



FUQUAY-VARINA

Softball Handbook

Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation & Cultural
Resources

www.fvparks.org

7/12/2019

Inclement Weather Information

www.fvparks.org

*Select "Facility Status" under the youth sports tab
If your facility is CLOSED your activity is CANCELLED*

Weather Hotline: 919-552-2698

Sign up to receive text message alerts!

*Both the weather hotline and webpage are updated weekdays by 4pm and weekends
by 8am.*

I. General Information

- a. The Town of Fuquay-Varina's softball league administered through Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department will focus on providing a recreational, fun, safe option for players to learn and enjoy the game of softball. Good sportsmanship and skill development should be the main goal of all coaches. Winning is secondary to having fun and learning the game.
- b. All rule interpretations will be administered by the Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (FVPRCRD).
- c. All team activities must be supervised by an approved Head or Assistant coach.
- d. No unsanctioned activities are permitted. Unsanctioned activities include practices held away from town owned/leased property; practices/activities held outside of the team's schedule provided by FVPRCRD.
- e. All who wish to participate in Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Athletic Programs must register and pay the registration fee prior to being assigned a team and participating in the program.

II. Coaches and Assistant Coaches

- a. No team shall have more than five (5) coaches. They are designated as Head Coach, three (3) Assistant Coaches, one (1) scorekeeper.
- b. Head coach appointments are to be made by FVPRCRD for one (1) season. All coaches will be evaluated following each season. This evaluation will be used to determine whether or not he/she will be invited back to represent a team in the future.
- c. All coaches are required to submit a formal application and background check. The background checks are subject to approval of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department.
- d. All Assistant Coaches may be selected by the Head Coach after the teams have been determined, pending approval of the Recreation Department. Assistant Coaches must submit a formal application and background check.
- e. All coaches must understand and agree to carry out the duties, responsibilities, policies, and philosophies as established by the Town of Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department. All coaches must be approved by the Recreation Department. Any coach not carrying out these duties and responsibilities will be subject to dismissal.
- f. Head Coaches are required to hold a preseason parent meeting to discuss rules, conduct, responsibilities, etc.
- g. Coaches should always keep in mind they are setting examples in sportsmanship and fair play and should conduct themselves accordingly at all times.

- h. Only the Head Coach and their Assistants will be allowed in the dugout during the playing of an official game.
- i. Only the head coach may confer with officials during the play of a regulation game. Any assistant coaches who approach an umpire on field during play may be removed from the game.
- j. Coaches are responsible for reporting players who have dropped from their team. If a spot opens FVPRCRD will fill the opening with the next player available on the wait list. If no players are on the waitlist the roster spot will remain open.
- k. All coaches must wear their FVPRCRD issued coaches shirts and wristbands to all team activities. No coach will be permitted in the dugout that is not in uniform.
- l. Coaches are responsible for leaving the dugout area clean after their game. Please pick up any trash, equipment or items before leaving.
- m. Coaches must remain inside the dugout while their team is on defense unless local league rules allow for coaches on the field during play.

III. Communication

- a. **24 HOUR RULE:** Parents sometimes disagree with a coach's decision or coaching style, especially when it involves their child. Parents must understand that the coach does not represent a player, but the entire team and must make decisions from the team perspective first and foremost. For parents, it is important to separate their child's sports development from game emotions. For this reason, we have adopted the "24 HOUR RULE," which simply states that the coach will not discuss game situations until at least 24 hours after the game. This rule helps to move the discussion away from the presence of the players and allows all parties to have time to put things in perspective and cool off if necessary. This rule also applies to coaches and parents contacting the recreation department.

Contact Info: **Primary Contact – Trey Baggett**

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919-552-1430
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IV. Weather Updates

- a. Decisions are made weekdays by 4pm and weekends by 8am or as status changes. Once the decision is made, FVPRCRD will email coaches so that they can communicate with their parents any changes. You can also check for updates by visiting www.fvparks.org and selecting 'Field Status' icon. If your facility is listed as "CLOSED" then your activity is cancelled. Coaches and families may also check the town's **weather hotline by dialing 919-552-2698**.
- b. An attempt will be made to reschedule all games that are cancelled due to inclement weather. If space/time allows, rained out practices may be rescheduled at the discretion of the FVPRCRD. Coaches may not request to change game times once schedule has been posted.

