



AHPD softball leagues are designed to meet the softball needs of Arlington Heights residents. We offer leagues for different skill levels to accommodate players with a variety of softball experience.

Although we offer leagues at levels from recreational to competitive, teams at all levels should have fun.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about our program, please contact Nick Wirth at nwirth@ahpd.org or talk to a supervisor on game nights.

Have a great softball season!

League Descriptions

Spring Season: Begins the week of April 1st. Teams play an eight game season. Most games will be double headers, however some teams may play only one game per night. In the event of a rain-out, we may attempt to reschedule. If we are unable to reschedule, teams will receive a refund for any games not played due to weather. We do not have awards for the spring season.

Summer season: Begins the week of May 6. Teams play a ten game regular season with single-elimination playoffs.

Fall Season: Begins the week of August 12th (pending the finish of summer season) Teams play mostly double headers with a 10 game regular season and a single-elimination playoffs.

Competitive League: For more skilled teams whose main goal for the season is a winning record.

Recreational /Co-Rec League: For teams who are less concerned with winning and more interested in having fun. Work and neighborhood teams would be a good fit for this league.

AHPD reserves the right to bracket teams based on past season record or at the discretion of the athletics supervisor.

The AHPD, its employees, or appointed agents assume no responsibility for any personal injury or loss that any team member or spectator may incur as a result of this program. Individuals are encouraged to have their own personal health/accident insurance plan for any injuries that occur.

Contact Information and Facilities

Melas Park – 1500 W. Central Road, Mount Prospect (Central Road just east of Busse Road). This 35-acre park has four lighted softball fields, a sand volleyball court, a playground and picnic area, walking trails, and a concession stand, which is open from 5:30-9:30pm on evenings when games are played.

AHPD Administration Center - 410 N. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, Hours: 8:30am-4:30pm, Mondays-Fridays. Phone: 847.577.3000, Fax: 847.506.2735

Nick Wirth, Athletics Manager

nwirth@ahpd.org

847.506.7132

Registration Information

You may register your team in three ways:

Login and register online at ahpd.org.

- **Register in person** during regular business hours at the Arlington Ridge Center. Please check www.ahpd.org for ARC registration hours. Or email Nick Wirth @ nwirth@ahpd.org to schedule a time to register at the Recreation Park Community Center.
- **Payment in full is due at the time of registration.**

Registration Procedures

- Only a team player may register a team.
- The AHPD is not responsible for inaccurate information on registration or roster forms. To ensure that you receive league information, please inform Nick Wirth of any changes to your contact information.
- Teams who use ineligible players or list incorrect information on their rosters risk forfeiture of their spot in the league if discovered before the season, or risk forfeiture of all games in which the ineligible player played if discovered during the season.
- **Teams will be registered on a first come, first served basis. AHPD does not hold spots for teams that may have played in previous seasons.**

COVID-19 TEAM RULES-

AHPD will update Covid 19 guidelines as necessary as these guidelines change frequently. AHPD and our softball leagues will follow all current state guidelines as it relates to Covid 19

Official Rules and General Rules: after in-house rules, ASA rules apply

Alcoholic Beverages

No alcoholic beverages are allowed in the parks at any time. If any player or team spectator consumes alcohol on site before, during, or after a game, the team risks forfeiting that week's game and possibly the following game. Teams are responsible for informing their spectators of this policy.

Appeal Play

An appeal play is one in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested to do so. Examples include missing a base or leaving too soon on a caught fly ball. Appeals must be made before the next pitch.

Base Running

- 12" and 14" - no lead-offs allowed
- 16" - lead-offs and stealing are allowed. A runner may advance to any base, including home, provided the following is true. This applies only to the man played on, only when played on by the pitcher OR catcher, only one base, only when the next base is open, and only if the runner tags the base he currently owns before preceeding to the next base.

Bats and equipment

Only rubber softball spikes or tennis shoes may be worn. No metal or removable cleats are permitted.

For 2024, bats must have a stamp or seal indicating approval by one of the below organizations.

