



**SOUTH FLORIDA BASEBALL ALLIANCE (SFBA)
OFFICIAL BASEBALL BY-LAWS & GAME RULES
May 12, 2026 Version**

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FORWARD

The South Florida Baseball Alliance (SFBA) has set forth its rules of play herein. The Official Rules of Baseball as published by Major League Baseball on MLB.com shall govern any item not specifically covered herein. Any reference to a particular gender contained within these SFBA Official Baseball National By-laws & Rules such as he, his, himself, man, men, or boy shall be meant to also include she, hers, herself, woman, women, and girl and are to be interpreted as gender neutral.

1.0 TEAM & INDIVIDUAL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

Team and individual player eligibility shall be mandated by the South Florida Baseball Alliance Organizational By-Laws and/or the SFBA Board of Directors. Players must have been on their park's Spring 2024 Rec Season Rosters as of March 22, 2025, AND have not participated in more than TWO (2) travel games for their league, or any other travel teams, from FEBRUARY 22, 2025 through May 17, 2025. Any players who participate in a tournament, regardless of number of games played, will count as TWO (2) games towards the TWO (2) game totals.

Team sizes shall be limited to the number of eligible players to take the field, plus 4, for a given tournament week (i.e. same 13/14 players for one tournament, next tournament may be different 13/14 players). Rosters for each tournament week shall be posted by each Head Coach by Monday at 5pm. Updated 5/19/25: Any tournaments that are rain delayed beyond their originally scheduled Sunday, and continue outside of their allotted week, will be able to obtain different players without penalty should one not be able to resume that tournament due to a scheduling delay.

AGE DIVISION	Minimum Rostered Players	Maximum Rostered Players Per Host Tournament	Maximum Number of Coaches on Field/In Dugouts per game
6U	10	14	5
8U	10	14	4
10U	9	13	4
12U/14U	9	13	4

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE GAME

Baseball is a game between two teams, under direction of a manager, played on an enclosed field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one (1) or more umpires.

The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent scores.

The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the Greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

3.0 PLAYING FIELD

The playing field shall be laid out according to the recommended dimensions contained within these rules.

AGE DIVISION	BASES	PITCHING	FOUL LINES	CENTERFIELD
6U	55'	40'	140'	175'
8U	60'	40'	160'	185'
10U	65'	46'	180'	210'
12U	70'	50'	230'	275'
14U	80'	54'	275'	300'

Pitcher Rubber: The pitcher's rubber (plate) shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber set in the ground. Dimensions shall vary for each age division.

Player's Bench: Player's benches shall be provided, one each for the home team and visiting team. They should be roofed and should be enclosed. Exception to this rule is allowed for the 6U and 8U Divisions pursuant to prior approval by SFBA board of directors.

4.0 THE OFFICIAL BALL

Shall be a sphere formed by yarn wound around a small core of cork, rubber or similar material, covered with two stripes of white horsehide or cowhide, tightly stitched together;

It shall weigh not less than five (5) nor more than five and one fourth ($5 \frac{1}{4}$) ounces avoirdupois;

It shall measure not less than nine (9) nor more than nine and one fourth ($9 \frac{1}{4}$) inches in circumference.

For 6U T-Ball a Level 5 Safety Ball and must be used in games.

Altered Balls - An Altered Ball is one which has had its physical structure changed in any way, including (but not limited to) balls that have been frozen, micro-waved, heated, melted, cooled, recovered, re-stitched, surface modified to be rougher or softer, etc. Altered Balls and the potential of a ball being altered and those suspected of altering, owning or using an altered ball (or determined to have altered, owned or used an Altered Ball) shall be viewed as falling under the same rules in place above for Altered bats, below.

Approved Baseballs

6U Tee Ball

- Diamond: DFX-LC5 OL Level 5 Flexiball Baseball
- Wilson: A1228 Level 5 Soft Compression Baseball
- AD Starr: Starr-5
- Baden: SAF-5S
- Any other Level 5 safety tee ball will be approved, but please post in 6U chat prior to use.

8U Coach Pitch - 14U Baseball

- Diamond: DOL-1 or DOL-A
- Rawlings: RNF or ROLB1
- Wilson: A-1010 or A-1030
- Baden: 1BBG/1BLLG
- Pro Nine: OL1
- Dicks/ADSTARR: AD100US and any other AD100 ____ type of ball with similar specs to AD100. (i.e. AD100LL, AD100PG, etc)

5.0 THE OFFICAL BAT

AGE DIVISON	DROP LIMIT	
6U	n/a – Must Say Tee-Ball on Bat	*Must Say Tee-Ball, T-Ball, or any variation. “Official Baseball” is not a T-Ball Bat
8U	-10	Or heavier (-8,-5,-3,wood)
10U	-10	Or heavier (-8,-5,-3,wood)
12U	-10	Or heavier (-8,-5,-3,wood)
14U	-8	Or heavier (-5,-3,wood)

The Official Bat shall be round in cross section of the barrel and taper, straight in length and measure not more than 36 inches long, including tape or other grip additions to the bat, shall have a knob at the end of its handle, and not more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter for small barrel bats and not more than 2 ¾ inches for big barrel bats at its largest part. Its weight shall not exceed 31-ounces, including tape or grip addition to the bat. The bat shall have a grip of tape or some other material to facilitate holding the bat during the batter’s swing. All key graphics, including USSSA, 1.15 BPF markings, must be permanent and cannot be applied as decals or by any other method that would allow the key graphics to be easily removed or added to the bat.

Material: THE BAT may be made of hard wood of one piece or laminated from sections of hard wood bonded together with adhesive in such a way that the grain directions of all the pieces are essentially parallel to the length of the bat. THE BAT may also be made of aluminum or other metals, fiberglass, graphite or composite materials.

Construction: The bat may be made in pieces from different materials but must have a closed barrel end, a taper, a handle and a taper. The bat may be modular with interchangeable parts, subject to additional safety and tampering requirements as set forth in the standard USSSA Bat Licensing Agreement. The knob portion must be welded or mechanically attached to the bat. Only USSSA approved bats, USSSA approved weighted bats or USSSA approved weights, may be used in the on deck circle.

Tee-Ball Big Barrel Bats (Diameter greater than 2 ¼” but not more than 2 ¾”)

Effective June 1, 2021 – “USA Baseball” stamped bats may replace the word “USSSA” in all instances.

