**SOFTBALL RULES**

**TOWN OF CHEEKTOWAGA YOUTH & REC**

 Revised: April 12th, 2024

**SECTION 1: Team, Umpire, and Performance Fees**

Article 1a. Fees

 The collection of team and non-resident fees is the responsibility of the team manager/captain and are to be paid with cash or a check made payable to the Town of Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Department. In order to play in any games, teams must have all fees paid by the scheduled Captain’s meeting prior to the start of each season.

1b. Team Fees

 Be it resolved that the following recreational fees are established effective January 2024 for the 2024 Spring/Summer season:

 **2024 SOFTBALL TEAM REGISTRATION FEES**

League Registration Fee Resident Team Discount Fee

Coed $500 $420

Women’s $500 $420

Men’s $500 $420

- There are no residency requirements for a team paying normal registration fee. Residency requirement for resident team is 90%

 of players on roster must be Cheektowaga Residents and all must turn in proper ID and a bill/mail with matching address.

- A $150 non-refundable deposit is required to register each team.

- All ASA Fees and one umpire forfeit fee is included in the Registration Fee.

- If a team does not forfeit during the course of the regular season, the umpire fee for their final regular season game will be paid for.

1c. The Southtowns Umpire’s Association is an independent organization from the Town of Cheektowaga. The Town of Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Department contracts with the Southtowns Umpire’s Association for the league.

1d. UMPIRE FEES

Each team will pay the umpire $23, one-half his/her normal fee before the start of any game. Any team that fails to make this payment will be subjected to penalties that may include the forfeiture of any game and suspension of the team from the league.

Article 2. NON-RESIDENT USER’S FEE

Non-resident fees are included in regular team registration fee.

Article 3. REFUNDS

There will be no refund of any fees paid if a team is ejected from the league. Teams ejected from the league must still pay the full amount owed for the league fees.

**SECTION 2 - ELIGIBILITY AND ROSTERS**

Article 1a. Each player of each team must be undersigned to that team’s roster.

1b. By the Captain’s meeting, the manager/captain of each **resident team** must submit the team **roster including proofs of residency** for resident team discount to the Softball Office.

1c. Rosters must be turned in by June 7, 2024. If they are not turned in by this date, the team captain will receive a phone call warning and any games thereafter will be forfeits until the roster has been turned in.

1d. Only those players on the roster will be allowed to participate in the games to be played. Additional players may be added in advance of participation. After the first game is played, no player may be added to another team within the same league.

1e. To be eligible to participate in playoffs, a player must have participated in 50% of the games that are guaranteed by the Town of Cheektowaga which would be 5 out of 10, and be on roster prior to June 28, 2024.

1f. Any team using an illegal/ineligible player, or anyone using a fictitious name and/or address shall be ejected from the league with no refund. This may occur immediately after the start of the first game of the season.

**1g. Any team not having a roster on file will not be eligible for the playoffs.**

**1h. No player may be on more than one roster in the same league, if a player is found to be on more than one roster, that player is not eligible for either team, and becomes an illegal player.**

**1i. No player is to play for more than one team in the same league, if a player is found to play for more than one team in the same league, that player is not eligible for either team, and becomes an illegal player for playoffs.**

Article 2a. All rosters are open to inspection by all league managers/captains and the softball office. Rosters must be neatly filled out or they will be rejected.

2b. Acceptable proofs of residency for Resident teams (with players’ name on it) are:

1. Drivers License
2. Voters Registration
3. Utility Bill
4. Property Tax Bill
5. A valid Town of Cheektowaga Resident Discount Card - Town Identification Card

2c. Each team may carry a roster of twenty-two players.

Article 3. Absolutelyno female is to play in a men’s league at any point.

## SECTION 3 – Postponements

Article 1a. After the start of the game, the umpire assigned to the game shall be the sole judge of whether or not the field and/or weather conditions are favorable or unfavorable for play.

1b. If a game is postponed at the site or before it becomes a legal game, the home team must notify the Softball Office of the status of the game, and why the game was postponed.

