

LEAGUE RULES for 2025/2026
New rules for 2025/2026

1.0 Game Schedules and Times:

1.1 Regular scheduled games shall be played on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. as per the community's available field times. Field times should be submitted to the webmaster three days after the season-opening meeting.

1.2 a. When 2 or more games are scheduled on the same field, the games will be scheduled 2 hours apart at 12:30. If a field conflict occurs, a mutually agreed-upon start time between Managers can be used.

b. Divisional playoffs will be played on the last day of the regular season.

1.3 **Games** will not be played if the temperature is below 50 degrees. If possible, the cancellation will be made 2 hours before game time. **The cancellation is made the night before if the weather calls for it, or no later than three hours before game time.**

1.4 All canceled games must be rescheduled within a week of cancellation and played before the year-end tournament. It is the responsibility of the home team manager of the game that was postponed to find a mutually agreed-upon date to make up the game. It will be a forfeit for the home team if not rescheduled, but it becomes a forfeit to the visiting team if they are not willing to play on a reasonably

rescheduled date.

1.5 The makeup date does not have to be a regularly scheduled play date. Games can be postponed only if the field is unplayable, or the weather presents a safety factor. It will be considered a forfeit if another date cannot be agreed upon.

1.6 Managers must notify the opposing team by telephone, followed by an email message (copy Chairperson, Web-Mistress/Master, and a copy to the Secretary), that they have less than nine (9) players and must forfeit the game.

2.0 Rosters:

2.1 All managers must have all team players sign the Player Waiver, Release of Liability, and Indemnification Agreement. The pitchers must sign the Pitcher's Waiver Form. These forms can also be found on the website.

2.2 There is no limit to the number of players allowed on a team roster as long as all the players meet the requirements described herein.

2.3 An official roster is one that is filed with the Chairperson, Vice- Chairperson, Secretary, and the Web Mistress, at the fall meeting of the Tri- County Board for the upcoming season, and it is the manager's responsibility to post the roster on the website. Managers will need to go to the website to obtain any copies. All copies of the rosters must be dated. Once the season is over, the roster is no longer official.

a. Each time the roster is updated, the roster date must also be updated.

- b. Years in the League should include the present season.
- c. Players' "special" status must be noted on the roster.
- d. Outside and sister community players should have their home addresses listed on the roster, not the community they are playing for.

1. **D - Dropped Player**

2. **G - Grandfathered Player Tabled to Rules Meeting** (must be approved by Executive Officers) **must play on a team minimum of 5 years to be Grandfathered. A vote was taken to table this discussion and not move forward with any Grandfathered players until the next Rules meeting.**

3. **N - New Player**, added after the season begins

4. **O - Outside Player** (does not include Sister Community Players)

5. **SC- sister community. A sister community is a community that does not have a team in the league that has agreed to individuals playing with said sister community that does have a league team.**

6. **Sub** - Player not playing regularly but on call if needed. To play in the tournament, one must have proof in the scorebook that they have played in all needed games. Age should be 50 years old as of October 31st of the fiscal year. (Our fiscal year is from November 1st 0001 to October 31st.0002.)

2.4 **Updating roster**

As players are added or taken off your rosters, you must make the appropriate changes to the roster that is on the website, remembering to change the date on the roster when the revisions are made. It is the Manager's responsibility to

check the website periodically to view any revised rosters.

2.5 New players may be added to the roster at any time, provided they meet the requirements of the TCGL league. Picture of driver's license will no longer be kept by the Secretary. Any new player to the team must also be within the age bracket to be added to the team. At any time, a player may be asked to provide proof of age.

2.6 Players must be residents or renters in a community or sister community within the counties of Marion, Lake, and Sumter.

2.7 If a player moves from one member community to another, the player may complete the season with the current team or transfer to the new team. If a player moves to a non-league community, they may stay with their team until the end of the season.

2.8 Players must be 50 years of age to play in the Tri-County Ladies League on or before October 31st of the next fiscal year. (Our fiscal year is from November 1st 0001 to October 31st 0002.) It is the team manager's job to have proof of each player's approved age to play in the league. A player may be asked to prove their age at any time.

2.9 # of games to play in the tournament.

a. Players on the roster at the beginning of the season must play in 7 games from November 1st up to the tournament meeting.

b. Must play in 4 innings per game. **Rainouts or doubleheaders; 3 innings will count.**

- c. Any player added to the roster in the first two weeks of January must play 5 games by the tournament meeting to be eligible.
- d. Must play in 4 innings per game. Rainouts or doubleheaders; 3 innings will count.
- e. Any players added to the roster after these dates must ask the Executive Board for approval to participate in the tournament.
- f. Scorebooks must be brought to the tournament to allow verification of games played if requested. (Please staple the two teams' lineup sheets to the scoresheet.)
- g. If a higher division team borrows a player from a lower division, they must note it on the lineup and scorebook and give a copy to the player's true division for proof of playing time. Exception: If, because of rain, the game cannot be made up, players will be treated as if they had played. Players added to a roster less than 30 days prior to the tournament are not eligible for tournament play.

