

2022

**Treasure Coast Senior Softball Association
RULES & REGULATIONS**

*The following Addendum rules apply specifically to the Treasure Coast Senior Softball Association (TCSSA) and are intended as a supplement to the basic rules for the **American Softball Association (ASA)** men's slow pitch softball which continue to apply.*

THE ASSOCIATION: The Association is for senior softball players within the Treasure Coast area. **All players must be 60 years of age or older by December 31st of the playing year.** It shall be governed by the Association Officers and Committee members adhering the the Association By-Laws and Association Incorporation papers filed with the State of Florida.

1. **GAMES:** Regular Season games are played January, February, March on Mondays & Thursdays. Pickup games are played throughout spring, summer, and fall. All games are played on the three fields at Langford Park near Jensen Beach. During regular season, there will be (2) six inning games played each day alternating home team assignments.
2. **STARTING TIMES:** All games will begin promptly at 9:30 AM during the season and 9 a.m. all other days. Season forfeit time will be 9:45 AM. Any team with less than nine (9) players on the field by 9:45 AM will forfeit the game(s) for that playing day. A team with nine (9) or more players may not forfeit a game. Teams may mutually agree to play the game by adding players, etc. although the official game is over after the forfeiture.
3. **PLAYER RULES:** Each team will consist of 14 or 15 players. All players will have been selected to teams through a draft process by Team Managers each November. All players must undergo a rating process prior to the draft to be eligible for play. The rating process will be managed and coordinated by TCSSA Board Members and a Rating Committee consisting of players. All players present must play defense three innings each game. If a team fails to comply, game is subject to a protest and forfeiture. A player having to leave the game for any personal reason will be removed from the lineup with no penalty to that team. A player arriving late to the playing field and being inserted into a game will be placed at the end of the batting order.
EXCEPTIONS: **A.** The game becomes shortened.
B. The player is injured and unable to play. All players will be given their turn at bat. However, no more than thirteen(13) players will be allowed to play defense at any time. Prior to the game each manager will notify the opposing manager

of his alternate players if he has more than thirteen(13) players present and available to play, also, exchange lineup cards and update any changes during the games. Any individual player declining to play the required mandatory innings must make his request to the Team Manager and inform at least one of the ASSOCIATION OFFICERS AND HE'S OUT OF THE GAME COMPLETELY.

4. PINCH RUNNERS: Every player is required to reach first base on their own. From there a player **with a disability** will be allowed a pinch runner from first (1st) base only. The pinch runner must be a player designated prior to the game by his manager. **A (2) two base advancement per hit will be placed on the pinch runner.** Being a "slow" runner will not be an approved reason to use a pinch runner.

a. If the disabled runner advances past first base to another base, no pinch runner will be allowed.

b. A player injured during the course of the game will be allowed a pinch runner designated as described above.

. **EXCEPTION:** Any player age 85 or older may request a pinch runner which will require TCSSA Board approval. The runner must be the player designated prior to the game as above. The runner will be allowed to start "in the hole" in the designated area behind the catcher at home plate. **ALL PINCH RUNNER OCCURRENCES ARE SUBJECT TO TCSSA BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL.**

5. PHYSICAL CONTACT: Any physical contact between fielders and runners is to be avoided at all times. Basic rules regarding contact follow:

a. If it is obvious that a play is being made on a runner approaching 1st, 2nd, or 3rd base, the base belongs to the fielder and the runner must run wide of the base on the opposite side of the incoming throw (or to the safety base at 1st).

b. If the runner touches the actual base when the throw is coming to that base, or the runner obstructs the flight path of the ball to the fielder, he is out for interference. If it is obvious that a play is not being made on a runner approaching or returning to a base, the fielder must give way to the runner or obstruction will be called on the fielder. In this case, the runner has the option of returning directly to the base or running wide of the base as described in "a". Once the runner touches the actual base, he must maintain contact with that base or advance to the next base or be subject to a putout.

