

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2024 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

#### IMPORTANT RULE CHANGES FOR 2024

- **LEAPING:** The act of leaping while delivering a pitch is a legal delivery. The pitcher may have both feet off the ground at the same time as long as both feet remain in the 24-foot width of the pitching plate and the pitcher does not replant the pivot foot. The replant of a pivot foot occurs when the pitcher pushes off the playing surface from anywhere other than the pitcher's plate in the act of delivering a pitch (Rules 2.00 (Leaping), 8.01(s), and 8.05(a), 2024 Rule Book).
  
- **SENIOR LEAGUE ONLY:** The Designated Hitter (DH) is now replaced with a "Designated Player and Flex Player" (DP). This rule is to provide more opportunity for players to play in Senior League Softball (Rules 2.00 (Designated Player and Flex), 3.03, and 714(a), 2024 Rule Book).
  - Prior to the start of a game at the pregame conference, a manager may list on the lineup card a Designated Player (DP)/Flex to use throughout the game.
  - The DP's name must be indicated on the lineup card as one of the nine batters in the batting order.
  - The name of the Flex player playing defense for the DP shall be placed in the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) position on the lineup card in the batting order.
  - The DP shall remain in the same position in the batting order throughout the entire game.
  - The DP may be substituted for at any time throughout the game by a legal substitute or the FLEX player may play offense for the DP. In either case, the DP will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the DP position remains in the lineup. A starting DP may re-enter the game one time, provided the DP returns to the original position in the batting order.
  - **NOTE 1:** If the DP is replaced by the FLEX, this reduces the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9). The game may legally end with nine (9) players.
  - **NOTE 2:** If the DP re-enters or a substitute enters as the DP and the FLEX was batting in the DP's spot on the lineup card, the FLEX can (a) return to the number ten (10) position and play defense for the DP or (b) leave the game if the DP plays defense for the FLEX.
  - The DP may play defense at any position. Should the DP play defense for a player other than the FLEX, that player will continue to bat but not play defense and is not considered to have left the game. The DP may play defense for the FLEX and the FLEX is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9).

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- The FLEX player may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute or the DP may play defense for the FLEX. In either case, the FLEX will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the FLEX position remains in the lineup. The FLEX may re-enter the game one time provided the FLEX returns to the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) position in the lineup.
  - **NOTE 1:** If replaced by the DP, this reduces the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9). The game may legally end with nine (9) players.
  - **NOTE 2:** If the FLEX re-enters or a substitute enters as the FLEX and the DP was playing defense in the FLEX player's spot, the DP can return to batting only, play defense for another player, or leave the game if the FLEX plays offense for the DP.
  - Placing the FLEX into one of the first nine (9) positions for someone other than the DP's position is considered an improper substitution.
  - If a team is using the DP/FLEX Option and there are no available substitutes when a runner advancing on an awarded base or after reaching base is unable to continue:
    - The previous batter not on base is allowed to replace that player as a temporary runner until the runner is put out, scores, or the half-inning ends.
    - When the player who could not continue is scheduled to bat, if a league permits teams to start and play games with eight (8) players, the Board of Directors will determine if an out is called for the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position in the batting lineup each turn at bat or if the team may skip over the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position without penalty.
    - When the half-inning ends and the team assumes a defensive position.
    - If a league permits teams to start and play games with eight (8) players and an eligible player becomes available, that player shall fill the empty space in the lineup without penalty upon arrival or availability.
  - The DP/FLEX Option cannot be used if a team is using the Continuous Batting Order.
- **AT-BAT DEFINITION:** It is clarified that for purposes of satisfying Mandatory Play for Tournament Play only, the definition of At-Bat **does not apply in Tournament Play**. The term "At-Bat" is defined in Rule 2.00 as a player completing his or her "at bat" after that player is retired is a batter, retired as a batter-runner, reaches base and scores, or reaches base and the inning or game ends. If the "completion" aspect of this rule applied during Tournament Play, there could be no courtesy runners for pitchers or catchers until everyone had "completed" their "at-bat".

