

Red River Softball Association – 2026 Rules and Regulations

A. **PURPOSE** – The purpose of this document is to provide general rules for all local leagues participating with the Red River Softball Association (RRSA).

B. **MISSION STATEMENT** – RRSA wishes to provide the opportunity for all girls that wish to play fast pitch softball a recreational association in which to do so. We hope to positively influence and develop the talents of all participants. RRSA utilizes the spirit of volunteerism to provide a player- centered organization. We wish to promote the sport of girls fastpitch softball through recreational play while providing good-spirited and fair competition.

C. **GOVERNING BODY** – The governing body for RRSA will be comprised of the Executive Board holding the following seats: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and League Rules official. These members will be elected by the respective Commissioners from the towns that are in the league. The RRSA Executive Board will have full authority and responsibility for the administration of the RRSA Rules and Regulations. RRSA will play softball according to NFHS, along with the attached local league amended rules.

D. **DEFINITIONS** –

1. **Eligible Player** – Girls are eligible players within their local league who:

- a. Players must attend the school for which team they play for. If they attend a non-public school, they must play for the town that they live in.
- b. Have completed the necessary local league registration requirements

NOTE: any other situation must be presented to RRSA for review of eligibility.

2. **Time Limit** – No new inning shall be started after the specified time limit has expired. Play is considered to begin when the umpire concludes the pre-game meeting with the coaches or declares “PLAY BALL”. The next inning shall be considered as started the instant the last out is made in the preceding inning. An inning in progress when time expires must be completed unless the run differential is greater than the established inning run limit, in which case the game will be declared over. At any point after time expires, and the home team takes the lead in the bottom of the inning, the game is over. The umpire’s countdown timer will be the official timepiece. (This will need to be noted at the plate meeting to the coaches and score keeper).

3. **Defensive Positions** – All players must play in normal defensive positions. The tenth player shall be the fourth outfielder.

4. **Continuous Batting Order** – All girls present for a game shall be in the batting order with each girl taking a regular turn at bat. (See 12u/15u rules for other exceptions during tournament play.)

- a. An exemption to this rule will be any girl who meets all of the following:
 - i. The girl has a physical condition that does not permit her to bat.
 - ii. A physician provides a written waiver stating why she cannot bat.
 - iii. A copy of the signed waiver is on file with RRSA.

b. Under this rule, no team will be penalized in any way for fielding a player who meets all of the above criteria.

5. **Malicious Contact** – Malicious contact by a player will be determined as a judgment call by the officiating umpires and is not debatable.

- a. Baserunner MUST attempt to slide into home plate when a play is eminent to avoid dangerous contact. Runner will be declared OUT by the home plate umpire if, in their judgement, they did not attempt to slide.

6. **RRSA Inning Ending Run Rule** –

- a. 6U – 5 run limit
- b. 8U/10U – 5 run limit
- c. 12U/15U – 5 run limit

7. **RRSA Game Ending Run Rule** –

- a. 6U – 10 runs after 4th
- b. 8U – 10 runs after 4th, or 5th inning
- c. 10U/12U/15U – 15 runs after 3rd, 12 after 4th, or 8 after 5th

8. **Pitcher’s Circle** – For all age divisions, a circle with an eight (8) foot radius shall be drawn around the forty-foot (40’) pitcher’s plate with the plate as the center of the circle.

9. **Substitutions** – Free substitutions are allowed at the end of any inning.

10. **Thrown Bat** –

- a. If the batter “throws” their bat during or after their swing, the following penalties will be enforced. (First offence by any player will result in verbal warning to entire team by home plate umpire. Second offence will result in the batter being declared out by the home plate umpire.) This is a judgement call by the umpire and is NOT

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debatable.

E. ORGANIZATION OF TEAMS –

1. **LEAGUES** – Leagues shall be formed of teams comprised of players within their specified league boundaries (school districts).
2. **AGE DIVISIONS** – Age of player on 8/31 of the prior calendar year will determine the player's age division eligibility. In 6U the minimum age for eligibility is 4 as of September 1 of the prior year. In 15U the maximum age is 15 and the player must remain 15 through June 1st of the current season. A player may play up ONE age division, but may not play in a lower age division. The age division in which a player is drafted is the only age division in which the player will be eligible for all-star participation. Age divisions are as follows:
 - a. 6U
 - b. 8U
 - c. 10U
 - d. 12U
 - e. 15U

The commissioner is required to have and hold all birth certificates for each player signed up to play and must provide to the board at any time the request is made to see it.

3. **TEAM ORGANIZATION** – Each league will be responsible for creating their teams and reporting them to RRSA. Team formation must follow RRSA Draft Rules.

4. **BORROWING PLAYERS** – Teams may borrow players only under the following conditions:

- a. The borrowed player must come from the age division lower than the borrowing team. If a player is “playing up”, that is the age division they are considered.
- b. A team may only borrow a player if they have less than nine players available from their regular team to play.
- c. The borrowed player can play any position desired by the coach.
- d. The borrowed player may bat anywhere in the line-up.