Text Message Alert Sign-up Instructions

1. Go to FVPARKS.ORG
2. Either:
 - Hover your mouse over the "Sports" tab, which will bring down a list of links. From there, you will find the "Alerts from PRCR" link on the left-hand side; click the link to go to the Alerts page.
 - Or click the "Sports" tab, which will take you to the main sports page. From there, you will find and click the link labeled "Alerts from PRCR".
3. You will then be directed to the Fuquay-Varina Alert Center. Find the link in the grey box labeled **"Notify Me ®"**
4. Click the "Notify Me" link. (To subscribe to text and/or email alerts.)
5. Type your email address in the box labeled "Email Address" and click the button labeled "Sign In".
6. For text message alerts, check the 2nd box that reads **"I would like to be able to receive text messages on my mobile phone"** and type your desired phone number in the box provided. Click save before continuing.
7. Underneath the Alert Center there are two icons beside PRCR Alerts:  & 
 - To subscribe or unsubscribe, you must click the Mobile phone icon,  beside PRCR Alerts. Once completed there will be a green check mark on the icon, which will look like: 

You will receive a text message asking to receive text alerts from PRCR. Reply **"Y"** to opt into the service. Once you reply **"Y"** you will receive a text confirming that you are signed up to receive text alerts.

V. Uniforms and Equipment

- a. Shirts will be provided by the FVPRCRD. Parents may be required to purchase additional equipment.
- b. Teams shall NOT alter the uniforms that are distributed to players in any manner (including adding names to shirts, cutting sleeves, changing colors). Parents will be responsible for the cost of replacing a modified uniform.
- c. All players participating in 7U and 8U Softball are required to wear a helmet with a facemask while batting. All players participating in 10U or 12U softball are encouraged to wear a helmet with a facemask while batting.
- d. All players participating in 7U and 8U softball are required to wear a fielding mask while playing on defense. A fielding mask is required for 10U and 12U pitchers and encouraged for all other defensive players.
- e. No jewelry, including earrings, shall be worn by any player. Hair clips must be soft, elastic ties and may not be metal/plastic.
- f. Coaches will be issued a shirt and wristband that must be worn to all practices and games. Once a coach has been approved (both assistant and head) they may come by the Community Center and pick up their shirt and wristband.
- g. Coaches will be issued a bucket of softballs. All town-owned equipment must be returned at the conclusion of the season. Any coach who has not returned equipment within 2 weeks following the final event of the season will be responsible for paying a replacement fee. Fees are dependent upon the equipment that is missing and are dependent on the current MSRP. Any equipment that is damaged during the season must be returned to FVPRCRD immediately. If damaged equipment is returned promptly, there will be no fee incurred.
- h. Batters, base runners, on deck batters, and catcher (and anyone warming up the pitcher) must wear protective head gear.
- i. Gloves may not exceed 14" in length. Pitchers gloves may not be gray or white. Pitchers may not wear arm bands, sweat bands or batting gloves while pitching. No pitchers' undersleeves shall be white or gray. Umpire will ask for them to remove the prohibited items before the pitcher will be permitted to begin.
- j. No metal cleats are allowed.
- k. All players must wear solid black pants or shorts. No pin stripes or different colors.
- l. Uniforms must be the outermost garment worn during play. Uniforms must be tucked in.

VI. Player Draft

The vision of the Town of Fuquay-Varina's Sports division is to provide fair programming where fun, safety, sportsmanship and team work are emphasized. In an effort to provide balanced teams, the Recreation Department has established draft rules. All coaches must agree to follow the listed draft format and agree to be honest, fair and act in good faith to provide the best experience for all players and families. Coaches may not collude, conspire or attempt to manipulate the draft in order to benefit themselves or a small group of individuals.

