

MIDDLESEX COUNTY 60+ SOFTBALL LEAGUE

LEAGUE RULES

2021

Revised: May 27, 2021

PREAMBLE

The name of the organization shall be Middlesex County 60+ Softball League Inc. The League shall be a non-profit corporation pursuant to Title 15A: 2-8 of the New Jersey Domestic Non Profit Corporation Act (The Act), whose purpose is to organize scheduled softball games for member teams. Each team in the League shall be considered a member pursuant to the Act and shall have equal rights and limitations. If any assets are at any time to be distributed, such distribution shall be equally among active members. All officers and only officers of the League shall be deemed Trustees under the Act. The League hereby indemnifies Trustees/Officers to the maximum extent permitted under Title 15A: 3-4 of the Act against expenses and liabilities in connection with any proceeding. Any provisions of these By-Laws (sometimes referred to as a "Constitution") which are not in accordance with the Act are to be considered null and void. The intention of the League is to operate as a corporation under the Act to limit any personal liabilities of Trustees/ Officers.

ARTICLE I

BY-LAWS

MEMBERSHIP/TEAMS/ROSTERS

- A. Each player must be at least **SIXTY (60)** years old during the calendar year that he joins the League. There will be no exceptions unless voted upon by the Rules Committee. No VERBAL requests will be acknowledged.
- B. If a player is found to be ineligible due to age, his team forfeits all games for which he was on the roster (current season only) and the player is ineligible for future play in the League unless reinstated by the Board.
- C. Players must turn sixty (60) during the calendar year for that season. Prior to April 1, any new team can be awarded membership by the Rules Committee in unanimous agreement. Any new team wishing to gain entry into the league must first be in compliance with Section E below in regards to the number of existing players that can be included for it to be considered "New." New teams will League Division at the discretion of the League Board.
- D. Prior to April 1st of the season, no more than two (2) players can be picked up by any team or lose two players to another team.
- A player shall be considered as an existing player (i.e. part of an existing team in the league) if he was on an official Player Roster for any team for any period of time (including partial seasons) during the preceding season and played in at least one game.
 - A new player would be anyone who never played in our league or did not play in any games in the preceding year.
 - Players who choose to sit out a year will be able to join any team of choice.
 - Players looking to switch teams must make a formal request to his last manager. That manager must forward request to Commissioner. Deadline to request is April 1st.
 - Former manager must approve or deny player request.
 - Rules committee will review request and decide what is in best interest of league. The League Commissioner will inform both team managers of decision.
- E. Team managers are responsible for meeting all deadlines, as outlined in the League rules. **Teams will not be reminded by League Commissioner.** All communication and requests regarding league must be sent by email to commissioner.
- F. Team ranking will be determined from the final regular season standings.
- G. Team rosters with a minimum of sixteen (16) and a maximum of twenty-five (25) players must be submitted no later than **May 1st.** It is the team manager's responsibility to PRODUCE a players' driver's license(s) in the event a question (protest) arises regarding actual birth date of player in question. The player in question can not play until DOB is confirmed.

- H. **Rosters must be sent to the League Secretary's email address**, that can be found on website. The League Secretary must acknowledge receipt for each manager and communicate with League Commissioner if a team fails to do so. All emails will be saved as proof. If roster can be posted on website, they do not have to be emailed to all managers.
- I. Teams will forfeit all played game(s) until roster is submitted.
- J. Team rosters will be frozen prior to 4th played game. Any player officially removed from the roster prior to 4th game played and has played in a game(s) is ineligible to play for any other team that year.
- K. Players who were on original rosters and not placed on the frozen roster, and did not play any games in current season, may join any team as a new player. The new team he joins must submit his name on the frozen roster prior to 4th game played.
- L. Any player appearing on more than one(1) roster, will be considered a legal player for the team he plays the first game with. If a player does play in a game with more than one team, all games played will be considered a forfeit if said player has played for another team second.
- M. Teams will not be allowed to hand in a final frozen roster late (must be prior to fourth/4th played game). Original roster will then prevail, if final roster is late or not turned in. It is the managers responsibility and will not be reminded by commissioner.
- N. In the event a team has numerous injured players and may not be able to finish the season, a team may request to add a replacement player(s). Requesting manager must email full name and COPY OF DRIVER LICENSE of the new player to commissioner, prior to replacement player playing in game. No replacements will be allowed after regular season schedule is completed.
- O. **The injured player replaced is considered not eligible for balance of season/playoffs.**

PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY

- A. A player must be play in at least **25% of teams games played**, rounded up to next whole # (Example: 18 games played times 25%= 4.5 games, round it up to 5 games).
- B. A team that gains a forfeit win, will count that game as a credit toward playoff eligibility.

