

# City of Raleigh Youth Athletics



## YOUTH SOFTBALL

## Parent Manual



**Raleigh Parks, Recreation  
and Cultural Resources  
Department**



**RALEIGH** Parks,  
Recreation and  
Cultural Resources  
[parks.raleighnc.gov](http://parks.raleighnc.gov)



**THE FOLLOWING MANUAL HAS BEEN PREPARED TO ACQUAINT YOU WITH SOME GENERAL RULES AND CONCERNS REGARDING OUR YOUTH SOFTBALL PROGRAM. PLEASE KEEP THIS WITH YOU SO THAT YOU MAY REFER TO IT AS NEEDED.**

# General Information

1. MISSION STATEMENT 1.1. Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department's Athletics Program strives to promote quality athletic programming while committing to healthy living, fundamentals and positive sportsmanship for both youth and adults in a safe recreational setting.

2. PURPOSE 2.1. The Purpose of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Softball is to provide the opportunity to the youth of Raleigh to have fun and learn the skills involved in sports.

## 3. YOUTH SPORT PHILOSOPHY

- 3.1. Every child is given the opportunity to participate in a safe and fun environment in the sport of his or her choice.
- 3.2. It is the charge to provide as many diversified athletic offerings as possible throughout the year.
- 3.3. It is encouraged that all participants are given the maximum opportunity to succeed in competition without regard to level of experience or ability.
- 3.4. All coaches, participants, and spectators are expected to display good sportsmanship at all times.
- 3.5. The wellbeing of the participant must always come first. NO exceptions!

## 4. LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

- 4.1. Operation of the leagues shall be under the direction of the Community Center Director, or designated staff member.
- 4.2. The governing authority shall be vested in the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department, Athletic Division.
- 4.3. Teams will play a determined number of games based on number of teams, weather etc.
  - 4.3.1. Mini Girls 8 games
  - 4.3.2. Modified 10 games
  - 4.3.3. Fastpitch 12 games
- 4.4. Staff will determine the number of practices based on availability, number of teams, and weather. Raleigh Parks and Recreation will attempt to schedule each team a minimum of six (6) preseason practices. There will be a maximum of three (3) league events per week throughout the season. A week is defined as Monday-Sunday and league event is either a game of practice.
- 4.5. Once game schedules have been distributed, schedule change requests cannot be accommodated. Necessary schedule changes will be made by Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department staff only in the case of inclement weather or unusable facilities.

## 5. IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

- 5.1. Athletics Line: 919-996-6836
- 5.2. Weather Line: 919-996-6575
- 5.3. Website: [www.raleighnc.gov](http://www.raleighnc.gov)
- 5.3.1. Athletic Program Information: search "athletic programs"
- 5.4. RecLink Website: search "Raleigh"
- 5.4.1. RecLink offers online access to game schedules and other information. The information can be found by selecting the "Activities" tab on the main RecLink page. Next, select the "Sports Report" for a list of active leagues. Select the league for your child to view the information.

5.5. MyRaleigh Subscription 5.5.1. MyRaleigh Subscriptions is a free, subscription-based service provided by the City. The City will be able to provide citizens with better service and access to relevant information by proactively delivering new information through email and wireless alerts. 5.5.2. Look for "MyRaleigh Subscriptions" to sign up. Sign up opportunities are available across many of our web pages.

## 6. PARENTS ASSOCIATION FOR YOUTH SPORTS (PAYS)

6.1. What are youth sports about?

6.1.1. Learning about teamwork and perseverance

6.1.2. Adopting a healthy, active lifestyle

6.1.3. Making Friends

6.1.4. And Most Importantly– HAVING FUN

6.2. Reasons Why Youth Quit Organized Sports:

6.2.1. It was no longer fun

6.2.2. Too much emphasis on winning

6.2.3. Too much pressure from parents

6.2.4. Lost interest

6.2.5. Friends stopped playing

6.3. Take the Sports Parent Pledge 6.3.1. I pledge to promote positivity in youth sports and act as a role model to my child, as well as other participants and sports parents I meet. I will serve as an advocate for good sportsmanship and to keep fun and learning at the center of the youth sports experience. I will try to improve upon my youth sports knowledge so that I can be an informative leader in the youth sports community.

6.3.2. To take the pledge, visit <http://www.nays.org/sportsParentPledge>

## 7. CODE OF CONDUCT

7.1. The Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department expects good sportsmanship from its coaches, participants and spectators, outlined below in the code of conduct.

