

# 2018 SUMMERVILLE MEN'S CHURCH SOFTBALL RULES

March 5, 2018

[www.smcsl.org](http://www.smcsl.org)

## 1. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A. To participate in the Summerville Men's Church Softball League, a player must regularly attend the church for which he is playing, but is not required to be a member of said church. If a player is a member of a church with a team in our league, he must play for that church.

B. Two (2) players who are members of a church without a softball team can play with another church with a team in the league. The pastors of the two churches involved must sign an official church transfer form agreeing to the arrangement.

**C. Players must be at least sixteen (16) years old before he participates in his first game. List date of birth for all 16 year old players after the players name on roster form.**

D. All players must be certified as eligible by their pastor/minister.

E. No players can be added to a roster after mid-season unless there are extenuating circumstances which have been approved by the commissioners. Mid-season will be the same for all teams. Mid-season this year will be Thursday, April 19, 2018. See add/delete form.

F. A roster may contain no more than 27 players.

G. Two or more churches may combine to form one team with the approval of the league commissioners.

H. Players switching teams within the same church will be handled by that church and no player on any team will be allowed to switch teams once they have played in a game (does not include practice games, but does include preseason tournament games) without the approval of League commissioners.

I. Any challenges to a player's eligibility will be submitted in written form to the commissioners within 24 hrs of identification and will be handled by a commissioner calling the pastor of the church in question. EXCEPTION: During tournament play notification must be made to a commissioner during or immediately after the game. If it is found that the challenged player was (is) not eligible to participate, a forfeit for the game(s) in which he has participated will be assigned to the team utilizing the ineligible player.

## 2. GAME REGULATIONS

A. During the regular season, games will be played on fields 1, 2, 3, or 4 at Gahagan Park on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, with the possibility of games on Fridays and Saturdays. Weekend games will be scheduled only if necessary to complete the season in a timely manner. Game times will be 7:00, 8:00 and 9:00 PM. No games will be allowed to start after 10:00PM (TOS). There will be a ten-minute grace period for the first game only. The time limit for the game will begin promptly at 7:00 PM and time waiting for the ninth player will be lost. Once a team has nine players, the game will start. Time limit will be one hour and ten minutes. Four and one-half (4 ½) innings will constitute a complete game. If a game is called due to the time limit, the team that is ahead at the bottom of the last inning will be

declared the winner. Once an inning has started, it will be completed unless the home team is ahead. The visiting team will be allowed to finish their time at bat. If the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of an inning occurs before the time limit is up, the subsequent inning shall be considered to have begun at that time.

B. Forfeits: Teams not having the required number of players (9) will forfeit the game. Players in the parking lot or on the way do not count.

1. Any team forfeiting 3 games during the regular season will be dismissed from the league without refund of league fee (TOS).
2. If a team has to forfeit a make-up game rescheduled with less than three days notice, the forfeit will count as a “coach’s loss” and will not count against the team’s limit of three forfeits.
3. A fee of \$69.00 will be collected with the registration fee to be used to pay for forfeited games. Any unused portion will be credited to the teams for next year’s registration fee. Forfeit fees from teams which no longer participate in the league will be retained for two years starting with the first year the team does not participate in the league. After two seasons, the money will revert to the league for general use.
4. Forfeiting team will forfeit \$23.00 of the \$69.00 fee paid at registration. This fee will be used to pay for the second umpire. Twenty-two dollars will be deducted from the following year’s (for the non-forfeiting team) registration fee for each forfeit experienced.
5. Players on the roster of the non-forfeiting team, at the time of forfeit, will receive automatic credit for a game played.
6. Teams that forfeit for conduct reasons will have to go before the commissioners to determine possible disciplinary actions.

C. Rescheduled Games:

1. Make-up games (games called off before they start) and suspended games (games started but suspended before game becomes regulation) will be played as scheduled. Although highly unlikely, some games may be scheduled on Friday or Saturday. Teams are to submit “cannot play” dates for March – July as part of the league registration form. Any dates or times submitted before the season for “cannot play” dates due to church functions will be honored to the maximum extent possible.
2. Suspended games when rescheduled shall be resumed at the exact point where they were suspended. A suspended game form will be completed and signed by the scorekeeper, umpire and both coaches. Completed form will be retained by a commissioner (Tommy Songer) and provided at the rescheduled game.
  - a. At the start of a rescheduled suspended game, coaches will submit lineups with players in the same batting order as in the original lineup. A team can only play the suspended game with no more players than in the original game. If, at the rescheduled suspended game only 9 players were present, no penalty for players 10, 11 and 12 will be assessed. If the tenth player (whether in the original lineup or not) arrives after the suspended game has commenced, he will be placed in batting position 10. Should an original player be absent at the start of a rescheduled suspended game, a player not in the original lineup may be entered as a sub in the missing player’s batting position.

The player on the original lineup (if he arrives after the rescheduled suspended game has commenced) can be placed in the lineup at his original batting position as a re-entry or in batting position 10. The player for which he re-enters will not be eligible to play any further.

3. All rescheduling will be done through the league commissioners. Coaches will be contacted by telephone or email with new dates and times of rescheduled games and a copy of the rainout schedule will be at the field in the scorekeeper's book and on the league website.

D. The NSA mercy rule will apply:

**15** runs after 3 innings

**12** runs after 4 innings

10 runs after 5 innings

E. Base stealing will not be allowed.

### **3. FIELD CONDITIONS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS**

A. The fitness of the playing field for all games (preseason, regular season, and postseason) will be determined by:

1. The town of Summerville – Prior to game time, COACHES ONLY may call 851-5211 after 5:00 pm to check for field conditions. All players are encouraged to sign up for the automatic text or email system to obtain rainout information. Sign up information available at [www.smcsl.org](http://www.smcsl.org).

2. 15 minutes prior to game time – fitness of the grounds for a game shall be decided solely by the plate umpire. (NOTE: for info only NSA does not require the 15 minutes prior to game time. This is now a league rule)

3. Once the game has started, the umpires will make the decision to stop a game.

a. Weather Delays (Rain/Lightning)

1. Should inclement weather occur, the following apply:

a. Umpire(s) shall wait 30 minutes before game can be called. Exception: if in the opinion of the umpire(s), after 15 minutes of delay the field conditions would not permit the safe continuation of the game, he may terminate (call) the game.

b. Once a game has been called due to weather, all games (all fields) scheduled for the remainder of that night, will also be cancelled.

b. Lightning Conditions:

1. Should lightning occur within five (5) miles as indicated on the instrument located in the press box, games will be immediately suspended for a period of 30 minutes.

2. If an additional indication occurs prior to the completion of the initial 30 minutes, the new suspension will begin from the last indication.
3. After a maximum of 45 minutes of delay, games will be cancelled for the evening.
4. Rainout games will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Some might possibly be scheduled for Friday or Saturday.

**ABSOLUTELY NO GAMES ON A MUDDY FIELD INCLUDING PRACTICES!!**

**4. OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPERS**

- A. Official scorekeepers will be furnished by the league to keep the scorebook and run the scoreboards.
- B. A properly filled out lineup card will be provided to the official scorekeeper five (5) minutes before scheduled game begins. If a properly filled out lineup card is not delivered to the scorekeeper by actual game time, the team not providing a lineup will have up to five (5) minutes to have the lineup (for those players present) turned in to the scorekeeper. Game will not start until the lineup is received by the scorekeeper. The five (5) minutes will be part of the 1 hour and 10 minute game time limit. If lineup is not submitted within the allotted five (5) minutes, a coach’s loss will be awarded to the non-submitting team. This loss will not count as one of the three (3) forfeits in rule 2.C(1), however, it will count as a league loss. The game may continue as a practice game, but the umpires will not call the game and the scoreboard will not be used.
- C. The scorekeeper/duty commissioner will notify the person delivering lineup card if the lineup card is or is not properly filled out. A properly filled out lineup card, including substitutes, will include the player’s names printed legibly (last name/first initial), the jersey number and the proper batting order. Late arrivers can still participate as substitutes. This rule applies to pre-season games, regular season, and postseason games. Recording the player’s fielding position is optional.

**PROPERLY FILLED OUT!                      IMPROPERLY FILLED OUT!**

Order	Name	#	Pos	...	Order	Name	#	Pos
1	Smith, Jo	5			1	Jordan		
2	Smith, Ja	9			2	Jarrood		
3	Smith, Ju	8			3	Justin		
4	White, Ro	4			4	White, R	4	
5	White, Ri	2			5	White, R	4	
6	Jones	3			6	Spanky	3	
7	Brown	1			7	bubba	1	
8	Bishop	6			8	Fred		
9	Beard	7			9	lefty	7	
10	Sanders	10			10	whitey	3	
11	Clark	11			11	Kevin		
12	Williams	12			12	joe	99	

- D. A lineup card will be turned in to the home plate umpire and opposing team’s coach. Any changes made to the lineup will also be given to the home plate umpire and the opposing coach.
- E. A representative from each team should sign the official scorebook after each game.

Check to make sure that the proper substitutions have been recorded.

F. Scorekeeper will start the time for the 7:00 games promptly at 7:00. Exception: If at game time, umpires are not present at the field, the game start time will commence at the arrival of the first umpire. 8:00 and 9:00 games start times will be established by the home plate umpire immediately after prayer.

## 5. GAME RULES

A. Game rules as specified in the 2018 NSA Rulebook will apply to this league, with the following exceptions:

1. **Uniform Numbers:** Starting with pre-season tournament, each player is required to wear a shirt with a six (6) inch number on the back. Numbers must coincide with the numbers that have been recorded on the lineup card turned in to the official scorekeeper. No duplicate numbers allowed. A shirt with a number must be worn as the outer garment while batting. During cold weather conditions, a batter with his number covered must display his number to the plate umpire and scorekeeper only at his first appearance at the plate.
2. **Uniform Colors and Logos:** Teams must have jerseys of the same color and same logo with any differences approved by the commissioners before the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the season. Coaches cannot agree to any deviation to this bylaw. This bylaw will be strictly enforced by the umpires and commissioners.
3. **BALLS:** Each team will hit the same ball purchased from the league- NSA Worth Icon 44 core-400 compression. All balls put in play must be approved by the home plate umpire.
4. **BATS:** NSA approved with the stamped "NSA 2012" logo.
5. In all divisions, the batter will begin with a one (1) ball and one (1) strike count with an extra foul allowed.
6. **PITCHING HEIGHT:** Minimum 6 feet, maximum **10 feet (6-10)**
7. **Home Run Rule –** Three (3) homeruns per team. Any subsequent home-runs will result in an out.
8. If two teams from different divisions are playing, the rules from the lower division apply.
9. Home team will be on the first base side, visitors on the third base side.
10. A team will consist of ten (10) players, but a game may be played if a team has no less than nine (9) players. In the case of a team starting with nine (9) players, the game is not forfeited and batting position number 10 will not count as an out. The tenth player may be added in the tenth batting position at any time during the game. Extra players #11 and #12 cannot be added to the lineup once the game has started. (NOTE: Game cannot start or continue with less than nine (9) players.)
11. The league will use the double bag (orange and white) at first base. If the runner fails to touch the orange portion of the bag on a play at the base, he will be called out by the umpire. The runner may touch the white bag to avoid a collision if the defensive player is forced to occupy the orange bag.

12. TIE GAME: In the event of a tie game, after time has expired (1 hr 10 min) or at the completion of 7 innings, the INTERNATIONAL TIE BREAKER RULE will be in effect.
13. Field 4 Play – Any ball (fair or foul) hit over the safety net while youth are participating in any scheduled practice or game on field 5 or 6 will incur the following penalties.
  - a. First ball over the safety net will be an out and a run for the opposing team.
  - b. Second ball over the safety net will be an out and two runs for the opposing team.
  - c. Third ball hit over the safety net, end of inning, three runs for the opposing team, and ejection of the batter (TOS).
14. Players in the dugout
  1. The offensive and defensive team coaches are strongly urged to keep all players not involved in the immediate play within the dugout.
  2. The defensive team will be allowed to have the defensive players in the field and one (1) other player outside but adjacent to the dugout. Infractions of this rule will incur the following penalties.
    - a. First infraction will be a warning to the coach.
    - b. Second infraction will be award a ball to the ball and strike count of the offensive batter.
    - c. Further infractions will be award first base to the offensive batter.
  3. The offensive team will be allowed to have a coach in the first and third base, coach's boxes, a batter in the batter's box, the on deck batter in the on deck circle, base runners(as appropriate) and one (1) player outside, be adjacent to the dugout.
    - a. First infraction will be a warning to the coach.
    - b. Second infraction will be the addition of a strike to the ball/strike count of the batter.
    - c. Further infractions will result in a called out for the batter.
15. Fees for the umpires will be paid to the league as part of the league fees and will be distributed to the umpire's association by the league treasurer.

## **6. SUBSTITUTIONS**

- A. A player may be inserted to bat as a pinch hitter without any requirement to play in the field. The original player in that batting position or a new player who has not played in the game may be inserted into that batting position.
- B. Courtesy runners are allowed in accordance with 2018 NSA rule 4 sec 9 page 24. Only one courtesy runner can be used per inning and can be any member of the team present.

2. Any changes made to a lineup will be reported to the home plate umpire, official scorekeeper, and the opposing coach, prior to that player entering the game.

## 7. SHOES

- A. No steel cleats of any kind are permitted. No shoes such as football shoes that have metal columns as support for the rubber cleat is permitted.
- B. Non athletic shoes are not permitted due to the inherent safety hazard presented by slick soles and heels. Tennis shoes are permitted, but not recommended.
  - d. These rules apply to all scheduled scrimmages, regular season games and tournament games.

## 8. CONDUCT

A. League Officials have full authority to take any action necessary for participant or team misconduct. All participants and teams have the right to appeal to the League Commissioners concerning misconduct.

1. No player, coach, captain, spectator, or official under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be allowed to participate in any Gahagan Softball League game. Town of Summerville Police will be notified. **Any team caught consuming alcohol or drugs on any Town of Summerville property will be suspended from the league for the remainder of the season. In addition, no refunds will be given to teams or players violating this policy. TOS**

**2. FOUL LANGUAGE, BADGERING, THREATS, OR ANY OTHER ABUSIVE ACTIONS TOWARDS UMPIRES, LEAGUE OFFICIALS, OR ANY OTHER PLAYERS OR COACHES/CAPTAINS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

3. Any participant ejected for any reason must leave the property immediately. An ejected participant **who refuses to leave**, after being given a reasonable amount of time to gather their belongings and exit the property, **will cause a forfeit for his team**. In addition, if the incident is sufficiently egregious (in determination of the commissioners) additional disciplinary action to include **possible removal of the violator from the league**, may be taken.

**4. Any participant ejected from a game shall be suspended from the team's next game. The ejected individual may appeal the suspension of the next game by providing documentation with rational as to why he should not be suspended for the next game, to a commissioner within 24 hours of the ejection. Commissioners will review the information provided and render a decision as to the suspension from the team's next game. If documentation is not received the next game suspension will be enforced. A participant who is ejected a second time in a single season shall be suspended for the remainder of the current season, as well as the next full season. Appeal per para 8A applies. TOS**

5. If a suspension occurs during the last game of the regular season, the suspension will carry over to any post-season play. If suspension occurs during a team's last post-season game, the suspension will carry over to the next season in which the player participates. **TOS**

a. Any ejection **during tournament play** will result in a commissioners meeting to determine whether that player may continue play in the tournament.

6. A suspended participant is prohibited from participating in any league OR tournaments hosted by the Town of Summerville during the term of his suspension. **TOS**

7. A suspended participant must meet with the TOS Parks and Playground Assistant Director **prior to being reinstated**. During this meeting, the suspended participant will be required to sign a form stating that a) he/she understands the reasons for his/her current suspension and b) the consequences of future infractions. **TOS**

**8. DEPENDING ON THE SEVERITY OF THE INFRACTION, THE TOWN OF SUMMERVILLE PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS ASSISTANCE DIRECTOR HAS THE AUTHORITY TO PERMANENTLY BAN INDIVIDUALS FROM FUTURE PARTICIPATION IN ANY TOWN OF SUMMERVILLE ATHLETIC LEAGUE/TOURNAMENT. TOS**

9. TOS will be provided notification and rationale for all ejections / suspensions.

## **9. LEAGUE STRUCTURE**

A. The league will be divided into three divisions (FAITH, SPIRIT, and FELLOWSHIP) unless the number of teams dictates greater or fewer than three (3) divisions.

B. Divisions will be determined based on previous year standings, regular season and postseason. Top teams will be in the FAITH division, middle division teams will be in the SPIRIT division, and remaining teams will be in the FELLOWSHIP division. A team can petition in writing the commissioners to place them in a lower or a higher division if they believe that circumstances surrounding their team warrant the position change. The decision of the commissioners on the petition will be final. See Rule 9A.

