

Northern Ct. Girls Softball League Rules, Policies & Procedures

It is strongly recommended that pitchers and infielders, especially third baseman wear face masks.

1. Mission

The primary purpose of the Northern Connecticut Girls' Softball League (NCGSL) is to encourage and enhance the development of competitive fast pitch softball players at the intermediate and secondary school levels in an organized, competitive, and safe environment.

2. Code of Conduct

NCGSL is an invitational league where by every officer, manager, coach, assistant and player is responsible for upholding the integrity of the league. Coaches shall be subject to yearly review and renewal by the League Officers. The officers shall be entrusted by the member towns with the overall welfare of the League and are empowered to govern the League in a manner that will preserve that welfare.

Any and all instances of rule infraction, unsportsmanlike conduct, willful misrepresentation or other disruption of the League will come into consideration in cases of membership suspension or expulsion from the League.

Special Cheering Rule for 12U

Teams may not cheer or chant when the pitcher is on the rubber or delivering her pitch. (At this level we do not find such behavior conducive to the learning/developing process.)

Coach Background Checks

The League lacks the resources to conduct background checks of coaches. It relies on each Town's families to be aware of any problems. The League welcomes notice of any findings by other entities which can assist it in determining a coach's acceptability.

3. Membership Voting

a.) Issues decided at League meetings will be by one vote per town represented. Any active coach may be the voting representative for their town.

b.) League officers each have one vote in deciding issues not brought before a town vote. The Presidents' vote will decide a tie. An officer must abstain from voting on an issue that involves the town he or she is affiliated with.

4. Team Age Divisions & GINGS

Each team may have a maximum of 25 players on its roster. As a practical matter, 12-16 players is the usual range depending on player commitments.

U18 Division

Players who are 14 or older as of January 1 are eligible for U18. Those players who are 13 or under as of January 1, will need to have a waiver signed by their legal guardian in order to play U18.

U15 Division

Players shall be comprised of players 15 years old and under as of January 1. Players must be at least 12 years of age as of January 1 or a special waiver will be need to be signed their legal guardian.

12U Division

Shall be comprised of players 12 years old and under as of January 1.

Transitional Players

The league approved the following regular season and tournament rule changes:

1. U15 rostered players are able to play on the U18 if the U18 team is short players for a game subject to age waivers above.
2. U12 rostered players are able to play on the U15 team if the U15 team is short players for a game subject to age waivers above.
3. U15 rostered players may play on the U18 Tournament team if that town does not field a U15 tournament team. However, the U15 rostered play must have qualified by playing in enough U15 games.
4. U12 rostered players to play on the U15 Tournament team if the town does not field a U12 team. However, the U12 player must have qualified by playing in enough U12 games.
5. A U18 rostered player cannot play on a U15 team even to avoid a forfeit, and a U15 rostered player cannot play on a U12 team even to avoid a forfeit.

The intent of these rules is to eliminate forfeits but the overall intent is not to allow players to regularly play for both teams at practically every game.

Rosters

The roster system will be handled by the Player Agent and President. Each team will be required to provide initial rosters one week before the season to the Player Agent and President. Any player who is not from the town or towns normally associated with that team, need to explain why or how any non town player is on the team. The Player Agent needs to approve any out of town player. Coaches can update their rosters until July 12. *In the event that the FPN system is used, then that shall replace the requirement to send rosters to the player agent and the President. However, any out of town player who has not played previously in the town must still be approved by the Player Agent or President before playing in any game.*

5. Medical forms and Birth Certificates

Coaches shall bring parent completed medical forms to every game. Coaches shall maintain player birth certificates for all new players from 2013 and on, which shall be available for inspection on reasonable notice.

6. Residency Requirement

Players must reside or attend school in the town for which they play. Players with divorced or separated parents may play for the town in which either parent resides.

Players residing in a town which is part of a **Regional School District** may play for another town in that District provided their home town has no appropriate age team. Players whose families move to a new town may continue to play for their former town.

At Large Player Policy

Players residing in towns with no appropriate age team may apply to the League President for assignment to another town. In making such assignments, the President shall consider geographic proximity, town needs, and parity of competition.

