

**NORTHAMPTON PARKS AND RECREATION
MEN'S SLOW-PITCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE
2022 RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. The league shall be known as the Northampton Men's Slow-Pitch Softball League.
2. The league shall be under the jurisdiction of the Northampton Parks and Recreation Commission and shall be under the direction of the Director of Parks and Recreation and/or their designee.
3. Players will compete at their own risk. The Parks and Recreation Commission is not responsible for injuries.
4. All bats must be on the approved bat list. If a bat is not on the list and you think it meets the criteria, you can ask that it be added to the list.
5. Games are played at Maines Field.
6. The Home Run Rule is set for 5 per game. Any home run hit after this will result in an out and includes extra innings. Players are responsible for getting their team's homerun balls and bringing them back to the umpire.
7. A player must be at least 16 years old to play.
8. ***Lightning Policy: Adopted May 7, 2012:***
 - a. **Northampton Parks and Recreation Commission Lightning Policy:** Thunder or lightning necessitates that all outdoor practices and competitions be suspended. Before a practice/game begins, take a look around and have a plan for shelter prior to the start of any contest. When thunder is heard or when lightning is seen, the following procedures must be executed:
 - Suspend play and direct participants to the previously identified shelter, such a building normally occupied by the public or a vehicle with a solid metal top (e.g. bus, van, and car).
 - Do not permit people to stand under or near a tree and have all stay away from poles, light towers, antennas, towers and underground watering systems.
 - After thunder and/or lightning have left the area, wait 30 minutes after the last boom is heard or strike is seen before resuming play or competition.
9. ***Player Eligibility: Adopted as of April 1, 1997 (revised August, 2002):***
 - a. **Residents** - Anybody whose primary residence is in or and individual who owns property in Northampton, Florence or Leeds is considered a resident. Players who are trying to meet this requirement **must** have their residence or property listed on the roster so it can be confirmed. Teams that misrepresent addresses to meet the residency requirement may be dropped from the league.
 - b. **Non-Resident** – Anybody who does not live or own property in Northampton, Florence or Leeds. Non-residents must pay and additional \$10.00 each.
 - c. **Proof of residency for all new players must be submitted with your roster.** Copies, with all copied on the least amount of pages possible, are required. All must be submitted together. Proof may consist of a copy of a pay stub, license or a recent bill, for example. Information must be current. Official Personnel Director letters are only accepted as a proof letter from a business. Phone book listings must list the full name. City Census will also be checked to verify addresses.
 - d. **A maximum of \$100.00 per team in non-resident fees.**

- e. Proof of eligibility must be provided to the Parks and Recreation Department. Use of an ineligible player will result in that team's forfeit of all game played with the player in question. Any further penalties will be at the discretion of Northampton Parks and Recreation and could result in the team's suspension from further play. No money will be refunded.
 - f. **Teams must submit requests regarding eligibility, which will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Department Staff.** The Parks and Recreation Department may decide the player is "too talented" for the level of competition in the division and reserves the right to remove the player from the roster. In this case, any non-resident fees involved will be refunded.
10. Each team must have a coach or manager who may also be listed as a player. This person will be responsible for submitting team rosters and receiving correspondence from the league coordinator.
 11. Each roster must be submitted with a complete list of all registered players who have signed that they agree and will abide by the guidelines on the player conduct and safety form. Players who are on the roster and have not signed this form will not be allowed to play in the league until they do so. Entire teams will not be able to play until all players have signed this form. Any additions must be made at the Parks & Recreation Department and not at the field.
 12. In the event there is not an "A" division, there will be a maximum of three "A" division ability players on the field at a time. The Northampton Parks and Recreation Department reserved the right to decide if a player is "too talented" for the level of competition in the division and reserved the right to remove the player from the roster.
 13. Each team must have at least 12 players listed on the roster.
 14. Copies of official rosters will be emailed to team managers when games begin and after the completion of the add/drop period. These rosters will also be available in the men's softball binder that is located in the equipment box at Maines Field.
 15. Teams can pick up players not on their roster to avoid a forfeit if the opposing team manager is ok with the change. The umpire must be notified of the agreement between both managers to be an official game prior to the start of the game. Teams are only allowed to pick up players until they have 9 players.
 16. Players may not be listed on more than one roster or play in more than one division. Players found listed on more than one roster must play on the team they first played for and/or signed player conduct form with first. Players who are found playing on more than one team will be ejected from the league and all games played with that player will be forfeited by the team utilizing that player.
 17. **Roster Changes:** Roster changes may be made until Friday, June 3 at 4:00p.m. After this date, rosters will be frozen for the remainder of the season.
 - a. To add a player to the roster, the manager must present, in writing, the name and address of the new player, as well as proof of residency or a non-resident fee of \$10.00 to the Recreation Department at least 24 hours prior to the team's next game. Each new player must also sign that they have read and understand the player conduct policy before participating in any game. **Non-residents fees cannot be transferred and are non-refundable after the season starts.**
 - b. All roster changes must be made through the league director at the Parks and Recreation Office. Roster changes will not be accepted at the field.