- e. Borrowing of players is not allowed in the end of season nor all-star tournaments.

F. DRAFT RULES –

- a. A head coach and assistant coach will be designated for each team before the draft begins.
- b. The head coach's child along with (1) one assistant coach's child will be pulled from the draft and placed on the team's roster.
- c. Siblings playing in the same age division will be placed on the same team unless otherwise requested by parents. Once the first sibling is picked by a team, the other sibling will automatically be placed on the same team. The sibling will be that team's last pick in her age group.
- d. No relationships or reasons other than those stated above will be allowed to automatically place any child on a specific team. Each coach will have an equal opportunity to draft all players. Parents cannot request that a player be placed on a particular coach's team, nor can they prohibit a coach from drafting their child.
- e. The draft will be held each softball season. NO CORE GROUP OF PLAYERS WILL BE HELD OVER FROM THE PREVIOUS SEASON.
- f. The draft order will be determined by a coin flip or blind draw.
- g. In 6U, 8U, and 10U the draft must go by age. It must go from oldest first to youngest.
- h. In 12U, and 15U there is no specific age order that the draft must go.
- i. A commissioner from a neighboring town MUST be present and active in running the draft for the town in which the draft is being held.
- j. In a two-team draft, the first team will pick one player, the second team will pick two players, and each team will subsequently pick two players at a time until all players are picked.
- k. In a three-team draft, the first team will pick one player, the second team will pick one player, and the third team will pick two players. The draft will then proceed in reverse order until all players are picked.
- l. Once the draft is complete, each head coach and commissioner will sign the draft sheet. All draft sheets shall be turned into the RRSA Board and will be made available in an electronic means for each town comprising RRSA.

- m. At no time will trading of players be allowed for any reason.

G. PLAYER PARTICIPATION – All players must play at

least two full innings in the field per game. (There is no minimum play time for players during the EOS and Allstar tournaments for 12U, or 15U. Please see age specific rules for clarification)

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A coach's failure to comply with this rule may result in a two (2) game suspension. Players may be benched for disciplinary reasons, but this must be determined based on local league disciplinary action policies, and the opposing team must be made aware of the reason the player is benched.

H. COACHES –

1. Eligible coaches will be assigned to a team by the league Commissioner.
2. To be considered eligible, the coach must have a background check completed at the expense of the town that they are to coach in. The commissioner will be responsible for providing this document if requested by the league.
3. Each team should have one (1) head coach and a minimum of one (1) assistant coach.
4. The Commissioner for each league may suspend a coach, pending a review by the RRSA Board for action or misconduct (**conduct unbecoming**) which in his/her judgment is not in the best interest of the program or does not follow the intent or guidelines of the Rules and Regulations of this document. The review by the RRSA Board must occur before the team's next scheduled game.
5. Any coach ejected from a game by an umpire will be suspended for one (1) game. The coach may also be required to appear before the RRSA Board for a review of the matter. If a coach is ejected a second time, within the same season, the coach will be suspended for the remainder of the season and will be required to appear before the RRSA Board for a review of the matter.
6. Only the HEAD coach is permitted to address the umpire at any point in the game. If assistant coach attempts to address the umpire regarding a play, they Can be ejected from the game if deemed necessary by the umpire.
7. Consequences for cheating in any way are as follows: First offense- the coach will be suspended for one year from head coaching in the league. Second offense- the coach will be banned from coaching anywhere in the league for life.

I. EQUIPMENT –

- a. Only official Fast Pitch softball bats may be used during a game.
- b. Any altered ball will be considered illegal. (ASA Rule 7.6.B)
- c. Chin straps and face masks are required for batting helmets. (must be worn at ALL times while on the field during play. See equipment rule in NFHS for penalties.
- d. Throat protectors are required for catchers. The new hockey style masks are sufficient if the player's throat is covered.
- e. The home team will be responsible for providing the game ball(s).
- f. Player uniforms will be provided by each individual league.
- g. No metal spikes or cleats are allowed. Soft rubber or plastic cleats are permissible.
- h. Jewelry will not be allowed on the playing field.
- i. All players that are in the squatted position to warm up pitchers whether on or off the field MUST wear a facemask. There is NO exception to this rule.

J. WEATHER AND RESCHEDULING –

1. The time limit to call a game is one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes before the start of the game. The home team is responsible for calling a game and rescheduling that game. If the visiting team has an open field and play is viable, the game must be played at the visiting town.
2. Rainouts/reschedules must be played in the same week (7) seven days. (**if two attempts are made by the town to reschedule and the opposing team does not respond, the game will be entered as a forfeit for the opposing team**)
3. Games must be rescheduled even if you have to go to the visiting town. The team listed as home on the schedule will be the home team, no matter what town the game is played in. The town where the game is held is responsible for getting and paying for umpires unless the two local commissioners have made prior arrangements.
4. Do not reschedule a game for a school function on short notice. Check your schedules as soon as you get them and try to reschedule those dates as early as possible. Also, do not reschedule unless ABSOLUTELY necessary. If you have enough players (seven), play the game. Remember that a coach does not have to agree to reschedule a game unless it is weather related.

