

**ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

1. All teams must have a designated Team Manager who is responsible for the following:
  - Collect all fees and submit a valid roster or online registration by the registration deadline.
  - Inform team members of all rules, regulations and communications provided by the Department of Parks and Recreation.
  - Collect and submit team lineup and scorecards as necessary.
  - Ensure players deposit all trash and recyclables in provided receptacle and team vacates the dugout area in a timely manner to keep games on schedule.
  - All rosters/scorecards **MUST** be signed by team manager and umpires.
  - The Parks Department reserves the right to update these Rules & Guidelines at any time. All vendors will be made aware of any changes in writing within 7 days.
2. All teams must register with at least ten (10) players. Each player must register online providing home address, telephone number, date of birth, resident/non-resident status, and agree to all waivers.
3. **Falsified Information:** Any registration or roster containing falsified information regarding residency of players is illegal and may result in that team or player losing its position in the Portage leagues. An illegal registration or roster detected prior to the start of the season may immediately eliminate that team or player, without refund, from the league; and its team position may be awarded to the next eligible new team. Any player registration or line-up discovered to be illegal after the season begins will result in a \$20 violation fee and possible suspension. ***Registrations and rosters will be checked.***
4. League titles will be determined by the best overall record for the 12-game season. All ties for division or league title will be settled by **1) head-to-head records or/then 2) total runs scored in games between tied teams.**
5. The Adult Softball Coordinator and Umpire Coordinator have authority to enforce Parks and Recreation Department rules, regulations and policies. Parks and Recreation staff have the right to make decisions in the best interest of the recreation softball program, safety of participants and protection of park property.
6. Leagues containing multiple divisions will be evaluated after the first 6 games and may be placed in a higher or lower division for the second half of the season. Placement changes will be limited to those necessary and made at the discretion of parks administrative staff. Many factors are considered during the evaluation process with the goal of bridging the gap between levels of play.

**PARK RULES**

All individual team members and spectators are expected to observe and comply with all park rules to avoid ejection, forfeits, suspensions and civil infraction citations. **Please review ALL Park rules prior to play.**

The following is prohibited in the dug outs:

- Smoking/vaping (including any marijuana products.)
- Drinking
- Children and/or dogs
- Loud and/or offensive music

**-Profanity is not allowed at any time in the parks.**

**Alcohol Policy-** Prohibited in Ramona Park. At South Westnedge Park, alcohol may be consumed after a game only in grass areas. Alcohol is prohibited in parking lots, bleachers and bench areas. **All cans/bottles must be disposed of properly by each team after each game. Failure to do so will result in a \$20 fine. To prevent being charged a \$20 fine from another team's poor choices, note the condition of your bleachers and dugout before playing with a picture that can be sent to [myports@portagemi.gov](mailto:myports@portagemi.gov).**

**PLAYER ELIGIBILITY** (\$20 violation fee applies, fee due prior to the next scheduled game)

1. There will be a maximum of twenty (20) players per team.
2. An ineligible player shall be defined as indicated below:
  - a player not meeting the minimum age requirement (15 years old as of April 27<sup>th</sup> of the current year)
  - a player who does not register or sign the roster or sub card or pay the appropriate fee prior to playing
  - a player who cannot prove identity when requested by an umpire or other league official
  - a player who has been removed from a roster or suspended for that game

If a player is determined to be ineligible, both the player and manager may be suspended for at least one calendar year and the offending team may forfeit all previous games and claims to league or division championships. The team may also be prohibited from entering the league the following year.

**Reminder: A player may play on multiple teams within the same division of play, on separate nights, if listed on official roster.**

Example: A male may play on more than one Men's or Co-Ed team as long as each team plays on different days of the week. Likewise, a female may play on a two different Co-Ed teams if on separate nights.

### SUBSTITUTIONS AND ROSTER ADDITIONS

1. Roster additions can be made online through July 3. The player must register with the team online. Roster additions are only allowed up to the 20 player limit. Team Managers may request to remove a player from the team roster with approval by the Softball Coordinator. The only exception to added players after the deadline is injury. **Injured player must provide valid doctor's note before the replacement is allowed to play.**
2. SUBSTITUTION PLAYERS--(2) "SUB CARD's" will be available to each team to assist in cases of unexpected substitution needs. A SUB CARD is good for a **single game player substitution** and must be filled out, signed by the substitute player and submitted to the Umpire prior to play. They are indicated on the game day roster with a 'S' next to their name. Subs must meet all eligibility guidelines and **if playing additional games, he/she must sign the official roster in the Parks office prior to further play.** Only 2 SUB CARDS are permitted / issued per team and cannot be used following the June 22 roster addition deadline.
3. PICK UP PLAYERS--If a team has less than 10 players to start a game, that team may obtain a substitute from a currently rostered player in the same division. This player is only permitted as a sub when the requesting team has less than 10 players to start the game. This substituting player may sub up to 3 times per season for other teams within their division and must be included on the lineup card. They are indicated on the game day roster with a 'P' next to their name.

