**Pearl Youth Softball League Rules**

*The City of Pearl Youth Softball league will abide by USSSA rules with the following exceptions and modifications:*

**6-8 Year Old Coach Pitch**

**Equipment/Safety**

* In addition to using a regulation yellow 11-inch softball, each batter on an 8U softball team must step up to the plate with a helmet and face guard attached. Chin straps on helmets are encouraged, but not required. In addition to players who are up to bat, the on-deck batter and all base runners must wear helmets during the game. Bats must carry the USSSA stamp per USSSA rules to be legal.
* Catchers will be required to wear helmet and chest protector. Shin guards are optional, but strongly recommended.
* On deck batter will stand on the same side as the batter during warm-up inside the circle. (If the home team (3B dugout) has a left-handed batter at the plate, the on deck batter will move to the visiting side on-deck circle. This is to minimize the risk of on-deck player being hit by batter.
* If a batter slings a bat, the batter will be given a warning. If the player slings the bat a second time during the game, the player will be called out.
* Defensive players are allowed safety masks. While not mandatory, the use of this safety device is strongly encouraged for all players.

**Time-Limit**

* Each game consists of 5 innings or 1 hour, no new inning after 55 minutes. If at the completion of the game the score results in a tie, the game will stand as a “tie game”. A game will be called complete due to weather conditions after 4 innings or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. **5 RUN RULE PER INNING.**
* Rain outs will be determined by the Pearl Parks & Recreation office. All rain outs will be rescheduled if possible by the league commissioner and shall have priority over practice times if applicable. Coaches are responsible for contacting parents about changes in the practice or game schedule.

**Line-Up**

* A team must have at least seven (7) players in order to avoid a forfeit. In this event the batting line-up will be turned in with 7 players. No “out” will be called for the 8th and 9th batter. If a forfeit occurs, both teams can remain at the field to play “for fun”. Umpires are not allowed to umpire “for fun” games.
* Any team with less than seven (7) players will forfeit the game to the opposing team with the score being recorded as seven (7) runs for the “winning” team. In the event both teams do not have the required players, both teams will forfeit the game with the score being recorded as zero to zero (0-0). No forfeited games will be allowed to be made up.
* Every player will bat, with late players added to the end of the line-up and the umpire and scorekeeper must be informed. Each coach will list all players on the line-up card by name, number, and position. This will be used as the batting order. This line-up must be shown to the umpire before turning in to the scorekeeper and the opposing coach, at least 10 minutes before game time. **If line-ups are not turned in by the umpire’s official game start time, time will begin but play will cease until line-ups are completed.**
* All players on each team will be listed on the batting order. All players will be on the field for defense and all players will bat. The 10 regular softball positions will be filled first, followed by all additional players being placed in the outfield. If teams have different number of players, the team with more players may elect to play only the number of players as on the other team. If the same number of players is played on each team, then the remaining players may be substituted for the starting players.
* Each team will be allowed three (3) outs per time at bat. It is the coach’s responsibility to keep up with his or her own batting line up, which child received the 3rd out the prior inning and which child begins batting the next inning. This is not the umpire’s responsibility.

**Pitching**

* Coach will pitch no closer than 18 feet from the plate, indicated by a hash mark.
* The coach pitcher is prohibited from coaching from the field. One warning will be given and subsequent occurrences will result in the pitching coach being replaced
* Each batter will receive six (6) pitches from the coach. A missed third swing will result in an out. A fouled 6th pitch extends the time at bat until the batter either hits the ball or strikes out. Walks and bunts will not be allowed. If the batter fails to hit the ball after six (6) pitches, she will be called out.
* The offensive coach will pitch to his or her team. If the batted ball hits the pitching coach, the ball is declared dead and the pitch is replayed with no penalty to the batter. If the umpire rules that the pitching coach interfered with the batted ball intentionally, the batter will be ruled out and no runners will advance. If the pitching coach interferes with a defense play, the ball is ruled dead, and the runner involved with play will be declared out and all other runners must return to the base occupied at the time of interference.
* Dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect.

**Coaching**

* When a team is batting, a coach is allowed at first base, third base, and pitching. On defense, a team is allowed two (2) coaches in the outfield behind their players.
* Coaches are prohibited from touching base runners while play is in progress. The infraction will result in the runner being called “out”.

**Base Running**

* On an overthrow to any base, all runners can advance a limit of one base at the risk of the runner. On an overthrow to the pitcher standing in the pitcher’s circle, base runners may advance **until lead runner is stopped at the risk of the runner**. When the lead runner has been stopped or the lead runner has given up & is not attempting to advance, the play will stop. **For a player to call time out, they must be in front of the lead runner.** At that point, any runner more than halfway to the next base may continue on to that base, but any runner who is not halfway may not advance and must return to the base previously occupied. The umpire will call time when a play is over. This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be questioned.

* Stealing bases is not allowed
* There will be no infield fly rule for this division.

**Defense**

* Infielders must play no closer to the batter than 35 feet. The pitcher must have BOTH feet inside the circle when the ball is hit. A maximum of six (6) players, including the pitcher and catcher, are allowed in the infield area prior to the ball being hit. All other players must be in the designated outfield area. If the umpire believes a player is out of position, they will ask the appropriate coaches to adjust their players accordingly.

**Scoring**

* The official scorebook will be kept by the home team. A scorecard must be signed by both coaches and the umpire at the conclusion of the game.