

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

#### IMPORTANT RULE CHANGES FOR 2025

- **BAT MODIFICATIONS:** Pursuant to Rule 1.10, APPROVED RULING 2, no bat, in any level of Little League Baseball or Softball play, is permitted to be altered. Products such as, but not limited to, choke-knobs, choke-up assists, or thumb protectors are considered alterations or modifications to the bat and are not permitted.
- **Clarification Of Allowed Colors of Undershirts:** Pursuant to Rule 1.11(a)(3), any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color, **provided it is not the same color as the ball being used in the game.**
- **Jewelry Permitted:** Pursuant to Rule 1.11(j), any jewelry worn by a player that poses harm to injury will be subject to removal. This rule applies regardless of the composition of such jewelry, hard cosmetic item, or hard decorative item. Hard items to control the hair, such as beads, are permitted.
- **Items Worn on the Hands or Wrists of Pitchers:** Pursuant to Rule 1.15(c), a pitcher may wear items on the glove hand, wrist, or arm (non-pitching arm) of a solid single color, provided it is not the same color as the ball being used in a game.
- **Courtesy Runner (does not apply to Senior Division):** Pursuant to Rule 2.00, Courtesy Runner, including NOTES 1 and 2, Rule 3.04, Rule 714(b), and Tournament Rule 3(e), a courtesy runner can only be used for a catcher, a pitcher, or both at the same time, provided there are two outs in the half inning. When using a continuous batting order, the courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out, or last and second-to-last if using two runners.
- **Electronic Devices Allowed for Catchers Only:** Pursuant to Rule 3.17, EXCEPTION, a manager or coach is permitted to use one-way electronic devices from the dugout to the catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. A manager or coach is prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member (including a manager or coach) while on offense, and a manager or coach shall not use the device outside the dugout/bench area.
- **Pitchers Removed From The Circle:** Pursuant to Rule 3.03(c) and Tournament Rules 4(c), 4(d), 9(a), and 10(c), a pitcher removed from the circle or withdrawn from the game defensively, can return as pitcher anytime during the remainder of the game and, in the case of minor or major divisions, only once in the same inning as she was removed. Therefore, a pitcher can return regardless of whether she is moved to a different defensive position or placed on the bench.

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

#### IMPORTANT RULE CHANGES FOR 2025

- **Pregame Equipment Inspection:** Pursuant to Rule 3.01(a) and Tournament Rule 3(b), umpires are no longer responsible for inspecting equipment, including bats, prior to the start of games. This responsibility is placed directly on the manager of each team. At each plate meeting, the umpire must confirm with the managers of both teams that all equipment is proper and legal for play according to Little League rules. If illegal equipment is used during the game, the manager of the offending team will be ejected from the game and the player who used the illegal equipment will also be ejected from the game. Both the manager and the player who used the illegal equipment will be suspended for their team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. The penalties noted in Rule 3.01(a) above have been updated in Rule 6.06(d) as well whereby a manager and player are ejected for the use of illegal equipment as well as the batter/player being out.
  
- **Tie Games in Tournaments:** Pursuant to Tournament Rule 14, in tournament games that ended in ties at the end of regulation time, there will begin immediately the placement of the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning on second base to begin each extra inning.
  
- **Stickers and Decals on Helmets:** Pursuant to Rule 1.16 as updated by the 2025 Little League Rulebook Significant Updates, the use of helmet stickers or decals is permitted, provided that such usage is not excessive, is not offensive, and does not make inappropriate references, such as that to drugs or alcohol. (<https://www.littleleague.org/downloads/2025-rulebook-significant-changes/>)

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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, 2025 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, 2025 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: (Rule 1.10, page 92, and Rule 6.06(d), page 135, 2025 Rule Book).
  - 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),
  - 2) both the manager and the batter who violated the rule will be ejected from the game and the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.

An illegal bat must be removed from the game once discovered (Rule 6.06(d) Approved Ruling, page 135, 2025 Rule Book).

**Pine Tar On Bats:** the use of pine tar or any other similar adhesive substance is prohibited at all levels of Little League Baseball and Softball. Use of these substances will result in the bat being declared illegal and removed from play. Penalties pursuant to Rule 6.06(d) will apply.

