

These Rules & Regulations shall be considered tentative until April 1, 2023.

All league ages are determined using December 31, 2023.

FEES:

A. Fees: \$325.00 Total **per team**.

1. **Administrative Fee (\$325) & CT USA SOFTBALL (USA Softball) Fee (\$50):** Applies to administrative duties, a Game Supervisor and credit card fees; it does not pertain to any additional field rental/usage or maintenance. The USA Softball fee allows us to use USA Softball Umpires and offers players the opportunity to purchase insurance.
2. All Fees (other than Umpire Fees) can be paid using a credit/debit card at www.milfordrecreation.com
3. Those needing to pay with a check or cash may do so in person at the Milford Recreation Department – 70 West River St. In-person registration is currently BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. To set up an appointment please contact the League Director. Checks Payable: City of Milford (***Two Separate Checks (\$275.00 & \$50.00)***).

B. Teams will be responsible for paying the Umpire(s) directly at the field. Umpires cost \$35.00 per team with two (2) Umpires and/or \$25.00 per team with one (1) Umpire – CASH ONLY.

C. Forfeit Fee: \$70.00 per game - ***This fee will only be charged if you forfeit.***

LEAGUE ELIGIBILITY/ DIVISIONS OF PLAY:

All leagues are open to Milford Residents & Non-Residents.

- A. MEN'S (Mon. & Wed.), WOMEN'S (Tues.) RECREATION LEAGUES: Recreation-Level Competition
- B. COED A (Competitive) & COED B – (Recreation-based) – (Friday)
- C. MEN'S Senior Leagues:
 - Over 50 League (Thurs.)
 - Over 60 League (Thurs.)
 - Over 70 League (Tues.)

Team Registration: Will run February 27 - March 17, 2023 (sooner if league maximums are met). *Coaches register/pay for their team's spot in the league.*

Individual Registration: (no charge) for players will begin March 22, 2023. *Players will register for each specific league they are in.*
Registration for individual players will conclude on May 31, 2023 (the player/roster addition deadline date).

NOTE: All players may play in any-and-all leagues than he/she is eligible for. However, a player may not play on more than one team within a Division or League.

AGE REQUIREMENTS:

All player league age is determined by players age as of December 31, 2023.

- A. All coaches/managers must be age 21 as of April 1st of the current year.
- B. All players must be age 18.

Men's Senior League Exceptions:

1. **The "Grandfather Clause" has been abolished. Your league age is what your age is in 2023. (I.E. You can be 69 and eligible for the Over 70 league provided you turn 70 in 2023).**

ALL PLAYERS IN ALL LEAGUES MUST REGISTER FOR FREE USING THEIR www.milfordrecreation.com ACCOUNT. There are no more paper rosters.

EQUIPMENT:

All equipment must meet the specifications of USA Softball as outlined in Rule 3 of the Official Rules of Softball; and the local variances detailed below.

Bat Guidelines:

Men's Leagues: All Leagues use USA Softball approved Wood Bats* only. (Exception: **Senior Leagues** may use any legal USA Softball bat, wood, composite, or otherwise).

*Any wood bat that does not bear an USA Softball approved certification mark shall also be deemed **legal** provided that the bat:

1. Is no more than 34 inches in length, nor exceed 38.0 oz in weight
2. Is no more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its' largest part.
3. Is marked "Softball" or "Official Softball"

NOTE: The Corndog bat is **legal** in all leagues.

Women's Leagues: Use any USA Softball approved bat.

APPROVED/CERTIFIED: The official bat for USA Softball Championship Play must meet all the USA Softball specifications and the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1, and:

1. The official bat: Made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burs, dents cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The official bat must bear either the 2000 Certification Mark, 2004 Certification Mark, or 2013 Certification Mark (Slow Pitch, Men's Adult Fast Pitch, Junior Olympic Boy's Fast Pitch and Men's Modified only), as shown below and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with 2000 or 2004 Certification Mark.



NOTE: USA Softball has begun transitioning to the new USA Softball Certification Marks for the 2023 calendar year. On behalf of equipment manufacturers, the USA Softball Equipment Testing and Certification Committee requested that the new certification marks be approved for the 2023 calendar year and the USA Softball Board of Directors approved the new marks (seen here) for 2019 USA Softball Championship Play. The Official Rules of Softball, Rule 3, Sections 1 and 3 will be updated for 2020 to identify the new Certification Marks for Championship Play.