c. Once a runner touches a real base he is fair game to be out if he leaves that base and attempts to run. The fielder only has to be in possession of the ball while on the base to retire the runner who is off the base.

d. A runner must touch the actual 2nd or 3rd base before advancing to the next base. The runner may advance to 2nd from 1st after touching the safety base or the actual base.

e. A runner approaching home plate must step on the secondary (safety) plate that is wide of home plate. If the runner steps on home plate or the extended part of home plate, he will be automatically out. If a runner reaches the commitment line (20 ft from home plate) he must continue to home plate and cannot return to 3rd base. On plays at home plate the fielder must have possession of the ball and his foot touching the rubber plate or extended part of the rubber plate to make the out prior to the runner touching the safety plate.

f. Sliding is not allowed under any conditions and will result in the runner being automatically out. Accidental tripping or stumbling will be ruled upon by the umpire whose judgement will be final.

NOTE: There may be situations that occur when a runner and a fielder share the base but every effort must be made by both players to avoid collision. In these cases common sense will prevail and the umpire will have final judgement on the ruling.

6. PITCHED & BATTED BALLS : All batters will start with a 1 ball & 1 strike count. Pitchers will pitch from behind a safety screen. Pitches must go over the screen, not around it and be no more than 12 ft in arc. Pitches that go around it, or are over the 12ft arc will be called illegal and called a ball if not struck by the batter. A strike is when any part of the ball touches the rubber or extended part of home plate before striking the ground. Any foul tip regardless of the height that is caught before hitting the ground is an out. A foul ball on the 3rd strike will result in a courtesy strike being given. A batted ball that hits the screen will be called a strike. A pitched ball hitting the screen is a ball. A thrown ball hitting the screen is in play. A batted ball that reaches the outfield grass untouched by an infielder, the batter runner can't be thrown out at first but any other runner advancing to any other base can be thrown out at that base.

7. SPECIAL FIELD RULES: Short field, ball over the short fence equals two bases only for all runners. Ball over the original fence equals a home run, batter not required to run the bases, any runner on base at that time must complete the base running to home.

8. FIELD/DUGOUT CONDUCT: Any disagreement on the field or in the dugout, between opposing players or teammates that escalates into physical contact of any nature, or any unruly argumentative behavior will be dealt with by the Association By-Laws and managed by TCCSA Board Members. These incidents may result in expulsions that vary in length of time depending on the violation. The By-Laws provide an appeals process.

9. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: This includes profanity, throwing equipment, verbal harassment, or excessive arguing. Umpires have the discretion to administer verbal warnings and team managers have the discretion to remove their players from the game. Additional actions may be implemented at the discretion of the TCSSA Board of Directors.

10. UMPIRES: Each team will be responsible for umpires for games unless there are qualified volunteers present. Both managers have to agree to allow the volunteer to act as either home plate or a field umpire. Umpires are required to have a thorough knowledge of the game, TCSSA Addendum Rules, and adequate communication skills. Managers are responsible for selecting umpires that meet these criteria. The field umpire will be positioned near 1st base until a runner reaches. The umpire will then move to a position where he can see both first and second checking with fielders to position himself in a non obstructing position. He will be responsible for calls at 1st and 2nd base. The home plate umpire will be responsible for calls at 3rd base and home. Umpires should make their calls **LOUD, and CLEAR**. Umpires have the discretion to coordinate with each other on questionable calls to assure the best call is made. **There will be absolutely no arguments with umpire calls by fielders.** Any and all disagreements will be handled only by team managers and umpires. No players are allowed in these discussions. It is the team managers responsibility to enforce this rule. In the event of a perceived misinterpretation of a rule (**not a judgement call**) by an umpire, managers may declare to the umpires and the other manager that the game is being played under protest and file a written protest to the Association Board for review and decision. See ASA rule book for guidelines in filing a protest.

