

2024 LEXINGTON COUNTY SOFTBALL RULES

1. All leagues will play USSSA Rules, other than stated Lexington County Rules.
2. Rosters for Men's D and Women's D will be limited to 20 players. Rosters for Church and Men's Industrial Leagues will be unlimited. Coed league rosters are allowed a maximum of 15 men and 15 women. **A complete roster with full names of each individual (NO NICKNAMES) must be handed in prior to your first game or your team will not be permitted to play. Rosters are available for viewing upon request, for your league/division, by HEAD COACH ONLY!**

In the case that an Industrial League doesn't make, Industrial teams will be allowed to play in the Men's D League with an extended roster to accommodate swing shifts

3. Additions or Deletions to rosters must be made **before April 18, 2024**. After this date, the rosters will be frozen for the rest of the season. Additions must be made in writing and submitted to the Pine Grove Sports Complex Director or Supervisor. Players added to rosters must be added at least 24 hours before they can play their first game.

→ **Exception:** Players who need to be added after the frozen date may be done so on a case by case basis with the approval of a Pine Grove staff member.

4. Participants must be 15 years of age or older as of April 1, 2024.

→ **Exception:** Participants on **Church teams ONLY**, who are younger than the age limit, must have written permission signed by their guardian and approval from the Complex Director, Jordan Bizzell or the Complex Supervisor, Scott Gordon.

5. Women cannot appear on a men's roster nor can men appear on a women's roster.
6. Players may NOT participate on two teams within the same league. Pine Grove Staff will determine your legitimate team by the team you participate with first, whether you are on the roster or not. We reserve the right to add you to that roster.

Players playing on two different teams within the same league may be identified by the umpires, Complex Director, and or Complex Supervisor. The opposing team **DOES NOT** have to protest. **If caught**, the player will be subject to suspension from all softball leagues within Lexington County for one week. **Second offense:** suspension for the remainder of the year. **Team Penalty:** a forfeit.

7. If an umpire **hears threatening comments** of hitting the pitcher with a batted ball or **intentionally hitting up the middle**, the player is subject to ejection.

8. Active participation rather than church membership is the requirement in all classifications of church play. **YOUR ROSTER MUST BE SIGNED BY THE PASTOR**. Stamped signatures will not be allowed!
9. In **COED**, you can start with nine players (five men and four women, or five women and four men). The game can continue with 9 players. However, on the arrival of the 10th player, his/her name must be added at the bottom of the lineup.
(If on offense, he/she becomes the 10th batter. If on defense, he/she goes to the field).
 - **EFFECT:** If it is the missing player's turn to bat in the lineup, that missing player's at bat **IS CONSIDERED AN OUT**.
 - Coed teams may play with 9, 10, or 12 players **ONLY**.
10. All men's and women's leagues may start and continue with nine (9) players. However, on the arrival of the tenth player, he/she must take their place in the game. If on offense, he/she becomes the 10th batter. If on defense, he/she goes to the field.
 - **EFFECT:** If it is the missing player's turn to bat in the lineup, that missing player's at bat **IS NOT CONSIDERED AN OUT**.

NOTE: If you start with 10, 11, or 12 players, and one player leaves for any reason (*excluding injury suffered during the course of the game*) and you do not have any substitutions, their at bat **WILL** be considered an **OUT**. **If you are caught faking an injury to play on another field, you will be suspended for two weeks...NO EXCEPTIONS!**
11. In all Men's, Women's, & Church Leagues you may have 2 (additional hitters) for a total of 12 players in the batting line-up.
 - The extra (11th and 12th) batters **MUST BE PRESENT PRIOR TO GAME TIME FOR THEM TO BE INCLUDED IN THE BATTING LINE-UP**.
12. No information about rosters will be given out over the phone.
13. ALL MEN'S, WOMEN'S, & COED LEAGUES (INCLUDING CHURCH) can have **ONE Homerun (HR) Hitter**. **In coed, there will be one homerun hitter for both men and women**. The coach can either designate the HR Hitter at the beginning of the game, or wait for the first person to hit a HR, which would then make that person the HR Hitter. If the HR Hitter is walked for any reason, it will allow someone else in the line-up to become the new HR Hitter. If the HR Hitter is ejected or substituted for during the course of the game, then the HR Hitter is removed for the rest of the game.

