

68+Softball League
Procedures, Policies & Rules
Effective ,
August 13, 2026

SECTION I – LEAGUE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

League Board

The 68+ League Board will consist of no less than 3 members and no more than 5 members. The board will be responsible for all final decisions on any policy, procedures or rules affecting the 68+ League or players. The board will confer with managers on any proposed changes and under normal circumstances will accept the desires of the majority of the managers in reaching their final decision on an issue.

Board members will serve a term limit of 3 years on the 68+Board. However, if at any time a board member feels he cannot continue serving effectively, he may be replaced by an appointment by the league Commissioner until such time as an election of all players of the 68+ League can be held. Additionally, if in the opinion of 75% of the managers of the 68+ League, a Board member is not serving effectively, the managers may call for a vote of confidence via a vote of all players of the 68+ League. Either of these votes will be taken in November of the respective year.

Substitution Procedures

A 68 League Sub List is comprised of players who wish to sub only during the respective season. Each player will be evaluated as A, B or C level players by the board members. During the season, a few of these players will request that they be designated as a replacement player to be placed on a team roster if an opening occurs at their level.

The weekly procedure for obtaining and selecting subs is as follows:

Managers will be provided with Substitute and Roster player lists

The lists will provide player contact information rating and preferred position

If a substitute is required, the Manager will first look to the substitute player list to fill their needs

It will be the Managers responsibility to contact and confirm that the player will substitute for his team that week

After the substitute player has agreed to play the Manager will send an email to the Sub coordinator no later than 3:00 PM the Tuesday prior to the game advising who the substitute player is and the name of the roster player he's subbing for

If a manager fails to contact the Sub coordinator prior to 3:00, any required substitutes will be considered game time substitutes and must bat at the end of the lineup

Substitute Players will be obtained using the following guidelines:

Substitute players must initially be obtained from the Substitute player list

Substitute players must be of the same or lower rating than the player they are replacing

The same substitute player cannot be used for two consecutive games and no more than 3 times per season

Only after the Substitute player list has been reviewed with no player acceptance can a manager look to the roster players to obtain subs

Managers will only secure enough substitutes to be able to play games with 11 players. The only exception to this rule is that if the team is missing one or more A players, the manager may obtain enough A player substitutes to insure they have 3 A players for their game.

Teams starting a game with 11 players that lose a player to injury will be allowed to obtain an injury sub player of equal playing level. However, if a team has 12 players and loses a player due to injury, the injured player will be scratched from the lineup and the team will play the remainder of the game with the 11 remaining players. (The only exception to this rule is that if the injured player is the Designated Pitcher (DP), the team may obtain a substitute pitcher of the same rating as the DP if available or the manager may use another member of his team to pitch.) Managers should be sure to inform the umpires and opposing manager as soon as a player is deemed to injured to continue playing.

Naturally it is the intention to always compete on a level playing field and provide the ability for teams to obtain substitute players as outlined above

Placement of Substitute Players in the Lineup:

Teams will follow the prescribed procedures for acquiring substitute players. There will be no change in the policies for assigning substitutes. However, if a substitute is confirmed and assigned to a team prior to game day, the manager has the option to place the substitute anywhere in the lineup he feels will be most beneficial. This rule overrides the current rule that requires managers to place substitutes at the end of the lineup. However, if a substitute is acquired on game day, regardless of reason, that substitute player must be placed at the end of the lineup.

NUMBER OF SUBSTITUTES:

Teams may receive up to 3 sub players as necessary to give them 11 players to compete for that game. Thus, if a team is missing 4 or less players, substitute players will be provided to give the team 11 players for their game. However, if a team is missing 5 players, only 3 substitute players will be provided, and the team will be allowed to play with 10. With the permission of the opposing manager, the opposing team may provide a catcher to allow the remaining 10 players to play IF and OF positions. However, the catcher will only be a ball returner and may not be involved in any plays at the plate, including popups behind the plate. If an opposing team catcher inadvertently catches a popup behind the plate, the umpire will simply call a "strike." If a team has less than 7 players, that team must forfeit the game.

Replacement Players

When a team needs a Replacement player to replace a player or players that due to illness or injury are unable to participate for the balance of the season the following is the procedure to obtain Replacement Players.

If the player to be replaced is a player, the manager should review the Substitute Player List. reviewing players who have the letter R alongside their name. The R coding indicates players that are willing to become active roster players. The manager may then select the replacement player of their choice and inform the Board.

After the changes are confirmed with everyone, the Board will take the necessary steps to update the team's roster.

Players that are lost to season ending injuries must be replaced no later than one week after it is determined that they are unable to play.

In fairness to all team players, Replacement Players are only allowed to be added on an equal player rating basis i.e.: A for A, B for B, and C for C.

