

# 2024 Softball Managers Handbook

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## SECTION I: BUSINESS & PROCEDURES

### A. Adult Softball Leagues

1. Leagues will be offered in the following levels of play:
  - a. Men's Slowpitch – Spring/Summer/Fall – Intermediate & Recreation Divisions (Tuesdays & Thursdays).
  - b. Women's Slowpitch – Summer League Open Division (Wednesdays)
  - c. COED – Spring/Summer/Fall – Intermediate & Recreation (Mondays & Fridays).
2. Monday & Friday COED Divisions play with regulation softballs, 12" for men and 11" for women. All Tuesday & Thursday Men's Divisions will play with a 12" ball.
  - a. NOTE that ALL divisions will use the USA Softball approved 52 Core 300# Compression ball.
3. Teams must play at the time, place and dates as specified by league schedules. Rainouts or cancellations deemed legitimate by the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department (SCPR) would be the only exceptions.
4. Skagit County Parks & Recreation reserves the right to form separate or combined divisions within leagues.
5. Skagit County Parks & Recreation reserves the right to freeze league entries once a pre-determined maximum number of teams have registered. Field and time scheduling limitations determine the maximum number.

### B. Team Eligibility

1. Team registrations will be taken on a first-paid basis. Once league capacities have been reached, no further registrations will be accepted.
2. Refunds are subject to Skagit County Parks & Recreation policy. No refunds will be made once league schedules have been drawn up. **There is a \$25.00 charge on all NSF checks.**
3. All teams shall be registered with the USA Softball of Washington (formerly the Amateur Softball Association – A.S.A.) and shall conform to all USA Softball standards, except where noted by specific league rules, policies or regulation.

### C. Player Eligibility

1. All Men's, Women & COED Divisions
  - a. Players must be 16 years of age or older.
2. Supplying False Information
  - a. Any player(s) identified supplying false information to compete in the league(s) will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) year and cause his/her team to forfeit any games he/she played in. All cases will be forwarded to District and State USA Softball offices for consideration of further penalties.

### D. Team Rosters

1. Men's, Women's, & COED will use USA Softball standard rosters that have a 20-player maximum. A manager's name must be included on the roster if a playing member.

2. All players must sign a USA Softball roster and Skagit County Parks & Recreation Participant Waiver Form **prior to participating in league play.**
  - a. USA Softball rosters and Skagit County Parks & Recreation Participant Waiver Forms can be turned in prior to the season at the Skagit County Parks & Recreation office or at the Skagit Valley Playfields to a SCPR representative prior to teams and participants playing their first game.
3. Rosters
  - a. New players may be added or transferred to another roster up to May 24, 2024. **Note:** The original rosters will be available at the Skagit Playfields for the duration of the season. Players all need to sign the official USA Softball roster to be eligible for USA Softball invitational and championship tournament play.
  - b. **Men's & Women's Leagues** – Players can be on more than one men's or women's team roster, though not on the same night (i.e. divisions that play on multiple nights would exclude a player from participating on another team either of the two nights) and for league play only.
  - c. **COED Leagues** - Players can be on more than one COED team roster, though not on the same night (i.e. Monday, Wednesday, or Friday) and for league play only.
4. All league fees for teams must be paid to Skagit County Parks & Recreation prior to being scheduled for any games.
5. **Pick-up Players** – teams are permitted to add or substitute a maximum of two players as follows:
  - a. **Pick-up players must be on an A.S.A. roster by the May 24<sup>th</sup> deadline.** No exceptions for this rule will be made.
  - b. Players may only play up from the highest level they are currently participating at each night. For instance, no Men's OPEN player may play in any Intermediate or Recreation Division as a pick-up player. Also, no COED Intermediate player may play in any Recreation Division as a pick-up player, as well.
  - c. The opposing teams must be made aware of and agree on pick-up players prior to the start of a game. Consent must be proven with a **Pick-up Player Consent Form**, which is to be signed by both team managers and player(s).
  - d. **If the opposing team does not give consent to the proposed pick-up player(s), the game will be ruled a forfeit.**
  - e. Use of pick-up players without an opponent's consent is illegal, and grounds for forfeit.
6. Teams that lose players due to injury, job changes, etc., may petition SCPR after the May 24<sup>th</sup> roster addition deadline to replace a player(s). These players would only be eligible for league play only and would not qualify for USA Softball Championship Tournament play.

