

Cape Coral 50+ Senior Softball League LLC
2026 PLAYING RULES
JANUARY 1, 2026

The Cape Coral 50+ Senior Softball League, Inc., shall be governed by the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall make all rules and regulations to affect the purpose of the League.

- 1) **THE LEAGUE:** The League will play under the official USA SOFTBALL (formerly ASA) set of rules unless modified by the League's rules. Managers and Umpires do not have the option of mutually changing these rules.
- 2) **PLAYERS:** All adults who will reach their fiftieth (50) birthday during the calendar year may participate in the League's activities. Players must fill out a League application, pay the required player fee, and sign the League's Code of Ethics to become a player. Players must pay their player fee for the upcoming season before they may enter the draft. Players who turn 80 before the start of the next season will pay ½ the player fee for that season and all future seasons.
- 3) **TEAMS:** Teams will be formed by a draft before each season to form teams of 12 active roster players or the number as determined by the Executive Board. Teams must maintain this number of active roster players at all times if replacement players are available. Each team will field 11 defensive players with 4 outfielders who must begin playing behind the encroachment line. The other 7 defensive players may play anywhere on the legal playing field. A team with less than 11 players may field only 3 outfielders. All roster players must bat and play a minimum of 3 defensive innings. Players may not enter the draft if they intend to play in a different League that plays on the same nights as the League.
- 4) **MANAGERS:** Managers will be selected by the Board before the draft. Managers are responsible for coordinating their team, including determining the game batting order and field positions, delivering the roster lineup to the umpire, requesting pool players as needed, designating a team player as assistant manager, and requiring their team players to read and follow the Code of Ethics.
- 5) **REPLACEMENT PLAYERS:** A list of new players to the League and players signing up after the draft will be compiled by the Board and assigned a draft level by the Board. Players that have previously played in the League will receive their previous draft level unless the Board decides that a new draft level should be assigned based on current information. When a team loses a roster player, the manager must fill out a League Replacement Player Form and receive a replacement player designated by the Board to bring its roster to a level equal to the other teams. A player is considered "lost" if the player will miss 8 or more games. Replacement players must be close to the skill level of the player they are replacing if practical. If a replacement player isn't available, the Manager must bring their game roster to eleven players from the pool. After being assigned to a team as a replacement player, if the roster player that they replaced returns, the replacement player returns to the replacement player list for reassignment as a replacement player. Replacement players do not receive a team jersey and must wear a different color jersey from the team jersey.

- 6) **GAME MANAGEMENT:** Scheduled start times are 6:30 pm and 8:00 pm. If both prior games end early and the pool has been called and completed, the managers of both teams may mutually agree to begin the scheduled game early before the scheduled start time with the consent of the Umpire.
- a) **Time Limit:** All games will adhere to a 1-hour time limit. Umpires should set their timer for 1 hour. Once the timer goes off, that inning will be completed, and one more inning will be played, which will be the unlimited inning for runs scored. Teams are limited to scoring 5 runs per inning except for the unlimited last inning.
 - b) **Flip Flop 10 Run Rule:** If at the end of the 6th inning, the home team is down by at least 10 runs, the bases will be cleared, and the home team will bat again for its 7th inning batting rotation, that will be an open inning. If the home team does not score enough runs to either tie or go ahead, the game is over. If the home team scores enough runs to either tie or take the lead, the visiting team would then bat their normal 7th-inning open-inning batting rotation and would be the winner if they go ahead. If they tie the score, the game is over unless there remains enough time for the normal procedure to break the tie. If the home team does not either tie or go ahead and the visiting team does not bat its 7th inning batting rotation, the visiting team will be awarded 3 runs to compensate for the run differential category in the League final standings.
 - c) **Extra Innings:** If a game is tied after 7 innings and the game time clock has not gone off, an extra-inning may be played by placing the last batter in the previous inning on second base. A courtesy runner may be used after the 1st batter has batted. Each batter will receive one pitch. If the pitch is called a strike by the umpire, the batter will be called out. If the pitch is called a ball, the batter will advance to first base. If the batter hits the ball, it shall be played as if in a regular game.
 - d) **Tie Games:** If the score remains tied after the allotted game time, each team will be credited with a half-win and a half-loss.
 - e) **Batting:** All batters will start with 1 ball and 1 strike. There is not a designated batter's box. Batters will not be called out for stepping in front of the home plate unless they touch the strike plate while making contact with the ball.
 - f) **Warm Ups:** There will be no field warm-ups after the first inning.
 - g) **Lineup Sheet:** Managers must fill out a starting lineup sheet and deliver a legible copy to the umpire and the opposing manager after receiving their pool players but before game time. Game line up sheets must have at least 11 players physically present at the field if pool players are available and must include first and last names of the starting players.
 - h) **Official Game:** An official game will consist of seven innings or follow the time limit in section 6.b unless it is called because of inclement weather, at which time it is a complete game if the home team is ahead after 4 and 1/2 innings or 5 innings, if the home team is losing.
 - i) **Forfeits:** Any team with fewer than six eligible roster players present at the time the pool is called will forfeit the game.
 - j) **Scorebook:** Each team will keep an official scorebook for each game.
 - k) **Mercy Rule:** There is a mercy rule of 20 runs after 4 innings and 15 runs after 5 innings. The official game will end once either of those applies but teams may continue playing until time expires. The home team always gets to bat in the bottom of the inning if they are behind in the inning, where the mercy rule comes into play.
 - l) **Encroachment Line:** The Outfield Encroachment line placed 165' from the home plate will