Teams losing an A or B player have the option to play with 11 players if no equal Replacement Player is available. While under this scenario a team cannot improve their position. A manager has the option of choosing a lower rated Replacement player to fill their roster.

No Replacement Player will be assigned during the last two games of the regular season.

Any teams roster that drops to ten or less will draw substitutes to fill their game day line up to eleven players during this period.

Lastly if a player who was removed from a team's roster due to illness or injury is now capable of returning to play, he will only be allowed to participate as a Substitute player for the balance of the season in which he was originally removed. However, he cannot substitute for the team that originally drafted him nor can he substitute for a team that is playing the team he was originally draft to.

Player Refusing to Play

Any player that refuses to play on a team or leaves a game for reasons other than injury or an acceptable (determination of the board) personal issue, will be removed from that team's roster and will not be allowed to enter the draft for the following season. Following that season, continued play in the 68+ League will be at the discretion of the managers and board of the 68+ League.

68+ League Managers

Managers will be selected by the board from a list of volunteers. The following is a list of responsibilities that selected managers should comply with:

- Confirm current season players intent for following season
- Rate their current season players
- Confirm ratings of all draft list players with the board
- Assign QUALIFIED umpires for each assigned game
- Assign scorers for each game (2 scorers for first game of the day)
- Manage their teams during the season
- Request subs with sub coordinator in a timely manner, in accordance with League Substitution Procedures
- Make suggested changes and improvements to League with the board
- After draft, confirm and update any player information with the Board
- Ensure all players have signed a current Release Form
- Confirm you have an emergency contact name and phone number for each of your players

The Manager should be the team expert on 68 League rules, policies and procedures

Tie Breakers

Should the season end with a tie between any teams, the following priorities of tie breakers will be used to determine final standings:

- If teams have played an unequal number of games (example some teams have played 10 games while others played 9 games), the lowest number of games will be used. The last game played by the teams with a higher number of teams will not count in determining tie breakers.
- Head-to-Head matchup results
- If there are multiple matchups with the same team, it will be the run differential between the two teams.
- If there are multiple teams that are tied, we will use a head-to-head result (i.e. one team beating the other teams will take the top seed)
- If there is a variation in victories, we will use run differential for the games the tied teams have played against each other.
- Total runs scored during the season.

Pitcher Draft Policy

It is important to ensure that each team has an opportunity to draft a qualified pitcher. Therefore, we will adopt the following procedure during the draft:

“Managers are allowed to draft a second pitcher anytime during the draft, provided there are enough pitchers available to be drafted equal to the number of teams that require a qualified pitcher.” This policy will hold until the end of the 9th round. After the 9th round is complete, all players are eligible to be drafted regardless of requested positions.

Ejections

A. Players or Managers may be ejected from a game for but not limited to the following:

1. Verbally abusive language including profanity directed at umpires, players, managers or others
2. Throwing equipment in anger
3. Threats or acts of physical aggression
4. After given an initial warning to stop a continued expression of displeasure with an umpire's ruling

The ejected player may be replaced with a substitute player.

The ejected player or manager must leave the playing field ,dugout and sports complex for the remainder of the game.

An ejected player failing to leave or returning to the sports complex immediately will result in a forfeit for his team

A suspended player is not allowed to be at the sports complex on the day(s) of his suspension.

Players not adhering to this policy will be subject to additional penalties to be determined by the Board

Penalties:

First ejection during a season leads to one game suspension

Second ejection during season leads to suspension for remainder of that season

Ejection during last game of season will result in one game suspension for first game of next season

Ejection for physical contact will result in player suspension for balance of current season. Players ejected for physical contact will be subject to Board review to determine if additional disciplinary action is warranted

The umpire enforcing the ejection will provide an email to Board members detailing the events that led to the player's ejection no later than the day of the occurrence

The Board will solely determine if additional disciplinary action is warranted.

SECTION II – LEAGUE RULES

The 68+ League is governed by the following priority of rules;

- Senior Softball USA Rules (SSUSA Rules)
- Villages rules supersedes any conflicting rules above.
- Division 4 rules supersedes any conflicting rules above.
- 68+ rules supersede any conflicting rules above.