AND

2. must be included on a list of approved bat models published by USA Softball

OR

3. must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with USA Softball Bat Performance Standard. This includes wooden bats.

All USA Softball bats must pass USA Softball's Bat Performance Standard. All bats having the 2000, 2004 or 2013 Certification Mark and not listed on the list of Non-Approved bats with Certification marks will be allowed. For your convenience, USA Softball's website has a listing of all approved bats and bats that have USA Softball Certification Marks and are no longer approved.

https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/~/_link.aspx?id=015F4358A30B44368FC142350D112FFF&z=z

So-called "Senior bats" approved for use in USA Softball Championship Play are NOT legal in any League or Division of play, including Senior Leagues. The bat standards for Senior (Senior) Leagues remain unchanged in Milford and are consistent with USA Softball rules governing local play.

During the 2023 season any bats whose status (legal or illegal) has been changed by the USA Softball will also be changed by the Milford Recreation Department.

The Milford Recreation Department reserves the right to ban any-and-all bats it feels to be in the best interest of the league, the Milford Recreation Department, and the City of Milford.

Prior to buying a bat, player's should consult with USA Softball website (link above) for the most recent list of both certified and banned bats.

SPECIAL NOTES CONCERNING BATS

- During the course of the 2023 season any bats whose status (legal or illegal) has been changed by the USA Softball will therefore be changed in Milford.
- During the course of the 2023 season the Milford Recreation Department reserves the right to ban any and all bats if it feels it is in the best interest of the league, the Recreation Department, and the City of Milford. This decision would be based upon the input of umpires, players, and Recreation Department officials.
- USA Softball web site (www.teamusa.org) contains a list of certified equipment and updated press releases, which will be utilized to determine the status of all bats.

SOFTBALLS:

All Men's Leagues use the following Optic Yellow softball:

12" .52 cor 300 compression Green Stamp

Women's Recreation League Optic Yellow softball:

11" .52 cor 300 compression Green Stamp

BASES:

- A. Each team shall have a set of "thrown down" bases in the event that there are no bases at the field. The home team shall provide the bases in this instance. **Note: Double "safety" first base is required.**

GAME INFORMATION (Playing Rules):

- A. **General** - USA Softball Rules and Regulations will govern all leagues, except where local Milford Recreation Department Rules and Regulations apply.
- B. **Count/ Strike Zone** – **In all leagues**, batters shall begin with a 1 Ball / 1 Strike count.
1. No fouls after the 2nd strike.
 2. A strike zone mat will be utilized in all leagues. A strike will occur any time a legal pitched ball hits the plate or the strike zone mat.
- C. **Double (Safety) First Base** – The double first base will be used in all games at fields where it has been installed. The runner shall run to the Orange side (foul territory) of the base and the defensive player shall use the white side (fair territory) of the base.

D. **Forfeit Time** - A forfeit allowance of ten (10) minutes will only be in effect for the first game(s) of any given day. All other games will start at the originally scheduled or rescheduled time with each team fielding a minimum of ten (10) players

Exception:

1. To avoid a forfeit, a team may start with nine (9) players. A tenth (10th) player only may be added prior to the team going through the entire batting order. Once the leadoff batter hits for the second time, a team must finish with nine (9) players. NOTE: Teams do not have to declare this to the umpire until this spot in the order is due up a second time. At this point the team must finish with nine and take the out in the order (COED – 10th player can be added at anytime and will slot into the 10th batting position).

E. **Home Run Limit: None** – All Leagues. All over the fence home runs are “hit and sit” – you do not run the bases and all base runners can clear the field without touching additional bases.

F. **Interrupted / Suspended Games**

1. In the event of rain and/or darkness that causes the permanent interruption/suspension of a game in progress, the following procedures shall be adhered to:
 - a. The game shall be made “official” once **4 innings** (3 ½ if the home team is ahead) are complete.
 - b. Any game that is not “official” shall resume from the exact spot where the game was suspended when the game is rescheduled.
 - c. If a game is suspended after it has been made “official,” the score will revert back to the last completed inning to determine the winner. If the reversion results in a tie, the reversion is undone and the game shall resume from the exact spot where it was suspended when the game is rescheduled.
 - d. In the event of an unofficial game the umpire(s) should return the game fee to the teams. If the game fees are not returned, the teams will NOT be responsible for paying the umpires for the rescheduled game.
 - e. The Recreation Department reserves the right to determine the game outcome in extenuating circumstances as determined by the League Director.