## E. Fields and Usage

1. For use of any school or other community fields, it is recommended that teams contact school districts or pertinent community Parks & Recreation departments for use of their fields.
2. Reservations for use of Skagit Playfields
  - a. **PRACTICES** – Teams must coordinate pre-season practices on weeknights through the Skagit County Parks & Recreation office. Since there is such high demand for Skagit Valley Playfields use on weeknights we are now scheduling all field use through our office at 360-416-1350 (M-F; 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM). IF you just show-up for a drop-in practice on a weeknight, you may find all fields in use. Teams must be on our field calendar for weeknight use.
  - b. **FREE** – Practice Space is FREE for Adult teams on weeknights when there is no league play, but must be coordinated through the Skagit County Parks & Recreation office. Sunday evenings

will be available ONLY for drop-in use, but please note that there are tournaments scheduled at the Skagit Valley Playfields most if not all weekends.

- a. The Skagit Valley Playfields – Picnic Shelter may also be reserved in advance at \$150.00 per use with no damage deposit.
3. Please use proper etiquette when using fields for practice. Do not interfere with school or other youth programs. Pick up all litter and do not bring alcoholic beverages to any field. **Absolutely no alcoholic beverages or glass containers will be allowed at the Skagit Valley Playfields.**

## F. Tournaments

1. Sponsors of tournaments must secure field usage and take necessary preparatory actions as required by Skagit Valley Playfields managing agencies (Skagit County Parks & Recreation and Skagit Valley College).
2. Skagit Valley Playfields scheduling forms are available at the Skagit County Parks & Recreation office at 1730 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. [parksrec@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:parksrec@co.skagit.wa.us) 360-416-1350
  - a. NOTE that there is a 12-game or \$360.00 minimum per date for any weekend tournament dates.
3. Teams traveling to a Metro area or another state for a USA Softball sanctioned tournament must have their rosters signed by a District 15 Officer, which can be Tony Tewalt, Recreation Manager with the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department.

# SECTION II: RULES & REGULATIONS

## A. Men's, Women's, COED Leagues

1. The Skagit County Parks & Recreation Adult Softball League rulebook will be the 2024 USA Softball Official Rules of Softball with the following exceptions or points of emphasis (USA Softball Rules are online at [USA Softball of Washington](http://USA Softball of Washington)).
  - a. The first team listed on the league schedule is the home team. Home teams are responsible for providing a new game ball and a back-up ball. New game balls will be passed out to teams the first night of league play.
  - b. The minimum number of players needed to start and finish a game is:
    1. **Men's & Women** - nine (9). A tenth (10) player arriving late may be added to the line-up and will assume the tenth spot in the batting order.
    2. **COED** - eight (8). Teams may play with more female players than males. Teams may never play more males than females.
  - c. Three (3) forfeits in a season will automatically disqualify a team from further league participation without a refund.
  - d. The home team will be responsible for keeping the official scorebook for a game. A scorebook will be provided to each team in their team packet.
  - e. A ten-run rule will be in effect in all league games after the trailing team has a chance to bat in the 5<sup>th</sup> Inning.
  - f. **No Smoking** – No player is to be smoking on the playing field or dugouts at the Skagit Valley Playfields.
  - g. **Alcohol** is NOT allowed in the Skagit Valley Playfields complex.
  - h. **Marijuana Use** – Please note that it is illegal to smoke Marijuana at the Skagit Valley Playfields. Initiative 502 in the state of Washington that legalized the Recreational use of Marijuana follows the state's alcohol model.

Anywhere alcohol consumption is banned in public, Marijuana use is also banned. In Washington State It is illegal to smoke marijuana in public or in view (or smell) of the general public.

