

INTRODUCTION

This handbook was made in order to answer questions and provide pertinent information to managers, teams and players of the DeKalb Park District Adult Softball Program.

The distribution of this handbook will give the people involved notice of the changes that will be implemented for the **2017** summer and fall softball seasons. It is the responsibility of the team managers to read this handbook and discuss the information provided plus any new changes with players of their team.

Prior to mentioning any program changes, it is important to note that the decisions for these changes were not made arbitrarily but were derived from careful consideration of input received from: program participants, other competitors, surrounding park districts staff, athletic conventions, etc.

In short, some of the changes contained in this handbook are: **1)** Men, women and coed slo-pitch teams and leagues are members of the United States Specialty Sports Association. **2)** All slo-pitch game rules will be governed by the USSSA and the DeKalb Park District guidelines, rules and regulations. **3)** Pitching mats will be used in all leagues to determining balls and strikes. **4)** Leagues, teams and players are classified in order to provide more parity within the softball program. **5)** A committee will be formed to hear appeals on player classification concerns. **6)** Clear guidelines were established for games played in inclement weather.

It is our hope that the program changes and this handbook will make your softball experience in the DeKalb Park District a more enjoyable one.

ROSTERING PLAYERS

Players may be rostered on teams at **Katz Park, 393 Dresser Rd. DeKalb, Illinois 60115** or at **The Sports and Recreation Center, 1765 s. 4TH Street DeKalb, Illinois 60115**. Players must meet the eligibility requirements of USSSA and the DeKalb Park District. If requested, players must produce a **valid state issued photo I.D.** in order to determine eligibility.

REFUNDS

Refunds will be paid up to 2 weeks after the league tournament. To receive a refund, managers must complete a refund request form and notify the DeKalb Park District or the league director.

ELIGIBILITY AND CONDUCT

To be eligible, all players must be at least **18 years of age and out of high school**. A player must supply the park district with a **correct name, date of birth, e-mail address, phone number and signature**. A player may be asked to verify his/her address and should be prepared to produce a valid driver's license at a game or at the time of registration. If a player cannot verify his/her address, that player can be ruled ineligible. The scorekeepers, umpires, park district staff or league director have the authority to verify the identity of any player and determine eligibility. It is not necessary that a person in authority ask to verify the identity of any player.

Any player who was ejected from league play during the previous season of athletic league play at the DeKalb Park District (men's basketball, soccer, volleyball, etc.) is ineligible to compete in the summer softball season. **NOTE: THE DEKALB PARK DISTRICT WILL HONOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS OF THE USSSA. THUS, PLAYERS DEEMED INELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE USSSA WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEKALB PARK DISTRICT SOFTBALL PROGRAM.**

A team playing with an ineligible player will forfeit that game. Forfeiture of any league game for reason of player ineligibility can be enforced upon any previously played game at any time during the current season by the league director.

If any player displays conduct in a disorderly fashion in a game, the umpire will eject that player from the game. If that player fails to follow the sight and sound guidelines of the league rules, the player will be ejected from the league. **If a player is ejected from a game, the player must sit out the next full game and pay a re-enter fee of \$25.** If a player is ejected from the league, that player will not be permitted to re-enter that league's play or any DeKalb Park District summer softball league play for one calendar year. Anyone not rostered as an eligible player on one of the teams playing a game that is in progress will be considered a spectator. Spectators have standards of conduct outside the fences just as players have standards of conduct inside the fences. If a spectator is disorderly, any park district employee has the authority to ask that individual to leave the park. If the disorderly spectator refuses to vacate the premises, he/she will be considered

in criminal trespass. That individual will not be eligible to participate in DeKalb Park District activities for one full year and could be arrested. Disorderly conduct is defined in the Park District Ordinance Code, which governs behavior in all parks.

TEAM AND PLAYER CLASSIFICATION

“A” and “B” player – This is a highly competitive player that has “superior” to “excellent” home run power. Some “A” and “B” classified players have participated in “A” or “B” post-season tournament play. “A” and “B” classified players may not participate or be rostered on any “E” classification team. If a player is recognized by the USSSA as a highly competitive player, this is cause to be classified “A” or “B”.