Article 2. It is prohibited for any manager/captain to postpone a scheduled game without permission from the Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Softball Coordinator.

Article 3. Unless notified by the CY&RS Softball Coordinator, all manager/captains with respective teams will show up at the designated field for a scheduled game. In the case of inclement weather or wet grounds, only team managers/captains are requested to call the Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Softball Coordinator’s office at 656-2294 or go online to <https://cheektowaganysoftball.weebly.com/> after 4:00pm, to determine if the games will be played. Games will be postponed when diamonds are unplayable. Managers/captains should appoint an assistant so that the Coordinator can contact that person if the manager/captain cannot be reached.

**Article 4. The Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Department reserves that right to cancel regular season and playoff games at its discretion at any time.**

### SECTION 4 - GAMES

Article 1a. The USA Softball rules will apply in those situations where there is no conflict with rules of the Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Softball League and the judgment of the Coordinator.

1b. The Coordinator reserves the right to amend the rules of the Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Softball League at any time.

Article 2a. Each game will be 7 innings or no more than 1 hour & 10 minutes. No new inning will start 1 hour & 10 minutes from the start of the game. If tied after 7 innings, extra innings will occur if time permits. If not, refer to rule 7c. **There are no ties!**

2a. Games will be played on 65 ft. diamonds.

2b. All regular season games will begin promptly as scheduled. A team failing to be ready to play at the scheduled time forfeits the game to the scheduled opponent at the discretion of the umpire. There is, however, a ***TEN MINUTE*** grace period before the game is forfeited. If a grace period is used, the game will be shortened the amount of time used to start the game. If an umpire is late for a game the teams shall still play their full game time.

2c. All players will begin each at bat with a 0-0 count. There are no free foul balls, therefore, if a player has two strikes and hits a foul ball they are out.

Article 3a. If a reschedule request is called in the **week of** the scheduled game, it will be considered an automatic forfeit.

3b. If a request is made within a week notice, we will **try** our best to reschedule the game within the remainder of the season. If there are games that have been rained out, they will take priority over requested makeups when rescheduling. If for some reason the requested game does not get rescheduled, it will become a forfeit. **NO requests are guaranteed!**

3c. In the case of a no-show, or a team forfeits due to lack of players at the diamond, the WINNING team is to pay their umpire fee of $23 for that game.

3d. A team awarded a win by forfeit must notify the Softball Office with a winning score of 7-0, and let the office know that it is a forfeit win.

3e.Two forfeits will suspend the team immediately for the remainder of the season and still owe all league fees if not already paid in full.

3f. Opponents of suspended teams will be awarded a forfeit, 7-0 win.

Article 4. A team may start and play with nine players. A team starting with 9 players must finish with 9. No out will be taken for missing a 10th batter. If a team starts with 10 players they must finish with 10 players, with the exception of a voluntary leave by a player, in which then the team must take an out for them. A team playing with 10 must have a sub for an ejected player to continue and finish with 10. If not the result is a **forfeit**. For Coed refer to Section 8: 2b&2c.

Article 4a. Men and Women’s leagues may bat 1 extra hitter, so 11 total batters. Men’s and Women’s teams may not bat 12 batters. Coed teams can bat 10 or 12 batters (refer to special rules 2b & 2c)

Article 5. Players are prohibited from wearing metal spikes. Any participant wearing metal spikes will be ejected from the game. The captain will NOT be ejected from the game if a different player on the team is violating this rule.

Article 6. The team at bat is responsible for retrieving balls.

Article 7a. **The winning team must email, text, or call in the final score. The message must include the both team names, and the league name. For email: softball@tocny.org For text: (716)444-0979**

7b**. If the winning team fails to call in scores within 48 hours of the completion of the game, both teams will be credited a loss. Week 12 games must be called in within 48 hours or they will be counted as losses for both teams.**

7c. If a game is tied at the end of regulation, there are no extra innings (exception: **only if time permits**). If no time permits the tiebreaker will be as follows: Team scoring more runs in the last inning of play wins the game, if still tied it goes to the inning before that and so on until a winner is determined

7d. **The 12 run rule applies after five innings. 20 run rule applies after the team behind has been up to bat 3 times. Teams down by 20 runs after 3rd at bat is not entitled to last at bat once down by 20.**

Article 8a. There are three courtesy runners allowed per game. Only one courtesy runner may be on the bases at any time. The same runner may not run 2 times consecutively. The courtesy runner must be the last person out, and the last of that gender out in coed. If the courtesy runner’s spot in the lineup comes while he/she is on base, they are out as a base runner and must bat.