be implemented. All outfielders must be behind the line until the batter puts the ball in play. Outfielders can not throw the batter/runner out at 1st base. Teams legally playing with only 10 players may move an outfielder to the Rover position. Teams with 11 players may move the rover to the outfield to a maximum of 5 outfielders. Teams are limited to a maximum of 7 infielders.

m) **Walk Rule:** As described in the walk protocol.

n) **1st Base:** Once the batter/runner crosses the 1st base bag, both the runner and the defense may use either the white or orange bag on subsequent plays on this batter/runner at 1st base.

7) **POOL PLAYER:**

a) The League will use a pool system as described in the League's Pool Protocol.

8) **SAFETY PITCHING SCREEN:** The safety pitching screen must be used on the field in all games in its proper location. The screen must be placed on the gloved side of the pitcher and the screen will be placed with the closest edge of the screen lined up with the middle of the pitcher's rubber 4 feet in front of the rubber. The edge of the safety screen may be adjusted sideways between the edges of the pitching rubber to help pitchers get behind the safety screen. All batted balls that hit the screen are strikes. The pitcher can field any ball that doesn't hit the screen. A ball hitting the pitcher's glove and then the screen will be considered a live ball. A thrown ball hitting the screen will remain live. The pitcher must have 1 foot in contact with the pitching rubber and pause 1 second before releasing the ball.

9) **UMPIRES:** Only the manager or their replacement in the manager's absence may question an umpire's call. Judgment calls are not appealable to a second umpire. Umpires will not require an appeal by either team for any infractions observed by the umpire. The manager may ask the umpire to ask for help but the umpire may refuse the request if they see the judgement play clearly. The team manager may request a League rules clarification from any Board member available and all rules clarifications must be settled at the field. Arguing with an umpire or violating the Code of Ethics is grounds for an ejection from the game. The umpire's decision is final. Protests after a game are not allowed. Exception: Either team's scorebook member may ask the umpire to clarify the official score, runs scored by either team, and either team's batting order.

10) **COURTESY BASE RUNNERS:** Teams are allowed unlimited courtesy runners per inning, but a player can only be a courtesy runner once per inning. If a player gets a courtesy runner, they cannot serve as a courtesy in the same inning. If a player has served as a courtesy runner, they cannot be replaced with a courtesy runner in the same inning. If a courtesy runner is on base and it is their turn to bat, they are removed from the base and an out is charged to the team. The courtesy runner then will bat in their regular rotation. Pool players may serve as courtesy runners and may have a courtesy runner.