“C” Teams – Competitive teams with a majority of players having good skills and experience. Some “C” players have good home run power and have played in post-season tournaments. No more than one (1) “A” and two (2) “B” classified players or three (3) “B” classified players may be in a “C” teams line-up in any given game at the same time at this level of competition. **There will be a limit of (6) untouched/over the fence home runs per game/per team allowed in “C” leagues.**

“D” Teams – Competitive teams with the majority of the players having some skills and experience. Some “D” classified players have participated in post-season tournaments and may have some home run power. No more than one (1) “B” and two (2) “C” classified players or three (3) “C” classified players may be in the teams line-up in any given game at the same time at this level of competition. **There will be a maximum of four (4) untouched/over the fence home runs per game/per team allowed in “D” leagues with the One-up Rule.**

“E” Teams – Teams that play for recreation and exercise. No more than one (1) “C” and two (2) “D” classified players or three (3) “D” classified players may be in a team’s line-up in any given game at the same time at this level of competition. **NOTE: “A” and “B” classified players are not permitted on rosters by any team in this classification. There will be a maximum of two (2) untouched/over the fence home runs per game/per team allowed in “E” leagues with the One-up Rule.**

Coed Recreational Teams – Coed teams that play for recreation and exercise. Teams will be comprised of male players that are classified as “D” or “E” and female players that are classified as “C” or “D”. **There are unlimited home runs allowed in coed leagues.**

NOTE: Coed teams can start with (9) players in the line-up. An out shall be declared in the last spot of the batting order before the start of a game. If a team is starting with more than (9) players in a line-up, a team may drop down to (9) players due to injury or ejection. An out shall be declared in the open spot of the batting order with less than (10) players in the line-up after the start of a game.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

If there is a question as to whether games will be played or cancelled due to inclement weather, managers or players may: **1)** Call (815)758-7756 before 5:00 PM. **2)** Drive by the ball field where the game is to be played and a sign will read **GAMES ON** or **GAMES OFF**. **3)** Check the DeKalb Park District web site, <http://www.dekalbparkdistrict.com/>, Athletics Link. In most instances a decision will not be made or posted until after 4:30 PM. **4)** Text the word “**DPDSPORTS**” to **74499** to receive DeKalb Park District Athletics weather cancellation alerts and important messages right to your mobile phone. ****Weather cancellations will be announced via text and website only****. This is a free service. Message and data rates may apply. A new list is created each season. To be removed from the list, simply reply “**STOP**” to the message.

Occasionally while playing or during a stay at the ballpark weather conditions will change for the worse. The following are guidelines DeKalb Park District will use pertaining to game conditions:

1. Whenever, in the opinion of the plate umpire, playing conditions reach a point where injury could result, the game should be delayed. Whenever lightning is present, games will be delayed without question.
2. The plate umpire has the authority to resume play at anytime, regardless if it is drizzling or not. However, all umpires should watch for deteriorating game conditions and act appropriately. In the case of a lightning stoppage, **DeKalb Park District Lightning Policy and Procedures** will be followed before play can resume.
3. **THE PLATE UMPIRE WILL SUSPEND PLAY IF IN HIS/HER JUDGMENT:**
 - A. Lightning is sighted within 5 miles of the field. (**Lightning Policy Posted At Field**)
 - B. Ball visibility is not conducive to safe play.
 - C. Player footing has deteriorated sufficiently to be unsafe.
 - D. Bats may not be used in a safe manner
 - E. The fields are too puddled to play safely.
4. If the earlier games are rained out, all games for that evening will be canceled regardless if weather improves in the evening.

NOTE: The DeKalb Park District schedules games so that all lights will be turned off **no later than 10:30 PM**. If in the judgment of the plate umpire a delayed game may force other games to end too late, the plate umpire will suspend that game to be made up at a later date in order for the other scheduled games to continue in a timely manner.

REGISTRATION

Due to the large number of teams involved in the softball program, it is necessary to register teams on a first come – first serve basis. All teams must register at the **DeKalb Park District, Sports and Recreation Center, 1765 s. 4th Street DeKalb, Illinois 60115.**

The DeKalb Park District offers softball leagues for various levels of competition. The men's program has two distinct levels of classification which are "D" and "E", the women's program has one, namely "D" and the coed program which consist of coed teams that play for recreation and exercise. This system of classifying teams is patterned after the United States Specialty Sports Association, a nationally accepted softball program with thousands of teams nationwide and over 3,000 teams in Illinois.

Prior to registering a team, it is important for managers to compare their team's roster with the DeKalb Park District Player Classification Listing included in this handbook. This will aid mangers in determining what level of competition their teams will play.

