

**MANITOWOC COUNTY YOUTH SPORTS, INC.  
GIRL'S SOFTBALL PROGRAM**

**2026 SENIOR FAST PITCH LEAGUE RULES**

**\*\*\*\*\*SPECIAL NOTE: Unless noted in this document, all league rules are to follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Softball Rules Book. Reference <http://www.nfhs.org/>.**

Additions or clarifications to rules for 2026 are in **bold block font.**  
Deletions to rules for 2026 are ~~struck out.~~

**I. ORGANIZATION**

1. All entries for teams desiring to play in the Senior Fast Pitch League must submit entry by the date established at the Annual Spring Meeting each year.
2. An official master schedule with designated Senior Fast Pitch League regular season game dates and starting times will be released no later than one day after the Annual May Coaches Scheduling Meeting each year.
3. Senior Fast Pitch League regular season games will be generally played on Wednesday evenings.
  - a. Any team may, by mutual agreement with the opposing team, change the date or time of play if necessary. Postponed games should be made up in good faith and in a timely manner. The Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner must be notified of the change.
  - b. Teams must schedule make-up games within 2 (two) weeks after postponement due to weather or other conflict. If a new date and time cannot be agreed upon, teams are directed to work with the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner to facilitate rescheduling. If they are not scheduled within this time, a letter request may be filed by one of the teams with the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner regarding forfeiture.
  - c. If one team does not show or is not ready to play 15 (fifteen) minutes after the designated starting time, a forfeit can be requested from the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner.
  - d. A team failing to field 8 (eight) players at game time shall forfeit the game.
  - e. All forfeits in this rule must be presented to, and granted by the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner.
4. A Senior Fast Pitch Tournament may be scheduled towards the end of the regular season. A Senior Fast Pitch Tournament will be structured as follows:
  - a. Team participation in the Tournament is voluntary.
  - b. Tournament bracket structure and seeding will be set by the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner, and may include a portion of the season record.
  - c. Member Communities may bid on hosting the Senior Fast Pitch Tournament

Games at the Annual May Coaches Scheduling Meeting.

- i. Senior Fast Pitch Tournament games may be bundled with other League Tournament games
    - ii. If multiple bids are received, the games shall be awarded to the Community with the longest time passing since last hosting.
    - iii. In case of a tie, a random drawing of bidding Communities will determine the winner.
  - d. In Tournament championship games for first/second place, establishing Home Team is by means of the flip of a coin - heads or tails.
  - e. If any team fails to show up for their scheduled semi-final or 1st/2nd place games at the appropriate tournament site and date, the MCYS would:
    - i. Impose a fine of \$500 (five hundred dollars) which would be paid by the Community who the team plays for and paid to the MCYS Treasurer. This monetary amount would be then given back to the community hosting the tournament.
    - ii. All MCYS awards acquired during the year would be forfeited.
    - iii. Penalties in this rule must be approved by the Steering Committee.
5. The following dimensions shall apply for the layout of the ball diamonds for Senior Fast Pitch games:
- Base path distance - 60 (sixty) feet
  - Pitcher's mound distance - 43 (forty-three) feet (this distance is from the front of the pitching rubber to the rear point of home plate)
  - A 16 (sixteen) foot diameter circle is required to be marked (chalked) around the center of the pitcher's mound.
  - Starting in 2020, an emphasis shall be placed on batter's & catcher's boxes being properly marked to start any Senior Fast Pitch game. If they are not marked, or if the lines have been removed by normal play, the Home Plate Umpire's judgement shall apply to whether the batter or catcher is positioned correctly relative to the batter's or catcher's box, for all plays. See Appendix B for dimensions.
6. All Senior Fast Pitch regular season and tournament (non-championship) games shall be 7 (seven) innings duration, unless tied. If weather or darkness interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game:
- a. If 5 (five) full innings have been played, or if the home team has scored an equal or greater number of runs in four or four and a fraction turns at bat.
  - b. If play has gone beyond 5 (five) full innings. If the game is called when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turns at bat. The score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home teams are in its half of the incomplete inning scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponents score, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.
  - c. If a game is called before completion of the number of innings and conditions as specified above, the umpire shall declare the contest "no game". A "no game" shall be rescheduled, to be replayed from the beginning.

- d. Any game that is tied at the end of 4 ½ (four and one-half) or at least 5 (five) full innings when the game is called, shall be a tie at that point. The game shall be rescheduled, to be completed from where it left off. The official score book is used to restart the game where it ended.
7. All Senior Fast Pitch regular season and tournament (non-championship) games shall have the following run rule limits.
  - a. The 10 (ten) run rule after 5 (five) innings shall constitute a complete game.
  - b. A 20 (twenty) run rule lead after 3 (three) complete innings shall constitute a complete ball game upon mutual agreement by both coaches.
8. There is no run rule limit for MCYS Tournament Senior Fast Pitch championship games. Any MCYS Tournament Senior Fast Pitch championship game shall be a 7 (seven) inning game unless tied, or unless called before 7 (seven) innings by agreement of both managers.
9. Lightning or thunder protocols during games shall be per NFHS Guidelines on Handling Practices and Contests during Lightning or Thunder Disturbances (see Appendix A). It is recommended that practices use these same protocols.