RULES COMMITTEE

- A. A rules committee consisting of 3 members will make all rule related decisions. The league commissioner and vice president will choose a team manager to be on committee.
- B. All protests or manager requests will be decided by majority vote of committee.

ARTICLE II

YEARLY OBLIGATIONS

- A. All teams must pay League fees as determined by the Treasurer are due prior to the first game. Fees are required to purchase softballs and also include insurance coverage, which the League will supply to the teams and to pay umpires. Umpires will be paid in cash at the start of all league season or playoff games.
- B. Teams may forfeit all games played until league fee is paid. It is the manager's responsibility and will not be reminded by the League Commissioner. Late payment exceptions will be at commissioners discretion. Fees are due prior to first game.
- C. League fee for this season is \$50. per player, up to 18 players. Managers and league officials do not have to pay.

ARTICLE III

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

The League Executive Board will be comprised of four (4) members, each with specific responsibilities. The Board will be charged with all League administrative decisions and duties, including enforcing League Rule revisions and additions which will be determined by the managers and approved by the Rules Committee. All appeals, grievances and protests lodged during the season will be reviewed and decided upon by the Rules Committee.

At all formal league meetings, the attendees must have a representative for each team and members of executive committee.

If a team manager chooses to send a representative to a meeting, it is the manager's responsibility to communicate with his representative regarding any changes covered during said meeting. A manager not attending a meeting will not be an excuse.

ARTICLE IV

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

All shall be held at a formal meeting called for at any time by the Executive Board or by a simple majority of team Managers and will be governed by the following:

A. Nominations

1. Any designated team can make a nomination representative.
2. Only one nomination or second will be accepted from any designated team representative for each Board position.

B. Elections

1. Requirements for voting. Each team has one vote to be cast by the designated team representative.
2. There will be no absentee ballots.
3. Any candidate shall be elected when the balloting yields a majority of the votes cast.

ARTICLE V

RULES OF PLAY

The League shall adhere to the current senior ASA rules and regulations for all playing matters, except as provided in the League rules of play. League rules take precedence over ASA rules. Before the start of each softball season, team managers and the Executive board will review the playing rules that shall be in the best interest of the League. **The Rules Committee will consider new proposals and decide appropriately.**

The Board shall also adopt a schedule for the regular season. Subsequent suggested revisions to individual regular season game dates, times, and fields may be made with the approval of the Rules committee.

The current League rules of play are as follows:

1. Team field strength will be a maximum of eleven (11) players and a minimum of nine (9).
2. A game will be forfeited if a team cannot field a minimum of nine (9) players fifteen (15) minutes after the pre-arranged starting time or during play. If both teams cannot field nine (9) men, then both teams forfeit the game.
3. **Teams will supply a catcher for nine (9) players only and will not participate in any defensive plays.** An out will be recorded every time the tenth batting position is up to bat.
4. Teams can share players to field a team to avoid a forfeit, if agreed upon by both managers (not a requirement). Game counts as official game.
If a team fields only ten(10), opposing team is not required to share player. *The League suggests to avoid a forfeit, the manager of shorthanded team contact the opposing manager to see if a solution can be worked out.*
5. Forfeit fines will be imposed by each successive offense at \$50, \$75, etc. Forfeit fines must be paid to the league treasurer prior to the next scheduled game. If not paid, the team will forfeit that game and be assessed another fine. **A team that forfeits more than 2 games will be ruled out of the remainder of season.**
6. A team may bat all players. However, a minimum of twelve (12) players, if available, must be batted. Any player playing the field must bat. Two players may occupy the same slot in the batting order and alternate at bats as long as lineup has minimum of 12 batting positions listed.
7. In the event a substitute is not available, the number of batters listed in the batting cannot be reduced without recording an out when the vacant position comes to bat. **In the case of an injury, an out will be recorded only the first time the vacant position comes to bat.**
(EXCEPTIONS:#1 if a player is ejected and a substitute is not available an out will be recorded every time that position comes to bat, #2 see #(9).
8. Before the start of the game, players planning to leave a game before its conclusion must inform the umpire and opposing manager of their intended departure time. No penalty will be imposed. His place in lineup will be skipped. *Note that the team is still subject to (non-*

monetary) forfeiture of the game, if it is unable to field nine (9) players as a result of (a) player(s) leaving or having been removed or ejected from the game.