- Must have the word Tee Ball, T-Ball, or Teeball stamped by the manufacturer on the bat, and one of either (ii) or (iii) below

- ii) HAVE THE NEW USSSA MARK ON ITS TAPER, OR (“USSSA marks and other graphics of the bat must be applied permanently and must be applied by the USSSA licensed manufacturer.
- iii) HAVE THE NEW “USA BAT” MARK

Big Barrel Bats (Diameter greater than 2 ¼” but not more than 2 ¾”)

Effective June 1, 2021 – “USA Baseball” stamped bats may replace the word “USSSA” in all instances.

EFFECTIVE January 1, 2021 14U AND YOUNGER BIG BARREL BAT RULES. TO BE LEGAL IN 2012 FOR USSSA 14U AND BELOW, A BIG BARREL BAT (no more than 2 ¾ inches diameter and no more than 36 inches in length) MUST BE MANUFACTURED BY AN APPROVED USSSA BAT LICENSEE, AND –

- iv) HAVE THE NEW USSSA MARK ON ITS TAPER, OR (“USSSA marks and other graphics of the bat must be applied permanently and must be applied by the USSSA licensed manufacturer. No stickers or decals are allowed and no one may add graphics to a bat once manufactured. Use of a bat with graphics not applied by the manufacturer will be use of an altered bat and subject to suspension under the USSSA Altered Bat rules. In addition to being violation of the USSSA Altered Bat rules, any use, creation or application of a USSSA mark without written permission of USSSA is a violation of Federal Trademark law and may result in prosecution by USSSA. If you have any concern about the person selling or providing you a bat, do not accept the bat, because you will be held responsible for any bat you bring into or use in a USSSA facility.”)
- v) HAVE THE NEW “USA BAT” MARK
- vi) BE A QUALIFIED BBCOR BAT, OR
- vii) BE A WOOD BAT.

"Qualified BBCOR Bat" means a Big Barrel bat that is made by a USSSA approved bat licensee, has a BBCOR mark permanently attached to the bat that is recognized by NHSF as a legal bat for NHSF sanctioned play and has no more than a minus 8 ounces difference from the length of the bat which bat must be at least 29 inches long. Please note that only Qualified BBCOR bats have any weight v. length (drop) limitation.

Small Barrel Bats (Diameter no more than 2 ¼”)

Effective June 1, 2021 – “USA Baseball” stamped bats may replace the word “USSSA” in all instances.

EFFECTIVE starting for the calendar year 2012. Only those Small Barrel bats made by approved USSSA licensed manufacturers that are either:

- i) Wood, OR
- ii) Made with the old USSSA mark, OR
- iii) Have the New USSSA Mark will be allowed in USSSA play.

This includes Tee Ball bats. **Must have the word Tee Ball, T-Ball, or Teeball stamped by the manufacturer on the bat, and one of either (ii) or (iii) above.**

The Old mark is simply the words "USSSA 1.15 BPF", all together in one spot on the bat.

The new USSSA mark can be found in the Baseball Tab of the USSSA Website.

EFFECTIVE for the calendar years 2014, only those Small Barrel bats made by approved USSSA licensed manufacturers that are either:

- i) Wood, OR
- ii) Made with the New USSSA Mark will be allowed in USSSA play.

This includes all Tee Ball bats that are longer than 23 inches. 23 inch and shorter Small Barrel Tee Ball bats from approved USSSA licensed manufacturers will continue to be allowed in 2014 without the New USSSA Mark.

Altered Bat Director Inspection and Suspension: A SFBA Director may at any time ask to inspect a bat that has been brought into the location of a SFBA sanctioned event or any other SFBA facility. The owner and/or user may either:

1. Withhold the bat from inspection and accept an immediate two year (automatic life for second time offenders under EI and/or E) suspension from SFBA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or,
2. Allow the Director to inspect the bat and reach a conclusion as to whether or not the bat might be altered.

Altered Bat Determination by Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer: If, after making the inspection of a potential altered bat, the Director in his discretion decides that the bat might be an altered bat, the suspected offending owner and/or user and may either:

1. Withhold the bat from further examination by the SFBA Altered Bat Committee Chairman or Manufacturer of the bat and accept an immediate two year (up to life for second time offenders under sections E and/or EI) suspension from SFBA sanctioned activities with no right to appeal; or
2. Allow the Director to send the bat to the SFBA Altered Bat Committee Chairman and/or Manufacturer of the bat for a determination as to whether or not the bat is altered. If the Manufacturer or the SFBA Altered Bat Committee Chairman determines that the bat has been altered, the Altered Bat Committee Chairman in consultation with the Director who inspected the bat at the SFBA facility may suspend a first time offender for up to five (5) years from SFBA play. For a second time offender under E and/or EI, any such suspension will be for to life.

Ownership and/or Knowledge of Bat Being Altered: The responsibility for knowing whether a bat is

altered is that of the users and the owner of the bat. If an individual uses an altered bat in SFBA sanctioned play or is the owner of an altered bat that is brought into a SFBA facility, the suspensions under this Rule 2, Section 1 will be imposed without regard to what the individual actually knew about the altered bat. An individual must know that his bat is not an altered bat, if he brings it into a SFBA facility or used it in a SFBA sanctioned activity. If not, the individual can be suspended from SFBA activities for using or owning an altered bat. The fact that the individual did not know that the bat was altered is not a factor in imposing the suspension. The only question is whether the bat is altered or whether the owner/user has refused to let the bat be examined to determine if it is altered. After the Director, Altered Bat Committee and Manufacturer examination of a bat to determine if it is altered have all been completed, or upon the decision of the owner/user to not allow further inspection of the bat under E or EI, above, the bat shall be returned to the owner. If no one claims to be the owner, SFBA shall retain the bat. Once the bat has been returned to the owner, no appeal can be made with respect to whether the bat is altered or not.

Investigation Cooperation: Any coach, manager, player or other person who fails to cooperate in the investigation by SFBA of a potential or actual altered bat shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension. A manager or coach of a team that has more than one of his team's bats determined to be altered (or not allowed to be inspected upon request for an altered bat inspection under E and/or EI, above) shall be subject to an unsportsmanlike conduct suspension.