## **II. EQUIPMENT**

1. The official ball for the Senior Fast Pitch League will be determined each year at the Officer', Director's, and Commissioner's Meeting. 1 (one) dozen balls are supplied with each team entry. See the General Commissioner to purchase additional balls from MCYS inventory, or to obtain the official ball make and model for purchase elsewhere.

## **III. ROSTERS (PLAYERS - RESTRICTIONS)**

1. To be eligible to play in the Senior Fast Pitch League, a player may not reach her 19th (nineteenth) birthday before June 1st of the current year.
  - a. Any appeal for an age or other MCYS roster exemption must be submitted to the MCYS Steering Committee before the Annual May Coaches Scheduling Meeting.
  - b. Senior Fast Pitch League participation is open to girls only, defined as female (girls) as indicated on the child's birth certificate.
2. No player may participate in this program unless they have a current liability form on file with the MCYS. A player is not eligible to participate in any game until a current liability form is properly filed with the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner.
  - a. Penalty for using a player that does not have a current liability form properly filed will be forfeiture of those games played. Penalties in this rule must be approved by the Steering Committee.

3. No players shall change from one Senior Fast Pitch team to another after the start of the season. Before the first league game is played, a roster is to be filed with the Senior Fast Pitch Commissioner. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of all games played until such roster is filed.
  - a. Players can be added to a roster at any time during the regular season. A player is not eligible to participate in any game until they have been added to the official roster. Penalty for using a player that has not been added to the official roster will be forfeiture of those games played.
  - b. Penalties in this rule must be approved by the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner.
  - c. The number of players on a roster will be unlimited.
4. Players are generally limited to play on one team and one league only within the MCYS program to give as many players as possible an opportunity to play.
  - a. Starting in 2020, each Senior Fast Pitch Team Roster may have up to 3 (three) players that are currently eligible and actively playing on an MCYS Junior Fast Pitch Team. To be eligible for this special roster exemption, players must be registered to play on Junior Fast Pitch and Senior Fast Pitch teams from the same community, and must have reached their 14th (fourteenth) birthday by June 1st of the current year. This special roster exemption will apply for the regular season, and for tournament play.
5. To be eligible for tournament play, players must have a current liability form on file and must be on the official roster in the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner's possession before July 1st. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Steering Committee.
6. Note: There are no residency rules for all Leagues starting in 2017.

#### **IV. BASE RUNNING**

(No Special MCYS Rules Exist for This Section)

#### **V. BATTING**

1. Roster Batting Option. For regular season games only, either coach may use what is known as Roster Batting to create their batting order. The following modifications to NFHS rules would then apply.
  - a. All eligible players present must be included in the batting order. Any eligible players arriving after the game officially starts are added to the bottom of the order. Players may not be moved to another batting order position.
  - b. If a player leaves the game due to injury or other, when that player's spot in the batting order comes up, an out is recorded.
  - c. All players are eligible for defensive play, and can be substituted into any defensive position at any time.
  - d. A courtesy runner for the Pitcher or Catcher is the player (not currently on base) that has made the last offensive out.

2. A Senior Fast Pitch League game may begin with 8 (eight) players. The vacant position in the batting order must be listed last (ninth), and an out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat. A player who shows up after the game starts shall take the vacant position in the batting order.

## **VI. PITCHING**

(No Special MCYS Rules Exist for This Section)

## **VII. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITY**

1. The home team shall furnish the umpires, 2 (two) per game. Once a game starts, the umpires shall have complete control over how the game proceeds. The umpires shall eject from the game, any player, coach, or manager for using profane language. The umpires may also eject from the game, for good reason, any person or player at any time they feel it is necessary for the good of the game and the program. Such ejections shall be agreed upon by all umpires working the game and shall be reported to the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner as soon as possible, but in no case later than the following day.
2. The umpires must be well versed in the rules of the game, especially MCYS special rules. 2 (two) adult umpires are required per game ... must be 18 (eighteen) years of age or older. The umpires shall, in all cases, be persons worthy of the position, of sufficient maturity to use good judgment, and do a satisfactory job.

The manager or coach of a team involved in a game shall not umpire that game, unless by mutual agreement with the manager or coach from the opposing team.