7.1.1. No Individual shall refuse to abide by any League Official's decision.

7.1.2. No Individual shall be guilty of objectionable demonstrations of dissent at any League Official, participant or spectator decision.

7.1.3. No Individual other than the Coach/Captain shall discuss with any League Official in any manner the decisions reached by any League Officials.

7.1.4. No Individual shall be guilty of personal verbal abuse upon any League Official, participant or spectator for any real or imaginary wrong decision or judgment,

7.1.5. No Individual shall be guilty of using unnecessary rough tactics in the play of the game.

7.1.6. No Individual shall at any time lay a hand on, push, shove, strike or threaten to strike ANY League Official, participant or spectator.

7.1.7. No individual shall be guilty of physical attack as an aggressor upon any other Individual or League Official.

7.2. Penalty: For rules 7.1.1 through 7.1.7, Individuals ejected from the game by any league official for any of the above unsportsmanlike acts shall immediately leave the property and will be suspended until after the team's next game. Individuals that have been suspended will not be permitted to attend any athletic activities, including practices and games for that team during the suspension period.

7.2.1. Individuals without transportation shall remain at the facility until a parent or guardian can

arrive to pick them up. If the individual continues to be disruptive while at the facility, he or she will suffer further disciplinary action.

7.2.2. If a coach is removed from a game, the assistant coach will take over the head coaching responsibilities. If there is not an assistant coach available, a parent will temporarily become the coach for that team. The Athletic Director should be made aware of any of these situations.

7.3. Penalty: For violations 2.1.5 through 2.1.7, individuals may be suspended for the remainder of the season. All suspension rules still apply.

7.4. Code of Conduct Definitions 7.4.1. Property – All facilities and parklands used by City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department programs.

7.4.2. League Official – Includes any scorekeeper, game official, and Parks and Recreation Department Staff

7.4.3. Individual – All Coaches, players, spectators and staff

7.4.4. Suspension Rules – Any suspension, regardless of broken rule and penalty, includes suspension from all property (defined above).

7.5. Four Level Suspension Policy (All penalties noted in code of conduct also apply.)

7.5.1. After an evaluation of each offense by staff, the following penalties will be imposed:

7.5.2. Level 1: The offending individual will receive a verbal warning and a note on their record.

7.5.3. Level 2: The offending individual will receive a written warning and a note on their record.

7.5.4. Level 3: The offending individual will be required to meet with an Athletics Department representative and a League Official at an agreed upon time where the individual will receive a 2nd written warning and an extensive discussion of the events that took place. Expectations for the immediate future will be discussed and additional penalties, including suspension, may be imposed. The result of any future disciplinary action will be discussed.

7.5.5. Level 4: The offending individual may receive an indefinite expulsion from all City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department athletic activities.

7.5.6. Depending on the severity of a situation that occurs, an individual may be called in by staff at any time to discuss the incident and the potential for immediate disciplinary action.

7.5.7. An individual may receive any level at any time depending on the severity of the situation

7.5.8. The suspension policy is cumulative, and may be carried over from sport to sport over an unspecified period of time.

7.6. No coach may come onto the field of play or to the home plate area to contest a call – automatic ejection. They may come to their respective foul line in front of their dugout, midway between home plate and first/third base, to confer with home plate umpire and make an appeal/protest.

## **8. RULES FOR PLAYERS, COACHES AND FANS**

8.1. Never boo a player or an official – recognize good play by all teams and participants

8.2. Always keep control of your temper

8.3. Remember “The Golden Rule”

8.4. Play to win, play fair, play with integrity

8.5. Treat all players and fans of the opposing teams with courtesy

8.6. Accept the outcome of the game graciously and in a sportsmanlike way

8.7. Do not make abusive or irritating remarks from the sideline.

8.8. Accept the decisions of the officials as final

## **9. SPORTSMANSHIP**

- 9.1. Sportsmanship is a foundation to encourage skill development in a fun, safe and competitive environment.
- 9.2. Provide a positive atmosphere for all involved.
- 9.3. Coaches, players and fans are held accountable through the City of Raleigh Code of Conduct policy.