- a. **CONFIDENTIAL:** The Draft, including Skills Evaluation results, player draft order and trades, is kept completely confidential. Each individual attending the draft is responsible for maintaining confidentiality of the draft and draft materials.
- b. **ADMINISTRATION:** The player draft shall take place following player assessments. The Athletic Program Administrator, or designated staff, will supervise the placement. Fall only: The recreation department will have the master list of returning players and players that have opted out of their previous season's team. The selection (opt in or out) that the parent makes at the time of registration is final and cannot be changed in the draft room.
- c. **NON-GRADED PLAYERS:** Players who do not have skills evaluation grades will not be drafted and will be assigned at random after all eligible players have been drafted. These players will be placed on a team by the Athletic Program Administrator or designated staff. Draft will continue until all rosters are full.
- d. **DRAFT ORDER:** Draft order shall be determined by draw. **Draft format will be a snake draft.** Draft picks will be selected by grade range. Coaches must select a player from the designated grade range if available. Once all players have been selected from that grade range the draft will continue to follow the snake moving on to the next grade range of players. (Example, all A players must be selected before moving on to draft B players, etc...)
- e. **COACH/CHILD SELECTIONS:** Head Coaches with children will select their child(ren) as their first pick of their child's qualifying round. Coaches with multiple children in the same division will select the first child as listed above. The second child and subsequent children will be selected first in their qualifying round. If the children are listed in the same qualifying round, they will be consecutive picks. See selecting siblings below.
- f. **SIBLINGS:** Brothers and sisters in the same age group will be placed on the same team. Coaches who select siblings will select the first sibling in their qualifying round and the second sibling with the first pick of the second child's qualifying round. If both siblings are listed in the same qualifying round, they will be consecutive picks. (Example – sibling 1 is rated an A and sibling 2 is rated a B.

The coach will select the first sibling 1 in the A round and sibling 2 will be the coach's first pick in the B round. If siblings 1 and 2 are both A players; when the coach selects sibling 1, sibling 2 will be the coach's automatic next pick.)

- g. **AVAILABILITY:** Coaches shall not pass up a player selection choice as long as selections are available to fill vacant positions.
- h. **PLAYER REQUESTS:** All player requests will not be considered in the draft unless there is a special circumstance that has been submitted to the Athletic Program Administrator prior to the draft. Any children that must be paired together for transportation purposes will be drafted in the same manner as siblings (see selecting siblings in rule F).
- i. **TIME:** Coaches have 1 minute to make their selection. Once 1 minute has passed and a selection has not been made, the Athletic Program Administrator or designated staff member will assign a player from the current round to the coach's team.
- j. **TRADES:** At the conclusion of the draft, the Athletic Program Administrator will open the floor to player trades. All trades must be finalized before coaches leave the draft room. Once the coaches leave the draft room, rosters are final. All trades must be approved by the Athletic Program Administrator or designated staff member. A player must be traded for another player with the same skill level grade (example; an A player cannot be traded for a C player). Coaches may make no more than 2 trades. Players who do not have a draft grade are not eligible for trade. Any further changes made after the draft must be requested in writing and receive special approval from the Athletic Program Administrator.
- k. **FALL DRAFT PROCESS:** Teams will stay together for a calendar year (from spring to fall). At the end of the calendar year (after the fall season), all players will re-enter the player draft and new teams will be drafted. Draft rules may need to be modified prior to the draft and the Athletic Program Administrator reserves the right to make changes as needed to ensure draft fairness.
 - i. Players may opt out of their previous season's team when registering. Players who opt out of their previous season's team will re-enter the "free agent" pool of players. The coach of the player's previous season's team may not re-draft the player.
 - ii. If a coach does not wish to return as a head coach during a calendar year (spring to fall), a new head coach will be designated, and the players will remain together.
 - iii. All players who did not play in the spring season of the calendar year or choose to move to a different team will be entered into the pool of "free

- agents” and must attend player evaluations. All free agents, except for head coach’s child(ren) are eligible to be drafted.
- iv. Draft order in the fall season will be the inverse of the final regular season standings from the previous spring season. Expansion teams will have first pick in the draft. If multiple expansion teams are required, they will draw for draft position.
 - v. Each player will be assigned an overall grade based upon the collective grades submitted by coaches during the evaluation. Prior to the draft, the draft administrator will determine the maximum number of players coaches may carry per qualifying round. Teams will only be allowed to pick if they have an open roster spot to pick a player in that qualifying round. To prevent teams from getting out of balance, the draft administrator will assign number values to each player based upon their collective grade. The numeric values will be as follows: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1 U=reenter free agent pool. The next pick will be determined by the team that has the lowest collective team score without exceeding their maximum allotted picks for that qualifying round. If teams are tied in value, the original draft order will be used.
 - vi. Once individual team rosters have reached the maximum number of players allowable (determined by registration numbers) then other teams, including those with higher values will select players following the draft order.
 - vii. In the event registration numbers require an expansion team, the recreation department will remove select players from each team, making an effort to balance teams using the players’ evaluation grade.
 - viii. In the event registration numbers require a contraction of a division (ie. dropping from 8 teams to 7 teams), the recreation department will dissolve the team(s) with the least returning players and/or a team without a returning coach. Those players will re-enter the “free agent” pool and be eligible to be drafted by a new team.