- **12" Softball**
 - National Softball Association (NSA)
 - United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA)
 - ASA/USA
- **14" and 16" Softball**
 - You do not need an association certified bat

Prohibited bats:

- Senior league bats
- Baseball bats (barrels larger than 2.25")
- For 16" softball – Chicago 6 and higher bats are prohibited
- Bats listed on a non-approved bat list by (NSA, USSSA, and ASA/USA.) An updated list will be provided to captains and an updated list will be available in the concession stand.

Co-Rec Specific Rules

- **Rosters** - **At least half of the players must be women**, and all players must be on the official roster. If a game starts with the defensive team only having nine players, the tenth player may enter the field at any time. If the nine players consist of five men and four women, an out will be recorded for the fifth woman.
- **Courtesy runners** – Only the player who makes the last out may be designated as a courtesy runner. Last out is not necessarily the last batted out. It might be, but it might also be a runner forced out at a base who then becomes the courtesy runner.
Men must run for men, and women must run for women. Courtesy runners do not have to be approved before the game and may be used at any time.
- **Batting** – A team may bat as many as 14 players (two more than 12" teams). However, for every male batter, there must be a female batter. The maximum number of male batters is seven. The maximum number of female batters is 14. There are no batting order limitations. Men bat natural handed. If a male batter is pitched four balls, he must take the walk and go to first base. **EXCEPTION:** If a male batter has a female batter behind him in the order, and is pitched four balls, he may either go to first base immediately or "bat again" and start with another one and one count. If he is walked again, he goes to 2nd base. This does not affect the next female batter who must bat as usual. What I want to make clear is the **EXCEPTION** part of the rule, which is a male batter can "ONLY" choose to "bat again" if the male batter has a **female** batter behind him in the order.
- **Fielding** – Five of the 10 field players must be women: There are no restrictions on which positions must be played by women or men, including pitcher and catcher. If a team has nine players to start and five of them are men, there is no penalty for this on defense, only the automatic out in the batting order for the 10th woman.
- **Equipment** – Only women may use gloves.

Courtesy Runner

Courtesy runners must be designated prior to the game. However, players injured during the course of a game may be added to the list at the time of injury.

Courtesy runners are always the last OUT, not necessarily the last batted out. It might be, but it might also be a runner forced out at a base who then becomes the courtesy runner.

Players with a designated runner may only walk, hit a home run, hit a single, or make an out.

Players who run for designated players are allowed to move as many bases as they can prior to the stoppage of play.

Eligibility/Rosters/Protests

Teams must provide the AHPD with a current phone number and email address for the captain when registering. Please inform the AHPD of any changes in contact information to ensure you receive game and league information in a timely manner.

Rosters and Eligibility

- Players must be 18 years of age by the first game of the season.
- Rosters may list a maximum of 20 players per team.
- Players may play in multiple leagues but may not play on more than one team in the same league.
- Players must be listed on and electronically sign the team roster by the start of the first game of the season.
- Teams may not make roster changes after the third game of the season. All roster edits will be “locked” in quickscores by the start of the 3rd game of the season. ALL players including subs need to be listed on the roster and ALL players need to sign electronically the waiver.
- The AHPD is not responsible for incorrect information on registration or roster forms.

Teams bat a minimum of eight and a maximum of 12 players and must have eight players present to start a game. At the captain’s meeting prior to the start of the game, captains must inform the umpire of how many players they are batting. Players don’t have to be present at the time of the meeting. An out will be recorded for players who are present in the batting order but are not present at the time of their bat. A team that starts with eight players will have a dead spot in the ninth and tenth spot until the ninth player has shown up for the game. Once the ninth player is present, the tenth spot automatic out is eliminated if a team is only playing with nine players. **Picking up players from other teams (at the fields, prior to first pitch) is strictly prohibited! Exception—If extra players are needed to avoid a forfeit. Team captains may ask other players from other teams to sub. ONLY IF..The captain of the team with enough players AGREES prior to the start of the game.** If not agreed upon, the game may end in a forfeit. If agreed on prior, teams short on players can only pick-up enough players to avoid the forfeit and players MUST already be waived in our leagues. This exception only applies to avoiding a forfeit at the fields, leading up to game time.

