

2023 Current Rules Hillsborough County Parks & Rec Dept.

Thank you for choosing the adult softball program offered by the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department. Our goal continues to be to provide a well-run, affordable, quality softball program in which players have fun no matter their skill level. Within that goal is our priority to provide to our program participants exemplary customer service – whether in person, on the telephone or via e-mail. It is our desire to constantly improve our program and we sincerely welcome your comments and suggestions on how we may provide better customer service to teams and ways to improve the program. We recognize that there are multiple levels of skills among our teams as well as different levels of competitiveness desires and we try to match teams accordingly. Despite how hard any individual competes or how hot the competitive fire burns, it is important to always remember that the adult softball program is a family – based recreation program for all participants. We ask that you and your players keep that perspective in mind before, during and after participation on a nightly basis. Knowing that excellence is our goal in customer service, quality of facilities and in the education of the umpires, we ask of you to be our partners in attaining that goal. Your communication with us on any issue of concern allows us to correct problems and work toward our goals of excellence and quality. Again, thanks for choosing HCPRCD adult softball program. Please feel free to email any question of concerns to www.hcsportsonline.com

General Program Information

- The rules, policies, or procedures published in this guide are the official rules of Hillsborough County Recreation Softball. The rules in this guide take precedence over any association other rules that may apply. This guide rules will be a modification of the official rules published and USSSA there official guide.
- All rules not addressed in this managers guide will fall under the official games are rules of softball as published by USSSA
- The operation and authority of the adult softball program rest solely on the Athletic Section of the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department. Any questions regarding the program should be directed to a member of the athletic staff.
- All teams and individual players, upon entering a league or joining a team, agree to abide by the rules, policies, and procedures as stated in this guide. Failure to abide by the rules policies, or procedures of the program could result in forfeiture of games or suspensions of a team or player from league play.
- As a condition of participation in the adult sports program, all players must sign a seasonal consent wavier of release. This wavier can be signed at either the William Owen Pass or Ed Radice complexes depending on where the player is playing. The wavier expires December 31st of the year it is signed. This is good for any adult sport sponsored by H.C.P.R. & C.D. But each team is required to turn them in every season. For Roster purposes.

- Hillsborough county softball has a zero tolerance for alcohol use at our facilities. Any Players caught with alcohol will be removed from the park and suspended from league play. Teams and players should be aware of any alcohol found in their dugout will result in a team's immediate forfeit to the game and removal of their team from the league.
- Hillsborough County will still enforce the 2023 Bat Rules for USSSA. All bats must be marked 1.20 BPF or Below. No ASA Only bats will be allowed to be used for play in this league, ASA Bats must also have USSSA stamp on it to qualify Non-ASA Only. As well as no Senior Bats will be Allowed for play in this league.
- Hillsborough County does not carry any type of insurance on players or their personal property. All players and spectators enter County property at their own risk. Cars could be damaged by hit or thrown balls. The County is not responsible for any loss of personal property or for injury which occurs as a result of participation in the adult sports program.
- It is recommended that each manager/coach be responsible for having a first aid kit. • In the HCPRCD adult sports program all participants must be at least 18 years old by the first scheduled game in the season of participation.
- For updates, standings, scores, schedules & rainouts, please be sure to visit hcsportsonline.com

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

All manager meetings are mandatory. Teams must have a representative present at the managers meeting even if your team has prepaid for the upcoming season a team rep must still be present and sign in at the meeting) HCPRD offers three adult seasons per calendar year. Teams play one night a week from 9 to 12 games scheduled depending on number of teams in your division per season.

Leagues are offered on weeknights and Sundays.

Season Start Date In February for William Owen Pass and Ed Radice

Summer Season Start Date is Typically in April/May

Fall Season Start Typically in Sept Teams sign up to play either the: East – (Dover / Brandon Area)

Field Locations:

Tampa - All People Life Center (6105 E Sligh Ave Tampa FL 33617) (In person Meetings)

West Tampa :(Citrus Park Area) (Athletic office)

East Tampa: West Facility: Williams Owens Pass (4 Fields) Ed Radice Complex (5 Fields)

(No Cash or personal checks will be accepted) Sponsor check will be accepted. Credit Cards payments will be accepted online during the open registration window via an online Payment.