The purpose of the At Large Player Policy is two-fold:

1. To provide NCGSL area players with no hometown team an opportunity to play softball, and

2. To help towns having difficulty finding enough players for a viable team.

3. To maintain parity of competition

a.) No qualified in-town players shall be displaced by At Large Players.

b.) A majority of players on each team shall legally reside in or attend school in the host town.

c.) The League President shall notify respective Division coaches of At Large Player assignments periodically. Where appropriate, "A" level pitchers may be assigned by lottery to towns geographically acceptable to parents.

d.) No new players may be assigned to the At Large Pool later than one week before the League's team sign-up deadline.

e.) Coaches or their players or parents are prohibited from recruiting out-of-town players if to do so impairs Parity of Competition.

Candidates are not to be invited or signed up before the second Friday after the President is informed of their candidacy.

In the case of players with superior abilities, so called Lottery Players. They should be identified and a lottery held before any team takes any step toward committing such player to their team. 2/16/17.

f.) Excess Player Policy

Where a town has an excessive number of home town players, yet not enough for two viable teams, or alternatively lacks enough coaches, IT may offer its players to the At Large Pool. However in such cases no out-of-town players shall displace hometown players, except in the case of "Grandmothers".

Rationale: this policy contributes to increased League participation and does not appear to foster recruiting abuses.

g.) Any team found to be using unregistered or ineligible players under these rules will forfeit those games and may also be subject to additional sanctions determined by the League Officers.

7. Tournament Eligibility and Format

a. Players must have played in the following in 40% of games played to qualify for the tournament.

14 games = 6

13 games = 5

12 games = 5

11 games = 4

10 games = 4

9 games = 4

8 games = 3

- b. Teams that forfeit will not count this game as a game played. So, for example a team plays 11 games and forfeits their 12th game, to qualify for playoffs, they would use 11 games played. (This is a rule change, the intent is not to punish the girl who could have played. We are assuming that no coach will purposefully forfeit a game to enable a player(s) to qualify).
- c. In the event that a player is injured or was unable to attend games for another understandable reason, then a coach may appeal to a committee appointed by the President. The committee will consist of the Player Agent and two other town coordinators who do not have a team in the same division. So for example, if Newington U18 had a request for an exception then the Player Agent and two other towns who did not have a U18 team would be appointed. Majority would determine whether that player was eligible. An exception will always be made for injured players where there is clear proof of such injury was the reason the player was unable to attend games.
- d. There are no refunds for tournament ineligibility or other inability to participate.

At this time, the section below does not apply, except as to playoff seedings will be the same as tournament seedings, as the league has gone to a playoff format. It remains in our rules in case at some point the league decides to return to a Weekend tournament.

- a. Standings will be based on win / loss percentage rather than points determines position for both All Stars and seeding in the tournament.
- b. The order of tie-breaking in League standings after win percentage will be:
 - 1.) Head-to-head record
 - 2.) Average runs allowed per game excluding in the average any game that was forfeit.
 - 3.) Coin Flip

9. Forfeits, Suspended, and Re-scheduled Games

a.) Coaches are expected to know their Player Availability Schedules by the Team sign-up meeting.

b.) Teams will have up to 3 days after the 1st Schedule Draft to reschedule games.

After the final schedule is published, games may be rescheduled only for weather related events or Little League Playoffs. All other cancellations will be deemed forfeits.

Note: Where a team advances past the District playoffs, the League will not process any more schedule changes. Forfeits will result if such teams are unable to meet their remaining schedule.

c.) Coaches must inform the "Web Master" and Division Director of re-scheduled games. Such games are not official until posted on the website at which time the Umpire Assignor will assign umpires.

d.) The last week of the season has been reserved for make-up games. Teams are expected to use those dates, but no team shall be required to play more than 4 games in a rolling 7 day period. Games unable to be made up because of Little League playoffs or lack of available make-up dates due to extraordinary

weather events will not result in forfeits. Teams may play weekend make-up games where mutually agreeable.

e.) If the same game is rained out twice in a row, the teams will not be required to make it up.