C. The commissioners will determine the proper division for all new teams in the league.

D. For voting purposes at meetings, churches having multiple teams in the league must have a representative from each team to be able to have more than one vote.

E. In the event of a tie in the regular season standings, the following tiebreakers will be used to determine the league champion/runner-up and tournament seedings:

1. Head to head competition
2. Most runs scored in games between teams in consideration
3. Least runs allowed in games between teams in consideration
4. Most runs scored in the season

F. First and second place plaques will be awarded in each division and each tournament, preseason and postseason. In addition, shirts (20) will be given to the first place team in each division for regular season and postseason tournaments. Plaques and shirts will not be ordered until the season and tournaments are completed.



## 10. TOURNAMENT

- A. General: Three double elimination tournaments will be held following the completion of the regular season. All players must play in 5 (five) of his team's regular season games to participate in any postseason tournament games. The team coach listed when the roster is originally submitted is exempt from the participation rule and may play in the tournament. A military exemption will be granted for someone not qualified to play if a team provides a copy of the individual's orders to the league. Courtesy runners used in tournament games must also meet these same eligibility requirements. Other exceptions may be granted by the board. If a player/coach is ejected from a tournament game, the commissioners will determine if that player will be allowed to participate in any following tournament games. A coin toss will determine home team except in the case of each team's first game when the higher seeded team will be home team.
- B. All games will be played to completion, either time limit, run rule or seven (7) innings. Four and one-half (4 ½) inning rule for suspended games does not apply in tournament play.
- C. One hour and ten (10) minute time limit will apply to all games except championship games which will be played to completion.
- D. If a team submits "cannot play" dates which fall on established or revised post-season tournament dates, commissioners will evaluate the team's status in the tournament and render a decision concerning the team's desired postponement of a game(s). This decision could result in a forfeit(s) or possibly the rescheduling of a game.

## 11. PROTEST

- A. Any team who chooses to lodge a protest must inform the home plate umpire (at the time of the occurrence of the protestable situation) that the game is being played under protest. The umpire must immediately inform the scorekeeper. The protesting team must contact a commissioner in writing within 48 hours of the incident in question. At that time, the commissioners will meet and make a decision on the protest. The commissioners must have at least three commissioners to rule on a protest. Rule interpretations may be protested, but judgment calls may not be protested.
- B. Any protest lodged in a tournament game will be acted upon immediately by the commissioners present at the field. The game will be halted until a decision can be made. If at least three commissioners are not present to make a ruling, a committee of three will be formed of at least one commissioner and available non-playing coaches to make a decision. The game will resume once a decision has been made.

### **TOWN OF SUMMERVILLE LAWS**

**NO ALCHOLIC BEVERAGES AT GAHAGAN PARK!  
THIS INCLUDES THE PARKING LOT!**

**NO TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON THE FIELD OR IN THE DUGOUTS!**

**NO ROLLERBLADES, SCOOTERS, SKATEBOARDS, OR BIKES!**

**NO PETS OF ANY KIND OR SIZE ARE ALLOWED!!!!!!!  
ANYONE SHOWING UP WITH THE ABOVE WILL BE ASKED TO  
LEAVE THE COMPLEX!**

**PARK ONLY IN MARKED PARKING SPACES!!  
NO PARKING ON THE GRASS!!!  
PARKING BY THE WORK SHED IS FOR GAHAGAN EMPLOYEES ONLY!  
ANY ILLEGALLY PARKED VEHICLE MAY BE TICKETED AND OR TOWED  
AT THE OWNER'S EXPENSE!**

**COACHES – PLEASE GO OVER THESE RULES WITH ALL OF YOUR  
PLAYERS / FANS!**

**THE COMMISSIONERS ARE HERE TO ENFORCE THE RULES. WE ARE  
NOT HERE TO EXPLAIN THEM TO YOUR PLAYERS / FANS OR TO  
PROVIDE EXCEPTIONS TO THESE BYLAWS.**

The Commissioners, umpires, or any Town of Summerville employee can have players, coaches or fans removed for any unruly behavior. We will not argue with the violator. They will be asked to leave. If they refuse, Summerville police will be called to escort them out.