The following are registration procedures for the softball program:

1. The DeKalb Park District does not reserve spots for any team. Teams may secure their spot in a league by paying the entire team fee for the league - **\$700.00 per team.**
2. At least 10 players per team must be registered in the DeKalb Park District office by 12:00 p.m., the business day before the first game. Players are registered when the office has their name, date of birth, e-mail address, phone number and signature.
3. When a team is fully registered, managers will receive line-up cards and DeKalb Park District rules. After the league is closed, schedules will be posted online. In addition, teams will become members of the USSSA organization.
(www.ussa.com), (www.ilusssa.com)

DEKALB PARK DISTRICT RULES & GENERAL INFORMATION

The following is a list of reminders that everyone who plays in one or more of the DeKalb Park District Softball Leagues should be aware of:

- 1. RAINOUTS:** The Park District has developed a system that will be used for rainout information. While it may not be the most convenient method for everyone, it is certainly the simplest and the least likely to create problems. First, check The DeKalb Park District web site, <http://www.dekalbparkdistrict.com/>, Athletic Link. In most cases a decision will not be made until after 4:30 PM. We will make every attempt to play if the fields and conditions are acceptable. Second, text the word “**DPDSPORTS**” to **74499** to receive DeKalb Park District Athletics weather cancellation alerts and important messages to your mobile phone. ****Weather cancellations will be announced via text and website only****. Message and data rates may apply. A new list is created each session. To be removed from the list, simply reply “**STOP**” to the message. Third, we will have a sign posted at Katz Park that will simply state **GAMES ON** or **GAMES OFF**.
- 2. RAINOUT MAKEUPS:** Makeup games will be scheduled at the end of the season unless there are so many that the season would end late. It would then be necessary to schedule rainouts on Saturday, Sunday or other weeknights that might be available due to other leagues being finished. Rainout make-up schedules will be posted on the DeKalb Park District website and at Katz Park. In addition, schedules will be distributed to team managers by the DeKalb Park District scorekeepers at the fields.
- 3. GAME TIME:** Game time is defined as the time shown on the schedule or immediately after the preceding game, if the previous game goes over its allotted time. Exactly 10 minutes after game time is forfeit time. Official time will be **DeKalb Time & Temperature, (815)758-8646**. If a team needs the ten-minute grace period in order to obtain a legal team (**9 players for MEN, WOMEN & COED LEAGUES**), then the grace period time is deducted from the original game time.
- 4. BEGINNING AN INNING:** No new inning may begin after one hour from game time unless the game is tied.
- 5. LINEUP SHEETS:** Lineup sheets must be completed and turned into the scorekeeper by the team manager ten minutes prior to game time.

NOTE: Men & women teams have the option of batting **9, 10, 11 or 12 players** in the line-up before the start of the game. **Coed teams** have the option of batting **9, 10 or 12 players** in the line-up before the start of the game.

6. **ADDING PLAYERS:** Individuals may be added to the team roster at the Sports and Recreation Center, 1765 s. 4th Street DeKalb, Illinois 60115, or at Katz Park, 393 Dresser Rd. DeKalb, Illinois 60115 during the designated hours or at the fields before the game. **A player is considered to be a rostered player after he/she has furnished the Park District with a correct name, date of birth, e-mail address, phone number and signature. Players may participate on more than one team in league play but can only play on one team during league tournament play.** Players added to the roster must meet the eligibility requirements of the DeKalb Park District and the USSSA and should be able to verify their correct address with a **valid state issued photo I.D.**
7. **GAME BALL:** The DeKalb Park District will provide one new and one used ball for each game. It is necessary that errant balls must be retrieved by players. If game balls are lost, the ball must be replaced by the home team first and the visiting team second.
8. **FORFEIT RULE:** Any team that forfeits three (3) regular season games for any reason **may** be removed from the remainder of league and tournament play. Their remaining games will be forfeits and their sponsor fees will be forfeited. Fees are not refundable. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
9. **ZERO & ZERO COUNT:** All 11” and 12” slo-pitch batters will be called out on (2) strikes and will walk on (3) balls. **The plate and mat is a strike.**
10. **SPIKES:** Absolutely **no** metal cleats allowed!
11. **ALCOHOL POLICY:** No alcoholic beverages are allowed in the park by players or spectators. Players who are considered intoxicated or under the influence of alcoholic beverages will not be permitted to participate in any softball games. **Please review DeKalb Park District Ordinance 9:16**
12. **SMOKING:** There will be no smoking on the fields or in the dugouts by players, coaches, umpires, etc.
13. **PROTESTS:** Protests must be in writing and may not concern matters of judgment by officials. All protests must be delivered to the Sports and Recreation Center, 1765 s. 4th Street DeKalb, Illinois 60115, **no later than 48 hours after the protested game.** Protests occurring in the Friday league must be delivered to the office by 5:00 PM on the following Monday.
14. **HOMERUN RULE:** A maximum number of untouched/over the fence home runs per team in a game will be enforced. **The hit and sit homerun rule is in effect for all leagues.** The limits are as follows: Men’s “C” League – (6) homeruns; Men’s “D” League – (4) homeruns with the **One-up Rule**; Men’s “E” League – (2) homeruns with the **One-up Rule**; Coed & Women’s Leagues - unlimited homeruns. Any untouched/over the fence homerun after the designated maximum is reached will be considered an out and a dead ball will result. No runners may advance.