VII. Playing Rules

a. All Divisions

- i. All rules are governed by NC High School Rules unless otherwise specified in the local league rules listed herein.
- ii. No infield is permitted prior to the start of a game. Teams may warm up in the outfield prior to their game time.
- iii. Game length will be six (6) innings. A regulation game is four (4) complete innings or 3.5 innings with the home team leading. A ten (10)

run slaughter rule will be in effect for all games after 3.5 innings when the home team is leading or 4 innings if the away team is winning.

1. Run Rule:
 - a. In the 1st inning, both teams may score a maximum of 5 runs each. Once 5 runs have been scored or 3 outs have been achieved, the inning will roll over.
 - b. In the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, & 5th inning the trailing team will always have the chance to tie the score and score an additional 5 runs. The team leading may only score 5 runs before the inning rolls over.
 - c. In the 6th inning, there is no run limit for either team.
 - d. Innings will roll over once a team gets 3 outs or the maximum number of runs has been scored.
- iv. There will be a 10-minute grace period for all games. Games must be started when both teams have the minimum number of players (8) required but teams are not required to begin a game before the scheduled time. If a team needs to use the 10-minute grace period, the game clock will be started, and the team will have 10 minutes to have eight (8) players.
- v. A game called prior to becoming a regulation game will be replayed as a new game on the next available date. Pitchers innings will not count towards their weekly totals. If a game is called in the middle of the inning but has reached enough innings to be considered a complete game, the final score will revert to the previous inning's score.
- vi. Once a game reaches the time limit, it is considered an official game regardless of the inning.
- vii. A game ending in a tie will play until a winner is reached only if time allows. If the game is a tie and time has expired, the game will be recorded as a tie. Teams will play up to 2 extra innings if time permits. If the game is still a tie after 2 extra innings the game will be recorded as a tie. All tournament games will play until a winner is reached. All tournament games will use the international tie-breaker rule when extra innings are required and will play until a winner is reached. International tie breaker rule will only be enacted when teams are still tied after 6 complete innings. International tie-breaker rule states that the last out of the previous inning will begin each extra inning on 2nd base.

- viii. The final out of an inning constitutes the end of that inning and the next inning begins immediately. If there is time remaining on the clock and a new inning begins, play will continue until:
 - 1. The full inning is complete
 - 2. The top half of the inning is complete, when the home team is ahead.
- ix. **All players must play a minimum of six (6) outs per game. FVPCRD encourages coaches to not allow players to sit on the bench for consecutive innings.** No original starter may re-enter the game until all substitutions have played on the field or an injury occurs.
- x. All rostered players will be placed in the batting order and will bat in continuous order throughout the game. Batting order may be changed before each game at the discretion of the coach. Players arriving after the start of the game are to be placed at the end of the batting order. All batting rosters are to be turned in to the scorekeeper before the game time. Teams must adhere to their batting order set in place at the beginning of each game, any spot in the batting order that is not filled by a batter for reasons other than an injury will be counted as an out. Free substitution will be allowed defensively but the batting order will not be changed once the game has begun.
- xi. Games may be started with as few as eight (8) players. If a team is playing with only eight (8) players, the ninth spot in the batting order will **not** be considered an out. Any team that does not have 8 players when the 10-minute grace period expires will have to forfeit that game.
- xii. A substitute runner for the catcher on base with two (2) outs is **mandatory**. The courtesy runner must be the last participant to make an out in the offensive teams' lineup. With less than two (2) outs, it is the coach's option to use a courtesy runner. The courtesy runner will be the last out.
- xiii. **No head-first sliding is allowed at any base.** If a runner leaves the base early, the umpire will declare a "dead ball" and there will be no pitch. The team will be given a warning and any further incidents of leaving the base early will cause the base runner to be called out.
- xiv. Only properly uniformed players and coaches will be allowed on the playing field. Players not in uniform will not be permitted to participate (this may be waived during regular season games however tournament games will be strictly enforced). Coaches must wear coaches' shirts and wrist bands to be permitted in the dugout.