All sponsor checks in the amount of 350.00 are made payable B.O.C.C. (Board of County Commissioners) \$ 30.00 made out to Tampa USSSA (USSSA FEE IS ANNUAL) ** A bad check fee of \$40.00

will be assessed for each dishonored check (Ordinance 77-2S) No team or individual will be allowed to participate until all checks have been made good and all fees have been paid (by money order or cashier's check).

Any Team that does not pay League fee or Sanctions Fee or has a check bounce will result in a frozen roster. All members of that team will be suspended until balance is paid in full. LEAGUE & SEASON INFORMATION.

League & Season Information

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Athletic Office Policy and Procedures

Casual Profanity:

It is the desire of the Athletic Office to create an atmosphere at all softball games in which any member of the family (regardless of their age) can be comfortable. Is defined as audible profanity not expressly directed to any Individual. The penalty for casual profanity is an out. If a team is on offense, the next batter is out. If a defensive player is guilty, the first batter for his/her team the next half inning is out. If there are multiple infractions, there may be multiple outs. A maximum of three (3) outs per team will be penalized in a game. The fourth infraction will result in a game ending infraction and will result in a forfeit.

Threats & Fighting

Verbal threats or Physical threats of violence made against umpires, or another player are taken seriously and are prohibited. Threatening an umpire or another player with violence or verbally attacking will cause the player or spectators to be ejected from the game and or the Field. The player may also be suspended from league play for the remainder of the season or for a period determined by the league up to an including two years from the date of the incident. If the player or spectator do not leave the complex including the parking lot, they will be trespassed by Hillsborough County Sherrieff department.

Ejections:

Umpires may remove any players or spectators from participation for any act they deem unsportsmanlike and may require the ejected participant to leave the premises before the game continues. A player or spectator may be ejected before during or after a game. If a player is ejected from a game, they are suspending for the rest of that night. And can't not play on any other field for that night. If a umpire writes up an incident report there will be a minimum of 1 week or more suspension for that player for all team that player may play for. This is determined by The Athletic Office A player can even be ejected after a game has ended. They made be ejected from the complex. Please be advise that a player is ejected from a game the teams manager may also be ejected from a game if the umpire feel The manager was not addressing the situation in hand. Any player, manager or spectator who refuses to leave the field after the ejection Is subject to being trespassed off the county fields and will in result in their game being forfeited.

Suspensions:

The Athletic Office has the sole authority to suspend players and spectators determine the length there of for players/ spectators who commit unsportsmanlike acts. The manager will receive either written or verbal notification (both when possible) of a player's suspension. Once suspended, a player may not participate on any team in HCPRC play. If a participant plays while suspended, both the players and the manager will be subject to disciplinary action. If the player plays under an assumed name (one other than their own), both player and the persons responsible for putting the name on the line-up card shall be suspended from all HCPRCD play Any player who fights or incites a fight will be suspended for a minimum of one season. Participants ejected from unsportsmanlike conduct acts will be automatically placed on suspension. Also, Any Player caught with alcohol will be removed from the park and suspended from the league.

Protest:

YOU MUST INFORM THE UMPIRES THAT YOU ARE PLAYING THAT GAME UNDER PROTEST Before the Game has ended. (Before The last out has been made no exceptions.)

You must make sure that the Umpire writes that your team is protesting this game on the score card, or the protest will not be accepted. All protests of rule interpretations or player eligibility must be filed in writing or email to info@hcsportsonline.com with the athletic office within 24 hours of the contest (by the close of the next business day). Only the team manager can protest a game with an umpire.

Umpire judgement calls made on the field by an umpire are typically not reversible .

If a protest happens in a playoff game the head umpire should contact the athletic staff immediately. Inform the staff member on site.

Alcoholic Beverages:

It is against the law to drink alcoholic beverages on County property (Ordinance 97-14). Players caught drinking on County property will be immediately ejected from the game or removed from the facilities and face a suspension. Violators are also subject to arrest by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office.

MAGERS CARDS AND ROSTERS:

All managers and Players must fill out a roster and Wavier form which is held in the county office at the facilities.