K. GAME SETTING –

1. Ten (10) minutes prior to the start of any game, both teams must complete a lineup, including substitutes, and exchange them with the opposing team and umpire

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2. Only team members and officially designated coaches and dugout assistants should occupy the dugout during the game.
3. All catchers must wear a catcher's mask/helmet, chest protector, shin guards, and throat protector when in position to receive a pitch during any practice, scrimmage, or game.
4. All offensive players outside the dugout must wear a batter's helmet. Only one (1) on-deck batter is allowed.
5. The home team will provide the official designated softball for their age division.
6. The home team will provide an official scorekeeper. The scorekeeper can be any person other than a base coach.
7. Both score books should be signed by the opposing team's coach and the home team book must be signed by the umpire. Game sheets will not be required.
8. Each team is responsible for ensuring that their dugout area is clean prior to leaving the field.

L. CONDUCT –

1. Only the head coach will be permitted to address the umpire regarding any call or protest. In the event a coach needs to address the umpire, he/she must call time and ask for permission to address the official. Screaming or yelling at officials or other coaches will not be tolerated.
2. Coaches will be held responsible for any misconduct on the part of their team members, coaches, spectators, and parents. This includes any foul or abusive language and/or negative comments directed toward umpires, opposing coaches, opposing team members, or opposing spectators.
3. Any player, coach, or parent/spectator ejected from a game must leave the park within 60 seconds or his/her team will forfeit. Any player, coach, or parent/spectator ejected from a game shall also be suspended from their team's next game.
4. Rulebooks will not be allowed onto the field without the expressed request from the home plate umpire. If the coach, a player, or spectator enters the field of play with a rulebook at anytime without the consent of the home plate umpire, it will result in immediate ejection from the game. If done between games, the offending person will be suspended for the next scheduled game. NO EXCEPTIONS
5. No video review or cell phone video is permitted for the purposes of changing an umpire's call. The Umpire has final judgement on any call on the field.

- ## M. BLOOD RULE –
- A player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on his/her 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 that is considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgment. Uniform rule violations will not be enforced if a uniform change is required. The umpire shall:
- a. Stop the game and allow treatment if the injured player would affect the continuation of the game.
 - b. Immediately call a coach, trainer, or other authorized person to the injured player.
 - c. Apply the rules of the game regarding substitution, short-handed player, and re-entry if necessary. Extra time is NOT added to the game time limit.

- ## N. FORFEITURE OF GAME –
- A forfeit shall be declared in the event of a team not being on the field with the minimum number of players (7) and ready to play within five (5) minutes after the scheduled game time or play time based on preceding games. (An out will be recorded for each missing player less than 9. Example: With 8 players, the offense must take an out for the 9th player. With 7 players, the offense must take an out for both the 8th player and 9th player in the lineup.) Play will not continue with less than seven (7) players. The goal is to play ball!

- ## O. TIE GAMES –
- Regular season games may end in a tie.

1. Once regular play has ended in a tie, Modified ITB rules will be in effect. The away team will place their last three completed outs on base as baserunners. Bases will be loaded with 1 out. The next batter due up will bat. Normal play will resume like this for one full inning. Both away team and home team will get this opportunity to break the tie. If the game is still tied after the completion of one full inning of ITB. The game will be considered a tie.
2. During tournament play, no game may end in a tie. Play will continue normally until one team prevails.

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- P. **KEEPING OF RECORDS**—it is the responsibility of the town commissioner to keep records of wins/losses for each team in that town for the purpose of selecting the coach for the all star team. The head coach of the team will be determined by winning percentage during the regular season. If there is a tie in the regular season, the team that advanced the farthest in the EOS will be the head coach. There **MUST** be a representative from teams in one town from a specific age group involved in coaching allstars. This should aid in selecting players in an equitable fashion. Each commissioner should upload scores to quickscores.com/rrsa by noon of the following day after games.
- Q. **PROTESTS** –
- a. There will be a protest committee comprised of two executive board members for each End of Season Tournament and All-Star Tournament.
 - b. There will be no protests for regular season games or Preseason tournament.
 - c. During regular season play, if there is a question about a rule, the coach or the umpire is to contact the UIC (Umpire in Charge) for the league.
- R. **Umpires** –
1. It is the sole responsibility of the umpire to control the game in a manner that is considered to be safe, fair, and consistent with the rules of NFHS and RRSA. If Umpire misconduct is observed, this must be reported to the town commissioner for review by the RRSA.
 2. ALL umpires that officiate in RRSA sanctioned events **MUST** be certified and have a card stating so by NFHS. This includes a background check by NFHS,