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- **ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING COURSE:** is now mandatory for ALL LITTLE LEAGUE VOLUNTEERS who are required to complete a Little League Volunteer Application and Background Check. **This includes ALL MANAGERS AND COACHES OF ALL-STAR TEAMS.** This free online training is available through USA Baseball, the governing body of amateur baseball in the United States and will only take approximately 20 minutes to complete. A certificate of completion link will be sent to your email for you to print and save. **PRINT THIS CERTIFICATE FOR EACH COACH/MANAGER AND INCLUDE WITH LEAGUE AFFIDAVIT BOOKS.**

Go to the following web site:

<https://usabdevelops.com/memberships/131/login>

Click on “Education” at the top of the Home page, then “Courses”, scroll down to “Abuse Awareness for Adults” and click on that link, enter your email address and password or click “Register” to set up an account. Click on “Go To Course”. Your host will be David Ross, former catcher and manager of the Chicago Cubs and was on the Cubs when they won the World Series in 2016.

- **DIAMOND-LEADER PROGRAM:** All managers and coaches will be required to complete the Little League Diamond Leader Training Program by obtaining a certificate of completion at [LittleLeague.org/DiamondLeader](http://LittleLeague.org/DiamondLeader). The completed certificate will be required to be available for inspection at all tournament sites and should be included in each league’s affidavit books (Tournament Rules, page 174, 2024 Rule Book).

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- **BATS (Major Division and below):** cannot be more than 33 inches in length nor more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter with a 1.20 BPF (Rule 1.10, page 91, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Bats for JR/SR League:** cannot be more than 34 inches in length nor more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter with a 1.20 BPF (Rule 1.10, page 91, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Penalties for use of illegal bats:** an illegal bat must be removed from the game. Additionally, if the batter enters the batter's box with one or both feet entirely on the ground with an illegal bat or is discovered having used an illegal bat during his turn at bat and prior to the next player entering the batter's box and the infraction is discovered before the next player enters the batter's box, the batter is out, and: (Rule 1.10, page 92, and Rule 6.06(d), page 134, 2024 Rule Book).
  - 1.1. the manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the penalty and accept the play (as long as this election is made at the end of the play),
  - 1.2. for the first violation, the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game,
  - 1.3. for the second violation, the manager of the team will be ejected from the game, and
  - 1.4. any subsequent violations will result in the newly designated manager being ejected.

An illegal bat must be removed from the game once discovered (Rule 1.10, page 92, and Rule 6.06(d), APPROVED RULING, page 134, 2024 Rule Book).

- **LEAVING DUGOUT WITHOUT PERMISSION:** A manager or coach may not leave a dugout for any reason during a game without receiving permission from an umpire. The manager or coach may be removed from the field for the remainder of the game for violation of this rule (Tournament Rule 7, VISITS, page 187, and Regulation XIV(d), Field Decorum, page 80, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Dropped Third Strike – Will NOT Apply in 8/9/10 Division of Play:** For the 8/9/10 Tournament, on a dropped third strike by the catcher, the batter will be out (Tournament Rule 3.c, page 183, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Electronic Equipment in Dugouts:** the use of electronic devices in the dugout is allowed for players, coaches, or managers as long as the devices are not used for communication; the penalty for violation of this rule is ejection from the game (Rule 3.17, page 114, 2024 Rule Book).