### PLAYING RULES

1. 2020 Official Rules of Amateur Softball Association of America shall govern all play except when superseded by local league rules. ASA approved game balls are provided for all regular league and tournament games. **Team managers and participating players are responsible for using ASA approved bats in all regular league and tournament play.**
2. Metal spikes are not permitted in the Portage Slow-Pitch Leagues.
3. The starting time of early games will be 6:15 p.m. A five-minute grace period shall be allowed only for the first game at which time eight players must be ready to play. Game time is forfeit time for late games. No inning shall begin after one hour and twenty minutes from the start of the game. The umpires should use their discretion on extending the time limit for close games and should complete all tie games when daylight permits. Infield practice shall be allowed only at the discretion of the umpires.
4. To provide the opportunity for more complete games, all leagues will use the 1 ball/1 strike rule and receive a "free" foul ball after two strikes.
5. **Mercy Rule:** If a team leads by 20 runs or more after 3 innings, 15 runs or more after 4 innings, or 10 runs or more after 5 innings, the game is ruled complete.
6. Teams must provide lineups prior to the start of the game. The lineup will be collected by the home team and kept with scorecard; however, both teams should keep accurate records and score for protest purposes. It is the responsibility of each manager to sign the scorecard and lineup as protests will not be honored unless signed. **Both teams should make sure the score is correct after each inning, with the umpire.**
7. A team may start or continue with as few as eight (8) players. A team unable to field eight (8) players at game time or any time thereafter will forfeit that game. If a team starting with eight (8) players has a ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) player arrive, he/she may take their position on the field at that time and must bat in the #9 batting position. Subsequent arrivals will bat in the #10, #11, #12, etc. batting positions.

Should a player be removed from the game due to an ejection and no legal substitute is available, that player will be declared **out** at that time and that position will remain an **out** when it next comes to bat.

8. Teams may choose to use the "open-ended batting order" prior to each game and must declare they are using the open or closed order at the pre-game meeting with the umpire and opposing coach. Once declared, they must use it for the entire game. Both teams do not have to use the open-ended order.

**Definition of Open-Ending Batting Order**

All players present for a game, bat, regardless if they play in the field or not. If 14 players are at a game, all bat in order, one through fourteen. Substitutions in the field are unlimited. If another team member arrives late, that player will bat in the last position in the order. Example: if 14 players start the game and another arrives late, that player bats number 15. (They cannot be inserted into the number 4 batting position.)

If a player is injured during the game and cannot bat, the batting order closes automatically without penalty. If a player on a team using the open-ended order leaves the park prior to the completion of the game, the batting order may be closed and no out will occur.

9. The over-the-fence home run rule for Men's, Co-Ed and Church recreational level leagues: 3 home runs and 1-up limit per gender. For Men's and Co-Ed Division 1 level leagues: 3 home runs and 1 up limit per gender. Additional home runs do not count and will ruled an out for all leagues.
10. A courtesy runner may be used once per inning for a batter reaching base.

**UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT, EJECTIONS, SUSPENSIONS & FORFEITS**

(\$20 violation fee applies, fee due prior to the next scheduled game)