- c. If an added player is found to be “too talented” for the level of competition, the Parks and Recreation Department reserved the right to removed him/her from the roster. Any fees involved will be refunded.
18. All games shall be played under the rules of the Hampshire Independent Umpires Association (IUA), with the exceptions as stipulated in these rules and regulations.
 - a. A team must have 9 players to start a game. A player who arrives late must enter the game immediately and be placed 10th in the batting order.
 - b. If an injury occurs to a player during the game, the game may continue with 9/10. The lineup will remain unchanged except for the omission of the injured player from the batting order.
 - c. After 4 ½ or 5 innings, a team with a 12 run lead will be declared the winner with no further action to be taken.
 - d. **Metal Spikes are not permitted.** Any player found wearing metal spikes will be immediately ejected from the game.
 - e. The additional hitter (AH) can be used at the discretion of the coaches as the 11th batter placed anywhere in the lineup. The AH’s must be decided before the first pitch. The batting order must remain constant. However, any 10 of the 11 players can take a defensive position throughout the game.
 - f. All divisions will play under the IUA rule of two strikes for an out and three balls for a walk.
 - g. **Courtesy Runner:** There can be one courtesy runner per inning for injured players only. If the hitter takes an extra base (i.e. goes past first base), then a courtesy runner is not allowed to substitute for the hitter. If a hitter takes a substitute runner at second base due to injury, the hitter is ineligible for re-entry into the game. The courtesy runner must be the last player to make an out. If a runner gets hurt after the courtesy runner has already been used, another courtesy runner may be used with a ghost out being imposed (again the runner would be the last out). Teams are always allowed to use substitutes.
 - h. The courtesy runner must be the last player of the same gender to make an out (male runs for a male; female runs for a female). If someone gets injured during the game and the team is already using their courtesy runner and there are no substitutes, the team will not be forced to forfeit, but rather put the newly injured person as an extra hitter or the catcher. If a runner gets hurt after the courtesy runner has already been used, another courtesy runner may be used but a ghost out will be imposed (again the runner would be the last out). Teams are always allowed to use a substitute.
 - i. If the length of a game reaches 90 minutes, the teams will finish the inning they are playing and the game will be considered complete.
19. **Game Time Limit:** There is a 1.25 hour time limit on games. No innings will start AFTER the 1.25 hour time limit, however you can finish the inning that you are in. There will be no game time limits in the playoff round.
20. **Open Wound Rule:** No player will be allowed to continue playing with an open wound until the bleeding has been stopped, cleaned and covered. To avoid problems, all teams should carry a first aid kit as part of their equipment. An umpire will give reasonable time to stop the bleeding and cover the wound before a substitute is required.
21. **Re-Entry:** Any of the starting players may withdraw and re-enter once, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he/she is in the lineup. The pitcher is governed by the provisions in the USSSA Official rule book. A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.

22. All players, coaches and fans are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Any player, manager or fan who harasses or abuses a game official or another player is subject to the penalties outlined in the Parks and Recreation Department's policy statement regarding verbal and physical abuse.
- a. Managers are expected to keep team players in control at all times. It is the manager's responsibility to encourage team members to take responsibility for their actions and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. In an effort to promote team sportsmanship and reduce unsportsmanlike behavior, if a player is ejected from a game, the team manager is automatically ejected as well. Both are subject to the fines and penalties outlined below.
 - In line with other league policies, a \$10.00 (\$15.00 for non-residents) fine is assessed to any player that is ejected from the game. The fine must be paid in cash at the Parks and Recreation Office before the player is eligible to play again. There is also a one game suspension as outlined in the player conduct regulations. The fine increases by \$10.00 each incident.
23. The first game on weekdays will begin at 6:00 PM. Forfeit time is 6:10 PM. A team must have 9 players to begin play. The second and third games will begin at 7:00 PM and 8:00 PM respectively.
- a. No inning may begin after 10:00 PM. There are no suspended games. The game will be called at the conclusion of the last complete inning.
24. The home team will keep the official scorebook. A scorekeeper must be provided by the home team.
25. The winning team manager is responsible for calling or emailing the Parks and Recreation Department with the score the following day.
26. There will be no infield practice before games.
27. **FORFEITS:**
- a. Teams that forfeit three games during the course of the season will be dropped from the league and no money will be refunded.
 - b. A forfeit caused by an injury to a player (or players) during a game will be recorded only as a loss and will not apply to the three game forfeit rule.
 - c. If a team knows in advance that a game has to be forfeited, and the Parks and Recreation Department is notified at least 24 hours in advance (by Friday for a Sunday or **Monday game**), the game will be recorded as a loss, rather than a forfeit.
28. The DPW Parks and Recreation Division determines if fields are in playing condition. In the event of inclement weather, an announcement of the cancellations may be made. Decisions to cancel games will not be made before 3:30 PM on weekdays and 8:00 AM on Sundays. For cancellation information, call the Parks and Recreation Department's cancellation hotline at 413-587-1044 or check our website at www.northamptonma.gov/recreation.
29. In the event that games are cancelled because of poor conditions, no team will be allowed on the field. Any team found in violation of this rule will be suspended from further play and no money will be refunded.
30. Once games are underway, the game umpire will make all decisions concerning the condition of the playing surface.