Awards and Coach Suspensions: If an owner/user chooses to submit a suspected altered bat to the SFBA Altered Bat Committee or the Manufacturer no awards will be given to the team until the bat is determined not to be altered. If the bat is found to be altered, no awards or berth will be given and the team will be placed last in the standings and the listed manager and coaches may be suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Participation in, Profits from, or Encouraging the Altering of USSSA Marked Bats: Anyone who participates in, profits from, or encourages the altering of USSSA (1.15 BPF) marked bats shall be suspended indefinitely from all SFBA activities, until the offending party has satisfied all requests of the SFBA Altered Bat Committee with respect to his altered bat activities including but not limited to publicly swearing under penalties of perjury to never again participate in, profit from, or encourage the altering of USSSA marked bats. Violation of such an oath shall result in permanent suspension from all SFBA activities.

Compression Testing: Failure of a SFBA approved compression testing device test shall result in the offending bat being removed from play for the duration of the tournament or league game, not longer without the permission of the owner/user—such as in the case of an allowed SFBA altered bat determination under section EI. Multiple failures of such SFBA compression testing may in the discretion of SFBA be viewed as unsportsmanlike conduct of the owner/user, coaches, manager and team.

Custom Bats: No approved manufacturer may make a custom SFBA bat for a player or a team. All USSSA marked bats made by a USSSA approved manufacturer must be available to the public for purchase. Individualized graphics (such as a team name, different color, player name or number only changes for a team or player), however, do not constitute custom bats for purposes of this section K.

Worn/Abused/Damaged/Foreign Substance Bats Not Allowed in SFBA Sanctioned Play.

1. No bat is legal for SFBA sanctioned play, if it is damaged in any way. Damaged bats include those with damage to the knob or end cap, those which have loose knobs or end caps, and those with cracks or dents in the bat material. For example, if the end cap is in any way loose or appears damaged, the bat should be removed from play for being a damaged bat. If an end plug has come out or the knob has come off, the only way that such bat is legal in SFBA play, is if the knob or end cap is replaced by the manufacturer. Replacement by anyone else results in an altered bat with potential suspension for the owner/user of the bat.
2. No bat is legal for SFBA sanctioned play, if any of the graphics of the bat have worn off. For example, even if the only graphics that have worn off are not Key Graphic Information and are only items such as the patent no., a manufacturer logo, or the approval mark of another association, the bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
3. No bat is legal for SFBA sanctioned play, if the paint has been worn through and the actual bat material is showing. For example, if at the end of the barrel next to the taper where there are no graphics the bat paint is worn off and the underlying bat material is exposed, that bat should be removed from play for being too worn.
4. No bat is legal for SFBA sanctioned play, if there is a foreign substance on the barrel or taper of a bat. Foreign substances included among other substances, pine tar, stick-em type products and even dirt or mud, but only if the substance adds to the thickness of the barrel or covers Key Graphic Information such as the USSSA 1.15 BPF mark, the serial number of the bat, the model or manufacturer name, official softball, etc.. Players are responsible for their equipment and must clean such substances off of their bats so that the substance does not add to the thickness of the bat or obscure any Key Graphics Information about the bat. For example, while bats will surely get dirt on them under normal use and may have pine tar added to the grip, if the dirt or pine tar obscures Key Graphic Information or adds to the thickness of the bat, such bats cannot be used in SFBA play until the dirt or pine tar has been removed to the extent necessary to make all such Key Graphic Information readable and the bat not have increased thickness. If Key Graphic Information about a bat cannot be read, the bat should not be used in SFBA play.
5. If any removed bat under these section L rules is brought back into play at any SFBA sanctioned event at any time, the owner and user of such bat may be suspended for up to one year for unsportsmanlike conduct. And if the foreign substance or the wear/abuse/damage is apparent enough that the batter should have been aware of it, the batter may be so suspended for bringing such a bat into the batter's box without having been warned in advance. Players are responsible for their equipment and must not use equipment that is even potentially illegal for use in SFBA sanctioned play.
6. In addition to the player being suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct, coaches of youth teams may also be so suspended when their players attempt to bat with such bats. Also, coaches of adult teams which have multiple offenses under this rule may also be so suspended for failing to have his team follow SFBA equipment rules. Please be reminded that unsportsmanlike conduct can result in a game or tournament suspension in the discretion of the umpire or tournament director and up to a year suspension in the discretion of the state director.

Youth Player Altered Bats: The parents or legal guardians of a youth player suspended under section E and/or EI shall be suspended for life from all SFBA sanctioned activities. As such, the player even after his suspension has ended under E and/or EI cannot participate in SFBA sanctioned activities until the player is 18 years old. In addition to any other penalties under this rule 2.1, any coach or manager of a youth team that has more than one suspension imposed on his players in connection with sections E and/or EI will be suspended from all SFBA activities for life.

Altered Bat: An “Altered Bat” is a bat that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

1. The bat has had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by addition of graphics, painting, repainting, removal of bat material or paint by any means including but not limited to sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means.
2. The bat has had the plug, or the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way.
3. The bat has had anything removed or added or inserted to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob. Other examples of altering a bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers’ markings or replacing the handle of a bat with a new handle. Replacing the grip, adding tape or adding a build up to the handle is not considered altering a bat.
4. The bat has been subjected to pressure in a manner that exceeds that of striking the bat at game speed swing speed against a SFBA approved ball traveling at game speeds. Such pressure would include, but is not limited to, compressing the bat, rolling the bat, vicing the bat or hitting the bat against an object such as a tree or pole. The bat has in any other way had its on-field performance improved by physically changing the bat (other than by hitting the bat at game condition swing speeds against a SFBA approved ball traveling at game condition speeds).

Penalty for using illegal bats and/or illegal balls (updated to include ball 6/3/2024):

First Offense - If the umpire discovers that the bat/ball does not conform to SFBA Rule 4.0/5.0 until a time during or after which the bat has been used in play, it shall not be grounds for declaring the batter out and/or ejection from the game. If the umpire discovers that a bat/ball has been used to put a ball in play and before the next legal pitch, the defensive team will have the choice of the result of play or the batter being called out and all runners returning to the base occupied before the pitch.

Second Offense – If a team is found in violation of this rule a second time, then the manager will be ejected in addition to the First Offense penalty.

Protective Gear: As a general rule, SFBA continues its long-standing policy of permitting players to determine the use of the protective equipment when they deem it appropriate. Game conditions (temperature, equipment, rain, wind, visibility, field conditions, humidity, etc.) vary greatly from game to game and from field to field. In addition, the relative and absolute experience and skill levels of

teams and players will vary from player to player and from team to team. Thus, SFBA encourages players to utilize any protective equipment that they deem appropriate. Such protective gear will be allowed in SFBA sanctioned play, unless by rule or by director/umpire ruling that such protective gear is disallowed as unsafe or as providing an unfair competitive advantage.