NOTE: The Hit and Sit Homerun Rule: On a fair fly ball hit over the fence/untouched for a homerun, the batter and all the base runners are credited with a score. They should go directly to the dugout area. This would eliminate any base running appeals. This includes a four base award.

NOTE: The One-up Homerun Rule is in effect: Once both teams have reached their respective homerun limits, either team may hit an additional homerun; however, no team may ever go more than one homerun up on the other team. Any additional homerun above the one-up rule will be scored as an out. The home team, in the bottom of the 7th or later innings, may hit one homerun to pull even in the number of homeruns as the opposing team, but may not hit a homerun to go one up.

15. **FLIP/FLOP RULE – ALL PROGRAMS:** The end of the 4th inning when the run rule is exceeded and the home team is losing, the home team will remain at bat and become the visiting team. If the team (**new visiting team**) does not score enough runs to reduce the run difference below the run rule, the game is over. If they reduce the run difference to below the run rule then the **new home team** will bat. If the **new home team** subsequently score enough runs to exceed the run rule, the game will be over; if they do not, the game will continue under that format.
16. **AWARDS:** First, second and third place awards will be provided for each league and first and second place awards for each league tournament. Adjustments may be made for leagues with more/less than 8 teams.
17. **BATS:** Bats will be legal for USSSA sanctioned play only if the bat is manufactured by an approved USSSA bat manufacturer on the USSSA approved bat manufacturer list and has the new USSSA mark on the taper of the bat.
18. **DEKALB PARK DISTRICT LEAGUE TOURNAMENT RULES:**
 - A. Tournament play is governed by DeKalb Park District rules.
 - B. **You have to play in one regular season game to be eligible for tournament.**
 - C. **Regular Season:** A player can legally play for any team as long as he/she provides: name, date of birth, phone number, e-mail address and signature before the game.
Post Season: A player can only play for one team. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
 - D. Tournament pairings are determined from season records.
 1. Total wins and losses (**if tied go to 2**)
 2. Head to Head games (**if tied go to 3**)
 3. Head to Head total runs scored (**if tied go to 4**)
 4. Coin flip
19. **COURTESY RUNNERS: Only one courtesy runner per gender, per inning.** The courtesy runner will be the last recorded out. If it is the first inning of the game, the last person in the batting order will be used as the courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is still on base when his/her turn to bat comes up, the original base runner can take the place on base with no penalty. For coed games, only the last male out can run for a male and only the last female out can run for a female.

COED TEAM RULES

- Five male and five female players must be in the lineup at all times (**six males and six females if the additional hitters are used**). Male and female players must alternate in the batter order. Any five male and five female players that are in the game must play defense. **Exception:** A minimum of 9 players can start a game: (**5 males & 4 females or 4 males & 5 females**). A team can add a 10th player any time during the game. An out shall be declared at the last position of the lineup before the start of the game.
- Teams starting with 12 players may drop down to 11, 10 or 9 players in the line-up due to injury or ejection. All vacant spots in the line-up will be declared an out every time that position in the line-up is due at bat. If a team starts with 9 or 10 players, they are not allowed to add the 11th or 12th player at a later time. .
- The defensive team may walk the proceeding batter or multiple batters to get to the position or positions in the lineup that is an out due to a team starting with 9 players or has dropped from 12 players to 11 or 10 players. No base appeals are allowed when this results in the third out of the inning.
- When a male batter receives a base on balls or an intentional walk, he will be awarded first and second base with the next female batter having the option to walk or bat. If the next female chooses to walk, it is not considered an intentional walk for the purpose of making an appeal.
- Male players can only use bats provided by The DeKalb Park District, **NO EXCEPTIONS! Using an illegal bat will be an out!**
- Coed teams can start with (9) players in the line-up. An out shall be declared in the last spot of the batting order before the start of a game. If a team is starting with more than (9) players in a line-up, a team may drop down to (9) players due to injury or ejection. An out shall be declared in the open spot of the batting order with less than (10) Players in a line-up after the start of a game.

EXAMPLE: FOR A COED TEAM STARTING WITH (9) PLAYERS:

(5) Males & (4) Females = YES

(5) Females & (4) Males = YES

FOR A COED TEAM STARTING WITH (10) or (12) PLAYERS:

(5) Males & (5) Females = YES

(6) Males & (6) Females = YES

COURTESY RUNNERS: Only one courtesy runner per gender, per inning.

The courtesy runner will be the last recorded out. If it is the first inning of the game, the last person in the batting order will be used as the courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is still on base when his/her turn to bat comes up, the original base runner can take the place on base with no penalty. For coed games, only the last male out can run for a male and only the last female out can run for a female.