Exception: if those teams have another future game scheduled, then the rained out game should be made up as part of a doubleheader.

f.) When two teams cannot agree on a mutually acceptable make-up date forfeits will result by the team or teams that cannot comply.

g.) Teams receiving forfeits and all their players are credited with a game played for purposes of tournament eligibility. Such teams also receive a win in the standings and are credited with a 0-0 victory. Forfeiting team will receive a loss. Except as noted above, schedules will not be re-constituted after they're established.

j.) Suspended games resume at the point of suspension. On resumption, the original batting orders remain in effect. To the extent there are new or replacement players, they will be added at the end of the order, just as if they had arrived late. If any players from the suspended game are not available, everyone "slides" up, just as if a player left a game under normal circumstances. Play resumes at the point of suspension, i.e., with the same outs, runs, and base runners (or a substitute if they're not present. Follow the Courtesy Runner rule, i.e. last batted out.) But the at bat player starts with a 0-0 count.

10. Field Availability

Where a team is unable to host a home game, that game should be moved to the opponent's field (if available), but the original home team continues as such.

11. Uniforms

The minimum player uniform will be a shirt with a large number on the back. All players on a team in a game must wear different numbers to avoid confusion concerning the identity of those players. It is recommended, but not required, that coaches all wear a matching shirt which readily identifies them on the field.

12. Scorebooks

SCOREBOOKS MUST CLEARLY INDICATE FIRST NAME OR INITIAL, LAST NAME AND UNIFORM #. This is important should eligibility questions arise. Every team must maintain a scorebook in case there is a challenge to eligibility for the playoffs.

13. 7 Players-15 Minute Grace-No outs for vacant Spots

A minimum of 7 players is needed to begin and complete a game. If 7 players are not present by 15 minutes past the designated start time, the game will be forfeited by a score of 7-0. **If a team plays a game or part of it with less than 9 players, those missing spots in the batting order will not be counted as "outs" except as provided in Rule #14.**

Coaches may mutually agree to start a game at 6:15: p.m. where they know additional players may be en route.

14. Playing Time

- a. Every player in uniform must play at least 2 innings in the field---time permitting.
- b. The entire lineup bats its regular turn regardless of whether a player was in the field that inning.
- c. **U18 Tournament.** In the U18 tournament, a team can choose to follow the above rule or to follow Connecticut High School rules which allow for Dp/Flex, courtesy runners for the Pitcher and Catcher if they have not participated in the game. Coaches shall notify the Umpire and the Opposing team as soon as possible before the game begins. May 2, 2025.
- d. All U18 tournament games where the U18 team has selected to use Connecticut High School rules will follow those rules. Therefore, Sections 15 and 16 below will not apply to that team in the tournament game.

15. Batting Order

- a.) Injured or departing players.** All players must remain in the original batting order for the entire game. The order can be changed only in the case of an injury or other circumstances that cause a player to leave the game. An injured player who is unable to appear for a scheduled at-bat but could possibly return to the game at a later time will be called "out" for that at-bat, scored as a technical out, and will retain her place in the order. A player who will not re-enter the game simply drops out and successive players move up.
- b.) Late Arriving Players** are simply added to the end of the batting order when they arrive.

16. Pinch & Courtesy Runners

Pinch runners will be allowed if a baserunner is injured or must temporarily leave the game. Courtesy runners may be used for catchers and pitchers in order to speed play. Pinch and courtesy runners **will be the last player to have made an out.**

Where a player on base has not been the catcher in the previous inning, but will catch the next inning, they are permitted a pinch runner.

Conversely, a catcher who will not catch the next inning, is not permitted a courtesy runner.

Rationale: the purpose of the rule is to avoid game delay by waiting for a catcher to put their equipment on.

17. 2014 New Bat Rule, Jewelry, Metal Spikes, Chin Straps

- a.)** The wearing of sunglasses over the eyes is allowed during games.
- b.)** Metal spikes are not allowed in the U15 or U12 divisions. Metal spikes are allowed in the U18 Division only.
- c.) Faceguards are required on batting helmets. Chin straps are no longer mandatory.**
- e.)** All Bats must be stamped with USSSA, USA or ASA approved.