- i. Players and teams can be ejected from a game for any use of Alcohol or Marijuana at the Skagit Valley Playfields. According to state and municipal code you are also subject to a fine by law enforcement.
- j. Batting:
  1. **Men's & Women** - Teams are allowed to bat their entire roster.
2. **COED** -
  - i. Men and women will bat in alternate order.
  - ii. Teams may bat their entire roster; however men may never bat consecutively.
  - iii. Substitutions may take place at any time. However, re-entry must be made in the same spot in the batting order.
  - iv. If a player leaves the facility or is injured and unable to play, that player will be considered an out if no available substitute is available.
- k. **HOME RUNS** for All Divisions (Men's, Women's & COED) will be three (3) ahead. A team can not be more than three over the fence Home Runs ahead of the other team.
- l. No metal cleats are allowed in any leagues.
- m. Base distances will be seventy feet (70') in all adult leagues as of 2013. The pitching distance will still be at fifty feet (50').
- n. **1-AND-1 Count for Batters** – In USA Softball all batters shall assume a one ball, one strike count upon entering the batters box.
- o. **COED** field positioning does not have to be male female or alternating positions.
- p. **COED** – Walks
  1. If a male batter walks, he will automatically go to second base. The next female batter will then bat, unless there are two (2) outs, where she can then have the option of hitting or walking.
- q. **Base Stealing** – As of Spring 2014, Base Stealing is NO LONGER allowed in any Men's Divisions. It has always not been allowed in COED & Women's Divisions.
- r. Sliding may be either head first or feet first. Any bowling over of a player will be an automatic out. **Runners forced out at second base must slide or get out of the way of the play.** Any act of a player that fails to do so will be deemed interference and ruled an automatic double play, as stated in the USA Softball Rulebook.
- s. **Commitment Line** – COED Divisions ONLY. A Commit Line will be placed perpendicular to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Line (towards the foul area) halfway between Home Plate and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base.
  1. Once a runner has touched or crossed the "Commitment Line", he or she has committed to trying to score and may not return to third base. A force play will now be in effect at home.
  2. **In the event that the runner returns to third base and does not try to score after having "committed", the runner will be called out once the play is over IF APPEALED TO THE UMPIRE.**
  3. **EXCEPTION: A runner who "committed", passed the commitment line, may return to third base after a caught fly ball OR to touch a base previously missed.**
- t. **Home Plate "Safety Line"** – COED Divisions ONLY. A Safety Line will be used at home plate that will be drawn perpendicular from Home Plate and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Line towards the backstop.
  1. The Safety Line will replace Home Plate for all base runners. Base runners are required to cross the Safety Line instead of making contact with Home Plate.
  2. Any base runner touching Home Plate will be considered out.
  3. **ALL** plays at Home Plate/Safety Line will be a force out once a base runner has crossed the Commit Line.
  4. The Safety Line shall be marked between home plate and the fence on the third base side of the diamond, perpendicular to the third base line.

5. **On a play at home plate, a runner will be called out if he or she touches or crosses the Safety Line after the catcher has the ball and is in contact with the plate (i.e. a force play).** Otherwise, the runner will be safe.
6. A runner will be considered to have crossed the Safety Line once they touch the ground on or beyond the line.
7. The catcher may still tag runners out if **NOT** standing on Home Plate. **If the runner touches home plate, runs over the plate or on the infield side (fair territory) of it, or makes intentional contact with the catcher, the runner will be called out. EXCEPTION:** The runner will not be out for any of these reasons if the catcher, or any member of the fielding team, is blocking the scoring/Safety Line so that the runner cannot be reasonably expected to cross it properly.
8. The runner is permitted to slide across the line.
9. **DEAD BALLS:** When a **HOME RUN** is hit (the ball clears the outfield fence), a **BASES LOADED WALK** or an **OVERTHROW** that goes **OUT OF PLAY** occur, the runner(s) **WILL NOT BE OUT** if they touch home plate.
- u. **Courtesy Runners** will be defined as:
  1. Any player injured during the game may have a courtesy runner. A player of the same gender who registered the last out that his/her team made will be the courtesy runner.
  2. One courtesy runner may be named prior to the start of a game. The courtesy runner in this instance will also be the player of the same gender who registered the last out that his/her team made. If at the start of the game with no outs for a particular gender, the player of the same gender at the bottom of the batting order will be designated the courtesy runner.

**Note: The intent of this rule is to help injured players prevent further injury, not to prevent slow runners from base running. Abuse of this rule should be reported to the Skagit County Parks & Recreation and S.V.S.A. Advisory Board.**

### 3. Casual Profanity

- a. Players are to refrain from using casual profanity at the Skagit Valley Playfields (expletives not directed at an umpire or opposing player and loud enough to be heard by spectators). Managers are encouraged to remind players that use of casual profanity is not an acceptable behavior while participating in Skagit County Parks & Recreation programs.

### 4. Skagit Playfields Music Policy

- Music should be contained to a team's dugout only and not discernible in the field of play or the opposing team's dugout.
- It's important to note that not everyone may agree w/ your choice of music or the volume at which you play it.
- Music must not contain any inappropriate language, regardless if music is at an acceptable level.
- The Skagit Playfields is a family park and we'd ask you to respect that there are often families and kids in the premises and stands.
- If your team has any issue during a game with loud or inappropriate music, please inform our Field Supervisor who can address this immediately on-site.
- Please share this information w/ your team members.
- Thank You for your attention to this issue.