9. Players arriving at any time subsequent to the start of the game will be inserted at the bottom of the lineup.
10. This is a slow pitch league with a minimum arc of six (6) feet and a maximum arc of twelve (12) feet above the ground.
11. The pitcher's box shall be three (3) feet wide to match the width of the pitching rubber and five (5) feet deep. The pitcher can pitch from any spot in the box, as long as he has one foot in the box. The pivot foot must remain in the pitcher's box throughout the delivery. Consistent with current regulations, the pitcher must pause at least one (1) second before the start of delivery i.e. he cannot run up while in the box.
12. A league approved wooden strike zone mat (22" x 36") will be used in all League games. The plate and the mat shall constitute the strike zone.
13. Courtesy runner rules- a runner can pinch run once per inning. If a pinch runner is on a base when his turn at bat comes, it is called an out.
14. A third strike foul (i.e, a foul hit when the count is already strike two) is an automatic out. If such a third strike foul out is caught by a fielder, the ball is in play and runners may attempt to advance at their own discretion.
15. All base paths are sixty-five (65) feet between bases and the pitching rubber is fifty (50) feet from home plate except where otherwise agreed due to field limitations.
16. A commitment line will be designated halfway (32½ ft.) between third and home. This line should be made by the umpire or ground crew.
17. All games will be nine (9) innings. Five(5) innings must be completed (4-1/2 if the home team is winning) for a game to be official.
18. Teams may score a maximum of 5 runs per inning or catch-up plus 5. There are no restrictions in the last inning or extra innings.
19. There is a mercy rule if one team leads the other by fifteen (15) runs after seven (7) innings of play have been completed or 6-1/2 innings if the home team is in the lead.
20. Pitcher must wear a mask during game
21. A pitching screen must be used for batting practice.
22. All team managers have the option to be in the lineup. He may enter as a sub for an injured player or a player designated as leaving early.
23. All bats must be inspected and tested prior to the start of every season. The League will use a SSL Portable Barrel compression bat tester set to ASA standards. A bat that passes test will have the current year sticker applied.

24. All bats must be official slow-pitch, and be on the approved ASA bat list for the current season. All bats must be equal to the 1.20 BPF standards. **NO SENIOR or USSSA BATS ARE ALLOWED.**
25. A bat without league sticker can not be used during the game or BP. It is managers responsibility to communicate the rule to team members and ensure only bats with correct stickers are used.
26. A three(3) week grace period will be allowed (first three played games) for bat testing. **A bat may be used if it has the prior year's sticker from the Middlesex 60's League, during the first three weeks.** The League commissioner will be available during first week of season at field, prior to game time, to start testing.
27. Any player who comes to the plate without the correct sticker on his bat shall be declared an out and runners return to their base, if ball was put in play. Said player will be ejected from game.
28. Any manager may challenge the legality of a stickered bat and will be tested as soon as possible. If its determined that the bat has not been altered, but just dropped below ASA standards, that bat will be ejected from use in league with no penalties.
29. If a player uses a bat ejected from league use, the batter will be ejected from league.
30. .Any player who has two events (2 bats tested and failing), after passing initial testing during the season, may be ejected from the league. After a decision of Rules committee, the league has the right to at any time to have random bat testing, conducted to ensure the safety of the players.
31. If at any time a player is seriously injured by a batted ball, the bat used will be tested. If the bat fails the compression test, it will be sent to the manufacturer to see if it was altered. If bat is found not to be altered, league will reimburse the player for the replacement of bat or a similar priced model. If bat is found to be altered, the player will be ejected from the league and can be open to civil and criminal litigation.
32. The safety base at first base will be placed eighteen (18") inches from the regular base.
33. Sliding is permitted into all bases, excluding (the scoring) home plate and (the batter's) first base. **(no head first sliding when running the bases, diving back to a base arms first is legal).**
At any base and regardless of the specific circumstances of the play, a runner who does not slide must veer out of the way of an infielder in order to avoid a collision. (A player cannot break up a force out, tag play or a double play by running into a fielder. It will be up to umpires discretion, as to his interference call. (The umpire will declare (an) out(s) as appropriate if this rule is violated. If the runner runs into the fielder and, in the umpire's judgment, it was a dangerous play; the runner will be ejected from the game and may face suspension. The player's action will be reviewed by the League Board to determine if further disciplinary action should be taken. Any decision made by the Committee will be strictly enforced. We are a competitive league.)
34. On a play at home plate, the catcher can record an out only by touching any portion of the mat. This means that the catcher cannot tag out a runner coming home or block him from crossing the scoring plate, even if the incoming throw draws him toward the runner and/or

