St. Charles County Parks and Recreation Departments
(Cities of Lake St. Louis, O'Fallon, St. Charles, St. Peters & Wentzville)
2015 Softball Program Rules

UMPIRES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED BY OUR LEAGUES TO ENFORCE RULES GOVERNING FOUL LANGUAGE AND UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT. IF YOU ARE EJECTED FROM A GAME FOR ANY REASON YOU AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A ONE GAME SUSPENSION. IN DOUBLEHEADER LEAGUES THIS IS EITHER THE SECOND GAME OF THE DOUBLEHEADER OR THE FIRST GAME THE FOLLOWING WEEK. A RAINOUT IS NOT A GAME AND DOES NOT SERVE THE SUSPENSION.

LEGAL BATS, USSSA RULES & TOURNAMENT INFORMATION ARE POSTED AT THIS WEBSITE: WWW.USSSA.COM.
IT IS THE PLAYERS RESPONSIBILITY TO CONFORM TO USSSA RULES CONCERNING EQUIPMENT.

PLAYER EJECTIONS

AUTOMATIC EJECTIONS
**Fighting
**Crashing a defensive player
**Touching an umpire
**Obscene language at an umpire
**Fake tag if runner slides
**Leaving a defensive position to argue
**Throwing any equipment
**Obscene gesture at an umpire

WARNING OF EJECTION (can be ejected for without actual warning)
*Interfering with batter's line of vision
*Harassment from bench
*Fake tag-no slide
*Failure to resume game when requested
*Beer drinking in dugout
*Profanities
*Leaving the bench to argue
*Wearing of metal cleats—must have legal replacement shoes.

Any player fighting, physically mishandling or verbally abusing an umpire, teammate, member of another team, spectator or staff member (before, during or after a game) will be ejected from the remainder of the season and all tournament play. Any physical assault upon another player, spectator and/or official will result in automatic suspension which may be extended for up to a lifetime as deemed as proper by the League officials. **They may also be arrested and charged with assault.**

1. All men's, women's and coed leagues will be governed by the general playing rules of the USSSA, the Omnibus Softball Association Rules and the following In-house league rules. We agree to provide at least one umpire per game.

2. Time Limits: All non doubleheader games are to be completed in one (1) hour regardless of how many innings have been played. When the time limit is reached, the inning in progress will be completed and the team ahead will be declared the winner. No new inning will be started after one (1) hour. If at the end of the inning/time there is still a tie, the game will end in a tie. Playoff tournament games may not have a time limit, but will adhere to the Omnibus run rules.

Doubleheader Leagues: Time limit for a doubleheader between the same two teams, back to back, shall be 120 minutes. The first game shall be played to completion. The second game will be played within the time remaining until the end of the 120 minute time limit and be considered an official game regardless of innings played. When the time limit is reached the inning in progress will be completed and the team ahead is declared the winner. If at the end of the inning/time there is still a tie the game will end a tie.

Forfeit time for the second game of a Double-header League involving the same two teams on the same diamond shall be 20 minutes after the first game forfeit has been declared.

3. Grace Periods: There will be a grace period of ten (10) minutes for the first game of the day only. These ten (10) minutes will be deducted from that game's official 60 or 120 minutes of play. (Example: If your team is late five minutes then you will only have 55 or 115 minutes in length to finish that game.) Be prepared to start your game as regularly scheduled even if the game prior to yours is running late.

4. Batting Order: All players present for a game are to be placed in the official batting order. A late arriving tenth rostered player may be added to the end of the lineup at any time. Late arriving rostered players BEYOND TEN may be added to the bottom of the batting order up until the lead off batter has begun their second at bat (1st pitch begins the at bat) otherwise they are substitutions.

7. Eligibility - All players must be listed on your roster to be eligible to play. If your team uses a non-rostered player, your team will forfeit that particular game with further disciplinary action possible. Teams may only play on one roster per league.

If you feel that the opposing team is using a non-rostered player you must identify the player to, and lodge a protest with, the umpire prior to that players second time at bat (the first pitch begins the at bat). That individual must present one valid photo I.D. to the umpire to verify their identity. If that player cannot produce valid photo identification the player may not continue in the game. The League Director will verify whether or not the player is eligible before the next week. If the player is ineligible the game will be ruled a forfeit for the offending team and will be reflected in the standings as such. If there is not a record of the roster (or any changes) and a protest situation arises, the team in question automatically loses the protest. The roster and player changes will have to be on file prior to the game in question. The game is played under protest, and a ruling will be made based on the team's roster at the time of the protest.
Teams must have a minimum number of 9 players to start or finish a game. (Coed 4 of the 9 players must be women.)

EXCEPTION: If a team cannot field enough players at game time, **they may, with the permission of the opposing team, pick up enough non-rostered players to equal 10 players total to play the game**. The umpire must be informed of this agreement between the teams and the game becomes official. A team which allows non-rostered players to play may not protest eligibility after that point.

8. Balls & Strikes: Each batter will start at the plate with a no ball, no strike count. THERE IS NO COURTESY FOUL FOR REGULAR LEAGUE PLAY AND PLAYOFFS. The batter is out if a second strike is called. The batter is awarded first base when three balls are called. Any batter hitting a foul after one strike will be out, and the ball is dead, plus no advance if a catch is made.