- **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 188, and Regulation XIV(d), Field Decorum, page 81, 2025 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, 2025 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 115, 2025 Rule Book). The exception is for manager/coach to catcher while on defense.

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- 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, 2025 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, 2025 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, 2025 Rule Book).
- Only one offensive time-out is permitted **each** inning (Rule 5.10(d) (**NOTE**), page 130, and Rule T-7, VISITS, **NOTE**, page 189, 2025 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, pages 98 and 99, 2025 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 131 and 132 and T-3a, pages 183 and 184 Tournament Rules, 2025 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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 192, 2025 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 178 and Tournament Rule 13(c), page 193, 2025 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), pages 185 and 186, 2025 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. 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 189 and 190, 2025 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(g), page 190, 2025 Rule Book).
- **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 184, 2025 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.

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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 184 and 185, 2025 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 185, 2025 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 190 and 191, 2025 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 81, 2025 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 170, 2025 Rule Book). **NOTE:** Pursuant to Rule 4.05(b), page 117, of the 2025 Rule Book, base coaches may be adults and/or players provided at least one adult manager or coach remains in the dugout.
- **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 68, 2025 Rule Book).
- **Pitching limits in JR/SR Leagues:** no pitching restrictions apply (Regulation VI(b), page 68, 2025 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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 186, 2025 Rule Book). **Junior League:** a pitcher removed from the circle or withdrawn from the game can return as a pitcher anytime during the remainder of the game **but only once in the same inning as she was removed;** **Senior League:** a pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and 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 188, 2025 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 154, 2025 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 156, 2025 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 156 through 158, 2025 Rule Book).
- **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 144 and 145, Rule 7.13, pages 150 and 151, and Tournament Rule 3.d, page 184, 2025 Rule Book)

**FLORIDA DISTRICT 11**

**2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL**

- **Pitching Rules:** Pitching rules are as follows pursuant to Regulation VI – Pitchers, sections (a), (b), (c), and (e), pages 68, 69, and 70 in the 2025 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):

**COLUMN A**

Sunday  
Monday  
Tuesday  
Wednesday  
Thursday  
Friday  
Saturday

**COLUMN B**

Tuesday  
Wednesday  
Thursday  
Friday  
Saturday  
Sunday  
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), page 187, 2025 Rule Book).
- **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 157, 2025 Rule Book).
- **Number of Pitchers Used In A Game:** Pursuant to Regulation VI, NOTE 4, page 70, 2025 Rule Book, there is no limit to the number of pitchers of a particular league age group on a team that can be used. Prior years limited those pitchers to 5 per game.

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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 188, 2025 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, pages 188 and 189, 2025 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 159, and Rule T-7, pages 188 and 189, 2025 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 138, and Rule 8.03(c), page 157, 2025 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, pages 108 and 109, and Rules 8.02 (a)(1) and (3), pages 156 and 157, 2025 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), page 113, 2025 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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 193, 2025 Rule Book).
- There is no 8-run rule in Tournament Play (Rule T-12, NOTE 3, page 193, 2025 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 144, 2025 Rule Book). **There is no “must slide rule”, only the “no slide to avoid contact” rule** (Rule 7.08(a)(3), Approved Ruling, page 144, 2025 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 144, 2025 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 145, 2025 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 144, 2025 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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 193, 2025 Rule Book):
  - a. starting in the top of the seventh inning (**Junior & Senior League:** eighth 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 149 and 150, 2025 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 116 and 117, 2025 Rule Book and Page 17, 2024 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 184, 2025 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 184, 2025 Rule Book).
- **TIME LIMITS:** **THERE ARE NO TIME LIMITS, OTHER THAN CURFEWS, DURING TOURNAMENT PLAY** (Tournament Rule 13(c), page 193, 2025 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 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 119, 2025 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 19, 2024 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 81, 2025 Rule Book).
- **The traditional batting donut is not permissible** (Rule 1.10, **NOTE 1**, page 92, 2025 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 147, 2025 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 81, 2025 Rule Book).

## FLORIDA DISTRICT 11

### 2025 TOURNAMENT RULES SUMMARY – SOFTBALL

- **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, 714(a), and Tournament Rule 10(h), 2025 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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- 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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