8b. If a runner leaves the base and the batter swings and misses the runner is out (**no warnings**). There are no leadoffs at all; the runner can only leave after contact with the ball. If a player is called out on a leadoff, the pitch still counts.

8c. A **starter** may re-enter a game once, in the exact spot in the order which he/she left. Once the starter has re-entered, the player that substituted for him/her is officially out for the remainder of the game. Substituted players may not re-enter a second time. The starting player and their substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time. If a player re-enters the game a second time or a player re-enters the game in a position in the batting order other than their original starting or substitute position, this is considered an illegal re-entry.

**Exception:** a player gets injured later in the game. If players subbed out are the only players left on the bench, 1 of them may re-enter the game for the injured player.

8d. There is a three homerun limit on over the fence hits. After 3 over the fence home runs, these hits will be outs.

8e. Exception for 8d: The homerun limit does not apply to **Women’s** leagues. Also if a woman hits a home run in coed it does not count to the three homerun limit, so the team will still be at the same number of homeruns after a woman hits a homerun, as they were before she hits the homerun.

8f. **Game balls - Any team using a non-issued 2024 season game ball will forfeit the game.**

8g. **The Town of Cheektowaga SCHEDULES 12 GAMES BUT ONLY GUARANTEES 10 GAMES TO BE PLAYED IN THE SUMMER SOFTBALL LEAGUE, NO EXCEPTIONS. \*\*\*see Section 3, Article 4\*\*\***

**8h. The Town of Cheektowaga reserves the right to not play a rained out game at the end of the season if it will have no bearing on the outcome of the final standings before playoffs. Therefore, this will be the exception to the rule (8g) in that if this would be the eighth, ninth or tenth game, all three of the game(s) will not be played and the league will not re-schedule if it runs into the scheduled playoff time.**

8i. A green strike zone mat will be utilized for league play. A pitched ball landing on the plate or mat will be a strike as long as pitched with a legal 6 to 12-foot arch in men’s leagues and a 6 to 12-foot arch in coed and women’s leagues.

Article 9a. It is the responsibility of the team representative to inform the team’s players and manager/captain of the outcome of the pre-game umpire’s meeting (ground rules).

Article 10a. No women are allowed to play in ANY Men’s leagues.

10b. All-women teams cannot play in a Co-Ed league.

Article 11a. Teams and/or players seeking exclusion from these rules and regulation may do so in writing to the Coordinator. In the request for exclusion, a detailed explanation of the extemporary situation and/or condition should be accompanied with all pertinent information and evidence.

**The Town of Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Youth Services Softball league will not allow base stealing in any leagues.**

**SECTION 5 - PLAYER CONDUCT**

Article 1a. No alcohol on the field; no player is allowed to drink alcohol while playing. Any player caught consuming alcohol while playing will be ejected.

1b. No unsportsmanlike conduct by players, managers/captains, coaches, or duly authorized representatives will be tolerated. Any person judged guilty of violating this rule should be subject to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the Coordinator.

**1c. Any player ejected from a game will serve an automatic 1 game suspension. A second violation will result in an automatic 6 game suspension. Both suspensions can include playoffs.**

1d. Any team that uses a player that has been suspended will result in that player, and the teams’ captain, being ejected and suspended. If the team does not have enough players to finish the game when the captain and suspended player are ejected, the team will forfeit.

1e. Any player, manager/captain, coach, or duly authorized representative physically who contacts an umpire in an unsportsmanlike manner will be immediately suspended. He/she is no longer allowed to participate until a hearing is held with the head of umpires, umpire involved, player involved, softball committee, town board member, and head of Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services.