- a. If the home team has not supplied the required, qualified umpires within 15 (fifteen) minutes after the designated starting time, a forfeit can be requested by the visiting team (**see Rule I.3.e**).
  - b. If both teams agree to use umpires that do not meet these requirements, then all decisions made by those umpires will be upheld as final (MCYS will not allow protest of the game results).
3. The home team shall furnish the official scorer. Both teams shall submit full names, first and last, to the official scorer.
  4. The winning team shall be responsible for reporting results to the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner. Results should be phoned, texted, or emailed to the Senior Fast Pitch League Commissioner, preferably the night of the game or the morning following the game, but in no case, later than 2 (two) days after the scheduled date of the game.
  5. The home team shall have available a current year or one year old copy of the Softball Rules Book from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), and the current year Senior Fast Pitch League Rules for each game. The MCYS shall provide a new NFHS rules book to each coach in every even-numbered

year. (The expectation is that new coaches in odd-numbered years will receive their copy of the NFHS Rules Book from their predecessor).

6. The home team shall furnish official game balls for regular season and non-championship tournament games, 1 (one) in new condition and others in good condition, as needed.

### **VIII. MISCELLANEOUS MCYS RULES**

1. To promote sportsmanship and fair play, umpires, managers, and coaches should insist that conversation between opposing teams during the game be addressed to play position, rather than name, nickname, or other forms of razzing. This is of prime importance in the younger leagues. We feel it is equally important for spectators to act in the same manner.

2. The Steering Committee will be composed of the Officers, Directors, and Commissioners of the MCYS. It shall be their responsibility to evaluate any problems or questions submitted to them by any member of this program and to make such decisions and take such action as they feel is necessary to rectify these situations. They shall have authority to suspend temporarily or permanently any member of the program, or to make such reprimands as they deem necessary.

3. Game Protest Procedures and Requirements.

- a. All game protests must be submitted verbally (no texting) to the appropriate MCYS League Commissioner within 24 (twenty-four) hours of game completion.
- b. The protest shall then be presented in writing (email is acceptable – texting is not) to the MCYS President within 48 (forty-eight) hours of the verbal submission.
- c. A \$100 (one hundred dollar) protest fee shall accompany any written protests and must be in the MCYS President's possession before the protest will be reviewed. This fee will be refunded if the protest is ruled in favor of the protesting team.
- d. No protests will be allowed on judgement calls. Protests will only be allowed on the application of MCYS or NFHS rules.
- e. Any protests will be decided by the MCYS Steering Committee and the teams involved. If a protest is upheld, the original game shall be declared a “no-game”, and will be rescheduled by the appropriate MCYS Commissioner, with the rule infraction corrected.
- f. There will be no protests allowed in tournament games.

4. Smoking or alcoholic beverages will not be allowed on the playing field or in the play area (dugouts, benches, etc.).

5. Any proposed changes or modifications of these rules must be submitted in writing to the MCYS General Commissioner by February 1st of the next year. The appropriate League Commissioner (or Commissioners, should the requested change directly

affect multiple Leagues) shall review the request and shall decide whether to submit the request to the full Steering Committee for review and a formal vote on adoption, or to place the request on the MCYS next business meeting agenda as a discussion item only. If the decision is to submit for review and formal vote, the Commissioner(s) shall work with the Requestor and the MCYS General Commissioner to draft language for the Steering Committee review. If the decision is for discussion only (not to submit for review and formal vote), The Commissioner(s) shall provide feedback to the Requester after the Steering Committee discussion has been completed. The Steering Committee shall conduct either the reviews with formal vote, or the discussions only, at a regular or special business meeting prior to the annual Spring Meeting.

# Appendix A

## NFHS GUIDELINES ON HANDLING PRACTICES AND CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING or THUNDER DISTURBANCES

### National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

These guidelines provide a default policy to those responsible or sharing duties for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of practices and contests based on the presence of lightning or thunder. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school activities association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

#### Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during practices and contests.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby safe areas.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
  - a. When thunder is heard or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the leading edge of the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play for thirty minutes and take shelter immediately.
  - b. Thirty-minute rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
  - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.
4. Review annually with all administrators, coaches and game personnel.
5. Inform student athletes of the lightning policy at start of season.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Lightning Safety" section contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

#### Revised and Approved October 2014

#### DISCLAIMER – NFHS Position Statements and Guidelines

The NFHS regularly distributes position statements and guidelines to promote public awareness of certain health and safety-related issues. Such information is neither exhaustive nor necessarily applicable to all circumstances or individuals, and is no substitute for consultation with appropriate health-care professionals. Statutes, codes or environmental conditions may be relevant. NFHS position statements or guidelines should be considered in conjunction with other pertinent materials when taking action or planning care. The NFHS reserves the right to rescind or modify any such document at any time.

# Appendix B

## Batter's & Catcher's Box Diagram for Senior Fast Pitch League

Softball Diamond Marking  
Batter's Box Dimensions  
Catcher's Box Dimensions