G. **Metal Cleats** – Are not permitted in any Milford Recreation Department league.

H. **Run-Ahead Rule** – A winner shall be declared when the score margin meet the below criteria:

- 15 runs after 4 (3.5 Home Team) Innings
- 10 runs after 5 (4.5 Home Team) Innings

EXCEPTION: **Senior leagues only:** All Senior divisions will have a 5 run maximum per inning except for the seventh inning or extra innings where runs shall be unlimited. The above Run-ahead rules still apply when applicable.

A. **Field Supervisors/ Official Score – NEW 2023.** Each field will be staffed with a Field Supervisor. The Field Supervisor will have each team's roster, at the conclusion of

ground rules, each manager will confirm their players and sign off on them with the Field Supervisor prior to first pitch. At the conclusion of the game the Field Supervisor will record the final score and send it to the League Director. Late arrivals **MUST** check in directly with the Field Supervisor. **NOTE: Field Supervisors are NOT scorekeepers.** It is still mandatory for both teams to keep a scorebook. Teams must confirm the score between each half-inning. In the event of a discrepancy, teams shall seek a mutual agreeable resolution (score). If a resolution cannot be agreed upon, the umpire shall hear both sides and resolve the matter before the start of the next half-inning. The Umpires decision is final. Absolutely no protests will be heard on scorebook or substitution matters.

- J. **Batting Order** – Teams, in all leagues, have the option of batting as many batters as they so choose. The batting order must never change. In the event that a batter leaves the game for any reason (including but not limited to ejection, disqualification, injury, etc.) the player may be replaced by a legal substitute without penalty. Should no legal substitute be available an “out” shall be declared in that spot in the order for the remainder of the game (**a legal substitute may enter at any time during the game “erasing” the “declared-out” in the batting order. Should a team be in a situation where there are two “declared-outs” in the batting order the game shall be declared a forfeit by the umpire).**)

NOTE: In COED play, all male/female batters must alternate. There should never be an odd number of batters in the lineup or the same gender batting back-to-back other than playing short-handed with nine players where an out is declared in the tenth batting position (or any vacated position in the batting order during the game).

NOTE: Players may play any defensive position freely at any time provided that the batting order does not change.

- K. **Sliding** – Teams /players should all be aware that there is **NO** rule that states a player must slide. Players however are not permitted to intentionally crash into a defensive player at any time. **Avoiding a collision should predicate being called safe.** A player who crashes into or runs over a player is subject to automatic expulsion from the game, with further disciplinary action to follow. A Defensive player shall not block/obstruct the base/plate without the ball. Obstruction that is the cause of a collision may result in a defensive ejection and subject to additional disciplinary action. Any umpire call during a collision is considered a “judgement-call” and will be final.

- L. **Courtesy Runner** – Any eligible rostered player may run once an inning. See *USA Softball Rule Book* rule for specifics.

M. **Schedule/Reschedule** – Every effort will be made to play all league games on the intended league night of play however it is expected that there **WILL** be some rescheduled games on “off” days in order to accommodate the league schedule. All games are to be played as scheduled. If a team cannot field a team, kindly give 48 hours and the game be cancelled. It will not be rescheduled and no umpire/forfeit fee will be assessed provided the proper notice is given to the League Director. The standings will reflect a loss for the team unable to field a team and a win for its opponent. In the event that both teams cannot field

a team, no standings adjustment will be made. **Games will not be rescheduled for any other reason than inclement weather or unplayable field conditions.**

SPECIFIC LEAGUE VARIANCES

A. COED League:

1. Batting order shall alternate genders.
 - a. If unlimited batters must be in pairs (male/female). There should never be an odd number of batters in the lineup or the same sex batting back-to-back.
 - b. If playing short-handed (9 players), the vacant position in the batting order shall be an out and shall be listed in either the 9th or 10th spot depending on alternate sex. If the 10th player arrives he or she may be added at any time.
2. Fielding Positions shall be
 - a. 2 Men and 2 Women in the outfield
 - b. 2 Men and 2 Women in the field
 - c. Pitcher and Catcher shall be alternate sexes
3. A "walk" to a male batter will result in a 2-base award. The male batter/base runner advance directly to second base. The next batter, a female must bat. **Exception: With 2 outs the female batter has the option to walk or bat.**