11. PLAYER TRADES: Trades are allowed when mutually agreed upon by both trading team managers, and the approval of the TCSSA Board of Directors. The trade deadline is January 31st. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

12. ADDING PLAYERS: No players will be allowed to be added to rosters after the November draft . **EXCEPTION:** Any non-drafted players that were previously rated but not selected in the draft are considered to be in a “player pool” and will be placed on teams not having at least 13 of their original drafted players present on a daily basis. These pool players will be placed on a rotational basis trying to maintain fairness. They will not be allowed to participate during playoff games.

13. NO INFIELD RULE; If in the Umpires opinion. a player purposely drops a infield fly with runners on 1st and 2nd or bases loaded, it will fall under ASA purposely dropped line drive rule and the batter is called out, ball is dead, all runners maintain their

positions.

14. OVERTHROWS: A ball overthrown into a dugout is a dead ball and results in the runner being awarded the base he is approaching and the next base. A ball going out of bounds through an open gate is dead, no advancement.

15. FALSE TAGS: These are not allowed and constitute an obstruction to a runner. These may be verbal or physical and can result in impeding the progress of a runner by the fielder who neither has the ball, or is about to receive the ball. A runner does not have to stop, merely slowing down when the fake tag is attempted will result in an obstruction being called at the umpires discretion.

16. TAG PLAYS: Tag plays should be avoided at all times. They will be permitted when a fielder can easily tag the runner rather than touching the base without causing harm but tags not allowed at home plate.

17. RUNDOWNS: Rundowns are not permitted, but there will be times when a runner realizes that he cannot reach the next base safely after committing himself having left the previous base. Regardless of how far the runner has advanced from 1st or 2nd he may attempt to return to the previous base or continue to the next base. In either case the runner is out if the fielder with the ball in his possession touches the base before the approaching runner reaches. The runner must make a commitment to one base or the other. He can turn twice but will be automatically out on the third turn. There is no "point of no return" between 1st and 2nd, or 2nd and 3rd as there is (20ft) between 3rd and home plate.

18. FIVE RUN LIMIT: There will be a maximum of 5 runs allowed for the first (5) innings of our six inning games and the first (7) innings of the playoff or championship games.. There is no limit to runs scored for the last inning of six inning game or last two innings of (9) innings games..

19. ABBREVIATED/SHORTENED GAMES: A game shall be considered a complete game if at the end of four and a half (4½) innings (**SIX** inning games) or the end of seven and a half (7½) innings (**NINE** inning games) IF:

A. **RAIN:**- play cannot continue due to weather or unsafe field conditions and the home team is ahead.

B. **MERCY:** The home team is ahead by **10 runs** or more after four and a half (4½) innings in **SIX** inning games or **15 runs** or more after 7 and a half (7½) innings in **NINE** inning games .

C. **MERCY:** The visitor team is ahead by **10 runs** or more after five (5) innings in **SIX** inning games or **15 runs** or more after seven (7) innings in **NINE** inning games. Teams may mutually agree to complete all innings after mercy although the game is officially over.

20. TIE GAMES: Tie score games will be played by adding innings until the tie is broken. Innings will begin with the last batter of the prior inning starting out at 2nd base. The game will continue until the tie is broken and each team has had an equal number of innings.

21. FOOTWEAR: Metal spikes are not allowed.

22. SAFETY GEAR: Safety gear including helmets, face masks, mouth guards, shin guards, etc. are allowed and encouraged.

23. SPECIAL AGREEMENTS: All decisions on games postponement or cancellation will be made by the TCSSA Board of Directors with input from the team managers. Any agreements between team managers that are not compliant with TCSSA Rules & Regulations will not be allowed.

THESE CONSTITUTE THE TCSSA RULES & REGULATIONS AND ARE A SUPPLEMENT TO THE STANDARD ASA RULES & REGULATIONS. THESE RULES MAY NOT BE DEVIATED FROM. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE TCSSA BOARD FOR CONSIDERATION.

APPROVED BY THE TCSSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS