

SOUTH JERSEY GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

2021 TRAVEL RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. BASIS

A. All SJGSA divisions will be following the rules set forth by the National Federation of State High School (NFHS) in their rule book, unless otherwise changed or altered by the following amendments or descriptions.

II. CONDUCT

A. It is the responsibility of all managers and coaches to follow and remind their players, parents, and fans to maintain a proper code of conduct when at games. Managers are responsible for their coaches, players and fans conduct. Teams can be penalized due to unruly behavior by anyone affiliated with the team.

B. The umpires have complete control of the game from the beginning until completion of the game. The umpire has the right to take any action necessary to uphold the structure and dignity of the game.

III. PLAYING REQUIREMENTS

A. All players must have a common uniform, including a shirt (with numbers), pants/shorts, and socks/stirrups. A player may be permitted to wear her high school pants/shorts during a game (cannot wear high school shirt). Hats/ headbands optional.

B. There will be nine (9) players on the field with a manager's option to bat the roster in Senior I, Senior II, Junior Olympic, Junior National, and Junior American divisions. There will be ten (10) players on the field with the manager's option to bat the roster in the Junior Patriot, Major, and Minor divisions.

C. A minimum of eight (8) players is needed to play an official game. Forfeits occur with only seven (7) or less players. Teams may not finish the game with less than eight (8) players. An ineligible substitute (as chosen by the opposing manager) may be used if injury or illness occurs and the team will only have seven (7) players left. If a player is removed from the game due to illness or injury and no substitute is available, **that player's batting position is passed over (not an out)**. *SENIOR DIVISION ONLY: If a team does not have the required eight (8) players coaches may agree that one team may lend players and it will count as an official game.*

D. Each game will be played with one (1) new ball and one (1) good condition ball (acceptable to umpire) **provided by the home team**. Each team must use a twelve (12) inch .47 maximum core ball with leather cover, with the

exception of the minor division. The minor division will use an eleven (11) inch ball. Game balls must be the same color and manufacturer.

E. Dimensions of the field (See NFHS rule book).

F. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets with cages. Helmets will not be removed while the ball is live. Base runners removing helmets while the ball is live will be called out.

G. Catchers must wear a throat guard and headgear/hockey style mask in addition to the regular catcher's gear.

H. Under no circumstances will any player warm up a pitcher without at least wearing protective headgear mask and throat guard. This does not apply to managers and coaches.

I. Metal cleats will be permitted in the Junior National, Junior Olympic, and Senior divisions.

J. Masks for pitchers are strongly recommended on the field of play.

K. All batting line-ups will be recorded in all record books showing first name, last name, and uniform number for each player. This rule may be spot checked at games by SJGSA board members and division commissioners. Rule violations will be subject to a \$10 fine.

L. At no time will anyone but the manager, or such person who has been designated as the manager in the absence of the regular manager, be permitted to question the umpire on any rule interpretation. Judgement calls, balls and strikes, fair, foul, safe, out etc. cannot be questioned. Excessive questioning will result in an ejection. Problems with umpires must be formally submitted to the Division Commissioner 12 hours after the game unless there is an extreme incident that needs to be addressed immediately.

IV. DURATION OF GAME AND GAME TIMING

A. Games start at 6:15pm or 8:15pm unless otherwise designated on the schedule. Rosters must be exchanged no later than five minutes before game time. A forfeit will be recorded if a team is not present thirty-one (31) minutes after game time. If a field is not available for use within thirty (30) minutes of game time, the game may be rescheduled if both managers agree (also see Article IV, Section E). If there are a minimum of eight (8) players, adult supervision (must be rostered coach) and at least one (1) umpire (for regular season games), the game must start.

B. In all divisions except Minors, games stopped due to rain or darkness that have gone at least one (1) full inning, but less than four (4) innings, 3 1/2 innings if the home team is winning, will be considered an incomplete game and will be played from the point of suspension until completion. (See Article IV, Section F). The Minor division will be required to play three (3) innings, 2 1/2 innings if the home team is winning for the game to be deemed an "official" game.

C. Games consist of seven (7) innings with the exception of the minor division. The Minor division will be allotted six (6) innings. At the conclusion of ground rules, the clock will begin at one hour thirty minutes (1:30). At the completion of the allotted time, teams will finish the inning in progress and play one (1) final inning. Games may end in a tie (DOES NOT APPLY TO PLAYOFFS). A new inning starts immediately following the last out of the previous inning. If the time expires between the final out of an inning and before the first pitch of the next inning, that would be considered the last inning of the game. Division Commissioners at their discretion and with Board approval institute a two hour time limit for games in Minor II, Major II, III, and Junior Patriot. There will be an additional fifteen (15) minutes allotted for unusual delay i.e. injury or rain. Games played under the lights will not be permitted to start a new inning after 10:30pm. Lights may be used to finish up any game as long as time permits.

D. If the umpire is late thirty-one (31) minutes from game time; the game may be rescheduled, played when the umpire arrives (if both managers agree to play), or played with a qualified substitute umpire if available (if both managers agree).