B. Men's Senior Leagues:

1. Automatic Force Out at all bases
 - a. A base runner may be retired at all bases on a non-force situation without a tag. The defensive player must only be holding the ball while touching the base. Runners are not permitted to slide with intentions of being safe or breaking up a play.
 - b. Once a base runner has crossed a line 20 feet from home plate he cannot return to third base. Any attempt to return to third base will result in a "delayed-dead-ball" out, the ball remains "in-play" and other base-runners are liable to be put "out". The play remains live until the umpires declares "time-out."
 - c. Exception: Run-down "pickle" situation: A base runner may only return to the last base touched **one** time. An "out" shall be declared should the base-runner make **a second attempt** to return **in the direction** of the last base touched. The Umpires discretion and decision is final.
2. **One and One Starting Count – All Senior Leagues**

ROSTERS

- A. **All INDIVIDUAL players must create a household account and register at www.milfordrecreation.com and digitally sign the electronic roster, acknowledgements, and all waivers of liability.**
- B. Rosters/Teams may contain no less than 12 players but are permitted to have as many players as needed.
 - a. Playing managers and coaches must be listed as players
 - b. Only players, coaches, scorers and batboys may be in the player/bench area.
- C. The last day to make changes/additions to your roster is **May 31** of the current year.

a. DAY-OF-GAME player registrations are not permitted. All players must be registered the day prior to playing in his/her first game.

- D. No player will be allowed to transfer from one to another without the written permission from the manager of the team whom they have already played for or League Director's approval.
- E. A player's team eligibility is determined by the first team he or she plays for (**legally or illegally**).

ROSTER NOTES: With Milford residency no longer an eligibility requirement the only way a player is illegal is if he/she is:

- A. **Playing on a team that he/she is not age-eligible for**
- B. **Playing on more than one team within a division.**
- C. Not **properly** registered, prior to playing, through his/her **own** account at milfordrecreation.com by **May 31, 2023**.

PROTESTS

A. COACHES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ELIGIBILITY OF THEIR PLAYERS. No protests will be considered.

Exception:

- 1. In the case of an Umpire **misinterpretation** (not judgment) of the playing rules.
- 2. In the case of ineligible players.
- 3. In the case if illegal players.

Both types of protests must be filed prior to the end of the game with the opposing team and the umpires. It must then be filed in writing with the accompanying \$100.00 Protest Fee to the Recreation Department by the close of business on the first business day following your game. Failure to follow procedural guidelines will render the protest as void.

B. The decision of the protested game may result in the following:

- 1. The protest is found invalid, the game score stands as played and the protest fee reverts to the City of Milford treasury.
- 2. When a protest of umpire's misinterpretation is found valid, the game is replayed from the point at which the incorrect decision was made with the decision corrected and the protest fee returned to the team.
- 3. When a protest for an ineligible player or illegal player is upheld, the game will be forfeited and the protest fee returned to the team. **The player and coach shall be expelled from the league and suspended from all Recreation Department activities indefinitely. The penalty shall also include a minimum of six softball games the following season pending further investigation by the League Director. All registered/rostered players shall be placed on probation for the remainder of the season. All penalties levied shall be at the discretion of the League Director and are final.**

FORFEITS

- A. Any team forfeiting a game (without advance notice) will pay \$70.00 per game (\$140.00 for doubleheaders) no later than 48 hours prior to their next scheduled game.
- B. If a coach advises the League Director or Recreation Department Main Office Staff at

least 24 hours prior to a game, the game will be declared a forfeit and forfeit fee(s) shall be assessed.

C. Two (2) forfeits by any one team may result in the team being expelled from the League at the League Director's discretion.