Rosters & Wavier

- Before each season a NEW Roster must be turned in by the 1st Game. Any Roster that does not have all the requested information fill out properly will not be accepted. All signed Rosters and waivers must be turned in to the umpire the night of the first game NO EXCEPTION!! Any roster changes must be made in person by the end of your teams third game of the season.
- Managers are responsible for their players make sure that the players sign their names on the roster and the waivers Forms clearly if the name is not printed clearly the player will not be eligible for play. If a manger allows a player to who has not signed a roster & waiver, to play that manger will be held accountable and is subject to be suspended There will be a Roster Limited of 20 per Roster players
- If players have not signed a wavier, they will not be allowed to play if for any reason. For whatever reason if the roster is not turned in by a team any challenge of a roster player will automatic result in a forfeit.
- A player can be on only 1 Roster per Division (Players may be in as many leagues as they want but can be on only 1 roster in each division). NO EXCEPTIONS
- If a player ends up on two rosters in the same division and there becomes an argument on which roster that player belongs to, the athletics dept. will contact that player to find out what roster that player signed. Forged names and forged wavier will not be tolerated in any way. This put the county in a bad position if a player is injured. Forged Roster may lead to a team suspension and or the Manager and coach from the league. So please make sure you have your players fill out the roster sheets with their correct information on it.

- Make sure you communicate all schedule changes to your team. Please Check the website daily for changes.

- Thru the season, the managers should check with Athletic Staff for early registration dates, changes in schedules for any rain outs. Usually, the rainouts will be replayed in the order which they were rained out after the regular season game the same time slots, also you may visit the web site for a lot of this information. The athletic staff reserves the right to reschedule or change times or nights to make up any cancelled or rainout games

LEAGUE RULES:

A pre-game conference is a meeting involving the umpires, coaches and or team captains at home plate. The meeting should begin approximately five minutes prior to the start of the game. The purpose of the pre-game conference is to exchange and check each team's lineup cards and as well as a coin flip to determine who is the home and away team and to discuss ground rules.

- All batters come to the plate with one ball, one strike. No Courtesy Fouls

- Time limit on all games is one hour, no inning will begin after the time Limit has expired unless the game is tied. After seven innings or time limit exceeded the teams are tied there will be a Texas - tie breaker put into play. There are no tie games. The Playoff Games Will Have the standard Game Time limits, Championship Game has a Time limit of 1 hour and 15 minutes. No new inning will start after this allotted time.

- The following run rules are in effect for all games 15 Runs after 4 Innings 10 after 5

- A Coin flip will determine which team is home and way for every game regular season games. The playoff's the higher seed will be home team.

- All levels of men's and women & co-ed play teams may use the extra hitter (EH). In a league play a team may bat up to 14 hitters.

- In all league games, a team may drop below the number of players with which they Began the game and continue to play provided that the number of players does not Drop below 8 players. However, if a team drops a player the team must take an out every Time the player is due up to bat unless the team has an additional player on their bench to Sub for that player.

- If a team loses a player to injury and does not have a available player to sub on the Bench and wants to use a pick up player you must check with the opposing Teams manager to allow you to pick up that player and sub for the injured player.

- If a team "drops" due to a player's ejection from the game, the team cannot use a sub for the ejected player and the team must take an out every time the ejected player is due up to bat.*At the time of ejection there is an extra hitter already in your lineup, that player may assume the fielding vacancy, However the spot of the ejected player will still be a automatic out every time the spot in the lineup

comes up to bat. If the team does have extra hitter in the line prior to the ejection a team may not fill that void in the field. They must play short fielders. And may not another player to the lineup.

- If a team loses a player due to work, and or gets mad and quits, etc. You may sub for That player provided you have additional player on your bench to sub for that player. You may not use a pickup player to sub for this scenario. If you have no available Players on your bench you may continue to play with an out being recorded each time The player is scheduled to bat. If the player who leaves is on base, the base is vacated, and an out is recorded. Please keep in mind that we have approximately 20 teams a night on the fields. So, if possible, please use the website for postponements of the games. If the game has not been postponed via the website One hour before game time. Then the decision to play becomes the umpire's reasonability to call off the games. Any concerns with the league or it's Umpires, field quality any general questions should be emailed in to info@hcsportsonline.com

Pitching Standards:

Slow pitch softball pitchers have the option of releasing the pitch from the pitching slab or from an area defined as the pitching area, which is a six-foot area directly behind the slab. The slab and the pitching area are both two feet wide. When he releases the pitch, the pitcher must have one foot on the ground either on the slab or within that six-foot deep box. The pitch must come out underhand, from below the pitcher's waist, and must have an arc to its trajectory. The ball must go up at least 3 feet from the ground and cannot go higher than 10 feet above the ground. To be called a strike, the pitch must pass the batter between the level of the highest shoulder and the front knee. And Cross thru this zone and the Plate. * Pitcher is required to wear a Face mask or helmet while pitching or must use a net. ** (Players Must Supply their own equipment) ** Pitcher safety rule, If the ball is hit back to the pitcher and it goes thru the pitcher's box and any part of the pitcher body is in the box in the air or on the ground 1 hop or less the batter will automatically be out. Once a Pitcher leaves the box, he is now no longer subject to this rule.

- Rules Allow a pitcher on Any Level to Fake or Deak or Pump a pitch before delivery for 3 sec prior to a pitch A Player cannot pitching behind the back or between the legs on the delivery. This will be deem a illegal pitch • Each Team will supply their own Usssa Stamped balls, Teams Must use a Usssa Stamped Ball.

Base Running:

SAFETY BASE: First base will have a white & orange safety base. Both bases are active Are meant for players to avoid contact. Players may use either bag to avoid contact.

STEALING : Due to the recreational nature of our leagues, it is our plan to allow stealing only in our Men and Women's Class Elite class.

PINCH RUNNERS: Any player in the lineup may be a pinch runner. Please inform the umpire that a player is subbing in for a pinch runner. Only male runners can run for male batters and Female runners for female batters. If the pinch runners is on base when it is their turn to bat the runner becomes a automatic out, and must vacate the base to bat.

Pick up players:

No Pickup players are allowed in the playoffs.

For regular season:

If a team is short of their required amount to play which is 8 they may check with a opposing team to see if they will allow them to us a pick up player to play in that game. If both teams agree, then the managers must inform the umpire of their intent.

- The umpire must verify with the opposing team's manager they are allowing a specific pick up for that game only.
- That team's manager will have two options they may choose to take the win via Forfeit. If they do they will be awarded a 7-0 victory (That Game will not be played) or they will allow the other team to pick up players. (They Waive there right to protest the game for a roster violation) * If they decide to allow you to pick up player these rules must apply: *
- Players must be an eligible player. A player is not eligible unless signed on a current roster at William Owen Pass or Ed Radice complex. If approved by the opposition A team can only pick up a max of 3 players to play the game. • If a team is picking up a player, they may not play with more than 9 players.
- If you picked up players and your roster player show up you must sub out the Pickup players only. (Exceptions if a player was injured)
- Any pickup player added to the team's line-up must be placed at the bottom of that Teams line-up {they may play any position on the field}

- If a team feels an opponent has a non-eligible player in their lineup, that team's manager Must inform the umpire that they would like to play this game under protest game due to their line-up. Make sure the umpire writes protest on the official score card. Before the game has ended. **

If you agreed to allow that team pick up those players you lose your right to protest the lineup regardless Of the result of the game.

- There will be no pick up players allowed for the Playoffs if a team does not have enough players to field a team a Forfeit will be issued.

Calls or concerns should be directed to William Owen Pass for games played at William Owen Pass, Email fuccaa@hillsborougcounty.org Calls or concerns should be directed to Ed Radice for games played at Ed Radice Email EasomM@hillsboroughcounty.org For all fields, the Athletic Staff and umpires will determine the playability of all fields up until 1 hour before the start time of the first game of that day. After such time, all teams should report to their scheduled games and the playability of the fields will become the umpire discretion

BAT RULES:

The following rules apply if (1) the ball hits a pitcher while in the pitcher's box without touching the ball touching the ground first or (2) a pitcher is injured by a hit ball and removed from the game due to the injury even for just one play:

- The bat will be removed from the game and placed behind the umpire on the fence for the remainder of the game (once a bat is removed from the game it cannot longer be used in that game). • After the game, the Umpire will inspect the bat. If the Umpire does not find an issue with the bat, it will be returned to the owner.
- If the Umpire feels the bat is unsafe due to cracks, or it looks altered, the bat will be tagged and reported to the USSSA and the Hillsborough County Athletic Office. • If the bat is tagged, it will no longer be eligible to be used for play in our league without written proof that the bat has been properly tested and is safe for play in a USSSA sanctioned game.
- Umpires may request that any bat be removed from play if they feel it is unsafe.
- A bat tagged means: The Umpire will record the Make, Model, Weight, Color, and Bat ID (or SN#). The ID/SN# is sometimes located behind the batters taped handle. The Umpire will also record the owner's Name and Phone number and a brief description of the bat.
- The bat will be immediately returned to the owner once this information is recorded by the Umpire following the game (neither the Umpires or Hillsborough County Athletics will never take possession of the bat after the game has ended).
- If a owner refuses to furnish the information needed to tag the bat, or tries to restrict the Umpire from recording bat information as described above, the person will be suspended from play.

- If a player is caught using a bat that has been removed from play and tagged, that player and/or owner will be suspended.
- New Rule If the ball is hit through the Pitchers Box in the air or One bounce off the ground the batter will automatically be out.

Co-Ed Rules :

In coed play, teams will bat using two ball concepts. Male players will hit the 12-inch ball, and females will hit the 11-inch ball. NOTE: If the pitcher throws the wrong ball and the batter hits the pitch, he or she will have the option of taking the result of the play or batting again using the correct ball. * Women can also choose a Men's Ball to Hit if they would like too. The only rules are you must have at least 3 women always playing anywhere in the field. If you only have 3 women in the field, you may only have 6 males on defense. With a total of 9 total players. If a team does not have three girls to start a game, it is a forfeit. In the Batting order you may never bat more than two males back-to-back. If a team is trying to field a team with 10 or more players, it must have at least 4 girls in its line up and in the field. With a max of 6 guys in the field. The most males you can have in defense position is 6 - in any scenario.

- Walks or Intentional walks If a walk is issued to a male batter with less than two outs the female must hit, if there are two outs the female batter has the option to take the base automatically Also in coed If there is back-to-back male batter the player is only awarded 1 base.

Miscellaneous:

- The Batting teams base coach will exchange the male and female balls with the pitcher not the umpire. Roster not turned in by the roster deadline will not be valid. Or if they are not filled out properly they will not be valid, Missing signature names address will result in no valid roster
- It is strongly recommended that teams should at minimum keep score for there at bats this resolves any discrepancy That may arrive in a scoring error. After every half inning team should verify the score with the home plate umpire.
- If a game gets suspended for whatever reason the athletic office will decide whether to continue that game from it Current place, or to just replay the whole game. After 5 innings the game is official.
- Standing or Scoring correction If you see a scheduling or scoring or standings issue, please contact the Athletic office to inform them. sent a email to info@hcsportsonline.com Email first then follow up with a phone message
- The Website is not official county driven site. The Athletic department tries to assist the volunteers with the most accurate information of standings, Rosters and current rules and regulation as possible. • All official Records Standing Rules are keep by the athletic dept.. The website is just a tool to help our support our league.

- Any unforeseen roster issues that may occur will be dealt with by Hillsborough County athletic office and will be their sole discretion. Team that tries to submit multiple rosters or do not turn in a roster in time will be penalized and may forfeit its eligible playoff status. Each team will complete their regular season games. After the 9 weeks of regular season games the top 3 to 4 teams will qualify for a divisional playoff to determine the league winner. The playoffs will consist of 1 week of playoffs (i.e. 7pm Game will be the 2 seed vs 3 seed, the winner advancing to the championship game. The same night; the 8pm Game will be the 1 seed vs 4 seed, the winner advancing to the championship game at 9PM that same night. Or if three team playoff then winner of 7pm game would play for Championship at 8pm that same night. (All other teams will be eliminated from playoff play). During the playoffs, rosters will be strictly enforced. All players who participate in the playoffs must have proper ID at the game If Requested by the umpire. Only player who have played in 3 regular season games for the team will be eligible for the playoffs. If there is a playoff protest the head umpire must contact the athletics immediately. All playoff Rosters will be verified by the umpires before each game. •Earphones, Headphone Cell Phones are not allowed to be used during play. There are no Speaker boxes Boom box or Bluetooth speaker Allowed during game play. In between innings and walk-up music is accepted but no music during play.