2.10 New Team. A community that wishes to become a new team must be evaluated by the Executive Chair and another manager or coach from a different community for division placement.

1. The new team must be from a named community in the Tri-county area with a home field. All players, except sister community players, must be from the named community. New teams are also limited to no more than 3 outside players on their roster.

2.11 Any team that has only 9 or 10 players at game time **may** borrow from a lower or same division team from their community to make a team up to 11. The borrower's manager must approve the loan of their players.

2.12 Outside Players

a. The number of “outside players” allowed on a team will be three (3), and they must be identified on the roster. **A small community with only one team may now have 4 outside players. (see addendum to End of Season meeting)**

b. If a player from a member or sister community or an outside player leaves the team they are playing for during the season, they must contact the Executive Officers for placement on another team.

c. All Outside Players and Sister Community Players on the official roster for the season are considered permanent members of the team.

3.0 Sister Communities

3.1 A sister community is a community that does not have a team in TCGL. That agrees to play for a community with a TCGL league team. A team cannot have more than two sister communities. **Small communities with only one team may now have three sister communities. To help equalize small struggling communities. (see addendum to End of Season meeting)**

3.2 Players from sister communities cannot be divided between Member Communities. **But you can play on another team as an outside player.** These are the rules of the Tri- County League and have no bearing on community rules that pertain to Outside Players or Sister Communities.

4.0 Umpires:

4.1 It is the home team's responsibility to provide one (1) or more umpires for each game. Umpires cannot be on the roster of either team. All umpires for TCGL games must have attended an Umpire Training Clinic within the year, given by Del Webb, Plantation, or The Villages.

4.2 Umpires are instructed by the Board to remove players from a game if they make any derogatory remarks or threats toward any umpire, manager, player, coach, or spectator.

4.3 A pregame conference consisting of the umpire(s) and managers of both teams is required prior to the start of the game. The meeting is to be kept brief.

B. If the manager has a coach or player who will discuss calls with the umpire(s), that person must be named at the pre-game conference.

4.4 Both managers have a duty to bring to the attention of the umpire(s) any call that is made that does not agree with the Tri-County Ladies rules.

4.5 All managers must provide their umpire(s) with a copy of the Tri-County rules as well as a copy of the rule differences between Tri-County and Sun and Fun.

4.6 Umpires must make a pregame check of the legality of bats. All bats must be on display prior to game time.

5.0 Home Field Ground Rules/Playing Field:

5.1 Home field ground rules take precedence over Tri-County League rules and must be followed.

5.2 Public fields used by communities that do not have a field may have specific rules for participation. All teams must follow these rules when using these fields.

5.3 Scoreboards must be provided by the home team. When an electronic scoreboard is inoperable, the Umpire will confirm the score with both teams after each half-inning.

5.4 Bat racks must be provided by the home team and must be outside of the dugout.

5.5 **Playing field** shall be laid out in accordance with the field diagram on the Tri-County Ladies website, including:

- a. 2 bases (a single double base, or 2 separate bases at first).
- b. A commitment line between 3rd and home.
- c. A separate scoring home plate and/or scoring line.
- d. A runner's line five (5) feet behind a line extending from the 3rd base foul line past home plate.
- e. A pitcher's box.

5.6 **Pitching Screen: The placement of the screen. The screen must cover or be in front of at least half of the pitcher's rubber. It cannot be more than 4 ft in front of the pitcher's rubber.**

- a. Should a community wish to use a pitching screen, it will be permitted to do so. Should one team choose to use the screen, the opposing team chooses not to use it; this will be allowed. The team using the screen must remove it from the field between innings.
- b. If a batter bats a ball into the screen, the ball will be considered a dead ball. (The count remains the same as it was before that pitch, and no runner on base can advance.)
- c. If the pitcher does not move behind the screen and fields the ball, the batter is awarded first base. "Forced" runners advance a base.
- d. If the pitcher does not move behind the screen after two warnings by the umpire, they will be removed from the pitching position.

6.0 Equality / Sportsmanship:

6.1 All teams in the Tri-County Golden Ladies League will have equal rights and will be treated as such by board officials, managers, players, spectators, and umpires.

6.2 High and low pitches can be called at the discretion of the umpire without argument from any player.

6.3 Only a team manager or her/his appointee can call a time-out to discuss any situation with the umpire.

6.4 Any manager who walks out, whether from a meeting or from their team, leaves their players without a place to play and puts Tri-County in a predicament, will not be allowed to

manage, coach, or play softball with any Tri-County team for a period of two (2) years.