CONDUCT:

- A. Any participant (player, coach, fan, etc) participating in a fight will be ejected from the game, to be followed by further disciplinary measures (multi-game or league expulsion) pending investigation by the League Director. Fighting during a game will result in a double-forfeit.
- B. Only team managers or coaches may enter the playing field to discuss a play with an Umpire. Any other player illegally entering the field risks ejection from the game at the Umpires discretion.
- C. Any participant physically approaching, threatening, or belittling a Recreation Department representative at any time will be indefinitely suspended from all Recreation Department programs pending an investigation.
- D. Any participant making disparaging or insulting remarks, gestures, or threats towards any umpire, player, coach, fan, or recreational official/staff before, during, or after a game will be ejected from the game and subject to additional disciplinary measures pending an investigation by the League Director.
- E. Teams are responsible for their fans. Abuse by fans may result in the forfeiture of the game and further disciplinary actions against the fan-associated team and coach.
- F. Any team member or team-associated fan may be asked to leave the premises (with or without an ejection) if, in the judgment of the Umpire or Milford Recreation Department Staff removal is warranted. If the person refuses to leave when asked he/she may be ejected and then required by League Rules to vacate the premises.
- G. An Umpire or Recreation Official may terminate a game at any time, if in his/her discretion, the ideals of recreation play are not being observed.
- I. Any person ejected must leave the grounds immediately. Failure to comply will warrant forfeiture of the game and further disciplinary action from the Recreation Department, pending investigation.
- J. Any participant ejected from a game for any misconduct reason is subject to additional disciplinary measures (probation, suspension, expulsion, etc. pending investigation by the League Director.
- K. Any participant expelled for flagrant misconduct will be indefinitely suspended from all Recreation Department activities indefinitely, pending investigation by the League Director.
- L. CASUAL PROFANITY RULE. The Casual Profanity Rule pertains to expletives and verbal un-

sportsmanlike language not directed at an umpire or opposing players or coaches. This is most likely uttered by a player out of frustration. This type of behavior is penalized by an out being charged against the offending team. If the player commits the violation at bat the next batter is out. If committed by the defensive team, the first batter up in the next half inning will be declared out. The above outs will be treated on a delayed, dead-ball situation. Profanity directed at others, especially Umpires will still result in an out and may also result in a warning or ejection. Umpires discretion is final in all cases.

- M. Any participant involved in a misconduct or ineligibility incident late in the season or during the playoffs will be placed on probation for next season and/or program with disciplinary actions being more severe than normal, including multi-game suspensions or expulsions.
- N. The Milford Recreation Department and the Milford Umpires Association operate under mutual cooperation and the Milford Recreation Department will enforce any decision recommended by the Umpire's Association.
- O. If not described in the League Rules & Regulations; the League Director may take any disciplinary measures he/she deems necessary against a participant. The Milford Recreation Department reserves the right to make any decisions it feels to be in the best interest of the League, the City of Milford, and/or the Recreation Department.
- P. Any team, player, or spectator who enters private property to retrieve a ball(s) or any other item(s) without the consent of the property owner will be suspended for a minimum of one (1) game and placed on probation for the remainder of the season with possible disciplinary measures to follow, based on the severity of the incident and pending investigation by the league director. Players whom fail to identify themselves to a property owner and/or league official when requested will face more severe disciplinary action when their identity becomes known. Furthermore, failure to provide identity will subject the entire offending player's team to disciplinary action, including but not limited to single game suspension, multiple game suspensions, and / or expulsion from all Milford Recreation Department activities. Violators may also be subject to arrest/prosecution.
- Q. Any team, player, spectator, sponsor organization, independent league / team / and/or independent Elite team / official that without the consent of the Public Works Department performs field maintenance (i.e. removal of puddles; addition of dirt, sand, kitty litter, saw dust; cuts the grass; etc.) on any field will be expelled from the league and/or their event will be terminated immediately. In the case of independent leagues and/or Elites, those organization's field permits will be revoked immediately and any future use will be subject to review.

The above conduct rules apply before, during, and after games.

SOFTBALL PERMITS

NO FIELD PERMITS ARE BEING ISSUED AT THIS TIME. A notification will be sent to all registered teams and players when the fields become available. PLEASE STAY OFF ALL CITY FIELDS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. Permit guidelines will be updated when it is appropriate to do so...

- A. One permit per team per permit week (Monday – Sunday).
- B. Permits will be issued by phone only during normal business hours by calling 783-3390.
Requests will not be accepted by email.
- C. Softball permits will not be issued until the Recreation Department and the Public Works Department determines that the fields are playable. The Recreation Department strongly discourages the use of the fields prior to the permit system being activated.
- D. Teams are NOT allowed to practice on Youth Baseball Fields. Any team that is found in violation of this will be automatically expelled from the league and will forfeit any and all fees that have been paid.
- E. Permits may be voided by the Recreation Department for any reason including but not limited to; the purpose of make-up games, field / weather conditions, and / or the violation of any of the Rules and Regulations pertaining to the 2023 softball season.
- F. All teams and players are reminded that many fields are located in residential areas and that every effort should be made to respect the rights and privacy of the residents.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- All teams/rosters may have an unlimited number of players on it. Players may still only play on one team within the any division.
- All teams are required to have a safety first-base.

IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION:

- A. *In the event of inclement weather, players and managers will receive a notification in the event of a cancellation or schedule change. They can also visit www.milfordrecreation.com where an alert will be posted to our home page in the event of a cancellation or schedule change. Only postponement or cancellation information will be posted. **No decision will be made prior to 4:00pm. We only send cancellation notices/schedule changes, we do not confirm games are on as scheduled as it should always be assumed that the games are on as scheduled.** The cancellation phone line will no longer be used.*
- B. If there is a tie for 1st place at the end of the regular season in any league/division a single elimination playoff between tied teams will decide the champion.
 - The consumption of Alcoholic Beverages is prohibited at all City of Milford fields/parks. Violators are subject to enforcement by the Police Department.

- All teams and players are reminded that many fields are located in residential areas and that every effort should be made to respect the rights and privacy of the residents.
- The Milford Recreation Department reserves the right to make any decision it feels to be in the best interest of the League, the City of Milford, or the Recreation Department.
- USA SOFTBALL, the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States. During this transition logos and umpire uniforms will change but both names represent the same organization.

This document and its contents shall be considered tentative until noted otherwise or April 1, 2023.

LEAGUE DIRECTOR:

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REV:01/26/23

Guidelines For Lightning Safety

All individuals participating in or observing an outdoor softball event are responsible for their own safety and should monitor threatening weather conditions. Before each practice, warm-up time, or game, the home plate umpire should appoint an individual as the designated “weather watcher.” If the home plate umpire is the only official at the event, then the home plate umpire should be responsible for the duties of the “weather watcher.” The individual will make the call to stop play, remove individuals from the field, and announce a warning to the spectators.

The designated weather watcher should be aware of weather conditions at all times, including observing the conditions and keeping abreast of the weather forecast. As a means of monitoring local weather, the designated weather watcher can consult the National Weather Service for current information. All storm warning and storm watches should be heeded.

When the weather becomes dangerous, the designated weather watcher will announce that all play activities are suspended and all individuals, both players and spectators, should seek appropriate shelter. No place is absolutely safe from lightning threat; however, some places are safer than others. Large, enclosed structures (substantially constructed buildings) tend to be safer

than smaller structures or open structures. In general, a fully enclosed vehicle with the windows rolled up tends to be safer than being outside so long as contact with metal surfaces inside and outside the vehicle is avoided. The following areas are not appropriate shelter and should be avoided:

Any area of higher elevation; wide-open areas such as sports fields, tall isolated objects such as flag poles, light poles, or trees; metal fences and metal bleachers, unprotected open buildings like dugouts, picnic pavilions, rain shelters and bus stops.

When determining whether or not to suspend play, the designated weather watcher should use his/her common sense and good judgment. If a thunderstorm appears imminent before or during an activity or contest (regardless of whether lightning is seen or thunder heard), postpone or suspend the activity until the hazard has passed. Signs of imminent thunderstorm activity are darkening clouds, high winds and thunder or lightning. Even storms that are many miles away can pose a lightning danger. This may mean the appropriate decision is to suspend activities even before the first sight of lightning or sound of thunder.

All individuals should have the right to leave an athletic site or activity, without fear of repercussion or penalty, in order to seek a safer structure or location if they feel they are in danger from impending lightning activity. Safety is the number one consideration; the activity can be made up later.

If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated weather watcher should wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder prior to resuming activity. Each time additional lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the minimum 30-minute waiting period should be reset. A clear sky or lack of rainfall are not adequate indicators for resuming play. The minimum 30-minute return-to-play waiting period should not be shortened. Play should not be resumed even after the 30-minute waiting period if any signs of thunderstorm activity remains in the area or if the weather forecast indicates the threat is not over.

NO LIGHTNING SAFETY GUIDELINES CAN GUARANTEE ABSOLUTE SAFETY. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY PERSON TO BE AWARE OF WEATHER CONDITIONS AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO BE SAFE. USE COMMON SENSE AND GOOD JUDGEMENT. PLAN AHEAD AND MAKE SAFETY YOUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.

Rev 02/23