## 10. COACHES AND ASSISTANT COACHES

- 10.1. Head coach appointments are to be made by the PRCR Staff for one (1) season. All coaches will be evaluated each year. This evaluation will be used to determine whether or not he/she will be invited back to represent a team in our program in the future.
- 10.2. All coaches are required to submit a formal application and pass a background check in order to coach. The background checks are subject to approval of the Athletic Supervisor. All coaches must complete the National Athletic Youth Sports training prior to games beginning.
- 10.3. Assistant coaches may be selected by the Head Coach, pending approval of the PRCR Staff. Assistant Coaches must submit a formal application and pass a background check.
- 10.4. All coaches must understand and agree to carry out the duties, responsibilities, policies, and philosophies as established by the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department. All coaches must be approved by the PRCR Staff. Any coach not carrying out these duties and responsibilities will be subject to dismissal by the department.
- 10.5. Head Coaches are required to meet with parents to discuss rules, conduct, responsibilities, etc. This can be done at a preseason meeting or at the first practice.
- 10.6. Coaches should always keep in mind they are setting examples in sportsmanship and fair play and should conduct themselves accordingly at all times.
- 10.7. Only coaches will be allowed in the dugout with the team during the playing of an official game. Violations of this rule will result in forfeiture of the game upon appeal from the opposing coach, if the offending coach does not immediately remove the unauthorized person from the dugout.
  - 10.7.1. Mini Girls: Teams may have up to four (4) coaches in the dugout. Teams may have up to three (3) coaches on the field on offense and two (2) coaches on the field for defense.
  - 10.7.2. Modified and Fastpitch leagues: Teams may have up to three (3) coaches in the dugout.
- 10.8. All coaches shall remain in the dugouts, or in the designated areas throughout the game. Only Head Coach may leave the dugout for the purpose of discussion with an official
- 10.9. No active Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department Coach shall recruit players to play in or on programs and/or teams outside the Raleigh Youth Program that directly affects current attendance to leagues. Violation of this rule will result in expulsion from the program.

## 11. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- 11.1. Reinforce positive behavior
  - 11.1.1. Use praise and privileges, such as being the first to start a shooting line, to encourage good behavior
  - 11.1.2. Learn to talk to participants at eye level. For example, get down on your knees to talk to a small child.
- 11.2. Unacceptable Discipline Techniques
  - 11.2.1. Administering corporal punishment, such as push-ups, wall sits, excessive running laps, hitting, etc., is not permissible under any circumstances. Do not use any form of discipline that might be considered physical, cruel or degrading.
  - 11.2.2. Verbal abuse of participants is not permitted. Always remain calm and refrain from making comments designed to humiliate.
  - 11.2.3. Never take away a participants' privilege of eating, using the restroom, or getting water.

11.2.4. Threatening a participant is prohibited. Do not say or do something negative to the participant and forbid the participant from mentioning your behavior.

11.2.5. Failure to abide by these policies will result in disciplinary actions in accordance with the Code of Conduct and possible child abuse/neglect charges.

11.3. Acceptable discipline techniques (listed below are some general techniques for managing behavior) 11.3.1. Discuss behavior problem with the participant. This should be done quietly and away from other participants.

11.3.2. Use “time out” technique if inappropriate behavior continues. One minute out per activity per year of age might be a rule of thumb for initial problems. Time out should be done in close proximity to a staff member.

11.3.3. If the situation does not improve, contact the league administrator for assistance.

## 12. TEAM COMPOSITION

12.1. Each team shall consist of approximately eleven to fourteen (11-14) eligible players, depending on the number of the candidates available at a particular location. There should be a minimum of 8 players.

12.2. Team composition will be determined by the number of registrants in each age group. 12.2.1. The PRCR Staff must determine the number of players the program can accommodate.

12.2.2. The PRCR Staff must develop the player selection to accommodate the needs of all teams, including possible modifications of draft order depending on returning players and other factors.

12.3. Registration Forms of all players will be kept by PRCR. A player cannot participate in player selection, practices or games until a registration form has been submitted. Only players with registration forms on file with PRCR are eligible participants in the program.

12.4. League Age as of date: Child’s age as of August 31st of the current school year.

12.5. Players may be replaced for the following reasons: 12.5.1. Sickness and/or injury that will prevent a player from resuming play before the conclusion of the season.

12.5.2. Parental consent to participate may be withdrawn at any time. Players will not be allowed to participate on another team within the youth program for the present season.

12.6. The PRCR staff may replace players who are lost during the season from the waitlist.

## 13. ROSTERS/AVOIDING FORFEITS

13.1. Rosters will be frozen after player selection has been completed. Players may be added during the season only by the PRCR staff.

13.2. Only players on the official roster are eligible to practice, play or sit in the dugout.

13.3. If a team is unable to field the required number of eligible players at game time, or at the end of the grace period, the game will be declared a forfeit. 13.3.1. If a team is unable to field eight players at any time during the game, the game will be declared a forfeit.

