

New York Senior Softball Association, Inc.

2026

Rules of Play

CODE OF CONDUCT

All players and managers are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and civilized manner, at all times, on and off the field, including board meetings, e-mails, phone calls and any other correspondences. Any physical or verbal abuse towards opposing players, teammates or umpires, will not be tolerated.

The **EXECUTIVE BOARD** and the **MANAGERS REVIEW BOARD** will review all violations and/or ejections of players and/or managers, and determine the appropriate length of suspensions. If a Manager Review Board member is the subject of a violation, he/she will be removed from the Manager Review Board, and another manager will be selected.

1.0 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board consists of the **Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Executive Board Members** and **Team Managers**. The Board is empowered to govern the league with goals to maintain team parity within the league, encourage sportsmanship and develop **Rules of Play**, for the enhancement of the league, by exercising the following actions;

1.1 ~ employs certified USA Softball of Long Island umpires to control all games, and enforce USA Softball of Long Island and NYSSA rules.

The Board asks umpires to;

- 1 - appear at the fields, 15 minutes prior to the start of all games.
- 2 - stress player safety, specifically, the avoidance of unnecessary contact.
- 3 - strictly recognize any **INTENTIONAL** contact, and eject any violators.

Pre Game Conference - umpire(s) and managers discuss ground rules.

Also managers must;

- 1 - indicate which, if any, players are unable to play that day.
- 2 - if the **Designated Fielder** rule will be used that day.
- 3 - clarify any other specific NYSSA rules.

1.2 ~ establishes procedures on **Draft Day**.

1.2a Draft Day and Player Trade procedures

1 ~ managers have the option to select a NYSSA member to assist the manager through the draft process. If the manager indicates that this individual will be his **Assistant Manager**, then the manager is restricted from selecting any NYSSA player whose **Draft Rating Score**, places that individual into the 1st and 2nd rounds of the draft.

- 2** ~ upon completion of the draft, managers can conduct player trades, if desired.
- 3** ~ after the draft is completed and managers have left the building, player trades can only be made by consenting managers and all players involved.
- 4** ~ no player trades can be made after July 1st.

5 ~ when a team manager and player agree that the player is to be removed from the team roster, the player cannot reenter NYSSA for the remainder of the season.

1.3 ~ establishes a player **WAIT LIST**.

1.3a the **Wait List** will consist of potential players who;

1 ~ submitted applications after the filing deadline and postmarked no later than July 1st.

2 ~ submitted applications before the January 31st deadline, but were not chosen in the Draft.

1.3b Procedures to use when assigning Wait List players to teams that have roster shortages;

1 ~ **Executive Board** members, will assign **Wait List** players to teams. The players will be assigned to teams, in the date order of need, and according to rating guidelines.

2 ~ Guideline ~ the **Evaluation Score** of the player coming off the **Wait List** cannot exceed 20 points over / below from the player that was removed from the roster. That **Guideline** is considered **Equal Value**.

3 ~ if a team loses a player(s), the team manager **MUST** accept the player(s) of **Equal Value** from the **WAIT LIST**, to bring the team roster to full strength.

4 ~ if multiple applicants fit the **Equal Value** rating, then the application with the earliest filing date will be chosen.

5 ~ Applicants on the Wait List who do not get placed on a team, by July 1st, will receive a complete refund.

1.4 ~ makes decisions to enhance the enjoyment and safety of all NYSSA members.

1.5 ~ establishes game modifications to assist players with physical disabilities.

1.6 ~ requires players to obtain a written doctor's approval to resume sports activities, if the player was removed from the field for medical reasons, or had major surgeries during the season.

1.7 ~ establishes age requirement to play in NYSSA. Current rule states that a player must be no less than 70 years of age, by December 31st of the current season.

1.8 ~ authorizes **only Team Managers** and/or **Assistant Managers** to discuss an umpire's judgement calls or NYSSA / USA rules.

1.9 ~ provides softballs, scorebooks, MLB hats, lineup/position boards, protective screens, black strike mats and alternate home plates, for each team.