6.0 UNIFORMS

Jersey - All players must have a league issued team jersey. Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. All Rostered Recreational Baseball Participants shall be allowed to participate, whether missing a uniform or wearing a uniform. Players who have lost or misplaced their uniform top, or were added to the roster after their park's main uniform order was placed, may play in their League Issued Rec Uniform top or any uniform top available that is provided by their park.

All jersey numbers shall be permanent. No jersey number shall affix by tape, marker or other non permanent manner.

Shoes - In age divisions 4U – 12U, non-metal cleats must be worn. Penalty: player must be removed until conforming footwear is utilized. Will count as an out if their place in the batting order comes up. 14U – Metal Cleats are allowed.

Protests on uniforms shall not be allowed. It shall be the SFBA Tournament Director's responsibility regarding uniform legality. Violation of the uniform rules shall result in the violator being allowed to immediately conform or be removed from the game. Managers and coaches may wear athletic type shorts.

The catcher shall wear all appropriate protective gear including a catcher's helmet with facemask and either a built-in extended throat guard or a separately attached throat guard, chest protector, shin and / or leg guards, and protective cup. In age divisions 8U – 14U, the catcher's helmet shall fully cover both ears.

All offensive players shall use a double ear-flap batting helmet whenever at bat, on deck, on base or any other time outside of the dugout and the ball is live and in play. Bat/ball boys shall be allowed at the Umpires discretion, provided they do not interrupt or impeded game flow.

Rule Comment: If the umpire observes any violation of these rules, he shall direct the violation to be corrected. If the violation is not immediately corrected, in the umpire's judgment, the umpire shall eject the offender from the game.

Playing equipment including but not limited to the baseballs, bases, bats, catcher's gloves and mitts, first baseman's gloves and mitts, infielders and outfielders' gloves and mitts, protective helmets, and uniforms as detailed in the provisions of this rule, shall not contain any undue commercialization of the product. Designations by the manufacturer on any such equipment shall be in good taste as to the size and content of the manufacturer's logo or the brand name.

Manufacturers who plan innovative changes in baseball equipment for future play should submit same to the SFBA and/or USSSA Baseball National Committee prior to production.

7.0 GAME PRELIMINARIES

Each team **MUST** provide two (2) baseballs per game.

The home team for each pool play game will be predetermined. A flip of a coin between the two teams shall determine the home team for the Championship game. The highest seeded team will be the home team for bracket play games.

In Tournament play time limits for play is as follow:

- 6U T-Ball: No new inning will start after 1 hour 45-minute time limit has passed. Game length is 6 innings.
- 8U Coach Pitch: No new inning will start after 1 hour 45-minute time limit has passed. Game length is 6 innings.
- 10U Baseball: No new inning will start after 1 hour 45-minute time limit has passed. Game length is 6 innings.
- 12U Baseball: No new inning will start after 1 hour 45-minute time limit has passed. Game length is 6 innings.
- 14U Baseball: No new inning will start after 1 hour 45-minute time limit has passed. Game length is 6 innings.

Extra Inning Rule (Bracket Games Only): Upon the completion of 6 innings (or the first inning after the time limit has passed) in 6U thru 14U age divisions or regulation game time in an elimination bracket game where the score is tied the following will proceed:

1. To start the all extra innings of a tied game, last recorded out is placed on second base, play each extra inning to 3 outs are recorded. **START PLAY WITH ZERO OUTS.** Play until a winner is declared. Unlimited Runs in all extra innings.

Rule Comment: Extra innings will **NOT** be played during Seeding Play (“Pool Games”). A Seeding Game shall end in a tie if the game is tied upon the completion of 6 innings in 6U thru 12U age divisions and 7 Innings in 14U age division or in the event the play time limit has expired.

Approved Team Line-ups: Teams shall submit to the Plate Umpire a SFBA Game Card that will list the team’s batting line-up for the game being played. This line up shall comprise of players previously reported and approved for play by the SFBA Tournament Director.

The Game Card shall:

1. In 6U and 8U teams may elect to report/list a ten (10) player or continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game. **POOL PLAY REQUIREMENT 1: MUST BAT ENTIRE LINEUP.**
POOL PLAY REQUIREMENT 2: NO PLAYER MAY SIT 2 CONSECUTIVE INNINGS

6U & 8U Rule Exception: a (9) nine player line-up will also be allowed ONLY IF ONLY (9) nine players are present. If a (9) nine player lineup is used, substitutes who arrive late, but before the end of the third inning, will be added to the end of the batting lineup.

2. In 10U, 12U, and 14U teams may elect to report/list a nine (9) player line-up or ten (10) player line-up if using an Extra Hitter (EH) or continuous line-up of all present, eligible, uniformed players. Such line-up must be declared before the start of the game and used the entire game. **POOL PLAY REQUIREMENT 1: MUST BAT ENTIRE LINEUP. POOL PLAY REQUIREMENT 2: NO PLAYER MAY SIT 2 CONSECUTIVE INNINGS.**

If a team uses a line-up that contains substitute players, all starting players may be removed and re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in their original position in the batting order. Non-starters are not allowed to re-enter. When a starter re-enters, the player in the starter's batting position in the batting order must be removed from the game and is ineligible for the remainder of the game.

If a team uses a line-up that contains ten (10) players, the player in the Extra Hitter position, while not actually playing a defensive position, will be treated as such for substitution purposes.

If a team uses a continuous line-up, all players other than the nine (9) defensive position players are Extra Hitters and may move freely in defensive positions except for the pitching position.

Any player(s) arriving after the game has begun, shall be added to the bottom of the battingline-up.

When using the continuous lineup and a player must leave the game for any reason, that position in the line-up becomes an out when that at bat comes around. Limited to 1 out per game after departure.

In 10U, 12U and 14U a team may start a game with eight (8) players although the ninth (9th) line up spot shall be deemed an automatic out throughout the game or until a roster player arrives that is properly uniformed.

In 6U and 8U a team may start a game with eight (8) players although the ninth (9th) and tenth (10th) line up spots shall be deemed an automatic out throughout the game or until a roster player arrives that is properly uniformed.

Rule Exception: For the 2024 Summer All Stars if a 6U or 8U team has only 9 players, the 10th line up spot will **NOT** be considered an out.