13.3.2. In the event of a forfeit, a practice game may be played between the two teams. If a practice game is played the officials and scorekeepers will not be present.

## 14. LEAGUE AWARDS

14.1. Participation medals will be given to all participants in the Mini Girls league.

14.2. Awards will be given to the regular season champions in the Modified and Fastpitch leagues. (Additional awards will be given by the Parks and Recreation Department when deemed appropriate.)

- 14.3. In the event of a tie, the following tie breakers will be used to determine a winner:
- 14.3.1. Head to head record between the teams involved in the tie.
  - 14.3.2. Point differential (Points scored minus points allowed) in the head to head games.
  - 14.3.3. Point differential against the first-place team if the first place team is not involved in the tie.
  - 14.3.4. Point differential for all regular season games for the teams involved in the tie.
  - 14.3.5. Overall record including pre-season games (if any were played).
  - 14.3.6. Point differential in overall record including pre-season games.
  - 14.3.7. Coin flip.

## 15. UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

15.1. Uniforms and Softball Visors 15.1.1. Jerseys, softball visors and batting helmets with masks will be provided by the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department. (Parents will be required to purchase pants, gloves and other baseball accessories.) It is mandatory that the jersey and visor provided by Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department be worn at all games and must be the outermost garment worn. Teams shall NOT alter or enhance the uniforms that are distributed to players in any manner. No team shirts, team bags, etc. shall be purchased or donated for any team. It is the goal that all participants receive the same opportunities, experiences, and benefits from the league.

15.2. No jewelry shall be worn by any player, except for medical identification or religious reasons.

15.3. No equipment should be purchased or used of a quality less than that supplied by the City.

# Administrative Information

1. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY 1.1. League age divisions for youth softball:

7-9 Mini Girls

10-12 Modified

13-17 Fastpitch

1.2. A player's league age is the player's age as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

1.3. Candidates may be asked to provide a copy of their birth certificate with their player registration form to verify age.

1.4. Non-City residents may participate in the program, providing they pay the non-resident fee in addition to the registration fee. They must also play in the proper athletic district as assigned by the Athletic office.

1.5. Players returning to a team from the previous season must register, however they will be excused from player assessments.

1.6. Players returning to the same team and age division shall not move from one team to another within their athletic district.

1.7. Players returning to the same team and age division who have moved into another athletic district during the off-season may do one of the following:

1.7.1. Register and play in the athletic district of their previous residence and remain on the team from previous season or

1.7.2. Register in the athletic district of their new residence and attend assessments.

1.8. No player shall be eligible to participate in player selection, practices or games until they have completed the registration process.

1.8.1. Penalty: Forfeiture of all games in which an ineligible player participates. Coaches may face disciplinary action if they allow an ineligible player to participate.

1.9. Player selection will be supervised by a member of the PRCR Staff.

**2. PLACEMENT DATES** 2.1. League placement dates for competitive youth softball leagues: (Only newcomers to these leagues and those moving up will need to attend placements; you will receive an email to your address on file in our system if your participant needs to attend.)

2.1.1. Modified:

2.1.2. Fastpitch:

**3. TENTATIVE SCHEDULE** 3.1. Tentative league start dates for practices and games:

(Each team will have 2-3 team events per week. Schedules may vary as changes warrant.

Participants are expected to be present at all team events. If player cannot attend it is their duty to notify their coach. Missing multiple practices may result in disciplinary action i.e. reduction of playing time during games. Parents are responsible for keeping the coach informed.)

3.1.1. Practices are scheduled to begin the week of

3.1.2. Games are scheduled to begin the week of

3.1.3. A single-elimination tournament will be held at the end of the regular season for Modified and Fastpitch.

#### **4. REFUND POLICY**

4.1. 100% refund/credit/transfer if the Department cancels the program or the facility rental.

4.2. Refund requests received in writing at least 14 or more days in advance of the program/rental/team placement date are entitled to:

4.2.1. 100% credit or transfer of fees to another program at the time of the withdrawal;

4.2.2. 85% refund based on the total cost of the program or rental

4.3. Refund/credit/transfer requests received less than 14 days in advance of the program/rental/team placement date will not be granted.

4.4. Refunds for medical circumstances requested prior to the program/rental/team placement date will be granted at 100%, pending verification.

4.5. A transfer must be requested at the time of withdrawal.

4.6. A credit may be used by any family member on the same registration account.

4.7. Non-attendance/non-participation in a program does not entitle the patron to a refund.