Article 2. By being on a roster for any Cheektowaga League you are agreeing to abide by The Town of Cheektowaga’s Zero Tolerance Policy/Code of Conduct, and can be suspended as a captain/individual for the actions of yourself or your team as the captain.

**SECTION 6 – PLAYOFFS**

Article 1a. If there is a tie for first place in a division the tie breaker will be a head-to-head season record. Then runs scored for and against (+, -) for the season, will be used. If that is a tie, it will be based upon record against the other playoff teams.

1b. Ties for second and/or third place will be broken using regular season record between the teams involved. If this is also a tie, record against the other playoff teams will be the criteria.

1c. Two or three way ties for fourth place will be broken using the following criteria (if the record for three or more teams is the same, but one team has the tie-breaker versus both of those teams, they would be considered one place above the other teams in question. Ex. Team 1, Team 2, Team 3 all finish 5-5, but Team 1 has the tie-breaker versus Teams 2 & 3, Team 1 would not be included in the tie-break between Teams 2 and 3.):

1. Record between the teams during the regular season
2. Run difference between teams
3. Record against the other playoff teams.
4. Difference between total runs scored and total runs allowed during the regular season
5. Coin toss

Article 2. Playoffs will start on the first available scheduled date following the completion of the regular season and is not limited to “league night.”

Article 3. For all inter-divisional playoffs, the team with the best record in games played between the teams involved or wins a coin toss, is the home team.

Article 4. Umpire fees will remain the same as the regular season.

Article 5. Pairings for the inter-divisional playoffs will be decided by a drawing.

Article 6. There will be no time limit for championship games ONLY. An hour and 15 Minute time limit still applies for other playoff games. All mercy rules will still apply.

\*\*Exception 1: Number of teams allowed in playoffs is subject to change due to weather, and will be determined by Softball Coordinator.

-games cannot end in a tie, there is no tie breaker

**SECTION 7 – PROTESTS**

Article 1. The Cheektowaga Youth & Recreational Services Softball Coordinator, if accepted, will act upon all protests. Their decision is final.

Article 2a. Umpire’s decision must be accepted and considered as final without question.

2b. A protest may be filed only if a misinterpretation of rules should happen to occur. Proper procedures must be followed if the protest is to be legal. The manager/captain must call time and notify the umpire and the opposing manager/captain of the protest immediately. If one pitch is thrown after you feel there were grounds for a protest your protest will not be valid. It must be done immediately. The scorebook must be signed by the umpire to verify that the game is being played under protest. These scorebooks pages must be turned in with a letter of protest. Again, after one ball is pitched, no protest will be allowed to be filed. (Exception- Section 7; Article 2g.)

2c. In filing a protest, the rule or situation in question must be stated. Unless the rule/situation is stated, the Softball Coordinator will not accept a protest.

2d. Protests must be submitted to the Softball Coordinator within 48 hours of game time.

2e. Managers/captains seeking to file protests should contact the Softball Coordinator the following day if they have questions concerning the filing of the protest.

2f. If a protest is upheld, the two teams involved must pay the umpire when the game is replayed. The protested game will be played from the point of protest or infraction. Any roster player may be used to replace a player who participated in the original game and is absent or injured and is unable to participate in the replaying of the protested game.

2g. Protests concerning illegal players may be filed at any time prior to the end of the regular season.

2h. Protests concerning illegal players in a playoff game must be filed prior to the completion of that particular playoff game.

2i. All protests will cost the protesting team $25.00 and will not be refunded win or lose of the protest being filed. If the $25.00 does not accompany the protest the protest will not be valid and will be thrown out; no exceptions.

**SECTION 8 – SPECIAL RULES**

**Co-Ed-**

Article 1. The batter becomes a runner when four balls have been called by the umpire. The ball is dead. Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award. The next batter (a female) has to bat with 0 or 1 out.

EXCEPTION: With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat. Note: Should female batter-runner pass a male batter-runner when choosing to walk, no out shall be called during this dead ball period. A male batter-runner advancing to second base without touching first base shall be called out if properly appealed.