- scoring plate. Correspondingly, the runner who touches home plate or interferes with the incoming throw at home plate shall be automatically called out.
35. If the home plate mat is accidentally moved/kicked, the catcher must touch the original permanent home plate to make the out. **DO NOT CHASE THE MAT.**
 36. Both teams shall provide one (1) new ball for each game and a game used ball as backup.
 37. The scoring plate will be placed eight (8') feet from the mat on the first base line extended. Where playing field design makes the use of a scoring plate potentially dangerous, as agreed upon by the opposing managers and the umpire, a scoring line (extension of the first base line into foul territory on the third base side) may be used instead of a scoring plate.
 38. During play, **only team managers can discuss calls with the umpire**, or other items pertaining to the nature of play. Managers must make this clear to their players.
 39. After the umpire calls, "Play Ball"; a team has two (2) minutes to resume play or the umpire can call a (non-monetary) forfeit.
 40. An umpire may remove a player for verbal or physical abuse. **Physical abuse may result in being suspended from the League for the remainder of the year.** Verbal and/or physical abuse will result in suspension of teams next game. The rules committee will review all violations and may increase the suspension.
 41. If a player is removed for the remainder of season from the League for physical abuse, player will be subject to review by the rules committee regarding future reinstatement the following year.
 42. A player removed from the game by an umpire must leave the vicinity of the ballpark to avoid more conflict with player. Umpire should advise team manager that failure to do so will result in his team's forfeiture of the game.
 43. End of season ties in the standings will be decided by the record of each team against all teams with which it is tied. (see exception below). If ties still exist, the tiebreaker is games recorded against the least runs allowed finishing team or group of teams in the division against the next highest, etc., in descending order through all teams. Ties shall be settled from bottom of standings to top in ascending order (ties for 3rd and 4th are settled before ties for 1st and 2nd). In case of ties still existing, a coin toss in the presence of representatives of all affected teams shall decide. Won/Lost percentage, rather than games ahead/behind, will be the criterion for comparing records. **(exception-the first tiebreaker used will be if either team has a forfeit loss..the team with a forfeit loss regardless to which team it forfeited to will lose tiebreaker)**
 44. It is the responsibility of the winning team to email Bob Lorencz or designated person with score of the game, the next day. **(It is important to report an accurate scores, if needed for tiebreakers)**
 45. Playoff groupings will be determined by final season standings. If time permits and if fields are available, the league will use a double elimination format. Depending on team strength and competitiveness, playoffs format may divide teams into an A and B bracket. A shorter single elimination format may be used, if necessary.

46. If the umpire does not show up for a scheduled game, or leaves during the course of the game, both managers must agree on a substitute or substitutes, who can be from either or both teams (and can even play in the game when not serving as an umpire), or a spectator. Once the game begins, it cannot be terminated over dissatisfaction with the umpiring.
47. The order of rainout makeups (with time permitting) will be made up in the order they occurred in the schedule.

ARTICLE VI

DIVISIONS

During pre-season meetings, both the Division and cross-Division team alignment will be reviewed and decided upon for the coming season. A majority vote will be required for approval. Every effort should be made to maintain parity among teams in any given Division.

ARTICLE VII

RATIFICATION

New by Laws are proposed and adopted for the League at the discretion of the rules committee. If so designated by the Board, a meeting of League Board may be called at any time to consider and adopt By Law revisions and/or additions. If such a meeting is held, ratification shall require that at least a quorum must be in attendance and at least two-thirds (66-2/3 per cent) of those present must vote for the Article I (By-Laws) in the affirmative. Changes in Article VI (Rules of Play), however, require only a simple majority vote approval.