E. Any game stopped because of a time limit will be an official game regardless of innings played, as of the last completed inning.

F. Regular season games may end in a tie after seven (7) innings or when the last inning is declared. Tie games during playoffs will be decided by the International Tie Breaker Rule.

G. Managers will see that their players quickly leave the field between innings in order not to delay the playing of the game. NFHS rule book allows only one minute, pitchers are only permitted five (5) warm-up pitches in the beginning of the first inning and three (3) warm-up pitches between subsequent innings. After the start of the first inning there will be no balls in the infield or outfield during warm-up pitches.

H. Any sight of lightening will immediately suspend the game (delay). All persons should remove themselves from the field immediately. (See Article IV, Sections B and C).

I. Standings, Point System and Playoffs:

- 2 points awarded to a played game winner
- 1.5 points awarded to each team of a played game ending in a tie
- 1 point awarded to a game played loser
- 1.5 points awarded to a forfeit game recipient (a possible 2 points will be awarded by the board on a case by case basis)
- -1 point for forfeited games and non-rescheduled games

Total points will then determine playoff seedings except in the case where a “round robin” playoff system is utilized.

All Championship games will be played to completion, a full seven (7) innings (six innings for Minors) or extra innings if necessary. There will be no time limit in the Championship game. Time limit rules will be in effect for the preliminary round playoff games as we have during the regular season. The ten- run rule will be in effect for all playoff games. Any game not completed will be completed before the start of the next game.

V. PLAYING RULES

A. Infield fly rule is used (see NFHS rule book) in all divisions, except the Minor Division.

B. Unlimited stealing is permitted in ALL divisions. Stealing home is permitted in all divisions.

C. Base runners may not leave the base until the pitcher releases the ball.

D. Dropped third strike applies to all divisions except the Minor Division.

E. Interference and obstruction (see NFHS rule book).

F. An offensive player must not collide with any defensive player who has the ball in her possession and is waiting to make a tag. Any offensive player who, in a manner found excessive by the umpire, does collide as stated will automatically be called out. Any offensive player that maliciously and intentionally runs into a defensive player awaiting to make a tag will be ejected from the game and will be subject to suspension.

G. An optional courtesy runner will be allowed and encouraged at any time during the inning when the pitcher and/or catcher is safely on base. The courtesy runner may be any player on the bench not legally in the lineup. If there are no substitutes on the bench, legal or illegal, the courtesy runner will be the last completed at bat (not on base). There is no charged substitution for instituting the courtesy runner. A mandatory courtesy runner must be used for the catcher with 2 outs.

H. Strike zone (see NFHS rule book).

I. There is free substitution, however all re-entries must be inserted into their original slot in the batting order. A starter or substitute may only re-enter once.

J. A team is permitted only three (3) defensive conferences per seven innings, one for each extra inning. Changing pitchers is not a charged conference. Any defensive conferences after three, the pitcher must be changed. (This is a High School Rule).

K. A team is permitted only one offensive conference per inning.

L. Fake tags (in order to deceive the runner) are not permitted and are considered unsportsmanlike. Player is subject to ejection; the obstructed runner is bound by obstruction rule.

M. Intentionally thrown bat (or other equipment) will be subject to ejection by the umpire.

N. Thrown bat rule will be used. First offense - team warning; thereafter, batters will be called out by the umpire.

O. Bunting is permitted in ALL divisions.

VI. RUNS AND SCORES

A. There is a limit of ten runs per inning per team for Senior I, Senior II, Junior Olympic, and Junior National divisions. There is a limit of five runs per inning per team for Junior American, Junior Patriot, Major and Minor Divisions.

B. Mercy rule is in effect for ALL divisions. With the exception of the Minor division, a team that is ahead by ten or more runs after the fifth inning (4 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead) will be declared the winner. A team that is ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs, after the fourth inning (3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead) will be the winner. In the Minor division, a team that is ahead by ten (10) or more runs after the fourth inning (3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead) will be declared the winner.

C. In all divisions, the last **declared** inning has unlimited runs. If due to a time limit or approaching darkness and the umpire declares an inning the final inning, there will be no more innings played at the completion of that inning even if there is still time or it is light enough to play. If the umpire does not declare a final inning **before** the start of the inning, it cannot be made the final inning. If there is not enough time to complete another inning, the game

will be legal with no inning set as the final inning. In the event that time has expired, the “next” inning will be declared the final inning.

VII. GAME RESCHEDULING

A. Rescheduling of games (after the final schedule) is in accordance with SJGSA bylaws Article XI, Section 1, Part D-E and will be subject to fines by the association and will only be allowed for the following reasons:

- Team with less than eight (8) available rostered players due to
 - Illness
 - Designated school has a prom, trip, or other school approved function.
 - Religious reasons
- All game changes must be approved by the Division Commissioner at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the game.

B. Umpires will be scheduled (for make-up games) by designated commissioner only. Managers and/or coaches can only cancel rainouts through their designated commissioner. **At no time will any manager or coach contact the umpire association.**