9. CO-ED Rules: A team must have a minimum of 4 females in the lineup to start and finish a game. You must alternate men and women in the batting order. Free substitution on defense is always used and you must always have at least 4 women in the field on defense for the duration of the game with no more than 10 total players (**of which only 5 can be men**). If there are only 4 women, an out is taken in the place of the 5th women's spot in the batting order **EVERY** at bat during the game for her place in the lineup. **Also, If only 4 women, since there can be no more than 5 men in the field, the total in the field will be reduced to 9 total players.**

Batting Order: The player's alternate male and females as they bat. A team may bat females greater than 5 back to back. Men may not bat back to back unless they take an out in between batters each time through the lineup.

Unequal number of males and females (the following batting order is recommended): List all the male players on the top portion of the scorebook page and then list all the female players at the bottom portion of the same page. The players then alternate male/female as they bat regardless of the number of each sex. The male/female batter will always follow the same male/female batter in the order but the male/female batting between them may change due to the unequal numbers.

12. Official Score: The home team is responsible for the official score of the game. The visiting team is the official score in the absence of a home team scorer. It is the responsibility of each team to check the score each inning. NO review will be allowed past this point. It is recommended that both teams maintain a score book for the game. Game time will not be stopped for discussion/correction of the score.

13. Forfeited Game: Any team which forfeits a game due to player ejection also forfeits the right to use the field for the remainder of their scheduled game time. **The team must leave the field and players bench.**

14. Home Run Limits: There will be a 5 home run limit with a "one up" rule. "One Up Rule": Once a team hits 5 home runs they cannot hit anymore until the opposing team hits "5". Any home run hit untouched, over the fence after the 5th home run will be recorded as an out. The ball is dead and runners cannot advance. When both teams have equal reached the limit (5) then either team can hit one more run to go "One Up". No further home runs can be hit by that team until the other team hits a home run. No "One Up" by the home team in the last inning.

OPTIONAL Hit & Sit Rule: On a fair fly ball hit over the fence for a Home Run or a four base error over the fence, the Batter and all Base Runners are credited with a score. The Batter and any Runner on base do not need to advance and touch the bases. They should go directly to the dugout area. This would eliminate any base running appeals.

15. Run Rules: Winner of the game is determined when a team is ahead by: (1) 20 run differential after 3 innings (2) 15 run differential after 4 official innings (3) 10 run differential after 5 official innings (4) 15 run differential by either team in the 6th or 7th inning and at this point it doesn't matter who is home or away.

16. Umpire Discussion: Only the manager and the involved player will be allowed to discuss a play with the umpire **if** the umpire allows any discussion. Any player leaving the bench will be subject to ejection from the game.

18. SYNOPSIS OF PITCHING RULE: The pitcher may pitch from the Pitching Plate or from the Pitching Area which is an area the width of the Pitcher's Plate and up to six feet (6) behind the Pitcher's Plate…. NOTE: All pitching rules that apply to Pitcher's actions before and during the release of the pitch along with the restrictions on height, speed, pivot foot on plate or within plate area etc… shall remain the same. For the complete rule go to WWW.USSSA.COM or consult your rule book. It is the umpire's judgment when enforcing the pitching rule.

20. RUNNING THE BASES: When a Batter/Runner is on the base paths you have several options when presented with the possibility of being tagged out. You can:

A. Slide
B. Give yourself up
C. Return to the last base held
D. Be stealthful to avoid the tag

Please note, this does not eliminate the automatic ejection for crashing into a defensive player (e.g. the catcher) when running the bases. All must be done with in the base path. It is the umpire's judgment if the player runs out of the base path to avoid a tag and therefore is not protestable. A batter/runner is out when running toward any base if he runs more than 3 feet from a direct line between a base and the base he is trying for to avoid being tagged with the ball in the hands of a fielder.

21. BALLS: Balls are optic yellow USSSA approved Classic M, Classic Plus or Classic W. Men hit the Classic M or Classic Plus ball and women hit the Classic W ball (where applicable). In leagues where teams supply the game balls to play, the Home team provides the initial USSSA approved Classic M, Classic Plus or Classic W ball (new or used) to begin the game. In the ***Spirit of Fair Play*** that ball remains the game ball until it leaves the field of play. No player, manager or spectator may voluntarily take the game ball out of the field of play. The ball must be batted or unintentionally thrown out of play by the players on the field. The team who causes the ball to leave the field of play must provide a USSSA approved Classic M, Classic Plus or Classic W ball to continue play (**You hit it, you get it!!**) even if it causes the third out of an inning. This ball remains the game ball until it goes out of play or the original game ball is returned to play. At the end of an inning, neither team may take the current game ball out of play and off the field. Example: If you put a "*Trump Rock"* (or any other USSSA approved ball) into play and that ball is still in play at the end of your turn at bat the opposing team will also be given the opportunity to hit that same ball until it leaves the field of play. ***This is in the Spirit of Fair Play***.

22. BATS: Legal bats are those identified on the USSSA website under Slow Pitch outlined under "Licensed Equipment – New Bat Rules" and are approved through USSSA. **Beginning in 2015** all Cities will be held to the same USSSA standards as indicated on their website.