roster must have been signed by the pastor or church official of his/her church stating that all players are actively attending their church or approved by their church.
- b. Due to the high risk of injury, teams are encouraged to use caution in the selection of your pitcher.

## **League Tournament Rules**

## **7.01 Rosters and Gameplay**

- a. Only players on a team's roster that have played at least one game are eligible to play in the tournament.
- b. Roster's will freeze upon the start of a team's last regular season game.
- c. In leagues with only one division, top seed will be home seed with the exception of the championship game which will be a coin flip. In leagues with multiple divisions, coin flip will determine home/away.
- d. No runs will be spotted in tournament games.
- e. Time limit rules will be used for tournament games.
- f. All league rules will apply for tournament games, unless stated differently above.
- g. Divisions; Men's (D, E, F) and Coed (D,E, F,F1) tournament will take place during summer league. There will also be a Men's Church & Coed Church tournament.

## **Additional Fall Softball Rules**

### **8.01 Times**

- a. Games will generally be played at 6:30, 7:30, 8:30 and 9:30pm on weeknights and occasionally some Thursday afternoons at Harvey Park.