- xv. On deck batters must be stationed at the back side of the batter.
- xvi. No coaching from the pitcher's mound once the ball has been pitched.

b. 7U Game Rules

- i. An inning cannot be started after one (1) hour of play. Game times will be 6:00 pm and 7:15 pm (or immediately following the previous game). There will be a 10-minute grace period if a team does not have enough players to start. Games must be started when both teams have the minimum number of players (8) required but teams are not required to begin a game before the scheduled time. If a team needs to use the 10-minute grace period, the game clock will be started, and the team will have 10 minutes to have eight (8) players.
- ii. Ten (10) fielders may be on the field each inning but play may go on with as few as eight (8). No team is allowed to start a game with fewer than 8 players and will have to forfeit said game. If, once the game has begun, a player is injured and reduces a team's lineup to fewer than 8 players, that game will be continued as a regulation game. Outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass prior to the pitch. They may not move forward into the infield dirt until the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- iii. Head coaches are responsible for all players, coaches, parents and spectators. Up to 5 coaches are allowed in the dugout. Two coaches are allowed on the field when they are on defense but must remain in the outfield grass. On offense one coach must serve as the coach pitcher. Other coaches will be positioned at 3rd base, 1st base and assisting the batter. One (1) offensive coach may be positioned near home plate to help batters with placement as well as collecting pitched balls. If the offensive team does not have enough coaches to fill all positions, a defensive coach may help at home plate. Unsportsmanlike conduct by any person shall result in one (1) game suspension. Second and subsequent violations may result in that person being banned from softball programs.
- iv. The distance from pitching rubber to home plate is 35' and the base distance is 60'. Coaches will pitch in an underhand motion and must have at least one foot inside the pitching circle when the pitch is released. The umpire will be stationed behind/beside home plate.
- v. No lead may be taken. Base runners may not steal. Base runners may not leave the base until the ball has reached home plate. 1st offense – warning; 2nd offense – runner is called out.

- vi. Batters will receive three (3) pitches to put a ball in play. Batters will have unlimited foul tips on the last pitch. If a player has not put the ball in play after the final pitch from the coach, the player will get 1 swing to hit a ball off the tee. A batted ball off the tee should travel past the 25-foot arch. **Clarification: a swing is defined as a normal baseball swing once the batter is in her hitting stance. If the batter taps the ball and it falls off the tee as part of her preparation, this is not considered a swing. A fielder can make a play on the ball when it is within the 25-foot arch. If the fielder touches the ball before it crosses the 25-foot arch it is considered a live ball and play will continue. The batter will be called out if the ball does not travel past the 25-foot arch AND the fielder does not touch the ball.**
- vii. **Players must stop the lead runner for the play to end.** Once the lead runner has been stopped by the defensive player, all base runners will be stopped by the umpire. If a base runner is over halfway to the next base when the umpire calls “time” the runner will be awarded the next base. If the base runner is not halfway to the next base when the umpire calls “time” the runner will return to the previous base. **In the event of an overthrown base, the base runners will only be allowed to advance one base. Once an overthrow occurs the umpire will stop play (the play is over) and award one extra base to all base runners.** *Clarification: the ball must be a clear overthrow. If the ball touches the first baseman’s glove and is dropped, it is not considered an overthrow and play will continue. The spirit of the rule is to allow the defense a chance to throw the runner out at second if he/she attempts to advance on dropped or muffed ball but limits the runner to one base if the ball is a clear overthrow. It is ultimately the umpire’s discretion if the ball is considered an overthrow or simply a dropped ball. If a player barely touches a ball in an attempt to stop the ball but is not successful and the ball rolls a substantial distance away from the defensive player, the play will be ruled an overthrow. The umpire’s call is final and shall not be argued.*
Overthrows may occur at any base, including home.
- viii. The player pitcher may be positioned anywhere inside the pitching circle even with or behind the pitching rubber.
- ix. All infielders must be positioned at least 35’ from the batter.
- x. If the ball hits the official or coach a “dead ball” will be called and the batter will be awarded first base. All base runner will advance one (1) base **if they are forced.**

xi. Infield fly rule is not in effect.