## B. Umpires

1. Umpires will warn players and/or teams of rules infractions.
2. The umpire has the power to eject offending players or teams and call a forfeit of a game for misconduct. Please review the player Misconduct section. The umpire will file a report of the ejection with the facility supervisor.
3. Ejection and/or forfeits will be reviewed for further action by Skagit County Parks & Recreation and if necessary, by the S.V.S.A. Advisory Board and disciplined according to rules.

## C. Equipment

1. Only USA Softball approved bats may be used. A.S.A. approved bats are listed online at [USA Softball of Washington](#).
2. It is recommended that catchers wear a mask.
3. **FACE MASKS** – Must be worn by pitchers.
4. Shoes must be worn.  
**A. METAL CLEATS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN ANY LEAGUES.**
5. It is recommended that all teams have matching jerseys with numbers, pants and caps. This is a requirement for USA Softball Championship Tournament play.
6. Official game balls are USA Softball approved.

## D. Pre-game & Ground Rules

1. **Infield Practice**
  - a. Each team will be allowed ten (10) minutes of infield practice, only if time allows.
  - b. It is up to the teams to take infield practice on schedule. Teams should inquire with the umpire if they have a question as to time remaining before the start of a game. The umpire will be responsible for on field time keeping.
  - c. **No warm-ups are to occur on any of the paved walkways through the Skagit Valley Playfields. Avoid throwing towards areas that people are congregating in.**
2. **Ground Rules**
  - a. A field's ground rules may vary according to the field.
  - b. Umpires will go over ground rules prior to the game with coaches and managers. Only the coach and/or team manager will serve as the official spokespersons during the game.
3. **Time Limit**
  - a. A one (1) hour and fifteen (10) minute time limit will be imposed on all Skagit County Parks & Recreation league games. **No new inning will start after one (1) hour, unless the game is tied. At this point the International Tiebreaker will be used (Each team comes to bat with a player on 2<sup>nd</sup> base that was the last player to make a plate appearance in the previous inning.)**
  - b. The final scheduled game of the evening will have a 1 hour and fifteen (15) minute time limit.
  - c. If the same two teams are playing a double header, the time limit may be extended for the first game if both teams agree. However, this may cause the second game to be shortened.
  - d. A ten-minute grace period will be allowed for the **first round** of games each night only.

## E. Rain Outs, Cancellations & Make-Ups

1. At the fields
  - a. Unless the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department cancels games prior to 5:00 PM, teams are required to show up at their assigned field at the designated time with the minimum number of players needed to start the game, **no matter what the weather conditions.**
  - b. If a team does not show up with the minimum number of players, the game will be a forfeit.
2. The umpire and facility supervisor shall determine fitness of the field for starting a game.
3. Skagit County Parks & Recreation staff, not the teams will do rescheduling of rainouts.
4. Games will not be rescheduled if teams cancel games for reasons not approved by the Skagit County Parks & Recreation.
5. A Rescheduling Fee of \$35.00 will be charged for any games canceled by teams that are non-weather related.
6. For Rainouts and other updates call the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Rain Out Hotline at 360-416-1361 x1 after 4:30 PM on game. **The Rain Out Hotline will continue to be updated after 4:30 PM if weather and/or field conditions change.**

## F. Protests

1. Submitting a Protest
  - a. Protests must be submitted to the Skagit County Parks & Recreation office, within forty-eight (48) hours of the game being played.
  - b. **The USA Softball format for appeals will be followed. Teams must notify the umpire of their intent to file a game protest.**
  - c. There will be a \$35.00 protest deposit for all protests, payable to Skagit County Parks & Recreation.
  - d. If a protest is upheld, the \$35.00 deposit will be returned.
2. Skagit County Parks & Recreation will make a ruling on each protest at the earliest possible opportunity.
3. Protests of judgment calls will not be considered.

## G. Reporting of League Scores

1. Winning teams are responsible for turning in scores to a Skagit County Parks & Recreation representative at the Skagit Valley Playfields.
  - a. Any scores for games not turned in at the Skagit Playfields can be called in to the Skagit County Parks & Recreation office the next day at 360-416-1350 or sent via e-mail by accessing the Skagit County Parks & Recreation website at [www.skagitcounty.net/parks](http://www.skagitcounty.net/parks) &/or [tonyt@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:tonyt@co.skagit.wa.us).