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- Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color. The pitcher's undershirt sleeves, if exposed, shall not be white, gray, or optic yellow. **NOTE:** a pitcher shall not wear any items on his/her hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the batter, except that play-calling bands may be worn on a pitcher's non-pitching wrist or forearm (Rule 1.11(a)(3), page 93, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Play-calling bands** are permitted as long as **(1)** the equipment is worn on the wrist or forearm as the manufacturer intended, **(2)** the band is not attached to the belt or any other location on the person, and **(3)** for pitchers, the band may be worn on their non-pitching arm provided the band is a solid color that is **NOT** white, gray, or optic yellow. If the umpire considers the band distracting to the batter, the umpire may have the band removed (Rule 1.11(a)(3), page 93, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Dangling Throat Guards on Catcher's Masks:** Catchers must wear a mask with (NOSCAE) approved catcher helmet and "dangling" type throat guard during pitcher warm-up and games (Rule 1.17, page 96, 2024 Rule Book).
- Only one offensive time-out is permitted **each** inning (Rule 5.10(d) (**NOTE**), page 129, and Rule T-7, VISITS, **NOTE**, page 187, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Bunts:** holding the bat in the strike zone is considered an attempted bunt. In order to take a pitch, the batter must withdraw the bat backwards away from the ball (Rule 2.00, BUNT, page 98, 2024 Rule Book).
- **BATTER TO REMAIN IN BATTER'S BOX:** After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat.  
**Exceptions:**
  1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
  2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
  3. When the batter attempts a "slap" or "slap bunt".
  4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
  5. When a play has been attempted.
  6. When time has been called.
  7. When the pitcher leaves the eight-foot circle or the catcher leaves the catcher box.
  8. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

**PENALTY:** If the batter leaves the batter box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter. No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

**NOTE:** The batter may return to their position in the batter's box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike. (Rules 6.02(c), pages 130 and 131 and T-3a, pages 182 and 183 Tournament Rules, 2024 Rule Book).

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- **REGULATION GAME:** A game is a regulation game if four innings (five innings for Junior and Senior Divisions) in which one team has scored more runs than the other [three and one-half (3 ½) if the home team is ahead or four and one-half (4 ½) if the home team is ahead in Junior and Senior Divisions] (Tournament Rule 13(a), page 191, 2024 Rule Book).
- **NO TIME LIMITS:** There are no time limits on games; there are curfews on games: no inning shall start after midnight (12:30 AM for **Junior League**; 1:00 AM for **Senior League**) (Curfew, page 177 and Tournament Rule 13(c), page 191, 2024 Rule Book).
- **MANAGERS/COACHES NOT PERMITTED TO WARM UP PITCHERS:** managers or coaches are **not** permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time; they may stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen (Rule T-3(g), page 184, 2024 Rule Book).
- **MANDATORY PLAY – (Minor Division through Junior Division):** Tournament teams will adopt a continuous batting order during tournament play to include **all players** on the team affidavit who are present at the start of the game. It is clarified that **for purposes of satisfying Mandatory Play for Tournament Play only**, the definition of At-Bat does not apply in Tournament Play. The term “At-Bat” is defined in Rule 2.00 as a player completing his or her “at bat” after that player is retired is a batter, retired as a batter-runner, reaches base and scores, or reaches base and the inning or game ends. If the “completion” aspect of this rule applied during Tournament Play, there could be no courtesy runners for pitchers or catchers until everyone had “completed” their “at-bat”. This will allow defensive players to play when and how much a manager decides. If a player arrives late to a game and the manager chooses to enter her in the lineup, that player would be placed at the bottom of the lineup. Managers are solely responsible for ensuring that all players fulfill this mandatory play requirement. **This rule does not apply to Senior Division.** (Rule T-9, pages 187, 188, and 189, 2024 Rule Book).
- **MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY-MANDATORY PLAY:** Managers are responsible for fulfilling the mandatory play requirements, even if notification is not made by umpires or tournament directors. **Failure to meet the mandatory play requirements in this rule is a basis for protest and, if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee’s attention, it may result (by action of the Tournament Committee) in the removal of the team’s manager, without replacement, for the remainder of the International Tournament.** (Rule T-9(h), pages 188 and 189 2024 Rule Book).