1. The umpires have the authority to eject any player, coach or manager from a game for what they deem unsportsmanlike conduct including profanity. Any player ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct or profanity is suspended for the next schedule game, however, that player may remain on the bench unless the unsportsmanlike conduct or profanity continues at which time the player and manager will be ejected from the park. Any player ejected for a flagrant act will be ejected from the park and will be subject to a hearing with the Parks and Recreation Department staff.
2. Two ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct during the current season will result in the player being suspended from the Portage softball leagues for one calendar year.
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct from a team or its spectators may result in a game forfeiture. Verbal abuse at any time within the park by a team or its spectators will result in removal from the park and/or suspension. **It is the responsibility of the team manager, and players to restrain their team members or spectators from abusing the umpires, opposing players or opposing spectators.**
4. Physical violence or **verbal threats of violence** between players or team members shall result in immediate suspension until a disciplinary hearing is held. It will be the suspended individual's responsibility to schedule a hearing with the Parks and Recreation Department. The department will consider each case individually and will take the appropriate disciplinary action following a hearing. Penalties may range from several games to permanent suspension from Portage softball leagues.
5. Physical contact, **verbal threat of violence** or any actions that could cause injury to an umpire may result in automatic suspension for the current season and following season and, if conditions warrant, the offending player may be permanently suspended from playing in Portage softball leagues.
6. All property north of the fence on diamonds #1, 2, 5 & 6 and directly adjacent to diamonds #3 & 4 is off limits. If any team member or spectator associated with that team is found on this property for any reason other than ball retrieval, that player may be suspended from league play. The umpires and the Adult Softball Coordinator have the authority to declare immediate suspension. Further individual and team sanctions may come from the Adult Softball Coordinator and Parks and Recreation staff.
7. Forfeits – Failure to call in a forfeit by 2:00 p.m. on game day.

**PROTESTS**

Protests must be made in accordance with ASA rules. Notification of a protest must be entered on the official scorecard prior to the next pitch. Only those involving an umpire's interpretation of a rule will be accepted. Protests must be submitted in writing on an official incident form, accompanied by a \$25 protest fee, to the Parks and Recreation office before 5 p.m. the next business day. Protests will be handled by a committee composed of Parks and Recreation staff members. The protest fee will be refunded if the protest is upheld. Protests involving player eligibility must be made before or during the game upon discovery of the ineligible player. If a team is protesting player eligibility, the game will be played. The player in question must provide proper identification. If the player eligibility protest is valid, both the player and manager may be suspended for one calendar year and the team will forfeit all games up the time of discovery and may not be allowed to enter the league the following year.

## CO-ED RULES

In addition to above rules and regulations, the following apply to CO-ED divisions:

1. Female batters will hit an 11 inch softball; male batters will hit a 12 inch softball.
2. There shall be 10 players on a side, half male and half female. If there is an unequal number of players, the females shall be more numerous, however, a team may start and continue with nine players, five male and four female. In this case, the teams will have these options:
  - a. Place the extra male in the same spot in the batting order as another male and alternate each time through the lineup.
  - b. Take an out for the missing female each time through the lineup. (If this option is chosen it will remain in effect the entire game or until an additional female arrives).
 With either option the “extra” male batter may also play defense until another female arrives to even up the defensive lineup, provided the opposing team has an equal or greater number of male players.
 

These options are only to be used if the team has less than ten players. If more than ten with a larger number of males the additional male/s may only bat on the same line as another male and alternate each time through the lineup. “Weaving” is not an option.
3. When on offense, batters will alternate, M, F, unless the females are more numerous, in which case a female could follow another female in the batting order. If the open-ended batting order is used, a late arriving male would be inserted between two female batters in the batting order.
4. Open-ended batting order, CO-ED example: Additional male batters may be substituted for each other in the same batting slot if the manager declares this option **prior** to the start of a co-ed game. **The managers of the respective teams will be responsible for monitoring each other’s rosters and correcting the lineup if discrepancies take place.** An example of this ruling is 8 male players and 7 female players show up for a game and alternate male-female batters. **The “extra” male batter may be rotated with another male batter in the same batting position to keep the batting order “open” rather than reverting to a “closed” batting order.**

*Example of 5 Males & 4 Females*

Continue to Rotate

<b>1-M</b>	<b>5-M</b>	<b>1-M</b>	<b>5-M</b>
1-F	1-F	1-F	1-F
2-M	2-M	2-M	2-M
2-F	2-F	2-F	2-F
3-M	3-M	3-M	3-M
3-F	3-F	3-F	3-F
4-M	4-M	4-M	4-M
4-F	4-F	4-F	4-F

5. When on defense, fielders will alternate male/female. An all-female pitcher/catcher battery is permitted.
6. If a male batter receives a walk on the first three pitches, the next female batter has the option of receiving a walk or taking her turn to bat. The male gets 2<sup>nd</sup> base, even if the female decides to hit.
7. The City of Portage does not use the encroachment rule, regarding male and female defensive players.
8. **Outfielders are prohibited from throwing the batter out at first base. Note, this is a COED rule ONLY.**