## H. Tiebreaker Rule

1. If at the end of the season two (2) or more teams are tied for the league Championship with one set of shirts, head-to-head competition will be the first determining factor for a tiebreaker. If teams are still tied after the head-to-head determination, a single elimination playoff will take place. In the case of more than 2 teams, names will be drawn from a hat at the Skagit Valley Playfields prior to the start of the first game. All regular season rules will apply.



2. IF in a division with two (2) sets of shirts for the top two teams, a playoff will occur ONLY if there's a three way tie that can not be resolved via head-to-head for all three teams. IF there's a tie for the second set of shirts (2<sup>nd</sup> Place) there will not be a playoff, but tiebreaker criteria will be head-to-head, fewest runs allowed in head-to-head games or fewest runs allowed on the season.
3. For non-Championship tiebreakers (3<sup>rd</sup> Place and beyond) the following criteria will be used in descending order – head-to-head, fewest runs allowed in head-to-head games or fewest runs allowed on the season.

## I. Insurance

1. Persons participating in softball leagues sponsored by the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department are not insured in any way for personal liability, injuries, property damage or loss, or any other inconveniences. Persons are competing, watching or participating at their own risk. USA Softball team/individual player accident insurance forms are available on-line through [USA Softball of Washington](http://USA Softball of Washington).

## J. Managers & Captains

1. Each team shall have two representatives. One team manager and a team captain. Preferably, the manager should be a non-playing member.
2. During the course of a game, the manager and captain are the only official spokespersons for a team. Only they may raise a question concerning rules and an interpretation to the umpire.

## K. Misconduct

1. Misconduct will not be tolerated.
2. The manager and coach are responsible for their team and fans behavior.
3. Umpires will use the manager and coach as the avenue of communication and put the burden for player behavior on the manager and coach when dealing with player misconduct.
4. In case of misconduct, the Skagit County Parks & Recreation will take disciplinary action.
  - a. Any disciplinary action will be reported to state USA Softball officials.
5. Ejections
  - a. An ejected player or manager is required to sit out his or her next game and will be put on probation the remainder of that season (i.e. Spring, Summer or Fall League).
  - b. A player ejected while on probation may be suspended indefinitely, but a minimum of two games.
  - c. Any player or coach, who subjects an umpire to unnecessary verbal or physical abuse after a game or after being ejected, may be suspended indefinitely.

## L. Appeals

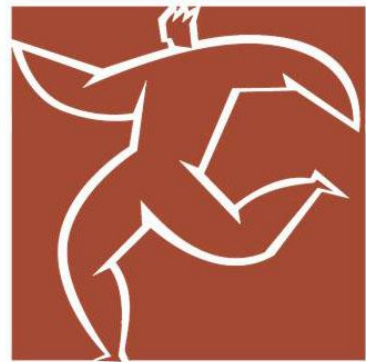
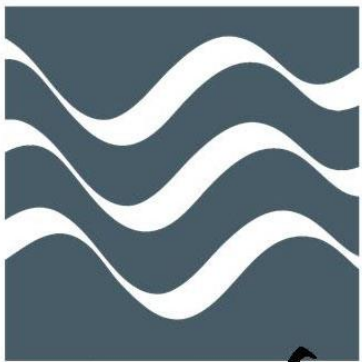
1. Ejected managers, coaches and/or players have the right of a written appeal of the mandatory one game suspension from their team's next game.
2. Appeals must be accompanied by a \$35.00 deposit and must be submitted within 24 hours of the game.
3. Pending the appeal, the manager, coach or player may participate or play in their next scheduled game.

4. Skagit County Parks & Recreation will rule on the validity of the appeal and will deliberate and determine what, if any, further action is necessary
5. In the case of physical assault or abuse, the Skagit County Parks & Recreation Department may deny the avenue of appeal.
6. If a manager, coach or player is ejected from the first game of a double header, that individual must automatically sit out the second game of the double header.
7. A player will not have to sit out a game if ejected for illegal substitution or a non-misconduct ejection.

**A WORD ON SPORTSMANSHIP!**

We know that most participants in Skagit County Parks & Recreation programs are responsible adults, partaking in the true spirit of competition. However, occasionally someone gets a little hot over a questionable call, a lost game or maybe their shoes are just a little too tight. So, remember softball leagues are here for everyone and we encourage families to come out to enjoy and cheer from the stands. And to our athletes and weekend warriors, have a good time, play hard and keep things in perspective!

SKAGIT COUNTY



*Parks and Recreation*