11) **TEAM UNIFORMS:** All members on a team roster must wear the same team shirt that is provided by the League.. The team shirt may not be altered in any way except that the USA flag may or may not be imprinted on the sleeve. The team shirt may be worn under warm

clothing. After the second scheduled game, players not wearing the team shirt will be given a warning. A second warning will result in the team forfeiting 2 runs to the opposing team. A second warning to two players on the same team at the same time will forfeit 5 runs to the opposing team. Replacement players do not receive a team jersey and must use a different color jersey. Sleeveless team jerseys are not allowed in League play.

- 12) **BASE SAFETY RULE:** For safety reasons, runners may step off the first base or third base sideways for up to 3 feet but cannot begin running until the batter hits the ball and must touch the bag before running to the next base. The runner must alert the umpire before stepping off the base.
- 13) **EJECTIONS:** If a player is ejected from a game by an umpire, the team continues to play and cannot replace the ejected player. When the ejected player's normal position in the batting rotation comes to bat for the rest of the game, an out will be recorded. The player must leave the Cape Coral Park grounds immediately. If a second player is ejected from the same team in the same game, the game will be declared a forfeit to the opposing team.
- 14) **SUSPENSIONS:** If a player is ejected from a game by the umpire, it will carry with it an additional 1 game minimum suspension. A second ejection of the same player during the same season will carry an additional 4-game suspension. A third ejection of the same player during the same season will be a suspension for the rest of the season. The suspended player's team may get a pool player if the team's game time roster is less than 11 players. The team may receive a replacement player if the suspension is longer than 8 games.
- 15) **TRADES AND TRANSFERS:** Managers may trade drafted players the night of the draft without Board approval. After the evening of the draft, if a manager wishes to trade a player or a player wishes to be transferred to another team, they must submit their request to the Board in writing. The Board will try to work out an equitable trade or transfer, provided the managers involved agree.
- 16) **INJURED PLAYERS:** If the game has begun and a team's roster drops to 10 players due to player injury, an injured player must be replaced for the remainder of the game by a substitute player of the same draft level or lower. The manager may choose any registered League player that is draft level or lower but also notify the opposing manager of the substitute player... The substitute player bats in the same place in the batting rotation and may play any position. The injured player cannot reenter the game or play in another game the same night. If a substitute player is not available, the team is not charged an out when the injured player is supposed to bat. If an injured player is not replaced but a substitute player becomes available, they may enter the game for the injured player in their batting order and play any position. The opposing manager may not challenge the substitute player so long as the substitute player is a draft level or lower and a registered player for the current season.
- 17) **BATS:** The League has approved the use of all senior softball bats for use in League play for all players. Passive bat warmers are also approved for use.

18) **HOME PLATE:** The catcher may touch any part of the strike plate on a force play.

19) **Potential double-play situation:**

On a runner advancing to second base must either slide or veer away from the play to avoid interfering with the second baseman. If the second baseman drops or fails to secure the ball, it will be at **the umpire's discretion** to determine whether the runner should be awarded second base. If, in the umpire's judgment, the runner fails to slide or veer and interferes with the second baseman's ability to complete the play, both the runner and the batter-runner will be called out, resulting in a double play. The purpose of this rule is to avoid unnecessary contact, protect our players, and allow the defensive player a fair opportunity to complete the play.

20) **Minimum Physical Requirement:** Players must demonstrate the ability to be able to at least walk to first base on their own while completing their time at bat. To assist the slower players, the League has included an encroachment line at 165' and added a rule that the outfielders cannot throw out a batter/runner at first base following a successful hit. (Rule 8. n.)

21) **American Disabilities Act:** If a player is requesting special accommodations under the American Disabilities Act, they must first submit in writing documentation from their treating physician as to what their physical limitation requirements are and how it applies to their participation in senior softball. The Executive Board will determine if reasonable accommodations can be provided to the player while keeping within the spirit of the game.

Approved by the Cape Coral 50+ Senior Softball League, Inc.
Executive Board