

Washington Township Girls Softball League

Revision 8
BY-LAWS
2024



WTGSL By-Laws

Purpose

The Washington Township Girls Softball League is an amateur organization designed to provide supervised softball competition for girls regardless of race, creed or religion. All rostered girls shall have the opportunity to play in every game. There will be no try-outs and no cuts. Our main objective is to provide a positive environment in which to teach softball fundamentals and good sportsmanship.

Staff Organization

Commissioner (Officer): The commissioner is the active head of all league divisions and has the power to govern all activities and problems arising from the operation and play of the league. The commissioner presides over all meetings and shall decide board votes that result in a tie.

Assistant Commissioner (Officer): The assistant commissioner coordinates with all the officers in the handling of league details and becomes the acting commissioner when necessary.

Treasurer (Officer): The treasurer shall collect and disperse all funds and maintain accurate financial records for the league. The treasurer shall submit a financial statement to the board at the end of each season. This report is available upon request to any member in the WTGSL.

League Secretary (Officer): The secretary shall keep notes on all meetings, prepares and sends all league correspondences (i.e. certified letters and announcements) and helps direct meeting agendas.

Head Organizer: The head organizer directs all roster building and team assignment activities. The head organizer will supply all head coaches with rosters prior to the beginning of the season and provide updated rosters during the season as needed.

Scheduler: The scheduler coordinates and distributes schedules of all games, arranges for the use of fields and acts as a liaison between the league and the umpire association. The scheduler is also the recipient of game score reports and regularly publishes standings on the league website.

Rules & Protests: The rules & protests chairperson is the point of contact for anyone in the league wishing to file a protest.

Equipment Manager: The equipment manager directs equipment purchases along with distributing and collecting all equipment at the beginning and end of each season. The equipment manager shall provide the board with an itemized inventory at the beginning and end of each season.

Field Maintenance: The field maintenance chairperson shall obtain permits for practice and game fields, where needed, and shall supervise repairs to fields as approved by the board.

The above representatives of the WTGSL Board are in direct charge of all activities of the league. All matters pertaining to the league, its teams and/or divisions should be directed to them. The WTGSL Board reserves the right to change any part of these by-laws as needed at any time during the season. The following by-laws found in this document supersede the USSSA rules. When a rule is not covered in this document, USSSA rules are in effect.

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Divisions of Play

A player's division will be determined by grade level in conjunction with the distribution of players registered within a given season. Below are two examples of how divisions have been split over recent seasons. The WTGSL Board reserves the right to modify divisions on a season to season basis based on the number of players registered.

Four Divisions

Minors: Grades 2/3

Majors: Grades 4/5

Junior High: Grades 6/7/8

High School: Grades 9-12

Three Divisions

Minors/Elementary: Grades 3-5

Majors/Middle School: Grades 6-8

High School: Grades 8-12

Player Eligibility

To play softball in the WTGSL, every player must be in good health and meet one of the following requirements:

- A student in grades 2 through 12.
- A returning player from the previous season.
- Play for the team in the elementary school district in which they reside.
- Play for the school in which they attend.

Any exceptions must be approved by the WTGSL Board. Any player who violates the eligibility requirements will be suspended with automatic team forfeiture of any games in which the ineligible player participated.

No girl can play out of her grade level for any reason unless she originally started early. The only way to start early is to be a 2nd Grader that was held back. Any girl that starts early can only spend two years in each division (until High School) and must move up with the current 3rd Grade class she's starting with.

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League Rules

1 Coaches & Assistants

- 1.1 All coaches are assigned the responsibility of being positive role models for the players. Conduct unbecoming a coach shall be cause for dismissal from the league.
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of the head coach to control their team and fans at all times. Failure to do so may result in game forfeiture **at the discretion of the Umpire or WTGSL Board.**
- 1.3 Head coaches must report any change of mailing address or phone number to the league secretary as soon as possible. The head coach bears all responsibility and consequences from the league being unable to contact them when required.
- 1.4 Head coaches must have access to these by-laws and the USSSA rule book for all games.
- 1.5 Head coaches are responsible for the cleaning of all trash from their sideline after a game or practice. If the fields are found to be dirty, the head coach can be called back to clean it.
- 1.6 A head coach must be a parent or an immediate family member of a player on the team. Any exceptions must be approved by the WTGSL Board.
- 1.7 No player shall be left unsupervised at any practice or game.
- 1.8 Head coaches are required to attend a majority of practices and games. Head coaches must also attend any mandatory league meetings.
- 1.9 Any individual that will be interacting with players (i.e. head coach, asst. coach, base coach, scorekeeper) is required to have a current and approved background check through the WTGSL contracted service **or hold a current Washington Local Schools background check and be able to provide said card.** Background check cards must be available at all times during league sanctioned events.
- 1.10 The board of the WTGSL may request, prior to the beginning of a game, that a head coach provide proof of background check through either physical presentation or digital verification of background check cards for all coaches present at the field. It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that all coaches have their background check cards available at all times, during any league activities. The penalties for not abiding by this by-law are as follows:
 - 1.10.1 First Offense: Head coach is provided with a warning and the offending coach is removed from the game.
 - 1.10.2 Second Offense: Head coach and offending coach are removed from the game and the head coach is suspended for the following game.
 - 1.10.3 Third Offense: Head coach and offending coach are removed from the game and the head coach is suspended for the remainder of the season. Reinstatement for the following season will be determined by the WTGSL Board.

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2 Playing Rules

2.1 The playing field will be a regulation field with the following distances:

Division	Bases	Home to Pitcher's Mound	Home to 2nd Base
Minors	50'	30'	70' 9"
Majors	55'	35'	77' 9"
Jr. High	60'	42' 6"	84' 10"
High School	65'	50'	91' 11"

2.2 The use of a rolling measurement tool to set the field is prohibited.

2.3 For the Minors/Elementary Division, five (5) innings will constitute a regulation game. In the case of a game that is rained-out or blacked-out after three (3) innings (2 1/2 innings if the home team is winning), it shall be considered an official game. If the game is rained-out or blacked-out before three (3) innings (2 1/2 innings if the home team is winning), the game will be restarted from the beginning at a later date. The umpire should return the game fee and the League Scheduler should be contacted to arrange a make-up date.

2.4 For the Majors Division, six (6) innings will constitute a regulation game. In the case of a game that is rained-out or blacked-out after three (3) innings (2 1/2 innings if the home team is winning), it shall be considered an official game. If the game is rained-out or blacked-out before three (3) innings (2 1/2 innings if the home team is winning), the game will be restarted from the beginning at a later date. The umpire should return the game fee and the League Scheduler should be contacted to arrange a make-up date.

2.5 For the-Middle School/**Junior High** and High School Divisions, seven (7) innings will constitute a regulation game. In the case of a game that is rained-out or blacked-out after four (4) innings (3 1/2 innings if the home team is winning), it shall be considered an official game. If the game is rained-out or blacked-out before four (4) innings (3 1/2 innings if the home team is winning), the game will be restarted from the beginning at a later date. The umpire should return the game fee and the League Scheduler should be contacted to arrange a make-up date.

2.6 All efforts must be made by teams to ensure games start at the designated game time. Repeated instances of teams failing to start games on time will be subject to future game penalties at the discretion of the WTGSL Board.

2.6.1 There shall be no infield warm ups between half innings.

2.6.2 Pitchers will be permitted one warmup pitch between half innings unless a pitching change is made. If a team is making a pitching change, the pitcher will be allowed five (5) warmup pitches.

2.7 The minimum number of players that can start a game is eight (8). If a team starts a game with eight (8) players, the team with eight (8) players must indicate which position in the batting lineup their ninth (9th) player would occupy, and the team will incur one (1) out each time the ninth (9th) player's position comes up in the batting lineup. If at any point during the game, a ninth (9th) player is added to the batting lineup **at their original position in the line up**, the team will no longer incur the one (1) out penalty.

2.8 The maximum number of players allowed to take a position in the field is ten (10).

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- 2.9** The maximum number of players allowed in the batting lineup is thirteen (13). **Unless teams are built beyond this number and then every rostered girl, that is present - must be put in the batting line up.** Any changes to batting lineup maximum must be approved by the WTGSL Board prior to the start of the season.
- 2.9.1** All teams are required to bat and play in the field every rostered player present. The only exceptions are for injured players or players benched for disciplinary reasons. The opposing team's head coach must be advised of these exceptions prior to the start of the game. The coach also has the right to question the player to determine validity. Violation of this by-law or the following by-laws as it relates to rosters and playing time will result in a three (3) out penalty. If necessary, the three (3) out penalty will carry over to the following inning.
- 2.10** If a game starts with nine (9) players, the tenth (10th) player may be added to the batting lineup following the player who was the last out from the previous inning. If the tenth (10th) player arrives while an inning is in progress, they may not join the game until the completion of the half inning.
- 2.11** If a player is not present at the start of the game and her arrival does not make her the ninth (9th) player, her name may be added to the bottom of the batting lineup. It is the responsibility of the head coach to notify the opposing head coach prior to the start of the game. If the player arrives prior to the batting position coming up, the player will be allowed to occupy that batting position. If the player arrives after the batting position has come up, the player must be removed from the lineup and will only be allowed to enter the game as a substitute.
- 2.12** If the game starts with nine (9) or more players in the batting lineup and a player is unable to finish the game due to injury, any player not currently in the lineup may occupy the open position in the batting lineup. If no player is available to occupy the open position in the batting lineup, an out **will not** be incurred when the open position comes up.
- 2.13** **For the Minors/Elementary Division, all players must be put in the game no later than the beginning of the second (2nd) inning. All players must spend a minimum of two (2) innings in both the batting lineup and the field.**
- 2.14** For the **Majors** Division, all players must be put in the game no later than the beginning of the third (3rd) inning. All players must spend a minimum of two (2) innings in both the batting lineup and the field.
- 2.15** For the Majors/Middle School and High School Divisions, all players must be put in the game no later than the beginning of the fourth (4th) inning. All players must spend a minimum of three (3) innings in both the batting lineup and the field.
- 2.16** Any player that misses the start of a game due to disciplinary reasons, and becomes undisciplined during the game, must enter the game following either by-law 2.12 or 2.13.
- 2.17** Only six (6) runs will be allowed per inning per team unless the team batting is behind. In this case, the team that is behind can score as many runs as needed to tie the game plus a maximum of six (6) more runs.
- 2.18** **For the Minors/Elementary Division, a game shall be considered complete after three (3) innings if one team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs and after four (4) innings if one team is ahead by ten (10) runs. If the home team is ahead, the bottom half of the inning will not need to be played.**

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- 2.19** For the **Majors** Division, a game shall be considered complete after four (4) innings if one team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs and after five (5) innings if one team is ahead by ten (10) runs. If the home team is ahead, the bottom half of the inning will not need to be played.
- 2.20** For the Middle School and High School Divisions, a game shall be considered complete after five (5) innings if one team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs and after six (6) innings if one team is ahead by ten (10) runs. If the home team is ahead, the bottom half of the inning will not need to be played.
- 2.21** For the 5:15pm games, no inning shall begin after **6:40pm**. For the 7:00pm games, no inning shall begin after dark and will be at the discretion of the umpire. The official score of the game will be the score of the last full inning played.
- 2.21.1** The above by-law only applies to weekday games scheduled back-to-back on a single field.
- 2.22** The Infield Fly Rule is in effect for the High School Division.
- 2.23** For the Minors/Elementary and **Majors** Divisions, batters will be allowed three (3) foul balls after accumulating two (2) strikes. The fourth (4th) foul ball will be considered strike three (3) and the batter will be out.
- 2.24** For the Middle School/Junior High and High School Divisions, batters will be allowed two (2) foul balls after accumulating two (2) strikes. The third (3rd) foul ball will be considered strike three (3) and the batter will be out.
- 2.25** On a foul tip with two (2) strikes, the batter will be out if the ball is caught by the catcher.
- 2.26** In the situation where a runner is advancing on a tag-play, and the fielder has possession of the ball, the runner must either “give up” or slide into the base to avoid injury to either player. **Failure to do so may result in the runner being called out at the discretion of the umpire.** The charging of a fielder by a runner may be cause for removal of the runner from the game. All instances of fielder interference are to be determined and called by the umpire.
- 2.27** The home team shall be indicated on the schedule and is not determined by field. The home team will occupy the bench on the 3rd base side of the field.
- 2.28** Prior to pitching, the pitcher shall take a position with a foot firmly on the ground and in contact with the pitching rubber. During the pitching motion, the foot must remain in contact with the pitching rubber and can only break contact after the ball is released.
- 2.29** The USSSA rule known as the “Flip/Flop Rule” is not used in the WTGSL.
- 2.30** Any player exhibiting signs of contagious condition/disease (i.e. chicken pox, measles, head lice, etc.), obvious injury (i.e. cast, large bandage), and/or open wounds (i.e. bleeding) shall not be allowed to participate in any game in which these signs occur. The WTGSL reserves the right to request a written medical authorization/release from any player prior to that player participating in WTGSL sanctioned activities.
- 2.31** **In the event of a tie at the completion of a regulation postseason game, the International TieBreaker rule will be enforced. For regular season games, the game will be recorded as a tie.**
- 2.32** **The use of hitting aids (i.e. hit stick, etc.) is prohibited once the game has started.**

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2.33 Safety bases will be used at first base and should be positioned such that the white portion is located where first base would normally be (in fair territory) and the colored portion should be in foul territory. Any batted ball hitting the white should be fair and any ball hitting the colored portion should be foul. On the initial throw to first base from the infield, or outfield, the batter/runner **must touch the colored portion of the base only**. The defensive player **must always touch the white portion**. This applies only on the initial play at first base and doesn't include:

2.33.1 Returning to the base after over running.

2.33.2 Running on a base hit to the outfield (runner may touch either the white or colored portion) or

2.33.3 Re-tagging to advance on a fly ball.

2.33.4 Any attempt to force the batter/runner out at first base where the initial throw pulls the defensive player off of first base and into foul ground. The defensive player and batter/runner may use either the white or colored portion.