1.10 ~ requires players to wear league uniform shirts which includes league jerseys and MLB team hats. **Home teams** wear **WHITE** jerseys. **Visiting teams** wear **BLUE** jerseys. Some players may be sensitive to the summer sun. In those cases, hat variations are permitted.

1.11 ~ Players that are not in proper uniform, will not be allowed to play.

1.12 ~ The Executive Board insists that players be dedicated to their NYSSA team, over any other softball team or other leagues in which they may be affiliated.

The Executive Board has the authority to apply the following disciplinary action against any NYSSA player who participates with any other softball team on any regular scheduled NYSSA game dates;

A ~ First Offense - two (2) consecutive doubleheader dates, immediately after the Executive Board meets, to review the offense.

B ~ Second Offense - four (4) consecutive doubleheader dates, immediately after the Executive Board meets, to review the second offense.

C ~ Third Offense - Suspension of all remaining season games and the post season tournament, immediately after the Executive Board meets to review the third offense.

1.13 ~ Emergency Contact Information ~ team managers are required to establish an emergency contact list for his team. The list is to include the players name, the players contact person and phone number. If an emergency occurs, we need to call the Hicksville, Wantagh or Bellmore Fire Dept. emergency numbers.

2.0 LEAGUE SCHEDULE AND GAME INFORMATION

2.1 ~ League schedule will vary from year to year. The season can commence the 1st or 2nd week in May and can end, as late as the last week in September. A best 2 out of 3 **Post Season Tournament** follows the completion of the regular league schedule. All teams participate in the post season tournament.

2.2 ~ Games are played on Mondays and Wednesdays. Players should arrive at the fields by 9:00am for batting and infield practice. Games start at 10:00am.

2.3 ~ Teams will play doubleheaders on each playing date. Games are seven (7) innings in duration, unless shortened by rain. No games end in a tie. Extra innings are played until a winner is determined.

2.4 ~ Rained out games will be rescheduled.

2.4a ~ procedures to cancel scheduled games due to rain or excessive heat are;

1 ~ the Commissioner and other Board members can cancel games if extreme weather conditions are forecasted 24 hours in advance, or

2 ~ the Commissioner and other Board members can cancel games the morning of scheduled games.

2.5 ~ The home teams will occupy the first base dugout and bat last in **BOTH** games. The home team will supply one (1) new ball and approved back-up balls for each game.

3.0 TEAM OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE AND FORFEIT INFORMATION

3.1~ Team line-ups and defensive positions should be posted on the dugout fence prior to the start of the game.

3.2 ~ Teams may bat up to 15 players. They can field 12 defensive players, consisting of a Pitcher, a Catcher, a maximum of 5 infielders and 5 outfielders. The teams have the option to add an additional outfielder and play with 1 less infielder.

3.3 ~ Game one (1) of the doubleheader will result in a forfeit if a team cannot field a **MINIMUM** of 10 players from their roster by 10:15am.

3.4 ~ Game two (2) of the doubleheader will result in a forfeit if a team cannot field a **MINIMUM** of 10 players from their roster by 10:30am.

3.5 ~ A team starting a game with the **MINIMUM** of 10 players, may add roster players to the bottom of their line-up, **if roster players arrive** after the game has started.

3.6 ~ In an effort to prevent forfeits, the **Board** requires opposing teams to offer one (1) of its players to prevent a forfeit. The player chosen, will be included in the batting order of the team he/she is temporary assigned to. If the addition of this one (1) player does not change the teams forfeit status, then forfeit rules 3.3 and 3.4 will be enforced.

3.7 ~ If a team manager notifies the Board or the opposing team manager, more than 24 hours before a scheduled doubleheader, that his team has to forfeit the scheduled games, the opposing team does not need to show up at the field. The team will receive 2 wins as a result of the forfeit.

3.8 ~ Every player **MUST** be given the opportunity to play one (1) complete game during a doubleheader. A player who is listed on the line-up card, as an extra hitter (EH), fills the complete game requirement. This includes games lasting longer than 7 innings.