18. Length of Game---Mercy Rule, International Tie Breaker, Darkness, Lightning, Night Games, Double Headers.

- a.)** In the U18 and U15, a **Mercy Rule will be invoked after 4 and 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead, or after 5 innings if the visitor is ahead by 10 runs.**

5/13/15 Meeting: If a team is ahead by 15 or more runs in the early innings, the coaches may agree to limit offensive innings to 5 runs or 3 outs whichever occurs first. However the trailing coach concedes

defeat at the time of the agreement. (Rationale: to eliminate lopsided scores such as 30-0. Nothing constructive is accomplished by a group of girls futilely trying to get 3 outs.)

b.) The international tie breaker rule will be instituted in games in which the score is tied after 7 innings have been completed, i.e. beginning with the 8th inning, the team at bat will start the inning with a runner at second base. That runner will be the last batter of the previous inning.

c.) Shortened v. Suspended Games: In games called by darkness or weather, the score reverts back to the last completed inning, even if the score is tied, but not if the home team is ahead.

Exception: If less than 4 innings have been played, the game shall be resumed at a later date, provided there is an adequate schedule opening and available umpire(s).

d.) In the event lightning is seen or thunder is heard, the game shall be halted immediately. After the last flash of lightning or last thunderclap, a waiting period of **30 minutes** must elapse before the game may resume.

Night games: no new inning to start after 10 p.m. 2

f.) Doubleheaders where no lights available. Start games at 5:30 p.m. No new inning should start after 1 hr. and 15 minutes per game. Teams with lights may agree to amend the length of each.

g.) If a game ends because of the 1 hour 15 minute limitation or the 10 o'clock deadline, the score reverts to the last previous inning except if the home team is leading.

19. Pitching Rule & Distances

The pitcher is required to have at least one foot in contact with the pitching rubber at the beginning of her delivery, i.e. pitching will be governed by high school Federation rules to replicate C.I.A.C. competition.

U18 and U15 43', 12U 40'

1. Prior to the pitch, the pitcher must take a position on the rubber with both feet touching the rubber.
2. The hands must be apart. The ball may be in either hand, the bare hand or in the glove, but the hands must be apart.

3. The pitcher must take or simulate taking a sign from the catcher by pausing 1 to 10 seconds. **The pitcher must then bring their hands together 1 time** in front of the body, for not more than 10 seconds and then pitch the ball.

4. There is no reference in the rule about presenting the ball. That word has been removed from the pitching definition long time ago. She does not have to put the ball in her glove, but she may.

5. Step-Back: The pitcher may take a step back in her delivery, as we use the NFHS High School Rule in our League.

20. Rainouts

a.) A rainout must be called by the coach of the home team no later than 4:30 p.m. (or 90 minutes prior to starting time). If the home team's coach has not contacted the visiting team's coach by that time, the game will be started or cancelled at the field by the umpire.

b.) THE HOME TEAM COACH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TELEPHONING AND E-MAILING BOTH THE OPPOSING TEAM'S COACH AND THE UMPIRE ASSIGNOR AT LEAST 90 MINUTES BEFORE GAME TIME. FAILURE TO DO SO COULD RESULT IN PAYING THE UMPIRE(S) HIS/ HER FULL FEE. Visitor coaches are expected to check their messages before traveling to out of town games.

The Web Master should then be informed by e-mail.

See also Rule 9e regarding the "two rainouts" rule.

21. Parent and Fan Conduct

- a.) Parents and fans are not allowed in dugouts or on or near benches of either team unless they have been previously registered with the League as a coach.
- b.) The number of coaches and/or scorekeepers on the field and in the dugout or bench is limited to 4 per team.
- c.) Coaches are responsible for their parents and fans proper conduct.
- d.) Umpires are authorized to order misbehaving parents and fans to leave the park.