2.34 If the base runner uses the colored portion at any time after the first attempt at first base and is not in contact with the white portion, then the base runner is considered off base.

2.35 **Intentional Walks: Intentionally walking a batter is strictly prohibited in grades 5 and under. In the Junior High and High School divisions, intentional walking a batter can be used at the coach's discretion.**

2.35.1 **Regarding grades 5 and under - if it is believed that an intentional walk is used on a batter and at the umpires discretion, the batter will automatically be awarded 2nd base.**

3 Equipment & Uniforms

3.1 Shoes with metal cleats are prohibited. Molded rubber cleats are allowed, as well as tennis shoes that tie or Velcro. Slip-on **or open toed** shoes are prohibited.

3.2 One new softball must be supplied by the home team and one good, used softball must be supplied by the visiting team for each game. All game softballs will be provided to head coaches prior to the start of the season by the WTGSL.

3.3 The home team is responsible for supplying all bases (incl. pitcher's rubber) and setting up the field in accordance with the dimensions stated in 2.1. All equipment should be in good condition and securely fastened.

3.4 All bats used in the WTGSL must be marked with the USSSA thumbprint (1.20 BPF) by the manufacturer **- to include, but not limited to "fast pitch" or "slow pitch" designation.**

3.5 All pitchers, in all divisions, are required to wear a protective face mask.

3.6 All catchers must wear a helmet that has a mask attached to it. **Use of a chest protector is up to the discretion of the head coach and player, except in the Minors division where a chest protector is required for the catcher.**

3.7 Players must wear team shirts with at least a six (6) inch number on the back. Player numbers cannot be the same, contain letters, decimals, or fractions. The wearing of hats, matching pants or matching socks is optional. During inclement weather jackets may be worn at the discretion of the coaches, but the jackets cannot cover the player's number while that player is at bat, **unless the player's**

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number has previously been identified by the opposing Head Coach.

3.8 Exposed jewelry such as earrings (studs only), nose piercings (studs only), necklaces (tucked inside the jersey), and/or items on the wrist (i.e. hair ties or non-metallic bracelets) may be worn, but solely at the responsibility of the parent and player. No jewelry may be worn on the hands. Pitchers are prohibited from having any jewelry items on their pitching arm. Medical Alert jewelry is the exception to this rule, but it must be taped to the body.

3.8.1 All parents and players shall not hold the WTGSL liable for any injuries resulting from the wearing of jewelry on the field, during both practice and game play.

3.9 Helmets with ear flaps are mandatory for all batters and base runners while the ball is in play.

4 Rainouts & Rescheduling

4.1 The WTGSL **scheduler** is responsible for rescheduling all necessary games called to inclement weather or darkness.

4.2 In the case of inclement weather, postponement decisions will be made by 4:30pm for the early games and 6:15pm for the later games. In the event of postponement, the WTGSL will send out notification via text message and/or league social media. If no postponement decision is made, teams will need to report to the field and any further decisions to postpone will be at the discretion of the umpire. If a field is deemed playable and a team has failed to assemble enough players, that team will forfeit the game.

4.3 Player safety is of paramount concern. Therefore, in the event of lightning, tornado warnings (sirens or sounds), or any other threatening conditions, head coaches have the authority to suspend a game, advise the umpire, and take immediate action to move all players to a safe location.

5 Registration and Rosters

5.1 All rosters are created by the Head Organizer and will be distributed to head coaches by a predetermined date prior to the annual coaches meeting.

5.2 Teams will be organized and filled based on sign-up order starting with returning players.

5.2.1 Sign-up order is determined by the date/time that the league fee is paid.

5.2.2 A returning player is defined as having been on a WTGSL roster during the previous season.

5.3 Any player (including returning players) paying the league fee after the official registration period for a given season has concluded will be placed on a waiting list and rostered based upon where players are needed.

5.4 Schools that have more than one (1) team will not be able to exchange players.

5.5 Any use of a player that is not on the official roster created by the WTGSL will result in the automatic forfeit of all games in which the ineligible player participated.

5.6 Any player that has not paid the league fee by the start of the regular season is subject to removal from the team roster.