•No dogs or pets are allowed at county complexes Only Service Animals are allowed.

Game Balls :

The Official Ball Men's (12") The Balls must be Optic Yellow , With a USSSA Stamp Men's Classic M allowed. The Official Ball Women's (11") The Ball must be Optic Yellow. With a USSSA Stamp Women's Classic W are allowed

STANDINGS & PLAYOFFS:

In Coed and Women play Women may choose to hit either Ball Women's or Men's Teams are required to purchase their own games balls but must meet the standard and specs above. Umpires have the right to remove any ball from play for discoloring unreadable etc. Each team will play between 9 or 10 depending on number of teams in the division The top three or four teams will enter a playoff based off the division standings 1 seed will play 4 seed and 2 seed will play 3 seed or 2 will play 3 and winner will play 1 in a 4 team division , Winners to meet for the championship Tie Breakers: 2 teams are tied in winning percentage the next tie breaker for 2 teams only will be head to head. If the teams have spilt the regular season game the next tie breaker will be the differential which is the teams point scored minus the points against which gives you either a positive number or a negative number depending on the points for and points against. The highest positive number or the lowest negative number if both teams have a negative differential The next tie breaker would be points against and then points For and then if still tied the athletic staff will do a coin flip. 3 or more Teams Tied: Head-to-Head does not apply.

Divisions:

Home Runs are Hit and Sit Players do not need to advance to the next Base.

When a team reaches its home run limits will be the inning ending.

Only Men's Women's and Coed Elite levels will have steals.

Men's Women's and Coed A,B,C Level will have no steals

ELITE

Men's Women's and Coed Elite – Unlimited Hr.'s With Steals

A -Level

Men's A Level – 8 hr.'s No steals.

Women's A Level – 6hrs No steals

Coed A Level – 6hrs No steals

B – Level

Men's B Level – 6 hr.'s No steals.

Women's B Level – 4hrs No steals

Coed B Level – 4hrs No steals - Per Sex

C – Level

Men's C Level – 4 hr.'s No steals.

Women's C Level – 3hrs No steals

Coed C Level – 2hrs No steals - Per Sex

Recreation

Recreation levels are NO Homeruns / No steals

AWARDS:

Each Season All Awards will be held at William Owen Pass Office for East Side and Ed Radice for the west side. It is the responsibility of each winning manager to pick up awards. Awards will be available at the end of Each season at the William Owen Pass Office for the East side, and at the Ed Radice Complex for the West side. The athletic staff will not be responsible for any awards left for over 30 days. Hillsborough county softball official standings may be found on the www.hcsportsonline.com web site or by calling the athletic office. Each League winning team will receive one team trophy. Trophies will be purchased by the Hillsborough County Athletic Section. Each winning team of each division will be awarded a Champions trophy. These trophies were purchased by Hillsborough County Athletic office.

RAIN OUTS / INCLEMENT WEATHER:

All regularly scheduled games that need to be made up or that are rained out will be rescheduled at the discretion of the athletic office. Please note that only the manager will be given make up information. Rescheduling of rained out and make up games is done without regard to bad nights, bad times or conflicts with other team's schedules. All the managers will be notified as soon as possible. Usually make up games are made up at the end of the season. After Week 8, the staff will do all that is possible to make up all games. Some games may not be made up for the following reasons: Due to deadlines to start the next season, Standings that will not affect the outcome of the Champions. www.hcsportsonline.com will have them posted as well.

Safety Net and Safety Mask:

Any League that Uses a Protective Pitchers Net (If the Ball Hits Any Part of the net or the frame It is considered a foul ball) Team may elect to not use the net on defense. The Pitcher will be required to wear a mask, if team uses the net, it must be placed in front of the pitching rubber up to three feet in front. The Pitcher will have to retreat behind the net after the pitch. After the ball is put in play, The Net may be knocked down for a play to the plate. If a Player Has 2 Strikes and hits the net the batter is out. The nets are not supplied by the league teams may elect to provide their own for use. A net may not be wider than 4 feet wide. Max of 7 high. All Pitchers not using a net will be required to wear a safety mask or helmet. Player must supply their own equipment. ** No Equipment is supplied by Hillsborough Country**