Eligibility: Player must be at least 68 or older within one year of the respective season starting date. Player must be a Village resident who has completed the Villages Evaluation Process. Player must be playing or drafted in Divisions 3 or 4 of Recreation or Neighborhood Leagues for the immediate season. Players cannot concurrently play in Divisions 1,2 and 5. Players who are coming down from Division 1 or 2 must complete a season in Division 3 or 4 before they are qualified to participate in 68+ League. If they return to Division 1 or 2 after completing a season(s) in Division 3 or 4, they must then complete another season in Division 3 or 4 prior to being qualified. (i.e. a Division 1 or 2 player cannot come directly to 68 League at the same time he moves down to Division 3 or 4 regardless of how many times he swaps Divisions) **EXCEPTION:** Players that were participating in the 68+ League on or after January 6, 2020 and were playing in the Division 5 Recreation or Neighborhood League, will be allowed to continue playing in the 68+ League on a “grandfathered” basis. No new Division 5 players will be allowed to participate. Additionally, any player moving to Division 5, even though currently playing in 68+ League will not be allowed to continue playing in the League. Number of teams and roster sizes will be determined by number of eligible players.

Participation:

Players are required to participate in a minimum of 70% of the scheduled games throughout the season. Any player that misses more than 30% of the scheduled games will immediately be removed from that team’s roster and be replaced with a player of an equal skill level. If the player is removed due to significant injury or health issues and is able to recover to playing ability prior to the end of the season, that player will be allowed to substitute in subsequent games. In order to be considered to have participated in a game, a player must complete at least 5 innings of play.

NOTE: Final decision to remove a player under this policy will be at the discretion of the 68+ League Board.

Players: The Manager has full discretion on how he uses his player. The Manager may move players in and out of positions and in and out of game as he feels necessary. A player is NOT required to play defensively during the game. However, all players are required to Be in the lineup to bat.

Umpires: In order to umpire in the 68+ League, the selected player must have attended either Bill Johnson's or the 68+ League umpire clinic prior to the start of the season. Managers are responsible to ensure the player they select to umpire any game has fulfilled this requirement.

Infield Practice:

Teams may take infield practice (normal sequence) prior to each game. The visiting team will take infield first and clear the field.

Home team will then take their infield practice and remain on the field to start the game.

Both teams should take infield as soon as possible prior to the game and be as expeditious as possible.

First basemen may throw the ball to infielders between innings until the pitcher has completed his warm-up pitches and is ready. The first baseman must clear the warm-up ball from the field as soon as the umpire calls, "Ball In!"

Batters

Box Rule: The batter's box is defined as the total platform. A batter may be called out for stepping out of the batter's box if the batter steps completely off the batting platform with either foot and hits a pitched ball (fair or foul). He may also be called out if his foot contacts the strike plate and he hits the pitched ball (fair or foul).

Infield

Fly Rule: Infield Fly Rule does not apply in this league. However, an infielder may not intentionally miss/drop an infield fly ball to force a double play. If, in the opinion of the umpire, an infielder intentionally misses/drops an infield fly ball and it results in a double play, he will call the batter out and replace the runners to their original bases.

Run Rule: Teams may only score 5 runs per inning. When a team scores 5 runs their turn at bat is over, regardless if they have less than three outs.

The exception being, if a Team is down by 6 or more runs, he may only score 5+1 runs prior to his third out. There is no total catch-up rule.

The 7th inning and extra innings are an open inning for both teams. A team can score as many runs as possible before their third out.

Courtesy

Runner: A runner can be replaced at any base at any time with a courtesy runner. Managers are not required to list runners on their lineup sheet. However, the batter has to run to 1st base. There are no rabbits from home plate. A courtesy runner can only run once per inning. A player will become a courtesy runner once he tags the base of the player he is running for. However, as per our rules, that courtesy runner may be immediately replaced if necessary. Just realize that tagging the base constitutes a time running and the runner forfeits his opportunity to run again in that inning.

If a player runs more than one time in any inning and the opposing manager appeals after the courtesy runner assumes the bag and prior to the next batter completing his turn at bat, that runner shall be called out.

If the replacement runner is on base when it's his time to bat, he can be replaced with another courtesy runner who has not run that inning with no penalty. This rule also covers extra-inning games, in which a runner is placed on 2nd base. The designated runner may be replaced with a courtesy runner.

Reversal: There are no rundowns for the sake of safety. Therefore, **a runner is only allowed to reverse his direction one time when a play is being made on him while advancing to the next base. The runner does not have to go back and re-touch the base that he was returning to if the ball is overthrown on a subsequent play, he may turn and proceed to the next base.**

Second Base Run By:

In an effort to reduce potential collisions at 2nd base, when a play is anticipated at 2nd base, the runner coming from first base must run either inside or outside 2nd base far enough to avoid contact with the defensive player. The runner is safe if he passes 2nd base prior to the arrival of the throw. Conversely, if the ball arrives prior to the runner passing second base, the runner is out. A runner safely passing 2nd base may return to the 2nd base at their leisure, without fear of being called out. If a runner who has passed second base desires to advance to 3rd base, the runner must first return and touch second base before advancing to third base. When there is no play at second base, the runner may touch 2nd base and either stop at 2nd base or advance to third base.