In normal circumstances and when captains are planning for the week on who of their teammates will be at their game, if short on players, captains may opt to use subs. Subs are allowed, assuming they are on their teams current roster, waived in our program, and meet roster rules. See below.

Eligibility protests

- Team rosters are due by the start of the FIRST game of the season. Players must electronically sign the roster to be eligible to play. (See new roster procedure directions) Additions can be made up to the START of the 3rd week of the season, however ALL players must electronically sign the roster/waiver before participating in league play. No Exceptions. If any player does not have the ability to electronically sign, a paper copy may be made available.

- Players may **ONLY** be listed on a roster for one team in a division. For instance, a player may be rostered on teams in Monday Rec 1 and Monday Rec 2, but may not be rostered on two Monday Rec 1 teams. Players are allowed to play on multiple teams (as long as they are on the official teams roster), however they are NOT allowed to play on multiple teams within the same division.
- Player must bring a photo ID to each game to prove ID in the event of an eligibility protest.
- Protests should be player-specific and made as soon as an ineligible player is suspected.
- Protests must be made on-site prior to the end of the game. IF not, the game will be deemed final
- If a player is ruled ineligible, the game in which he or she is playing will be deemed a forfeit. If the player is rostered on a different team in the same league, he or she may face additional suspension.
- Players may not play on any teams in any AHPD softball leagues while suspended.

Rule protests

Teams may only protest rule interpretations, not judgment calls. Team captains must inform the umpire of their intent to protest prior to the next pitch. At that time, the protesting team must notify the opposing team and AHPD staff. If possible, the protest will be settled immediately. If not, the protesting team must submit a written statement to Nick Wirth within 24 hours (or the following Monday for Friday leagues) that includes the details of the events and the rule that was violated. A protest fee of \$25 must be submitted with the written protest. If a team does not follow this procedure, the protest will not be considered.

Forfeits

If at any time a team does not have at least eight players, the game will be forfeited. The umpire's decision is final on all forfeits. (Exception—Read above on picking up players to avoid forfeit)

If you know in advance that you must forfeit, contact Nick Wirth at 847.506.7132 or nwirth@ahpd.org as soon as possible so that we may notify the umpire and opposing team. Teams that forfeit less than 24 hours before the start of a game may be fined. (See "League Fines and Suspensions.")

Any team that forfeits three games during the season will be ejected from the league without a refund.

Game Cancellation/Postponements

In case of inclement weather or dangerous field conditions, we will cancel and make every effort to reschedule games.

On days when weather and field conditions are a concern, the Park District will make a decision regarding game cancellations by 4pm and post a message on the weather hotline, 847.577.3003, extension 6. To check weather, call the hotline, not the general number.

If dangerous weather or field conditions arise during the course of a game, the decision to postpone or cancel a game will be made by the umpire. All umpire decisions on this matter are final.

Game Length and Rescheduling

All scheduled games will be seven innings in length. If a 14" or 16" game runs longer than one hour, no new innings will be started. No new innings will be started for 12" games after 65 minutes.

If a game is tied after seven innings, extra innings will be played until a winner is decided. A 3-2 count will be used for all extra innings. The last batter from the last inning goes to second base. (keeping the batting order intact and consecutive from prior inning.) A game called by the umpire is considered regulation if five or more complete innings (4½ if the home team leads) have been played. A team leading by 20 or more runs at the end of four innings, 15 or more runs at the end of five innings (4 ½ if the home team leads), or 10 runs at the end of six innings shall be declared the winner.

In the **playoffs**, there is no time limit. However, the first full inning past 60 min and all subsequent innings will begin with a 2-2 count.

A game is considered official if five full innings have been played. During summer and fall season, unofficial games will be picked up from the exact point that the game was cancelled or at the discretion of the athletics supervisor.

Home Run Rule

Teams have a home run limit of three runs plus 1-up. The 1-up rule allows teams to hit more than three home runs as long as they do not have more than a one home run lead over the opposing team. For example, if Team A has hit their three home run limit and Team B has hit fewer than three home runs, Team A may not hit any more home runs. If, however, Team B catches up and hits three home runs, Team A may hit a fourth home run. If Team B then catches up with a fourth home run, Team A may hit one more run and so on. If a team hits a home run that violates the 1-up rule, the run will be counted as an out.