3.9 ~ If a player leaves the field because of an **INJURY or FAMILY EMERGENCY** he/she can be replaced by another team member, who is not in the batting order. If this is not possible, the players' turn at bat will be passed over, **WITHOUT PENALTY**. If a player leaves the field under other circumstances, the team will be charged with an **OUT**, when that players turn at bat occurs.

4.0 BATTING/FIELDING/PITCHING

4.1 ~ Each batter comes to the plate with the count, 0 balls and 0 strikes. Four (4) pitches called Ball, constitute a **WALK**. Any combination of three (3) strikes or foul balls, constitutes a **STRIKE OUT**. Managers can **INTENTIONALLY WALK** a batter. In that case, no pitches need to be thrown, and the umpire instructs the batter, or designated courtesy runner, to go to 1st base.

4.2 ~ NO PITCH HITTERS

4.3 ~ SUBSTITUTIONS will be allowed in game 2 of the doubleheader, as long as the players being substituted for, played the entire 1st game. The substitute player must enter the game defensively, not as a pitch hitter.

4.4 ~ The **INFIELD FLY RULE** does **NOT** apply in NYSSA.

4.5 ~ ENCROACHMENT RULE ~ Outfielders may not enter the infield until the batter **MAKES CONTACT** with the ball. If any outfielder violates this rule and becomes **INVOLVED** in a play, the umpire will call **TIME**, award 1st base to the batter and advance all other baserunners, one (1) base. On Field A in **Wantagh**, the far end of the artificial turf, is the beginning of the outfield. The same is true for fields in **Cantiaque Park**. On Fields B and C in **Wantagh**, the furthest painted base from **Home Plate**, is the beginning of the outfield. At **Newbridge Rd** field, the outfield starts at the furthest point of the fences along both lines.

4.6 ~ FIVE (5) RUN RULE ~ Teams are limited to scoring five (5) runs per inning, **WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS:**

A ~ Teams may score an unlimited amount of runs in the seventh (7) inning of the game.

B ~ if a game is tied after (7) innings, each subsequent inning will be treated as the **LAST** inning of the game.

C ~ If a team is behind by fifteen (15) or more runs, the team may score as many runs needed to take them out of the **MERCY RULE**. If the team cannot score enough runs after five (5) innings, the **MERCY RULE** is enforced, and the game is over.

D ~ MERCY RULE ~ If a team is behind by fifteen (15) runs or more, after five (5) **COMPLETE** innings, the **MERCY RULE** is enforced and the game is over.

4.7 ~ In the event of rain, a game will be considered official after five (5) complete innings, or 4 1/2 innings, if the home team was in the lead. Rain out games will be rescheduled and start over from the 1st inning.

4.8 ~ PITCHERS BOX shall be two (2) feet wide, and 50' to 56' from home plate. The pitcher may deliver the ball from anywhere within this area. A pitch that is delivered between a 6' and 12' arc, and hits Home Plate or the Mat, that extends the home plate, will be called a **STRIKE** by the umpire.

Pitch Delivery ~ pitcher must come to a full stop before delivering the pitch. The Pitcher cannot release the ball in a continuous motion as he walks over the rubber. The umpire will give a warning to the pitcher. Continued behavior will result in a non pitch or a "ball" call by the umpire.

4.9 ~ BATS

A ~ Only approved, single wall bats, made of aluminum/aluminum based alloy, with a 2 1/4" barrel diameter, not exceeding 34" in length, and having a 1.20 BPF rating, are permitted. A NYSSA approved sticker will be affixed to the approved bat, by the team manager.

B ~ If a bat does not have any markings at all, managers can not affix a NYSSA approved sticker.

C ~ Any player using a non-approved bat during batting practice, or a league game, will be suspended four (4) games.