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- **COURTESY RUNNER (Minor Division through JR Division):** A tournament team may permit a “courtesy runner” for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Utilizing a continuous batting order, the courtesy runner may be in the team’s batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out (Rule T-3(e), page 183, 2024 Rule Book). This rule does not limit the number of times a catcher and/or pitcher can utilize a courtesy runner during a tournament game. It has been clarified that **for purposes of satisfying Mandatory Play for Tournament Play only**, the definition of At-Bat does not apply in Tournament Play (Significant Updates for 2024, page 6, 2024 Rule Book).
- **SPECIAL PINCH RUNNER USAGE – SENIOR DIVISION ONLY:** Twice a game but not more than one time per inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch-runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the lineup, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-runner (Rule T-3(e), pages 183 and 184, 2024 Rule Book). NOTE: Both the DP/Flex are considered to be in the batting order and therefore not eligible to be used as a Special Pinch Runner – see Designated Player/Flex Player at end of these rules (Rule T-3(e), page 184, 2024 Rule Book).
- **SUBSTITUTION AND RE-ENTRY – SENIOR DIVISION:** Any player who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game in the **SAME** position in the batting order. Defensive substitutions must be made while the team is on defense. Offensive substitutions must be made at the time the offensive player has her turn at bat or is on base. Designated Player/Flex (DP) **WILL** apply and will both be considered to be in the batting order and therefore not eligible to be used as a Special Pinch Runner – see Designated Player/Flex Player above. Any player in the starting lineup, including the DP/FLEX, who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game **ONCE**, provided such player occupies the same batting position as she did in the starting lineup. A substitute (non-starter) may **not** re-enter the game in any position once they are removed from the lineup. (Rule T-10(b), (d), (h), and (i), pages 189 and 190, 2024 Rule Book).
- **ON-DECK BATTER (JR AND SR DIVISION ONLY):** the on-deck batter is to be positioned in the **on-deck circle closest to their dugout** (Regulation XIV(b) and Approved Ruling, Field Decorum, page 80, 2024 Rule Book).
- **MANAGERS/COACHES IN THE DUGOUT:** A maximum of three (3) adults who are named on the affidavit will be permitted to act as manager/coaches for that game and in the team dugout (Tournament Rules, page 169, 2024 Rule Book). **NOTE:** Pursuant to Rule 4.05(b), page 116, of the 2024 Rule Book, base coaches may be adults and/or players provided at least one adult manager or coach remains in the dugout.

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- **PITCHERS:**
- **Pitching limits in Major and Minor Leagues:** a player may pitch in a maximum of twelve (12) innings in a day, but if seven (7) or more, that player requires one day of rest prior to pitching in the next game (Regulation VI(b), page 67, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Pitching limits in JR/SR Leagues:** no pitching restrictions apply (Regulation VI(b), page 67, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Major Division and Below:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game **but only once in the same inning as she was removed** (Rule T-4.d, page 185, 2024 Rule Book).  
**Junior/Senior Leagues:** a pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime during the remainder of the game **but only once in the same inning as she was removed**; a pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, can return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate the substitution, visits per pitcher, or mandatory play rule(s) (Tournament Rule 4.c, page 186, 2024 Rule Book)
- **RULE 8.01(g) Approved Rulings, PITCHER STEPPING OFF PITCHER'S PLATE:** If the hands are together while in the pitching position, the pitcher may not step back with the non-pivot foot. For the pitcher to remove herself from the pitching position after the hands have been brought together but prior to the start of the pitch, the pitcher must legally step back from the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot first. For the pitcher to remove herself from the pitching position (1) before the hands have been brought together as noted in Rule 8.01(f), the pitcher may legally step back from the pitcher's plate with either foot; (2) after the hands have been brought together but prior to the start of the pitch as noted in Rule 8.01(k), the pitcher must legally step back from the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot first (Rule 8.01(g), Approved Rulings 1 and 2, page 153, 2024 Rule Book).
- **RULE 8.02(a)(1), PITCHER BRINGING HANDS TO MOUTH:** the pitcher may bring the hand in contact with the mouth or the lips provided she distinctly wipes off the pitching hand before contacting the ball (Rule 8.02(a)(1), page 155, 2024 Rule Book).
- **Penalty for Illegal Pitches for ALL DIVISIONS:** If a pitcher pitches an illegal pitch, the pitch will be declared a ball to the batter (there is no longer an advancement of any base runners without liability to be put out). If the catcher is not in position to receive the pitch and a pitch is made, the pitch will be declared a "NO PITCH" and the pitch shall be called a ball. A play may follow these calls and the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch penalty and accept the play. (Rules 8.01 and 8.05, PENALTY, pages 153 through 157, 2024 Rule Book).