c. **8U Game Rules**

- i. An inning cannot be started after one (1) hour and ten (10) minutes of play. Game times will be 6:00pm and 7:20pm (or immediately following the previous game). There will be a 10-minute grace period if a team does not have enough players to start. Games must be started when both teams have the minimum number of players (8) required but teams are not required to begin a game before the scheduled time. If a team needs to use the 10-minute grace period the game clock will be started and the team will have 10 minutes to have eight (8) players.
- ii. Ten (10) fielders may be on the field each inning but play may go on with as few as eight (8). No team is allowed to start a game with fewer than 8 players and will have to forfeit said game. If, once the game has begun, a player is injured and reduces a team's lineup to fewer than 8 players, that game will be continued as a regulation game. Outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass prior to the pitch. They may not move forward into the infield dirt until the ball is hit or reaches home plate.
- iii. Head coaches are responsible for all players, coaches, parents and spectators. Up to 5 coaches are allowed in the dugout. Two coaches are allowed on the field when they are on defense but must remain in the outfield grass in foul territory. One coach on defense may remain in front of their dugout and must not approach the home plate area. On offense coaches will be positioned at 3rd base, 1st base and assisting the batter. Unsportsmanlike conduct by any person shall result in one (1) game suspension. Second and subsequent violations may result in that person being banned from softball programs.
- iv. The distance from pitching rubber to home plate is 35' and the base distance is 60'. Coaches will pitch in an underhand motion and must have at least 1 foot inside the pitching circle when the pitch is released. The umpire will be stationed behind/beside home plate.
- v. No lead may be taken. Base runners may not steal. Base runners may not leave the base until the ball has reached home plate. 1st offense – warning; 2nd offense – runner is called out.
- vi. Batters will receive five (5) pitches to put a ball in play. Batters will have unlimited foul tips on the last pitch. If a ball has not been put in play after five pitches, then the batter will be called out.
- vii. **Players must stop the lead runner for the play to end.** Once the lead runner has been stopped by the defensive player, all base runners will be stopped by the umpire. If a base runner is over halfway to the next base when the umpire calls "time" the runner will be awarded the next base. If the base runner is not halfway to the next base when the umpire

calls “time” the runner will return to the previous base. **In the event of an overthrown base, the base runners will only be allowed to advance one base. Once an overthrow occurs the umpire will stop play (the play is over) and award one extra base to all base runners.** *Clarification: the ball must be a clear overthrow. If the ball touches the first baseman’s glove and is dropped, it is not considered an overthrow and play will continue. The spirit of the rule is to allow the defense a chance to throw the runner out at second if he/she attempts to advance on dropped or muffed ball but limits the runner to one base if the ball is a clear overthrow. It is ultimately the umpire’s discretion if the ball is considered an overthrow or simply a dropped ball. If a player barely touches a ball in an attempt to stop the ball but is not successful and the ball rolls a substantial distance away from the defensive player, the play will be ruled an overthrow. The umpire’s call is final and shall not be argued. **Plays at home are not considered overthrows***

- viii. The pitcher may be positioned anywhere inside the pitching circle even with or behind the coach pitcher.
- ix. All infielders must be positioned at least 35’ from the batter.
- x. If the ball hits the official or coach a “dead ball” will be called and the batter will be awarded first base. All base runner will advance one (1) base **if they are forced.**
- xi. Two coaches are permitted on the field while on defense. Coaches must stay in the outfield grass. One coach may be stationed at home plate while a team is on offense to help the batter. A first base coach and a third base coach are also permitted on the field. A coach must operate the pitching machine while on offense.
- xii. Infield fly rule is not in effect.
- xiii. All players must wear face masks while playing defense.

d. 10U Game Rules

- i. An inning cannot be started after one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes of play. Game times will be 6:00pm and 7:30pm (or immediately following the previous game). There will be a 10-minute grace period if a team does not have enough players to start. Games must be started when both teams have the minimum number of players (8) required but teams are not required to begin a game before the scheduled time. If a team needs to use the 10-minute grace period, the game clock will be started, and the team will have 10 minutes to have eight (8) players.
- ii. Ten (10) fielders may be on the field each inning but play may go on with as few as eight (8). No team is allowed to start a game with fewer than 8 players and will have to forfeit said game. If, once the game has begun, a

player is injured and reduces a team's lineup to fewer than 8 players, that game will be continued as a regulation game.