14. Players or Coaches who are ejected from the game are subject to suspension from all Lexington County owned and operated facilities for ONE WEEK, or possibly the remainder of the season. Any player or coach who feels that he/she has been unjustly suspended by a league official may appeal in writing within 24 hours to Jordan Bizzell (Complex Director) or Scott Gordon (Complex Supervisor). The appeal will be reviewed as soon as possible, and the impending suspension will be upheld, revised, or waived at that time.
- Any player or coach who is **ejected from 3 games** during the season (Spring or Fall) will be subject to an indefinite suspension from league ball.
 - Any team that has a total of **3 ejections** within a season will be removed from the league and place last in the standings.

NOTE: Unsportsmanlike behavior such as vulgar gestures, cursing, fighting, or abusing the umpires will NOT be tolerated! Any player or coach displaying unsportsmanlike conduct will be subject to the maximum penalty or expulsion from ALL Lexington County owned and operated facilities for ONE YEAR.

15. USSSA approved bats (USSSA Thumbprint) will be the standard in Lexington County Adult Leagues. Lexington County will grandfather in the older metal bats that are from the pre-composite time frame (before 2002). Lexington County Recreation reserves the right to implement a banned bat list, if necessary.

NOTE: Lexington County Recreation requires that all bats that are to be used during the season must be tested prior to the bat being used in a game. If the bat passes the compression test, we will affix a tamper proof sticker to the bat. Once a player positions themselves in the batter's box, and his/her bat does not have a sticker on it, the player will be subject to be called out. **The responsibility for checking the bats for stickers lies with the opposing team and will be enforced by the umpire.**

- **Bat Testing** will be scheduled during the preseason on the nights teams reserve the fields for practice. Testing will also be scheduled each night in the first two weeks of the season (weeks of March 18 and March 25) until 9pm. In the succeeding weeks, a rotating schedule by night will be posted on the umpire lounge door on the 2nd floor of the tower. Random bat testing will still be conducted throughout the season at the discretion of the Complex Supervisor, Scott Gordon.

16. **Protests: ALL RULE PROTESTS MUST BE MADE AT THE POINT OF INFRACTION TO THE UMPIRE.** All eligibility protests must be made verbally to the umpire before the last out of the ball game. It is **YOUR** responsibility to know the proper procedure.

NOTE: In case of an eligibility protest, be prepared to show picture identification. If you are unable to produce a valid ID within a reasonable period of time (which will be deemed by the Complex Supervisor), your team is subject to forfeiture of the game.

17. Courtesy runners will be allowed in all leagues (including coed). One courtesy runner per inning through the 5th inning. In the 6th and 7th innings, the courtesy runner must be approved with the opposing team's coach.

→ In **COED**, the one courtesy runner per inning will apply. It is **NOT** one male and one female courtesy runner per inning.

NOTE: Courtesy runner can be anyone on the team roster. If the courtesy runner is on base and his/her time at bat comes up, that person **WILL BE CONSIDERED OUT** at the plate.

18. There will be **NO GRACE PERIOD FOR ANY GAME**. Both teams must have at least nine (9) players to start the game. Players must be on the playing field or in the dugout, not the parking lot or restroom area. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
19. All games are scheduled to start on the hour or the half hour. Be sure to check with the umpire for the exact starting time. No new inning will start after one hour and five minutes, except in the case of a tie. Umpires, coaches, and players are encouraged to keep the game moving.
20. If a game is forfeited due to lack of players and both teams want to scrimmage, the umpire will officiate the game if requested.

NOTE: Both teams must have 8 players.