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**2024 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL**

- **PITCHER IN CIRCLE:** If the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher’s 8-foot radius circle and is not making a play (a fake throw is considered a play), runners not in contact with their bases **must immediately attempt to advance or return to their base.** If no such immediate attempt is made, “No Pitch” is declared, the ball is dead, and the runner is out. If the runner fails to keep contact with the base to which that runner is entitled until the ball has been released (**8 – 10 year old Division:** until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter), the runner is out (Rules 7.08(a)(5) and **NOTE 2**, pages 135 and 136, Rule 7.13, pages 141 and 142, and Tournament Rule 3.d, page 175, 2023 Rule Book)
- **Pitching Rules:** Pitching rules are as follows pursuant to Regulation VI – Pitchers, sections (a), (b), (c), and (d), pages 67 and 69 in the 2024 Rule Book.

A pitcher who has attained a league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League and a local league Board of Directors may prohibit a pitcher who has attained a league age of fifteen (15) from pitching in the Junior Division.

Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

**Minor and Major League:** If a player pitches in more than seven (7) innings in a day, one calendar day of rest is mandatory prior to pitching in the next game and that player may pitch a maximum of twelve (12) innings in a day.

**Minor and Major League:** If a player pitched in seven (7) or more innings on (Column A) and is still eligible, that player can pitch again on (Column B):

<b><u>COLUMN A</u></b>	<b><u>COLUMN B</u></b>
Sunday	Tuesday
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Sunday
Saturday	Monday

**Junior/Senior Leagues:** No pitching restrictions apply.

- **REMOVAL OF PITCHER DUE TO INNINGS PITCHED LIMIT (Major Divisions and Below):** Managers are responsible for the removal of pitchers once the pitcher has reached his/her maximum number of innings pitched for the day, week, or game. Failure to remove that pitcher is basis for protest (Tournament Rule 4.i, pages 177 and 178, 2023 Rule Book).

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- **WARM-UP PITCHES BETWEEN INNINGS:** A pitcher shall be permitted to pitch no more than eight (8) preparatory pitches to the catcher **but no more** than one minute of preparatory pitches between half-innings (Rule 8.03(a), page 156, 2024 Rule Book).
- **PITCHER VISIT LIMITS:** For **9- to 11-Year-Old Division and above**, a manager or coach may come out once in one inning to visit the pitcher but the second time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A manager or coach may come out twice in one game to visit the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. (Rule T-7, page 187, 2024 Rule Book). For **8- to 10-Year-Old Division**, a manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit the pitcher but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. (Rule T-7, page 187, 2024 Rule Book). A manager or coach who is granted time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher. When a manager requests timeout to make a pitching change, it shall not be considered a visit to the pitcher provided the manager makes the pitching substitution prior to speaking to any defensive player (Rule 8.06(c), APPROVED RULING 1, page 158, and Rule T-7, page 187, 2024 Rule Book).
- **INTENTIONAL WALKS:** a defensive team may intentionally walk a batter at any time during a player's at-bat **but only once per game per batter without throwing four pitches** that are called "ball" by the umpire. In that case, after calling for and receiving "time" from the plate umpire, the defensive manager will make the intentional walk request, the ball will be dead and no runners may advance unless forced by the batter's award (Rule 6.08(a)(2), page 137, and Rule 8.03(c), page 156, 2024 Rule Book). Otherwise, pitches will be required to be thrown.
- **FOREIGN SUBSTANCE APPLIED TO GAME BALL:** The pitcher shall not apply a foreign substance **of any kind** to the ball (this includes **dirt or clay**) or deface the ball in any manner. A pitcher may use a rosin bag for hands only. The pitcher may bring the hand in contact with the mouth or the lips provided she distinctly wipes off the pitching hand before contacting the ball. When a pitcher violates this rule, an umpire shall call the pitch a ball and warn the pitcher. If the violation is repeated during the game, the umpire shall remove the pitcher from the game (Rule 3.02, page 108, and Rules 8.02 (a)(1) and (3), pages 155 and 156, 2024 Rule Book).
- **UNANNOUNCED SUBSTITUTE PITCHER:** If a player who has not been announced as a substitute for the pitcher delivers one warm-up pitch to the catcher, that player now becomes the pitcher of record (assuming eligibility) and must pitch to at least one batter (Rule 3.08(a)(1), pages 1112 and 113, 2024 Rule Book).