Article 2a. There is no position rule. Any player (Male or Female) may play any position. However, there must be an equal number of Males and Females on the field and there must be an equal amount of males and females in the outfield, and the infield as well as pitcher and catcher being opposite sex. If playing short, then the outfield may be an odd number.

2b. Teams may start and play with 9 players. If team has 5 females to 4 males, the batting order must be female, male, female, etc. with no out taken for the 10th batting spot. A team may also start with 5 males and 4 females, however an out must be taken for the missing player. If a team starts with 9 and is waiting for another player to show up they must take an out until they get there.

2c. A team may bat 11 batters in coed, however the team must take an out for the missing 12th batters spot in the lineup.

2d. A Coed team may play with 10 with a ratio of 6 females and 4 males.

2e. Batting order must be male, female, male, female, OR female, male, female, male, etc. A team may also bat 12 batters and they must be male-female/female-male, based on the batting order.

2f. A male outfielder cannot throw a female batter out at first.

**All Leagues-**

Article 3a. Any team winning that finishes in first place for their league’s regular season**,** will be moved up to the next highest league (ex. C to B, B to A), and the Softball Coordinator holds the option to move up the **first and/or second place** teams as well for the following year. Any team that win’s their league’s championship may also be asked to move up to the next highest league.

3b. Championship teams will be allowed as many prizes as the number of players on their roster, UP TO 16, of whichever offered item they pick for their championship prize. In lieu of a prize (t-shirts for the 2023 season), teams can elect to have $100 deducted from their overall league fee for the 2024 season instead. Their decision on taking the prize or discount, would be due within two weeks of the conclusion of the season.

3c. Championship teams will have two weeks to place their championship prize order from the date they are called with the options. If they do not place the order in this allotted timeframe, then they will have until the fall league order is placed, at the end of the fall season, after this order is placed no more orders will be accepted.

**SECTION 9 - BATS**

1. Bats must bear **either** the **ASA approved 2000, 2004, 2008, or 2013 (slow pitch only) certification marks, or 2020 USA certification mark,** as shown below, and must not be listed on an USA Banned Bat List. **\*\*USSSA certified-only bats are NOT permitted.\*\***
2. Bats must be included on a list of approved bat models published by USA Softball.
3. Any player caught using an illegal bat will result in an automatic ejection from the game.
4. **THE TOWN OF CHEEKTOWAGA SOFTBALL PROGRAM HAS A BAT COMPRESSION TESTER AND WILL UTILIZE A STICKER SYSTEM SO THAT ALL BATS USED IN THE TOWN OF CHEEKTOWAGA LEAGUES WILL HAVE TO BE TESTED AND STICKERED BY END OF WEEK 2, TO BE USED DURING THE SEASON AND IN THE PLAYOFFS. ANY BATS WITHOUT A PROPER STICKER WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE USED IN LEAGUE PLAY.**
5. **Random checks may be performed throughout the season.**

**Review the list of certified equipment at** <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball.aspx>

All wooden bats will continue to be approved for ASA Play regardless of whether they bear an ASA approved certification mark or are included on a list of approved bats published by USA Softball.

**2024 Season Notes**

\*Office Hours – we will typically have someone in the office Monday – Friday from 4:00pm-9:00pm.

\*Scores may be called in at 656-2294 – texted to: (716) 444-0979 – emailed to: softball@tocny.org

**\*Rainouts – We will not know the status of the diamonds until 4:30pm on rain days. We may also leave a message to call back after 5:00pm. Please designate 1 person to call for the status of games. You may also check status of games online at** [**https://cheektowaganysoftball.weebly.com/**](https://cheektowaganysoftball.weebly.com/)

**Sign up for text alerts at** [**https://rainedout.com/**](https://rainedout.com/)**. Search for “Town of Cheektowaga Softball,” and choose to receive alerts for the night(s) you play.**

* Please note, rules and guidelines may be added or adjusted throughout the season, at the discretion of Town leadership, and/or the Softball Coordinator.

Rev. 4/12/2024