22. Home Team Obligations

- a.) Provide a suitable playing field of regulation dimensions.
- b.) Provide a new **USSSA game ball** and suitable USSSA back-up balls. Some fields are prone to losing softballs in the adjacent woods, ravines, and streams. Home teams bear the brunt of such conditions.
- c.) Arrange for at least one USSSA qualified and registered umpire, assigned by the USSSA assignor. Two umpires are contemplated for H.S. Division games. **Umpire fees** shall be split equally between both teams that are playing. The umpire(s) shall be paid in full prior to the start of the game.
- d.) Provide restroom facilities at or close to the playing field

23. Coach/Player Ejections and Suspensions

Profanity used by a player, coach, or other team personnel will be cause for immediate ejection from the game. If a player being ejected leaves the team with less than 7 players, the team will be allowed to finish the game with less than 7 players. Any player or coach ejected for any reason will be out for the remainder of that game as well as suspended for the next game. The Division Director and Officers will be notified of ejections by the coach of the Home Team. Ejections and suspensions apply to all other team personnel as well. Repeated offenses will be a cause for disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the League Officers.

Any coach engaging in unfriendly conversation or conduct with an opposing team, or their own team's player, will be subject to partial or permanent suspension.

24. Umpire Calls and Rule Interpretations

- a.) Only the Head, or acting-Head Coach is allowed to converse with umpires regarding Umpire **rule interpretations**.
- b.) No one is allowed to question or remark about **judgment calls**, most especially balls and strikes.
- c.) Any disputes, questions or grievances should be addressed to the League Officers.

25. League Fees

League fees will cover expenses such as insurance, game balls, publication expenses, association fees, trophies and other awards and any other costs approved at NCGSL meetings or by the Officers on an ad hoc basis.

26. Reporting Scores

The coach of the winning team must report game results to the League's Web Master. It is recommended that game results be e-mailed to before 11:00 p.m. on the night of the game.

27. Special 12U Rules

- a. Six inning games. *The league has voted to return to dropped third strike rule. 5/2/2025. 5 run max for the first five innings and unlimited for the 6th inning. 5/2/2025.* 10 run mercy rule after 4 1/2 or 5 innings (Complete inning if time permits just for practice).
- b. *Coaches can agree before the game to amend these rules. If there is an agreement, inform the umpire. For example, two highly skilled teams may want to eliminate the five run rule, or two struggling teams may want to have the batter out even if the catcher drops the ball. If both coaches cannot agree, to changes, then section will apply.*

28. USSSA Rules--go to neussafastpitch.com/ussa-fastpitch-rules/

29. Substitutions-Unlimited v. Limited

Unlimited substitutions are permitted at all fielding positions, except Pitcher.

Only the starting pitcher may return to that position. *This does not apply if U18 tournament team decides to follow U18 High School rules.*

30. Refunds—There are no refunds when a team is unable to participate for whatever reason.

31. Face Masks--are mandatory for all 12U pitchers and infielders. 2/16/17

32. All Star Site Checklist (Ideally) (At this time, we do not have an All Star game)

- a.) ability to host a triple header including field grooming
 - b.) sufficient parking
 - c.) P.A. system or power source for announcement of participants
 - d.) Site manager, i.e., someone physically present for all 3 games. —also a person to present medals to each participant
 - e.) Rest rooms/port-a-potty
 - *f.) Lights for H.S. game
 - *g.) Refreshment stand
 - *h.) Central location
- *desirable but not a show-stopper.

33. All Star Teams (At this time, we do not have an All Star game)

The weekend after our tournament, NCGSL hosts an All Star game for each of its Divisions.

Coaches select 1-2 players from their own team to participate. The number of picks depends on the number of participating teams.

The spirit of the games is to afford extra recognition to those players who have made a superior contribution to the team. It may be skill level, or it may be intangibles such as leadership, extraordinary support of the program or perfect attendance.

34. Officer positions/Executive Board

The league shall have 5 officer, executive board members. The positions shall be as follows:

- a. President
- b. Vice-President
- c. Treasurer
- d. Secretary
- e. Player Agent.

The officer positions shall be a two year position. Elections shall take place in October of even numbered years. However, In the event that an executive board member shall resign or no longer be able to carry on their responsibilities, then the President shall appoint a temporary replacement until the next October board meeting. In the event that the President shall resign or be unable to carry on their responsibilities, then the Vice President will assume those responsibilities until the next October board meeting and shall appoint a new Vice-President.

May 20, 2025

Kevin Mason, President