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- **15-RUN RULE/10-RUN RULE:** If after three (3) innings (**Junior/Senior League:** four (4) innings), two and one-half innings (**Junior/Senior League:** three and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after four (4) innings (**Junior/Senior League:** five (5) innings), three and one-half innings (**Junior/Senior League:** four and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent. During regular season, the local Little League may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule. However, this rule will apply during Tournament Play at all levels. (Rule T-12, pages 190, 2024 Rule Book).
- There is no 8-run rule in Tournament Play (Rule T-12, NOTE 3, page 190, 2024 Rule Book).
- **NO SLIDE TO AVOID RULE:** Any runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to avoid contact with a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag (in other words, the runner “trucks” the fielder as in football or rugby) (Rule 7.08(a)(3), page 143, 2024 Rule Book). **There is no “must slide rule”, only the “no slide to avoid contact” rule** (Rule 7.08(a)(3), Approved Ruling, page 143, 2024 Rule Book).
- **HEADFIRST SLIDING:**  
**8/9/10, 9/10/11, and Major Divisions Only:** When a runner is advancing or stealing a base, there is no head-first sliding. If a runner does slide head-first while advancing, that runner shall be called “Out” (Rule 7.08(a)(4), page 143, 2024 Rule Book).

**JR/SR League:** A runner may slide head-first on an advance to any base.

Head-first sliding is allowed for all runners in any league if they are attempting to return to a base they occupied.

- **If the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher’s 8-foot radius circle** and is not making a play (a fake throw is considered a play), runners not in contact with their bases must immediately attempt to advance or return to their base. If no such immediate attempt is made, “No Pitch” is declared, the ball is dead, and the runner is out (Rule 7.08(a)(5) **NOTE 2**, page 144, 2024 Rule Book).
- **If a defensive player blocks** the base, home plate, or baseline clearly without possession of the ball, a delayed “dead ball” obstruction shall be called and the runner is safe (Rule 7.06(b), **NOTE 2**, page 143, 2024 Rule Book).

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- **TIE GAMES:** During tournament play, when the completion of six innings (**Junior/Senior League:** seven innings) and the score is tied, the following tie-breaker will be played to determine a winning team (Rule T-14, page 191, 2024 Rule Book):
  - a. the seventh inning (**Junior/Senior League:** eighth inning) will be played as normal.
  - b. starting in the top of the eighth inning (**Junior/Senior League:** ninth inning) and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base. **EXAMPLE:** If the number five batter is the lead-off batter, the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. An eligible substitute or special pinch runner may be inserted for that runner.

4. **APPEALS:** Any appeal under Rule 7.10 (tag-ups on fly balls, runners advancing or returning to a base and failing to touch each base, or a runner failing to touch home plate and making no attempt to return to touch home plate, and home plate is tagged) must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. **No appeal can be made if the ball is dead.** If the violation occurs during a play which ends a half inning, the appeal must be made before all the defensive players have left fair territory.

In making an appeal, the pitcher shall not throw to a base while the foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate. In putting the ball back into play, after taking the pitching position, the pitcher shall step backwards off the pitcher's plate (with the pivot foot first) to begin the appeal. **Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base.** If the defensive team on its first appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire (Rule 7.10, pages 148 and 149, 2024 Rule Book).