Teams may play an official game with an eight (8) player line-up. If a team plays with an eight (8) player line-up, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9th) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. A ninth (9th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the bottom of the batting line-up as soon as they become available. **SUMMER 2024 RULE UPDATE: if a player is intentionally walked in the inning, the ninth (9th) position in the batting lineup shall NOT be declared an out.**

Once the entire line up has a plate appearance no new player shall be allowed to report on the game

roster; other than as a substitute unless Rule is in effect.

Team may continue a game with a minimum of eight (8) eligible players.

8.0 STARTING & ENDING A GAME

The umpire, or umpires, shall enter the playing field five (5) minutes before the scheduled game time and proceed directly to home base where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams.

The following shall take place in sequence:

Both team managers (home team first) shall tender a properly completed SFBA Game Card and line-up card in duplicate to the umpire-in-chief. Such line-up card shall be orientated in batting order sequence and shall contain each player's first name and last name (no middle names, nicknames, shortened names, slang names, initials, prefixes or suffixes are allowed) as they appear on the team's Official Online Roster, a correct uniform number and starting defensive position. The umpire-in-chief shall make certain that the original and copies of the respective batting orders are identical, and then tender a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting order. The tender of the batting order by the umpire shall establish the batting orders. Thereafter, no substitutions shall be made by either manager, except as provided in these rules.

Comment: Obvious errors in the batting order, which are noticed by the umpire-in chief before he calls "Play" for the start of the game, should be called to the attention of the manager of the team in error, so the correction can be made before the game starts. Teams should not be "trapped" later by some mistake that obviously was inadvertent and which can be corrected before the game starts.

Require strict observance of all Rules governing implements of play and equipment of players;
Be sure that all playing lines are marked with chalk, paint or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;

Receive a supply of regulation USSSA licensed baseballs and alternate regulation USSSA licensed baseballs. The umpire shall inspect all baseballs to ensure they are regulation baseballs. Such alternate baseballs shall be put in play when:

A ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the stands;

A ball has become discolored and/or unfit for further use;

The pitcher requests such alternate ball.

No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sandpaper, emery-paper or other foreign substance.

Penalty: The umpire shall demand the ball and eject the offender from the game. For rules in regards to a pitcher defacing the ball.

8.1 PLAYING THE GAME

Starting Summer 2026, 6U will be allowed

The players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first (1st) batter of the visiting team shall take his position in the batter's box, the umpire shall call "Play" and the game shall start.

When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be on fair territory.

The catcher shall station himself directly back of the plate. He may leave his position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

When the umpire suspends play, he shall call "Time". At the umpire's call of "Play", the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of "Time" and the call of "Play", the ball is dead.

Members of both teams shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and into the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.

When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in his opinion will nullify the act of interference.

Players and substitutes of both teams shall confine themselves to their team's benches unless actually participating in the play or preparing to enter the game. No one except players, substitutes, managers, coaches, trainers and bat / ball boys shall occupy the bench area during a game.

A regulation game consists of six (6) innings for age divisions 4U – 14U, unless the game is:

Extended because the score is tied after the completion of the regulation number of innings, in which case play shall continue under SFBA Rule **2.02C** until the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning, or the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning; or

Shortened because the home team needs none of its half of the last inning or only a fraction of it to win; or

Shortened because an imposed Time Limit expires; or

Shortened because any applicable part of SFBA Rule has been met; or

An imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential in the corresponding listed start inning. In enforcing this rule, the home team shall not bat if they are winning and the mercy requirement is met prior to the bottom half of the listed inning. Similarly, if the home team is batting and meets the mercy requirement in the bottom half of a listed inning the home team shall cease batting and the game shall end.

Length of Game	Runs	After*
6 Innings	15	3 innings
6 Innings	8	4 innings
6 Innings	8	5 innings

If a game is called due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of God and cannot be resumed, it is a regulation game if:

For a scheduled six (6) inning game, if three (3) innings have been completed And the home or if the home team has scored more runs in two (2) innings or two and one half (2 1/2) innings than the visiting team has scored in three (3) complete innings or if the home team scores one (1) or more runs in its half (½) of the third (3rd) inning to tie the score.

If a regulation game is called with the score tied and one (1) or more innings has been completed beyond three (3) innings, the score shall revert back to last completed inning, or last completed half (½) inning if the home team leads but back no further than the third (3rd) inning. Games that cannot be declared a regulation game by SFBA Rules 2.03.F.1 & 2.03.F.1(a) shall be a suspended game.

If a game is delayed due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of God, and the game would be considered a regulation game (defined above), the game clock will not stop during such a delay. If the game has not resumed at the expiration of the game clock the game will be deemed a completed game.

Any Friday Night pool game starting after 8:30pm shall be limited to a 4 inning contest.

All games that for any reason cannot be declared a regulation game pursuant to SFBA Rule shall be a suspended game. A suspended game when resumed, will resume from the exact point of suspension. If the game fails to resume within 2 hours of the onset of the condition that resulted in the suspended game: 1) a player who was present when the game started is no longer present they shall be considered a scratch from the game with no out (unless less than 9 players result), and/or 2) a player who was not present when the game started is present for when the game resumes they shall be allowed to play and placed at the bottom of the batting lineup. Player must be present at the time of first pitch.

Rule Comment: SFBA Championship games for all age divisions must be completed entirely (6 innings for 6U - 12U and 7 Innings for 14U). The mercy rule set forth herein shall be applied to championship games. If a Championship game is suspended due to rain, weather, light failure or other acts of God, the game will resume from the exact point of suspension and played until a winner is determined.

NEW UPDATE 6/3/2024: For 6U Tee-Ball and 8U Coach Pitch divisions, each team will be limited to 1 defensive timeout per inning, limited to 1-minute in duration. Injury timeouts do not count towards this limit.

8.2 THE BATTER, BATTER RUNNER & RUNNER

In the 10U, 12U, 14U and 16U Divisions an Intentional Walk may be issued upon announcement from either the pitcher or catcher. The four (4) pitches need not be thrown. The four (4) pitches DO NOT count against the pitcher.

Intentional Walks are not allowed in the 6U or 8U Divisions.

At any time, the offensive team may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher of record the previous inning on defense. If using substitutes, the courtesy runner must be a player not presently in the line-up. If no players not presently in the line-up are available, the courtesy runner shall be the player making the last batted out. The re-entry status of the courtesy runner, pitcher, and catcher shall not be affected by this rule. If at any time, a courtesy runner is determined to be ineligible, a proper replacement pursuant to these rules (if available) will be used without penalty.

6U T-Ball & 8U Coach Pitch: Courtesy runner allowed for catcher of record (player who played the position the previous inning) ; no courtesy runner allowed for pitcher.