- iii. Pitchers may pitch no more than ten (10) innings per calendar week (Monday- Sunday). If a pitcher delivers one (1) pitch in an inning she shall be charged for one (1) inning pitched. Pitchers may not throw more than 4 innings in one game. Any game where an ineligible pitcher pitches will be considered a forfeit.
- iv. Pitching limitations continued – Pitching limitations apply to all games regardless of circumstance (e.g. make up games, rescheduled games). If a pitcher is ineligible and the mistake is caught before the pitcher makes a pitch to a batter, then this will not be considered a violation. If a game is called prior to being ruled a regulation game the pitching eligibility is the same as it was prior to the beginning of the stopped game.
- v. The starting pitcher may re-enter the game as a pitcher as long as they have not exceeded their maximum allowable innings for that game (max 4 innings). If a pitcher re-enters the same game, it is considered one (1) assignment. Starting pitchers may only be re-entered as the pitcher once and may not exceed their maximum allowable innings (max 4 innings). A starting pitcher cannot re-enter as a pitcher in the same inning (e.g. pitcher may only change to another position once during the same inning). Substitute pitchers may not re-enter as a pitcher.
- vi. The distance from pitching mound the home plate is 35' and the base distance is 60'. Ball size is 11".
- vii. No lead may be taken. Base runners may steal once the ball has crossed the plate. If a play is being made on a base runner at a base, the runner must make an attempt to slide. Players may only steal one base per pitch. Players are not permitted to steal home under any circumstances.
- viii. Defensive players may not block the bag without possession of the ball.
- ix. No batter may advance to first on a dropped 3rd strike by the catcher.
- x. Infield fly rule is **not** in effect.
- xi. Players must stop the lead runner for the play to end. Once the lead runner has been stopped by the defensive player, all base runners will be stopped by the umpire. If a base runner is over halfway to the next base when the umpire calls "time" the runner will be awarded the next base. If the base runner is not halfway to the next base when the umpire calls "time" the runner will return to the previous base.
- xii. Pitchers must wear face masks. The pitcher must be positioned inside of the pitching circle and in contact with the pitching rubber.

- xiii. Coaches may elect to intentionally walk a batter. No pitches must be thrown, and the batter will immediately move to first base.

e. **12U Game Rules**

- i. An inning cannot be started after one (1) hour and twenty (20) minutes of play. Game times will be 6:00pm and 7:30pm (or immediately following the previous game). There will be a 10-minute grace period.
- ii. Nine (9) fielders may be on the field each inning but play may go on with as few as eight (8). No team is allowed to start a game with fewer than 8 players and will have to forfeit said game. If, once the game has begun, a player is injured and reduces a team's lineup to fewer than 8 players, that game will be continued as a regulation game.
- iii. **No head first sliding is allowed at any base.** If a play is being made on a base runner at a base, the runner must make an attempt to slide.
- iv. Stealing is permitted. Base runners may leave the base when the pitcher releases the ball. If a base runner leaves the base early, the pitch will be declared a dead ball and the runner will be called "out."
- v. Defensive players may not block the bag without possession of the ball.
- vi. Pitchers may pitch no more than ten (10) innings per calendar week (Monday-Sunday). If a pitcher delivers one (1) pitch in an inning she shall be charged for one (1) inning pitched. Pitchers may not throw more than 4 innings in one game. Any game where an ineligible pitcher pitches will be considered a forfeit.
- vii. Pitching limitations continued – Pitching limitations apply to all games regardless of circumstance (e.g. make up games, rescheduled games). If a pitcher is ineligible and the mistake is caught before the pitcher makes a pitch to a batter, then this will not be considered a violation. If a game is called prior to being ruled a regulation game the pitching eligibility is the same as it was prior to the beginning of the stopped game.
- viii. The starting pitcher may re-enter the game as a pitcher as long as they have not exceeded their maximum allowable innings for that game (max 4 innings). If a pitcher re-enters the same game, it is considered one (1) assignment. Starting pitchers may only be re-entered as the pitcher once and may not exceed their maximum allowable innings (max 4 innings). A starting pitcher cannot re-enter as a pitcher in the same inning (e.g. pitcher may only change to another position once during the same inning). Substitute pitchers may not re-enter as a pitcher.
- ix. The distance from pitching mound to home plate is 40' and the base distance is 60'. Ball size is 12".

- x. Coaches may elect to intentionally walk a batter. No pitches must be thrown, and the batter will immediately move to first base.
- xi. Infield fly rule is in effect.
- xii. Prior to starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitcher's plate and the non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within or partially within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.
- xiii. About the Pitch:
 - 1. The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the windup after the hands have been brought together.
 - 2. Once the hands are brought together and are in motion, the pitcher shall not take more than one step which must be forward, toward the batter and simultaneous with the delivery. Any step backward shall begin before the hands come together. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together.
- xiv. Warm Up Pitches: The pitcher shall receive no more than one (1) minute to complete no more than five (5) warm up pitches. If the catcher is not ready to warm up the pitcher, a coach or another player may catch the warm up pitches until the catcher is ready. If the catcher did not receive any of the previous warm up pitches, then one (1) additional pitch may be thrown to the catcher.