21. Games will be started and considered an official game with **ONE** umpire present.
22. All leagues will play **FREE SUBSTITUTION**, which means that any starting player may be substituted for and then return to the line-up in the same batting spot that he/she vacated. The starter and the substitute **MAY NOT BE IN THE GAME AT THE SAME TIME**.
23. Game balls will be furnished by Lexington County Recreation Commission and umpires will provide these balls. After each game, both teams will be given a game ball, provided it has not been lost. **Teams should keep these balls for backup in future league games.**
24. All teams listed **FIRST** on the schedule will be the home team and official score book.

25. If a team is ahead by 15 runs or more after 4 complete innings, (or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead) they will be declared the winner. If a team is ahead by 10 or more runs after 5 complete innings, (4 ½ if the home team is ahead) they will be declared the winner.
26. Please do not warm-up on concrete sidewalks or behind the dugouts. Teams may warm-up in designated areas ONLY. These areas are as follows: Between Field 1 & 2, 2 & 3, 3 & 4, and 4 & 5.
27. **IF A TEAM FORFEITS THREE GAMES IN A SEASON, THE TEAM WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE REMOVED FROM THAT INDIVIDUAL LEAGUE.**
28. No metal cleats/spikes are allowed.
29. **RAINOUTS:** The fitness of the ground for the games will be decided by a Pine Grove staff member. When possible, games will be called by 4:30 p.m.
*****FOR RAINOUT INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 356-9095*****
If this is not possible, games will be called at the fields. After games have begun, it will be left up to the Complex Supervisor, Scott Gordon, to decide whether to continue or postpone games. At all outlying fields, the umpires will make the decision. When an incomplete game is suspended because of rain, power failure, etc., it will be restarted at the point of interruption with the same situation as when the game was suspended. However, if the game is not tied and 4 ½ or 5 innings have been completed, the game will be considered a completed game.
30. The Recreation Commission will schedule all make-up games. Team contacts will be notified by mail/email, as to the time and field location of their make-up game. Make-up games will be held during or after the season. Be prepared to play make-ups on any night during the week regardless of what night you play on during the regular season. (If necessity dictates, make-ups could be scheduled on Sunday afternoon).
31. **First Place Teams** will receive a team trophy and individuals. **Second Place Teams** will receive a team trophy. In the event of a tie for First Place, the tie breaker will be a head to head competition. If the teams split, there will be a one game playoff. In leagues where some teams play each other only once, their head to head match up will decide first or second place. Second place ties will be determined by head to head competition. There will be **NO playoffs for second place.**
32. At the end of the season, a County Tournament will be held if time permits (Rainouts).
33. All leagues will use a 3 ball 2 strike count with **NO** extra foul. Unless you are using the pitching screen. (See Rule 34)

34. Lexington County will be offering the use of **PITCHING SCREENS** during the season. In **ALL LEAGUES**, teams have the option to use the screen as they please. They **DO NOT** have to use it from start to finish.

→ **Example:** If the starting pitcher wants to use the screen and a new pitcher comes in and does not want the screen, he does NOT have to use it. The same goes for if the starting pitcher is not using the screen and a new pitcher comes in and wants to use it.

Any part of the pitching screen must be in contact with the 10 foot pitching box between the 50 and 60 foot pitching rubbers and be parallel to the front part of home plate.

*****NEW*****

The first batted ball OR strike to hit the pitching screen will be considered a **FOUL BALL**. The next batted ball OR strike must be **FAIR**. Second ball to hit the screen will be considered an **OUT** with **NO** runners advancing.

If the screen is in **FAIR or FOUL TERRITORY** and a thrown ball hits it, the ball will be considered dead and all runners will advance **ONE** base. If a batted ball deflects off of a fielder's glove and hits the screen, the ball will be considered dead and all runners will advance **ONE** base. If only one team chooses to use the screen, **IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO MOVE THE SCREEN ON AND OFF THE FIELD.**

35. Pepper will be allowed before and between games against the backstop as long as the 16" (pumpkin) ball is used. Otherwise, pepper should be played in the outfield.
36. **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE PROHIBITED AT PINE GROVE SPORTS COMPLEX!** There is **NO SMOKING** in the dugouts or on the field.