Whenever a tag play is evident, a runner must slide or seek to avoid contact with the fielder and/or catcher.

Head-First Slides are not allowed at home plate. Runner is automatically called out for a Head-First Slide at home plate, regardless if there is a or not at home plate.

Attempting to jump, leap, or dive over the fielder and/or catcher is not interpreted as seeking to avoid contact. Malicious contact shall supersede all obstruction penalties.

Rule Penalty: The runner shall be called out and may be ejected from the game at the umpire's discretion.

Rule Comment: When enforcing this rule, the umpire should judge the runner's intent. If the umpire feels that the contact was unintentional, then the runner should only be declared out. If the umpire feels that the contact was intentional and / or malicious, then the runner should be declared out and ejected.

8.3 THE PITCHER

Tournament games shall adopt the following rules pertaining to the visit of the manager or a coach to the pitcher. This rule limits the number of visits a manager or a coach may make to any pitcher in any one (1) inning;

A second (2nd) visit to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the pitching position;

The manager or a coach is prohibited from making a second (2nd) visit to the mound while the same batter is at bat, but: If a pinch-hitter is substituted for this batter, the manager or a coach may make a second (2nd) visit to the mound, but must remove the pitcher.

A manager or a coach is considered to have concluded his visit to the mound when he leaves the eighteen (18) foot circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber.

A manager or a coach that crosses the foul lines and enters the field of play and communicates with the pitcher in between innings will have been considered to have completed a visit to the mound.

A player removed from the pitching position (starting pitcher or subsequent relief pitcher) may not return to the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The defensive team may correct this rules infraction at any time by substituting a legal pitcher without penalty. If an illegal pitcher is permitted to pitch, any pitch or play that results is legal. The rule violation should be caught by the umpire or the offensive team and immediately corrected. If the violating pitcher has legal innings remaining, the violation is deemed an improper substitution and is corrected without penalty. If the violating pitcher has no legal innings remaining, it's deemed a pitching limitations violation pursuant to SFBA Rule.

The end of the day for the pitching limitation rules is the time of day or night when the ballpark is shut down and the teams go home for the night break. Games that for any reason extend past midnight (12:00 AM) or start late at night, past midnight (12:00 AM) and are completed before the teams take the night break, will count as being played on the scheduled day. A game not completed before the night break pursuant to SFBA Rules shall be a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed (the next day or another day), shall count as being played on two different days. The outs recorded during the portion of the game played prior to suspension shall count as being played on the regularly scheduled day and the outs recorded during the portion of the game played once resumed, shall count as being played on the resumed day.

PITCH LIMITS: The following rule applies to pitchers regarding pitch in between starts:

No player shall pitch more than:

10U Baseball: 60 pitches per day; 120 pitches in weekly tournament. If player pitches more than 30 pitches in a day, they may not pitch the following day. Any player who pitches more than 30 pitches in the game may not play catcher during that game. Any player who plays Catcher for more than 2 innings in that game may not pitch in that game. Any player who plays Catcher at any point during the game is limited to 30 pitches in the game.

12U Baseball: 70 pitches per day; 140 pitches in weekly tournament. If player pitches more than 35 pitches in a day, they may not pitch the following day. Any player who pitches more than 35 pitches in the game may not play catcher during that game. Any player who plays Catcher for more than 2 innings in that game may not pitch in that game. Any player who plays Catcher at any point during the game is limited to 35 pitches in the game.

14U Baseball: 80 pitches per day; 160 pitches in weekly tournament. If player pitches more than 40 pitches in a day, they may not pitch the following day. Any player who pitches more than 40 pitches in the game may not play catcher during that game. Any player who plays Catcher for more than 2 innings in that game may not pitch in that game. Any player who plays Catcher at any point during the game is limited to 30 pitches in the game.

Example: A 10U pitcher may pitch up to 60 pitches. The pitcher's coach will be warned by the opposing team's coach when he reaches 60 pitches, at which time he will be allowed to finish the batter. A pitcher may NOT start a new batter if he has reached 60 pitches, he may finish the batter despite going over the 60 pitch count. A 10U player may pitch a maximum of 120 pitches for the weekly tournament. Any coach violating the pitching limit rule should be reported to the league, this will help the league monitor that coach and team.

Rule Exception: Pitcher may finish the batter they are facing.

Rule Penalty: It shall be the responsibility of each team manager to challenge pitching violations by notifying the Umpire-in-Chief and then filing a Protest (SFBA rule 12.0) with the SFBA Tournament Director. A protest may be filed at any point after the pitcher in violation records an out beyond his legal limit **AND** while the pitcher in violation is in the game and in the pitching position. If such violation is the last recorded out of the game, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. Any violation of SFBA Rules shall result in immediate forfeiture of the game. If such violation occurs during Pool-Play, the team in violation of the rule may not advance to the championship bracket regardless of record.

The pitcher named in the batting order handed to the umpire-in-chief, as provided, shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter is put out or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is out or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains injury or illness which, in the judgment of the umpire-in-chief, incapacitates him from pitching. If an improper substitution is made for the pitcher, the umpire shall direct the proper pitcher to return to the game until the provisions of this rule are fulfilled. If the improper pitcher is permitted to pitch, any play that results is legal. The improper pitcher becomes the proper pitcher as soon as he makes his first pitch to the batter, or as soon as any runner is put out.

8.4 PLAYER SUBSTITUTION DUE TO ILLNESS OR INJURY

In the event that a player in the lineup is injured or become ill and can no longer play the following shall apply:

If the player is leaving the game due to injury or illness reasons, the player whom recorded the previous out (last recorded out) assumes the runners position on base.

When a player who has left the game is scheduled to bat and no legal substitutes are available, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat.

The manager shall immediately notify the umpire-in-chief of any substitution and shall state to the umpire-in-chief the substitute's place in the batting order.

The umpire-in-chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered as having entered the game when:

If a pitcher, he takes his place on the pitcher's plate;

If a batter, he takes his place in the batter's box;

If a fielder, he reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder he has replaced, and play commences;

If a runner, he takes the place of the runner he has replaced.

8.5 COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES OF PLAY

Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be a fair ball.

Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot mark on the baseline from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.

Pitching Circle: There shall be a ten (10) foot diameter circle set according to the front edge of the pitching plate.

Pitching Rubber: The pitching plate shall be located at forty (40) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate

The pitching coach shall keep one foot on or straddle the pitching rubber.