7.0 Divisions: The final placement of teams within divisions will be voted on at the first meeting of the Tri-County Board of the fall season.

1. The Chair will schedule a meeting in mid-September with the TCGL Board will discuss the placement of teams in divisions, with the purpose of having 2 or 3 proposals for the September **Pre-Season** Meeting.

2. It will be mandatory for a team to move up if 1st in the division or down if last in Div. according to where they finish the season...

3. If a team has a 40% roster change, it may petition the Executive Officers at least three (3) weeks prior to the September meeting for reconsideration. At this time, an executive officer will schedule a time to evaluate the teams before placement into a division.

4. If a team has consistently won in Division 1 for more than three years in a row, they will be required to adjust 50% of their team to continue playing in the TCGL league

8.0 Uniforms:

8.1 All teams must have matching shirts. The shirts must have a number on the back, visible at all times, at least 6" high, and no duplicate numbers. For cold weather, sweatshirts or jackets worn must also have the right number on the back.

8.2 Sponsors for teams are acceptable, and teams may be identified by a sponsor name and/or a community name. Rosters should clearly identify this.

8.3 Protective helmets and/or facemasks, chest protectors, and any other protective equipment may be worn by any player.

9.0 Protests:

9.1 Only managers or acting managers may consult the umpire over the rule interpretations. Protests will not be considered if they are based solely on a decision involving the accuracy of judgment on the part of the umpire. There are Three (3) types of protests:

1. Misinterpretation of a playing rule – must be made before the next pitch or on the last play of the game.

2. Illegal Substitute – must be made while they are in the game and before the umpire(s) leave the field.

3. Ineligible Player – can be made at any time during or after the game. Eligibility is the decision of the League Protest Committee.

9.2 The team scorekeeper will make a notation in the scorebook when it is determined that a protest is being filed, with careful attention to all pertinent facts and details.

9.3 Managers from both teams should contact the League Vice-Chairman before the next game is played, and she, along with her committee, will attempt to settle the dispute.

9.4 Procedure to report a Protested Game

- a. Only a Manager may file a protest.
- b. Follow the instructions given on the Protest Form, including the signing of scorebooks, at the time of the incident.
- c. Complete the GAME PROTEST FORM found on the TCGL Website (Managers should have blank copies at each game.)
- d. Give the following to the Protest Committee Chair:

The completed Protest Form - keeping a copy.

A copy of the signed Scorebook Page.

The Umpire(s) report(s) – keeping a copy

A copy of the two lineup sheets.

9.5 Processing Protest Forms

- a. The Protest Committee Chair will ask the opposing manager for their written statement of the protest.
- b. The Protest Committee Chair will ask for additional witness statements from players/coaches on both teams involved. (at least two from each team)
- c. The Protest Committee Chair will share all the Information gathered with the Protest Committee, Executive Officers, and persons involved, including both team managers.
- d. The Protest Committee Chair will report the committee

findings and rulings in writing to all persons involved, the Executive Board, and both Team Managers.

9.6 Rulings by the Protest Committee

a. Illegal Substitution

1st Time in Season – Manager is suspended for one game. 2nd Time in Season – Manager is suspended for 3 games. 3rd Time in Season – Manager is suspended for the remainder of the season and the following season. The game may stand as played, forfeited, or replayed, as determined by the Protest Committee.

b.) Ineligible Player

1st Time in Season – Manager is suspended for one (1) game.

2nd Time in Season – Manager is suspended for three (3) games

3rd Time in Season – Manager is suspended for the remainder of the season and the following season. The game may stand as played, forfeited, or replayed, as determined by the Protest Committee.

c) Misinterpretation of the Playing Rules by an umpire, or refusal to officiate per TCGL rules.

1st Time in Season – A letter of complaint written by the Protest Committee will be sent to the Community Softball Club President and the HOA. The letter must be clear, and outline the incident.

2nd Time in Season - a letter written by the Protest Committee will be sent to the Community Softball Club President and the HOA, asking the umpire(s) to no longer

officiate TCGL games. The letter must clearly outline the incident.

Should a member of the Protest Committee (including the Chair), also be a member of either team involved in a protest, the Chairperson of the Protest Committee will appoint a replacement from a team not involved in the protest.

10.0 Reporting of Game Results:

10.1 The home team manager is responsible for ensuring that game reports are sent to the Tri-County Web Master within 24 hours of the game. Guidelines and reporting forms are provided on the webpage. The third time in the season a manager is reminded to submit the game report, the team will be assessed a \$10 fine and fined \$10 every time thereafter.

10.2 The home team manager is also responsible for reporting postponements, cancellations, forfeits, and any other schedule changes to the website as soon as possible.

11.0 League Recognition – Recognition pins will be given out at the end of each season for every five (5) years of participation in TCGL. Years played need not be consecutive. (Ladies may purchase pins if this leaves pass over).