5.0 BATTER/RUNNER and COURTESY RUNNERS.

5.1 ~ BATTER/RUNNER

A ~ First Base ~ If a batter hits a ground ball to an infielder, the batter/runner must make every effort to avoid contact with the 1st baseman. The batter/runner must make contact with the **ORANGE** base that is attached to 1st base. If the 1st baseman's effort to catch an inaccurate throw from any fielder results in incidental contact with the batter/runner, the umpire will render a call, using USA Softball of Long Island rules.

B ~ Second Base ~ runners are **NOT** permitted to overrun 2nd base. All players need to **avoid physical contact**. Interference or obstruction calls will be made at the discretion of our USA Softball of Long Island umpires. **Umpires will eject runners who intentionally make physical contact with fielders.**

C ~ Third Base ~ runners are **NOT** permitted to overrun 3rd base. All players need to **avoid physical contact**. Interference or obstruction calls will made at the discretion of our USA Softball of Long Island umpires. **Umpires will eject runners who intentionally make physical contact with fielders.**

*******NO SLIDING PERMITTED - base runners who overrun 2nd or 3rd base can dive back to the base, they cannot slide back to the base, feet first.**

D ~ Home Plate ~ **ALL** plays at home are **FORCE** plays. **NO TAGS** required. Runners **MUST** make contact with the **ALTERNATE HOME PLATE** which is located eight (8) feet to the right of home plate, and in line with the home plate and the 1st base foul line. Any runner taking a direct route along the 3rd base foul line, and interferes with a throw to home plate, or physically touches home plate, will be called **OUT**.

D1 ~ Commitment Line ~ is a line drawn from the 3rd base foul line, across to the dugout fence, 20' before home plate. Runners **TOUCHING** or **CROSSING** the Commitment Line must continue to the **ALTERNATE HOME PLATE**. Runners can return to 3rd base if they have **NOT** touched or crossed the Commitment Line.

5.2 ~ COURTESY RUNNERS

A ~ All roster players can be courtesy runners. Each courtesy runner can run only **ONCE** an inning and is limited to **3 times per game**.

B ~ Courtesy runner must be authorized by team manager or assistant manager. The courtesy runner will enter the game during the time out, before the 1st pitch to the next batter, and must occupy the base reached by the previous batter.

C ~ If a courtesy runner improperly makes contact with a base for a **4th time in a game**, or a **2nd time** in an inning, he/she must be removed from the base before a pitch is made to the next batter. If a pitch is delivered, the courtesy runner will be declared **OUT**, and removed from the base.

D ~ A baserunner who is replaced by a courtesy runner, **CANNOT BECOME A COURTESY RUNNER FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE GAME**.

E ~ A courtesy runner, whose turn at bat comes up while on base, will be called **OUT**. After being removed from the base, the courtesy runner, now the batter, will take his/her turn at bat. If his/her out was the 3rd out of the inning, that player will lead off the next inning.

6.0 GAME MODIFICATIONS

6.1 ~ A batter is awarded a **SINGLE** if he/she ;

A ~ hits a ground ball through the infield and onto the outfield grass/turf or

B ~ hits a line drive or fly ball that lands onto the outfield grass/turf.

A play can be made against the batter if he/she attempts to advance to 2nd base.

6.12 ~ Runners that are in a **Force Situation**, must attempt to advance to the next base.

NEW RULE

6.2 ~ DESIGNATED FIELDER - DF - definition and conditions.

A ~ Is a player who is willing to **ONLY** play a defensive position and not be included in the teams starting lineup. (usually a P or C).

B ~ Team manager must inform the umpire, and the opposing manager, at the **PRE GAME CONFERENCE** that he has a player who is willing to be a **DF**.

C ~ The team must have at least a 12 man starting lineup, not including the **DF**.

D ~ If for **ANY REASON**, the starting lineup is reduced to fewer than 12, during the game, then the **DF** must be inserted into the lineup, to fill the vacant spot in the batting order.

***** **THE ABOVE 2026 RULES OF PLAY HAVE BEEN VOTED UPON AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. THESE RULES CANNOT BE CHANGED OR AMENDED IN ANY WAY, FOR THE 2026 SEASON.** *****