Infield Fly

An infield fly is a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when 1st and 2nd base or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd base are occupied before a team has two outs. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder who positions him/herself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders. The ball is live and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught or tag up and advance after the ball is touched.

Interference

Interference is an act by an offensive player (batter, batter-runner, on-deck batter, coach, or teammate) that impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player. Defensive players must be given the opportunity to field the ball anywhere on the playing field.

League Fines and Suspensions

1. Fighting anywhere on facilities or grounds of AHPD sponsored events: \$50 fine and season suspension for each individual involved.
2. Being under the influence of or in possession of alcoholic beverages: \$25 fine and one game suspension.
3. Involvement in rough tactic: \$25 fine and two game suspension for each individual involved.
4. Threatening an official or supervisor: \$50 fine and season suspension.
5. Ejection from game:
 - 1st offense: minimum one game suspension.
 - 2nd offense: \$50 fine and minimum two game suspension.
 - 3rd offense: one year suspension from all AHPD athletic programs, effective date of offense.
6. Team forfeit less than 24 hours in advance of a game:
 - 1st offense: \$50 fine, to be paid by your next scheduled game.
 - 2nd offense: \$75 fine, to be paid by your next scheduled game.
 - 3rd offense: \$100 fine, to be paid before registering for the next season, and suspension from league for remainder of season.
7. Improperly listing a player or using player who is not listed on your roster or who hasn't signed the roster: minimum one game suspension for each player involved and forfeit of game.
8. Touching, pushing, or striking an official or AHPD staff member: \$50 fine and two year suspension from all AHPD athletic programs.
9. Playing in a game during a suspension: \$50 fine and one year suspension.

Ejected players must leave the premises immediately. Non-compliance will result in team forfeiture. Premises mean the Park District grounds where programs are being held.

Obstruction

Obstruction is when a fielder who is not in possession of the ball nor in the act of fielding a batted or thrown ball acts in a way that impedes the progress of a base runner legally running bases. The obstructed runner and any other runners affected by the obstruction will be awarded the base(s) he or she would have reached had the obstruction not occurred.

Official Score Book

The home team will keep the official score of the game and will be responsible for any questions regarding scores, outs, or innings. All teams will receive one score book prior to the season's start. The home team will be listed first on the schedule.

Overthrow

If a ball is thrown out of play, time will be called. The umpire shall award the base runners two bases from the base last touched when the throw was made.

Pitching

League	Pitching	Base
12"	53	70
14", 16"	38	60

All leagues will play with a one and one count. Every batter will start with one ball and one strike.

12" – The pitcher shall take a position with one foot firmly on the ground and one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the pitched ball leaves the hand. The pitch must have a 6' to 10' arc and must clear the white of the plate. A pitch may hit the black on the back of the plate and may drop in the well for a strike.

14" and 16" – The pitcher shall take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and one or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate. The pitch must have a 6' to 12' arc and be pitched with moderate speed. The ball may hit on the black of the plate and fall into the well for a strike.

Strike Zone Mats – a strike zone mat fits behind home plate and is used by umpires to determine whether a pitch is a strike or a ball. If the pitched ball hits the mat, it is a strike. If the pitched ball does not hit the mat, it is a ball. Strike zone mats will be used in all AHPD softball leagues.

Substitution/Re-Entry

Any starting player may be withdrawn and re-entered once, providing players occupy the same batting positions in the line-up. Substituted players may not re-enter once withdrawn. The starting player and substituted player may never be in the game simultaneously.

Unsporting Conduct

Any team or individual exhibiting unsporting acts towards members of another team, umpires, or Park District representatives before, during, or after a game, risks forfeiture of the game. The AHPD reserves the right to forfeit any game following complaints by the umpire's association or AHPD representatives even if the umpire does not do so. Any team or individual that the AHPD feels does not display the high level of conduct that the AHPD expects in its leagues will be suspended or expelled from the league for the season, the year, or possibly longer.

The Arlington Heights Park District reserves the right to make changes to this document as necessary during the course of the season. (updated 2/9/24)