VIII. Protest Procedure

- a. All protests must be noted in the score book at the time of the objection and received in writing within 24 hours of the game in question. Protest will only be allowed for rule misapplications. All judgment calls are final. Coaches may not question judgment calls or the integrity of the umpire.
- b. Protests must include a brief description of the play in question and the ruling that was made, reference to the written rule and how the rule was misapplied.
- c. Protests will be ruled on by the Athletic Program Administrator. All decisions are final.
- d. Protests may be denied if the outcome does not have any bearing on final standings.
- e. All decisions will be made within one (1) week of the protest.
- f. If a coach wishes to protest a tournament game, the game in question will stop until a ruling can be made by the Athletic Program Administrator.

IX. Schedules and Tournaments

- a. Practices will be held during the week and on weekends until games begin. After the start of the game season, practices will be scheduled on the weekend with games being held during the week.
- b. At the conclusion of the regular season, 8U divisions and above will play in a single elimination tournament.
- c. Tournament seeding will be based upon the final regular season standings. Ties will be broken by head to head results. If a tie still exists, then the tie will be broken by coin flip.
- d. Tournament games will be played by regular season rules (including time limits). Only the championship game will have no time limit (run rule still applies).
- e. Higher seeded team will be the home team.
- f. Pitching limitations will start new on the first game of the tournament.
- g. All tournament games must play until a winner is reached. If the time limit is up and a tie exists, the game will continue until:
 - i. The home team is winning after the top half of any inning is complete.
 - ii. The visiting team is winning after the completion of any full inning.
- h. The Town of Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department reserves the right to make changes to activity schedules when necessary.

X. Awards

- a. FVPRCRD provides individual awards for all players. Tournament trophies are awarded to tournament Champion and Runner-Up. Coaches are responsible for passing out individual awards to each player. If an award cannot be given to a player, please return it to the Fuquay-Varina Community Center and notify the parent that they may pick up their award there. Divisions ages 8U and younger receive individual commemorative trophies. Divisions 10U and older will receive individual achievement certificates.

XI. Code of Conduct

- a. Any coach, player or spectator that is ejected by an official or town staff member will be suspended for the team's next scheduled game. Suspensions may be longer depending upon the severity of the offense. All suspensions are at the discretion of the Athletic Program Administrator.
- b. No coach, player or parent shall berate, belittle or taunt opposing team player, parents or coaches. Any unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Offenders may be warned or immediately ejected if the behavior is particularly inappropriate. If ejected the offender must leave the premises immediately. All judgement calls are final.

- c. No coach, player or parent may harass or continually argue with umpires, scorekeepers or FVPRCRD Staff. Offenders may be warned or immediately ejected if the behavior is particularly inappropriate. All judgment calls are final.
- d. Coaches, players or parents that have been ejected from an official game will be required to vacate the premises and escorted out by a staff member immediately. Failure to abide by this will result in forfeiture of the game.
- e. Drugs and alcohol are prohibited at all games and practices. Violations will result in a minimum one (1) game suspension.
- f. Spectators that wish to use tobacco products are encouraged to be courteous of others around them and do so away from other spectators & program participants. Use of tobacco products on the field is prohibited. Tobacco products are prohibited on Wake County School property (Banks Rd, Herbert Aikens, Ballentine, & FV Middle).
- g. Pet owners are asked to leave pets at home for town sanctioned athletic events (practices, games, & special events).
- h. No spectator (non-coach) may enter the field of play to argue or discuss an on-field issue. Violations will result in an immediate ejection.
- i. Coaches may not intentionally run up the score. If a team is ahead by 10 or more runs before a regulation game has been reached, coaches are encouraged to have base runners run "station to station."
- j. No coach or player may deliberately or intentionally try to injure or harm another player or coach. No player, coach or spectator shall be guilty of physical attack as an aggressor upon any players, official or spectator.
- k. Coaches who do not meet their minimum playing time requirements will receive a warning for the 1st offense and suspended for three (3) games for any subsequent offenses. More than 2 violations of playing time minimums may result in expulsion from the program. Protests for not meeting minimum playing time requirements will be considered on a case by case basis. The intent of the protesting coach will be considered when ruling on playing time cases.
- l. The Fuquay-Varina Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department reserves the right to suspend any coach, parent or player found to be violating the mission, vision or philosophy of the department.