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5.7 All processing fees charged to the league during registration will be deducted from refunds.

5.8 Once the regular season has started, there will be no refunding of league fees.

6 Umpires and Team Conduct

6.1 USSSA umpires are assigned to fields by their local office. Any issue regarding the umpires should be brought to the attention of a member of the WTGSL Board.

6.2 The umpire has the authority to eject any player and/or coach from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. At time of the ejection, the head coach (or assistant coach in the case of head coach ejection) must provide the umpire with the name of the player and/or coach being ejected.

6.3 Any player or coach that is ejected from a game will automatically receive a minimum suspension of one (1) full game to be served during the team's next scheduled game.

6.4 The umpire has the authority to eject fans from the game due to behavior and, if deemed necessary, call the game as a forfeit.

6.5 Any member of the WTGSL Board has the authority to remove a coach, player, or fan from the game if deemed necessary.

6.6 If an umpire does not appear for duty, the game may be played using volunteer umpires. The game will be considered official if both head coaches agree upon the use of volunteer umpires prior to the first pitch of the game being made. The agreement to play must be signed in both score books prior to the start of the game. If the volunteer umpire(s) completes the whole game, the umpire fees for that game should be provided to the volunteer umpire(s).

6.7 Head coaches, assistant coaches, and players leaving the bench or coaching boxes to protest ball and strike decisions are subject to ejection from the game. Coaches do have the right to advance to the field to control players who are arguing with the umpire, so that said player might not be ejected from the game.

6.8 The WTGSL definition of poor sportsmanship includes, but is not limited to; pushing, fighting, foul language, talking about or teasing another player, either on the opposing team or the same team, throwing equipment, ignoring a coach trying to defuse the situation, or refusal to play a position as requested by the coach. Any instances of poor sportsmanship, by players, fans, or coaches, must be immediately addressed by the head coach and stopped. The WTGSL Board reserves the right to address any situation after the fact, regardless of the situation being resolved at the time of occurrence.

6.9 Smoking on the field or in the bench area is prohibited. Any coach or player found to be smoking in the previously identified areas are subject to disciplinary action by the WTGSL Board, up to and including, indefinite suspension. Any fans discovered to be smoking in the previously identified areas will be asked to leave the field.

6.10 Any player or coach found to be in possession, or under the influence, of alcohol or illegal drugs at the field will be removed and immediately placed on indefinite suspension pending a hearing by the WTGSL Board.

6.11 Any player or coach to be found in flagrant violation of these by-laws will be subject to a hearing and potential disciplinary action by the WTGSL Board, up to and including, indefinite

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suspension.

6.12 Failure to follow the terms of any disciplinary action set for by the WTGSL Board may result in removal from the league.

7 Protests

7.1 Only when an infraction of the rules occurs may a protest be called. Those issues that may not result in a protest include an umpire's judgment call such as balls/strikes, safe/out, etc.

7.2 All protests must be made on the playing field, in the presence of both the opposing head coach and umpire, before the next pitch of the game.

7.3 The protest must be handled on the field and decided by the umpire after a protest is called.

7.3.1 The only exception to this rule is player eligibility, which can be protested at any time during the season. If challenging the eligibility of an opposing player, the coach must follow the guidelines in 7.2. The coach should gather as much information about the player as possible before continuing play. After the conclusion of the game, the coach present should contact, and present their evidence to a member of the WTGSL Board.

8 Forfeits and Game Score Reporting

8.1 In the event of a forfeit, and the umpire being present at the field, the coaches should provide the umpire with the umpire fees for the game. If for some reason, the umpire cannot be paid at the field, the coaches are to notify the League Scheduler.

8.1.1 If a team is aware of the need to forfeit prior to the start of the game, it is the responsibility of the head coach to notify the League Scheduler or any member of the WTGSL Board as soon as possible.

8.2 Any team that withdraws or is disqualified from the league shall forfeit all remaining games.

8.3 The final score of a forfeited game shall be recorded as one run per inning for the maximum number of regulation innings in the division that the forfeit occurred (ex. a forfeited High School game will be recorded as 7-0).

8.4 It is the responsibility of the coach from the winning team to report the score of the game through the league website within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure to do so will result in the league recording the game as a tie; with a score of one run per inning, per team, for the maximum number of regulation innings in the division that the score reporting failure occurred (ex. a Minors/Elementary will be recorded as 5-5).

9 Field Rules

9.1 Parking at all WTGSL sanctioned fields (practice or game) is at the vehicle owner's own risk. The WTGSL is not responsible for any vehicle damage caused by foul balls, errant throws or any other action that may occur during the course of a practice or game.

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