

Hello Fall Softball:

Here is everything you need to know to register your teams for the 17th year of the USA D2 Fall League. I would strongly suggest you print it out for reference. The timeline is EXTREMELY TIGHT, and we can't make exceptions, if we're to be up and running on time.

COSTS: The cost to register is \$850. The extra expense of Fall is the need to rent the fields for this centrally located league. We pay more than \$40,000 to do that, which of course is good for the programs that have fields to offer, and a volunteer base strong enough to make the commitment. We also expanded from 8 games to 10 last season without raising the cost, which caused a significant financial shortfall.

Also, as you all are now aware, the USA Team Registration year for youth softball is September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026. So you must add an additional \$50 per team to register them with USA Softball for the year. As a commissioner, I can register your teams, so you can include that in a single check.

The cost for umpires is the same as it has been, \$70 a game at all levels. As in the summer now, expenses are shared at every game, \$35 per team. Each team also needs to provide one game ball each game. There is one umpire at all levels.

Your base costs per team then, assuming 10 regular season games and an average two playoff games, would be:

$\$850 \text{ league Reg'n} + \$50 \text{ USA Team Reg'n} + \$420 \text{ Umpire} + \$60 \text{ Game Balls} = \$1,380 / \text{team approx}$

Please understand that umpires will still be paid cash on the field by you, so I will not be collecting umpire fees. I am just giving you this as an aid to budgeting.

DATES OF PLAY: We begin play the week of Thursday September 4 through Sunday September 7. All playoffs have always been completed before Halloween.

Teams play an AVERAGE of two games a week. Typically, with makeups and stray games, we begin playoffs the sixth week of the season, which this year is Th October 9 – Sunday October 12.

08U usually plays most of its games on Saturdays, but can also have games on Thursday and/or Friday on occasion; 10U plays on Fridays and/or Saturdays; 12U plays on Thursdays and/or Saturdays; 14U plays mostly on Sundays, but might have a game or two on Thursdays.

SCHEDULE: As in the summer, there will be no blackouts, but we will try to accommodate needed changes within reason, and for a limited period of time. In fall, we have the additional complication that only a few programs act as our hosts, and so moving games becomes very complex. Because of this, we will get you the schedules as soon as possible. It is then on you to make sure you can field a team for every game on your schedule. Please remember that ALL teams will continue to make the playoffs, so limit your schedule changes to days when you truly cannot field any team - NOT days when you won't have your number one pitcher or the head coach finds it inconvenient to be there.

AFTER OPENING DAY NO CHANGES WILL BE MADE. YOU HAD TWO WEEKS TO SURVEY YOUR TEAM PARENTS, AND THAT IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TIME. If you fail to plan properly, and you find that you truly won't be able to field a team after opening day, you will be responsible for making arrangements for a field, and playing the game on a NON-PLAYING DAY. (08U Sunday –

Wednesday; 10U Sunday – Thursday; 12U Sunday – Wednesday; 14U Sunday – Wednesday, Friday – Saturday)

In the years that I have been principally responsible for running this league, we have had virtually no forfeits. That is a tradition we will continue.

AGE CUTOFFS for Fall 2025:

08U

Born on or after September 1, 2016

10U

Born on or after September 1, 2014

12U

Born on or after September 1, 2012

14U

Born on or after September 1, 2010

Key Dates:

Immediate: Please get us an **ESTIMATE** of the number of teams you will be entering at each age level

Friday, August 8: All rosters, evaluation forms, checks for payment in full, and certificates of insurance **MUST** have been received by me for your team to be guaranteed participation. There will be limited exceptions to this, because the deadlines are much too tight to allow for exceptions. If you have an issue with the deadline, please contact me to discuss.

REGISTRATION FORM: Our registration site is now updated. Go to USA Softball NJ, District 2. You must let us know, in the registration, if you intend to play A or B level ball. If you intend to compete in the top tier, your registration process is much simpler. The roster requires less info, and the evaluation forms are not needed.

ROSTERS: You **MUST** use and carefully follow the roster template at our registration site. These **MUST** include the following to be accepted, as they are key instruments in helping us set the proper playing level for your team.

EVALUATION FORMS: They are self-explanatory, and need to be accurate and detailed as to each team.

Note - While we will consider (in addition to the evaluation forms and detailed roster info) your input as to whether a team should be playing A or B, (or upper / lower B where appropriate), that decision ultimately is with the Competition Committee of the Board. Obviously, if you want your team playing A, that's the end of it, the team plays A. This approach is much closer to the hard line taken by our D2 Fall League. If we designate you as an A team, we'll certainly listen to your appeal, and discuss that with the committee - as we do with the D2 Fall League. But ultimately we will decide, as we have the data for ALL the teams, which you do not.

Registration PLUS USA Team Registration cost for all teams, all age groups:

\$900 per team - Please forward one check for all teams from your organization, @ \$900 per team, made to USA District 2, and mailed to (or dropped off at): USA District 2, i/c/o Keith Hoffman, 360 Retford Ave, Cranford, NJ, 07016

There will be no exceptions. Merely being insured by RPS Bollinger does not mean your team is properly registered already with USA Softball. If I don't have the registration, you are not registered.

INSURANCE: On the COI, you need to name USA Softball NJ, District 2 as a certificate holder. This is not a big deal, and your insurer will not charge you for it. For the address, please use "USA Softball NJ, District 2, i/c/o Keith Hoffman, Commissioner, 360 Retford Ave, Cranford, NJ 07016."

RULES FOR TEAM FORMATION, ROSTERING RESTRICTIONS

Players at all levels must ordinarily represent the town that player lives in, unless she lives in a town that is NOT fielding a team or attempting to field a team in this league at her age level. Players and teams may also seek an exception to play for the town where she plays recreation ball, or the town in which she goes to school. All players who DO NOT live in the towns they represent must be clearly listed in their team roster, with the exception they are claiming (rec league participation, school participation). They must apply to us for a waiver.

If a player lives in a town fielding a team, or trying to field a team, the presumption will be that she must play for that team. We will consider exceptional circumstances but, by definition, they will be the exception, not the rule.

We understand that at 14U and even at 12U, some towns have trouble fielding a team. Programs in this situation are invited to join other towns who are also short of players to combine. **THIS PROVISION IS SPECIFICALLY NOT MEANT TO ENCOURAGE THE FORMATION OF SUPER-TEAMS, FROM SEVERAL TOWNS.** It is just meant to help programs combine so more kids can play.

In the unusual case of an application to allow a player on a team from a town that has formed, or is trying to form, a team at that age level, we will take into account the following:

- The parents' reasons for applying for a waiver
- The position of the program where the player plays rec ball, or is forming a team to play USA Travel ball.

Please understand that this is a change in position. The presumption now is that exceptions will not be allowed.

We still need to front-load the schedule, to make sure all the games get played, and to leave breathing room for rain make ups near the end. So teams might well get three games in certain weeks, particularly early on.

Thanks and Welcome to the 17th year of the USA D2 Fall League.

Keith Hoffman
Commissioner
USA Softball NJ, District 2
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