- All fielders, except the catcher, must be positioned in fair territory when play begins (including first- or third-basemen attempting to hold on runners). **NOTE:** There is no penalty for this infraction; the umpire should just have the player move into fair territory (Rule 4.03, pages 115 and 116, 2024 Rule Book and Page 19, 2022 Make The Right Call Manual).
- **LEAVING BASE EARLY (9/10/11 Division and above):** any runner is out when the runner fails to keep contact with the base until the ball has been released by the pitcher on delivery (Rule T-3(d), page 183, 2024 Rule Book).
- **LEAVING BASE EARLY 8/9/10 Division only):** any runner is out when the runner fails to keep contact with the base until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter (Rule T-3(d), page 183, 2024 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2024 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **ENDING GAME:** When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home plate and the batter-runner has touched first base (Rule 4.09(b), page 118, 2024 Rule Book).

Tie game in the bottom of the sixth inning, two outs. Batter receives ball four and all runners begin to advance. The runner from third base touches home plate. The batter rushes to join in the endgame celebration without having first touched first base. The batter then enters the dugout with the rest of the team. **RULING:** Umpire will call the batter out for abandoning his/her effort to advance. In this instance, the third out is a result of the batter being called out before touching first base, therefore it is a force out. No run scores and the game continues with the score still tied. (**NOTE:** the player must enter dead ball territory before he/she can be called out for abandonment.) (Rule 4.09(b) Situation, page 21, 2022 Make The Right Call Manual).

- **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:** The actions, on or off the field, of players, managers, coaches, umpires, and league officials must be above reproach. Any player, manager, coach, umpire, or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, or an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the game site or any other Little League activity including through online or social media, is subject to disciplinary action by the local league Board of Directors (Regulation XIV(a), page 80, 2024 Rule Book).
- **The traditional batting donut is not permissible** (Rule 1.10, **NOTE 1**, page 92, 2024 Rule Book).
- **RUNNING THROUGH FIRST BASE RULE:** Any runner is out when failing to return at once to first base and overrunning or over-sliding that base. If attempting to run to second base, the runner is out when tagged (Rule 7.08(j), page 146, 2024 Rule Book). Please note that there is no requirement for the runner to “turn out” into foul territory in order to be declared safe without liability to be put out. The runner simply must immediately return to first base without making any move to run toward second base, regardless of whether that runner turns out into foul territory or turns into fair territory prior to immediately returning to first base.
- The possession and/or use of firearms, tobacco products, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes and vapors), controlled substances, and alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches, or dugouts. Alcohol is prohibited at the game site (Regulation XIV(e), Field Decorum page 80, 2024 Rule Book).

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- **SENIOR LEAGUE ONLY:** The Designated Hitter (DH) is now replaced with a “Designated Player and Flex Player” (DP). This rule is to provide more opportunity for players to play in Senior League Softball (Rules 2.00 (Designated Player and Flex), 3.03, and 714(a), 2024 Rule Book).
  - Prior to the start of a game at the pregame conference, a manager may list on the lineup card a Designated Player (DP)/Flex to use throughout the game.
  - The DP’s name must be indicated on the lineup card as one of the nine batters in the batting order.
  - The name of the Flex player playing defense for the DP shall be placed in the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) position on the lineup card in the batting order.
  - The DP shall remain in the same position in the batting order throughout the entire game.
  - The DP may be substituted for at any time throughout the game by a legal substitute or the FLEX player may play offense for the DP. In either case, the DP will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the DP position remains in the lineup. A starting DP may re-enter the game one time, provided the DP returns to the original position in the batting order.
  - **NOTE 1:** If the DP is replaced by the FLEX, this reduces the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9). The game may legally end with nine (9) players.
  - **NOTE 2:** If the DP re-enters or a substitute enters as the DP and the FLEX was batting in the DP’s spot on the lineup card, the FLEX can (a) return to the number ten (10) position and play defense for the DP or (b) leave the game if the DP plays defense for the FLEX.
  - The DP may play defense at any position. Should the DP play defense for a player other than the FLEX, that player will continue to bat but not play defense and is not considered to have left the game. The DP may play defense for the FLEX and the FLEX is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9).
  - The FLEX player may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute or the DP may play defense for the FLEX. In either case, the FLEX will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the FLEX position remains in the lineup. The FLEX may re-enter the game one time provided the FLEX returns to the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) position in the lineup.
  - **NOTE 1:** If replaced by the DP, this reduces the number of players from ten (10) to nine (9). The game may legally end with nine (9) players.
  - **NOTE 2:** If the FLEX re-enters or a substitute enters as the FLEX and the DP was playing defense in the FLEX player’s spot, the DP can return to batting only, play defense for another player, or leave the game if the FLEX plays offense for the DP.
  - Placing the FLEX into one of the first nine (9) positions for someone other than the DP’s position is considered an improper substitution.