The pitching coach is **NOT** allowed to verbally or physically coach while in the pitching position at any time. Updated 5/27/2022: Coach Pitcher may coach BATTER ONLY until ball is pitched. Coach Pitcher must not coach while ball is in play. A Coach from the defensive team will be permitted to stand behind the catcher to retrieve passed balls. This coach's impact on game is to speed up the game when passed balls occur, not to coach from that position.

Rule Penalty: If a coach violates this rule, **First Offense:** Warning; **Second Offense:** Removal of coach as the pitcher /speed up coach for the remainder of the game.

The pitching coach shall position himself as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit.

Rule Penalty: If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction will be called.

Rule Additional Penalty: If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, **First Offense:** Warning; **Second Offense:** Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.

The defensive player listed as the catcher **MUST** be equipped with full catcher's equipment to include: shin guards, a chest protector and dual ear-flap catcher's helmet with mask. Catcher may use any baseball glove type while playing catcher (catchers mit, first basemans glove, outfielders glove).

The catcher shall receive the pitch in the catcher's box in a normal baseball manner. If in the umpire's judgment, the catcher is not receiving the ball in a normal baseball manner, there will be a warning issued. If the act continues after the warning, the offending teams' manager will be ejected.

Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines at a minimum of fifteen (15) feet until the ball is hit.

The defensive player listed as the pitcher **MUST** wear a helmet with a face guard.

The defensive player listed as pitcher **MUST** have at least one foot inside the pitching circle and shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

Rule Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch.

Rule Additional Penalty: First Offense: Warning; **Second Offense:** Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

Defensive coaches are **NOT** allowed on the field of play and **MUST** coach from the "dugout area." The dugout area shall be defined as the area in front of the dugout, spanning the length of the interior of the dugout, extending onto the field of play half-way between the fence and baseline. If a coach is seen coaching from the outfield the following shall apply: 1st offense is a warning issued. 2nd offense shall result in ejection of the coach from the game. NO OUTFIELD COACH ALLOWED. **EXCEPTION: For 6U & 8U one defensive coach may be allowed to coach from the outfield foul territory on their team's dugout side of the field at the depth of the deepest outfielder.**

The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

Teams may start a game with eight (8) players. The ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) positions in the batting order will be declared an out each time at bat. A ninth (9th) & tenth (10th) player and all subsequent players may be added to the batting order as soon as they become available.

If a team is playing a game with fewer than 10 players, the catcher's position **MUST** remain. No team may play without the catcher position defensively.

Bunting is **NOT** allowed.

No Intentional walks are allowed.

The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes.

Rule Comment: A batter that has received less than six (6) pitches and has a count of two (2) swinging strikes shall have his turn at bat extended on foul balls up to the six (6) pitch limit. The sixth (6th) and final pitch **MUST** be batted into fair territory, if not an out shall be declared.

Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner shall be called out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate.

A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, unless the team is trailing. The trailing team may tie the opposing team and then score up to an additional five (5) runs. In the last inning (6th) there is no limit in the amount of runs allowed to be scored.

Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule.

Rule Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.

When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply:

If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance.

If in the umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.

8.6 T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES

Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair.

Safety Arc: There shall be a thirty (30) foot arc drawn from (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. Infielders must stay behind this line until the ball is hit.

Pitching Plate: The pitching plate shall be located at forty (40) feet from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate

The catcher shall wear a dual ear-flap catcher's helmet with mask and shall play the catcher's position at a distance safely behind the batting tee; preferably a short distance away from the back stop.

Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baselines at a minimum of fifteen (15) feet until the ball is hit.

The defensive player listed as the pitcher **MUST** wear a helmet with a face guard.

The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers' plate until the ball is hit.

Rule Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-play being declared.

Defensive coaches are **NOT** allowed on the field of play and **MUST** coach from the "dugout area." The dugout area shall be defined as the area in front of the dugout, spanning the length of the interior of the dugout, extending onto the field of play half-way between the fence and baseline. If a coach is seen coaching from the outfield the following shall apply: 1st offense is a warning issued. 2nd offense shall result in ejection of the coach from the game. NO OUTFIELD COACH ALLOWED.

The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time.

Bunting is **NOT** allowed.

No intentional walks are allowed.

UPDATED SUMMER 2026: 6U - The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes via Coach Pitch. If they "strike out" in their Coach-Pitch attempts they are not declared out, they go to the tee and may take a maximum of three (3) swings off a tee to put the ball in play or be called out. No additional swings shall be awarded on foul balls off the tee. A coach may opt to go straight to the tee if desired, but no additional swings will be allowed above the third swing off the tee.

Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner shall be called out for leaving the base before the ball is hit.

A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, unless the team is trailing. The trailing team may tie the opposing team and then score up to an additional five (5) runs. In the last inning (6th) there is no limit in the amount of runs allowed to be scored.

Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead as soon as the lead runner is not attempting to advance. "Time" is not called by the defense for the purpose stopping play.

Rule Comment: When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance" and "Time" shall be called.

The "Tee" **MUST** be placed of the center of home plate.

8.7 SPECIAL PROVISIONS

The umpire-in-chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in his opinion darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team:

1. Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within one (1) minute after the umpire has called "Play" at game time unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire's judgment, unavoidable;
2. Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game;
3. Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire;
4. Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one (1) minute after the umpire has called "Play";

9.0 UMPIRES

All leagues and tournaments played under the jurisdiction and administration of SFBA Baseball shall utilize umpires who are registered with the Association.

One (1) or more umpires will be assigned to officiate each game.

The umpires shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these Rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.

Each umpire is the representative of SFBA and is authorized and required to enforce all of these Rules.

Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator to do or refrain from doing anything, which affects the administering of these Rules, and to enforce the prescribed penalties.

Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach or manager for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field.

Each umpire has authority at his discretion to eject from the playing field any person whose duties permit his presence on the field and any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the field.

Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, coach or manager shall object to any such judgment decisions.

Rule Comment: Players leaving their position in the field or on base, or managers or coaches leaving the bench or coaches box, to argue on BALLS AND STRIKES will not be permitted. They should be warned if they start for the plate to protest the call. If they continue, they will be ejected from the

game.

If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it.