Tag Play: If a player beats the throw to a base but his foot subsequently comes off the base and the defensive player is still in contact with the bag, the runner is out. This will be considered a force play and NO TAG IS REQUIRED.

Mercy Rule: The Team ahead by 15 or more runs after 5 innings of play is the winner.

Flip/Flop

Rule: If the VISITING Team is ahead by 10 runs or more in the top of the 7th Inning the Flip Flop rule will be in effect. The Flip-Flop Rule is mandatory. The Home Team will bat first and if the Home Team catches up or passes the Visitors, the Visitors will bat.

Caps: The wear of baseball caps during play is OPTIONAL.

Pitchers

Safety: It is MANDATORY that the Pitchers wear a Face Mask to Pitch. Failure to use a Face Mask is a disqualification to Pitch in a game.

There will be no exception made to this rule. The use of a Pitchers Safety Screen is optional.

Safety Screen Rule:

Pitcher may elect to use a safety screen if he feels it will enhance his safety. The safety screen does not relieve the pitcher from wearing a Face Mask. A Face Mask is always required for the pitcher. When the safety screen is put into play, the following rules will apply:

- a. The Team using the screen is responsible for the placement and removal of the screen. Managers will designate 2 infielders to put the screen in the proper position for the pitcher and remove the screen from the field after the team completes their portion of the inning.
- b. After removal from the field between innings, the screen may be placed outside the dugout for convenience of moving the screen on and off the field. If a ball strikes the screen, it remains in play. If the ball is trapped behind the screen, it becomes a dead ball and runners will not be allowed to advance.
- c. The screen will be placed one to three feet in front of the pitching box. The screen can be adjusted if the pitcher chooses to pitch deeper in the pitching box.
- d. The screen will be placed at the outer edge of the rubber on the pitcher's glove side.
- e. The first and second batted balls hitting the screen will be declared a strike. A third batted ball hitting the pitching screen will be declared a dead ball. A fourth batted ball will be declared a third strike.
A thrown ball that hits the screen is a live ball and in play.
- f. If a pitcher chooses to use the screen, he is responsible to ensure it is in the legal position before he delivers a pitch. If, not in legal position it will be declared a dead ball. If the pitcher refuses to place the screen in the legal position his manager will be notified and remove the pitcher from pitching position.
- g. If a pitcher chooses to use the screen, he must step completely behind the screen by the time each pitched ball reaches the plate. Failure to do so will result in the Umpire calling an "Illegal Pitch" Ball.
- h. **The Pitcher may make a defensive play on any batted ball.**
But, if in the Umpires judgement the Pitcher fails to get behind the screen prior to the batter hitting the ball and he makes a defensive play on the ball it becomes a Dead Ball Single. The batter is awarded 1st Base and all base runners advance one base if forced to do so.
- i. If a batter hits a ball declared an "Illegal Pitch" because the pitcher did not get behind the screen the results of the play stand. There is not a reward for the batter or penalty to the defensive team. It is handled as any other "Illegal Pitch" for high or low pitches.
- j. If the pitcher elects to use the pitching screen, he will be allowed to take 5 practice pitches at the beginning of the game, but will only be allowed one practice pitch between innings.

Delay of Game

After the start of the game, the home plate umpire may temporarily suspend the game for such reasons of inclement weather, excessive heat, safety, or other factors. At that time, a board member should be consulted. In coordination with the board member, umpires and managers of both teams,

a determination will be made as to whether it is safe to continue the game or cancel. As always, SAFETY is the overriding factor in any situation.

Umpire Assistance

If the manager of a team requests that an umpire ask the other umpire for assistance on any call, the umpire **MUST** confer with the other umpire to see if there is any conflict with the call. Realize, the final decision on the call is made by the umpire that has the initial authority to make the call. So, if you're absolutely certain of your call, you have every right to stick with the initial call even if the other umpire disagrees. However, out of common courtesy and respect for the manager, it will ease the frustration on the field if you will take just a moment to confer.

By the way, you don't have to be asked to confer with the other umpire if you're not sure of a call. To me it shows a lot of class if an umpire has the integrity and pride to make sure he saw the play correctly.

REMEMBER: THE GOAL OF THE UMPIRE IS TO MAKE EVERY CALL CORRECTLY. THERE IS NO SHAME IN CHANGING A CALL TO THE CORRECT CALL. WE DON'T MEAN TO, BUT WE ALL MISS ONE EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE. IF WE CAN MAKE A WRONG CALL RIGHT, IT MAKES THE GAME AS FAIR AS POSSIBLE! EVEN THE PROS MISS ONE, AT LEAST THEY HAVE VIDEO REPLAY!!