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### 2024 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- If a team is using the DP/FLEX Option and there are no available substitutes when a runner advancing on an awarded base or after reaching base is unable to continue:
  - The previous batter not on base is allowed to replace that player as a temporary runner until the runner is put out, scores, or the half-inning ends.
  - When the player who could not continue is scheduled to bat, if a league permits teams to start and play games with eight (8) players, the Board of Directors will determine if an out is called for the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position in the batting lineup each turn at bat or if the team may skip over the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position without penalty.
  - When the half-inning ends and the team assumes a defensive position.
  - If a league permits teams to start and play games with eight (8) players and an eligible player becomes available, that player shall fill the empty space in the lineup without penalty upon arrival or availability.
- The DP/FLEX Option cannot be used if a team is using the Continuous Batting Order.

Any comments, concerns, suggestions, or questions regarding rules should be directed to:

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**SOFTBALL - SR LEAGUE ONLY**

**Designated Player (DP) / FLEX Player (FLEX)**

(See Rules 2.00, 3.03, 714(a), and Tournament Rule 10.h)

**DP** - any one of nine batters on lineup card; initially bats for FLEX in DP position on lineup card.

**DP** - **can never be on DEFENSE ONLY.**

**FLEX** - 10th position on lineup card; initially plays defense for DP; **can never be on OFFENSE ONLY.**

(NOTE: Either DP or FLEX are eligible to be used as Special Pinch Runners if out of game)

Placing FLEX into one of the first 9 positions other than for DP position is an improper substitution

(Rule 3.03(h), page 111, 2024 Rule Book)

**SUBSTITUTIONS:**

		<b>DP</b>			<b>FLEX</b>			
BY	SUB		BY	FLEX	BY	SUB	BY	DP
DP leaves game			DP leaves game		FLEX leaves game		FLEX leaves game	
Bats as DP			Bats for DP		Defense for DP		DP plays defense	
Remains 10 on lineup			Now only 9 on lineup		Remains 10 on lineup		Now only 9 on lineup	

If FLEX batting for DP at time of substitution:

- 1) FLEX can return to 10th Spot on lineup card and play defense **OR**
- 2) FLEX can leave game; now only 9 on lineup

If DP playing defense for FLEX at time of substitution:

- 1) DP can return to batting only,
- 2) DP can play defense for another player, **OR**
- 3) DP can leave game; now only 9 on lineup

**RE-ENTRY TO LINE-UP:**

		<b>DP</b>			<b>FLEX</b>		
BY:			BY:				
		Only once per game			Only once per game		
FLEX Batting-DP			FLEX Not Batting-DP		DP on defense		DP not on defense
1) Return to 10th Spot on lineup card and play defense <b><u>OR</u></b>			FLEX remains in 10th Spot on lineup card and plays defense for DP		1) DP can return to batting only,		DP remains on offense in original order on lineup card
2) Leave game; DP plays defense for FLEX; now only 9 on lineup					2) DP can play defense for another player, <b><u>OR</u></b>		
					3) DP can leave the game if the FLEX plays offense for DP; now only 9 on lineup		

**PLAYING DEFENSE BY DP:**

		<b>DP</b>			<b>FLEX</b>		
OTHER PLAYER			FLEX PLAYER		OTHER PLAYER		DP PLAYER
Continues to bat in order on lineup card			FLEX leaves game; now only 9 on lineup		FLEX Continues to play a defensive position		DP remains in game and plays defense and bats in DP lineup spot on lineup card; now only 9 on lineup
Not considered to have left game							
DP bats in her original order							