Rule Comment: The manager or the catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire calls the pitch a ball, but not when the pitch is called a strike. The manager may not complain that the umpire made an improper call, but only that he did not ask his partner for help. Field umpires must be alerted to the request from the plate umpire and quickly respond. Managers may not protest the call of a ball or strike on the pretense they are asking for information about a half swing. Appeals on a half swing may be made only on the call of ball and when asked to appeal, the home plate umpire must refer to a base umpire for his judgment on the half swing. Should the base umpire call the pitch a strike, the strike call shall prevail. Base runners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire. The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing. If the manager comes out to argue with an umpire and if after being warned he persists in arguing, he can be ejected as he is now arguing over balls and strikes.

Immediately following a game, the umpire shall report to the SFBA Tournament Director and/or officials all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any player, coach or manager and the reasons therefore.

General Statement Concerning Umpires: Umpires on the field should not indulge in conversation with participants or spectators. Keep your uniform in good, clean and pressed condition and be active, and alert on the field. Always be courteous. When you enter a ballpark, your sole duty is to umpire a game as the representative of SFBA. Do not allow criticism to keep you from studying out bad situations that may lead to protested calls. Keep the games moving. A ball game is often helped by energetic and earnest work of the umpires. You are the only official representative of the SFBA on the field. It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first (1st) essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper and self-control. You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to "even up" after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them. Keep your eye on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast. Do not come running with your arm up or

down, denoting "out" or "safe", wait until the play is completed before making any arm motion. Each umpire crew should work out a simple set of signals, so the proper umpire can always right a manifestly wrong decision when convinced he has made an error. If you're sure you got the play correct, do not be stampeded by appeals to "ask the other man". If not sure, ask one of your

associates. Finally, be courteous, impartial and firm, and so compel respect from all.

10.0 SPORTSMANSHIP

All players, coaches and managers will be expected to behave in a sportsmanlike manner at all times.

Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive will at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party may be removed from the playing field and stands area at the discretion of the Umpires and/or the SFBA Tournament Director.

Abusive language or cursing will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will be an automatic ejection.

Throwing of equipment will be an automatic ejection.

A team may be forced to forfeit and/or be removed from the tournament, if necessary.

Any player, coach, manager, sponsor or spectator leaving their position or base on the playing field or leaving the bench or dugout area or the stands to participate in a fight or brawl will be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred pursuant to Rule.

There will be no distracting chatter by the managers, coaches, player, parents or spectators during the game. Clapping, talking/yelling, singing or any other efforts deemed to be a distraction to the batter or pitcher will not be allowed once the pitcher comes set on the pitching rubber. This rule applies to all players, coaches, and fans whether on the base paths, in the dugouts, or in the stands. The head coach will be responsible for the behavior of his team and fans. Violation of this rule will result first in a team warning, with subsequent offenses resulting in a strike being assessed to the batter.

11.0 EJECTIONS

If a coach is ejected from a game, he must sit out the remainder of that game. Additional penalties may be assessed as deemed by the SFBA Tournament Director.

A player ejected must sit out the remainder of that game.

Anyone ejected may be asked to leave the park at the discretion of the SFBA Tournament Director.

As these rules indicate, the matter of disorderly conduct will be taken seriously. The leagues and tournaments your team will be participating in will include some of the finest baseball teams in the world. The level of competition will be high and at times fierce. Because of this, please remind your players, coaches, manager, sponsors and spectators to be extra aware of good sportsmanship.

12.0 PROTESTS

Umpires will work to settle all situations on the field. Protests will be allowed for age and pitching violations or rule interpretations only. Protests must be declared to the Umpire-in-Chief and then to the Tournament Director before the next pitch following the dispute. If a call to be protested is the last recorded out of a game or on a game ending play, the protest **MUST** be filed prior to the umpires and the protesting team leaving the field of play. No protest will be allowed following the game.

Rule Comment: The Protest fee is \$200.00 cash. The Tournament Directors will rule on all protests and their decisions shall be final. The fee shall be returned only if the protest is upheld. The SFBA Tournament Director decision is final.

13.0 SAFETY

Head first slides at home plate are not allowed in any age divisions.

BUTCHER BOY is **NOT** allowed. "Butcher Boy" is defined as a strategy where the hitter first shows he intends to bunt, pulls back the bat when the pitcher begins the delivery, and takes a quick swing at the pitch.

Penalty: Butcher Boy will result in the batting being called out. In the event the batter makes contact with the ball into fair territory, the play shall be ruled a dead ball, the batter called out and base runners (if any) shall return to the original base prior to the play.

14.0 SEEDING AND TIE BREAKER RULES

1. Win-loss record*
2. ONLY if two teams are tied – Head-to-Head winner
 1. If more than 2 teams have same record skip this tie breaker
3. Total runs allowed in pool play*
4. Run differential in pool play*
5. Coin flip

*In the event that all pool games are unable to be played, games not played will be awarded a 5-5 tie for seeding calculation purposes.

All Bracket games originally scheduled for the same day shall be considered being played on the same day for pitching rules, even if delayed due to rain, weather, light failure, City and/or Park Staff Instructions, or other acts of God.

15.0 ALLIANCE CUP

The Alliance Cup will be presented to the ballpark with the most tournament points at the end of the summer tournament series. The Alliance Cup will be held for one year. The Champion and Runner-Up team from each tournament will earn points towards the Alliance Cup as follows:

- Champion = 5 points
- Runner-Up = 2 points
- If ballpark has 2 teams in age division, only count team with highest points

16.0 ORDER OF RULE PRIORITY

1. **SOUTH FLORIDA BASEBALL ALLIANCE (SFBA) OFFICIAL BASEBALL BY-LAWS & GAME RULES** posted in the Coaches Corner at <https://www.ccobaseball.com/page/show/9506247-sfba-summer-all-stars-rulebook>
2. USSSA Official Baseball National By-Laws & Rules.
3. Official Rules of Major League Baseball
 - Please note that we will not institute the Time Clock, Shift Bans, or Larger Base Sizes rules that were put in place during the 2023 MLB season.
4. All rules are subject to change without notice if published at <https://www.ccobaseball.com/page/show/9506247-sfba-summer-all-stars-rulebook> at the time of first pitch.
5. All revisions shall be shared with league commissioners and distributed in division chats. It is the Head Coach/Team Manager's responsibility to share updates with their teams.

17.0 RULE ITEMS NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED

Any rule Items not specifically covered herein, including player eligibility, shall be referred to the SFBA Board of Directors for guidance. The SFBA Board of Directors shall be comprised of each participating Park's President/Baseball Commissioner.

During each tournament the Hosting Park's Baseball Commissioner (or designee if they are not present) shall have interpretation authority of the rules contained herein.