31. Games that are postponed because of inclement weather will be played where space allows on Sundays or at the conclusion of the season. Most rained out games will be rescheduled within a week of the originally scheduled game.
32. One umpire will be scheduled for regular season games. Two umpires will be assigned to the championship game of the playoffs.
33. Umpires have consent prior to the start of the game to check any bat that a team will use during the game. All game bats must be checked before used.
34. The league will supply a new game ball for each game (52 Core/300 Compression). The home team will supply a good second ball. The home team will take both balls at the conclusion of the game (the official balls of play must be Worth 52 Core/300 Compression).
35. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted at any of the playing areas. Games will be forfeited if alcoholic beverages are found in the playing area.
36. All teams are responsible for their members' conduct arriving at, during and leaving the game. Any team members found driving in an unsafe manner at any of the playing fields will be suspended from the league. Maines Field closes at 10:00 PM. Team members and spectators must vacate by then or immediately following the conclusion of the game.
37. All protests dealing with a playing rule of the IUA must be made to the home plate umpire before the next pitch to thrown and must be followed by a written protest within 48 hours to the Parks and Recreation Office.
38. Protests dealing with special league rules must be filed in writing within forty-eight hours to the Parks and Recreation Office. Protests of eligibility of player may be filed at the Parks and Recreation Department within forty-eight hours.
39. If there is no umpire at the field, the game will be rescheduled unless BOTH team managers agree that the game was official. The Parks and Recreation Department must hear from both managers that they want to count the game.
40. Any action involving the league that is not covered by these rules and regulations shall be handled by the Director of Parks and Recreation, Parks and Recreation Supervisor and/or the Parks and Recreation Commission.
41. At all league meetings, each team will be represented by the team manager, or one person acting in his/her place. All others will be asked to leave unless specifically invited to a particular meeting.
42. Due to abuses to game officials, any player observed, suspected of or leaving the playing area to consume alcoholic beverages will be warned and/or ejected from the game. Any player who refuses to leave the field or continues to abuse a game official will cause the forfeiture of the game for his or her team.
43. **All players must have played in at least four games to be eligible for the playoffs.**
44. Teams must supply their own equipment (i.e. bats, catcher's masks, gloves, etc.).

45. The higher seeded team at the end of regular season will be the home team throughout playoff games.
46. In the case of a tie in the standings between two or more teams at the end of the season, these are the order of the tie breakers that will be used
 - a. **Head to Head Games:** The team with the most wins against the team they are tied with will be the higher seed.
 - b. **Coin Flip:** If two teams have the same amount of wins and losses against each other, a coin flip will be used to determine the higher seed
 - c. **Three Way Tie:** If three teams are tied in head to head wins, a random order generator will be used to determine the seeding.
47. Teams are not allowed to schedule practices on Maines Field. REF is available during the season to schedule practice on, contact the Parks and Recreation Department. Do not practice on youth fields or baseball fields in the City. Any team found in violation may be dropped from the league with no money refunded.

S A F E T Y R E G U L A T I O N S

In playing organized sports, the participant must be aware of any and all risks to personal injury. The game of softball carries with it some obstacles that can cause serious injury. Other players, equipment, fences, boundaries, benches, etc. all pose potential areas of injury.

Remember this is a recreational sport. Keep your body under control to avoid collisions. Be aware of all ground rules. Keep all equipment away from playing areas and be considerate of the safety needs of you and your co-participants.

The Parks and Recreation Department strongly recommends the use of face masks for catchers. Team managers should ask all potential catchers if they would like to wear a mask. If the answer is yes, it is the responsibility of the team/manager to purchase one. Failure to wear one could cause serious injury and/or death.

Please be aware that the DPW's Parks and Recreation Division maintains the fields. Report all maintenance problems or any unsafe field conditions to us at 413-587-1040 and we will contact the DPW.

Northampton Parks and Recreation

100A Bridge Road
Florence, MA 01062

Phone: 413-587-1040

Cancellation Line: 413-587-1044

Email: recreation@northamptonma.gov

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM