2019
Youth Baseball
&
Softball Handbook

Inclement weather hotline: 770-297-5453
www.teamsideline.com/Gainesville
www.statusme.com
www.gainesville.org/recreation

830 Green Street, NE
Gainesville, GA 30501
770-531-2680
Fax: 770-531-2681
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GAINESVILLE PARKS & RECREATION MISSION STATEMENT
“The Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency, through a coordinated effort, seeks to enrich the quality of life of the citizens we serve by providing safe and accessible facilities and a diversified program of activities in an effective, efficient, equitable, and responsive manner.”

GAINESVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION STAFF
J. Melvin Cooper, CPRP, Director
Michael Graham, Deputy Director
Missy Bailey, CPRP, CYSA, Recreation Division Manager
Sam Ballinger, Recreation Program Coordinator
Eason Spivey, Recreation Program Coordinator

GAINESVILLE PARKS & RECREATION YOUTH SPORTS MISSION STATEMENT
“The Gainesville Parks and Recreation Youth Sports Program is dedicated to encouraging, stimulating, and inspiring a fun, positive experience which builds self-esteem and leadership, promotes good sportsmanship, health, develops skills and fosters team work.”
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I. Welcome

Welcome:

Participation in athletics plays a very valuable role in the development of children. Aspects of teamwork, dedication, discipline, physical fitness, self-esteem, and fair play all contribute to the overall growth and maturation of young people. Gainesville Parks and Recreation takes this responsibility seriously and strives to offer quality programs which will aid in this development.

We feel open dialogue and communication with parents, coaches, and participants make for a better operated program. Our professional staff members working with your child are GRPA and NRPA members and are certified by Bobby Simpson, founder of Higher Ground Softball, to train and supervise our volunteer coaches.

Our volunteer coaches have gone through an application process that includes reference checks, criminal background checks, and are required to complete coaches certification through Higher Ground.

Sometimes, we as professional administrators, volunteer coaches, and parents often forget why we do what we do. It is not to satisfy our individual egos, but to provide a positive, healthy experience that teaches the importance of teamwork, cooperation, skill development, ethics, abiding by the rules, winning and losing with grace, coping with success and failure, respecting authority figures, and always striving to do your best.

This about all else, at this level, is what we should be about and it must be a cooperative effort between our professional youth sports administrators, our volunteer coaches, our officials, and our parents.

We believe that working together, through training and education we can raise the standards for youth sports, and we can return to the age-old notion that children’s participation in organized sports should be FUN!

This handbook is presented to serve as a reference for you, as a parent or volunteer coach, so you may better understand the philosophies of the Agency regarding youth athletics and do your part in making this program a success.

Sincerely,

J. Melvin Cooper

J. Melvin Cooper, CPRP

Director

J. Melvin Cooper, CPRP

Director

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Gainesville Parks and Recreation Baseball and Softball Youth Handbook
II. Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play

We will work to provide a quality program and professional customer service, BUT in return, we ask that our patrons follow the rules set forth in order to maintain the integrity and spirit in youth sports...

In order for Gainesville Parks and Recreation to offer the best youth sports programs available, it becomes necessary to set forth certain policies, procedures, rules, regulations, codes of ethics and, in this case, a Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play Agreement. Our staff created and adopted this Agreement in order for all patrons to have a positive experience. Whether you are a coach, official, parent, player or even a spectator, YOU are expected to abide by this agreement 100%.

GAINESVILLE PARKS & RECREATION

“GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY AGREEMENT”

By participating as an Administrator, Coach, Official, Parent, Player or Spectator
I hereby pledge to encourage youth sports in a positive manner by following the Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play Agreement:

- I will demonstrate Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play.
- I will promise to make youth sports Fun for everyone.
- I will become Knowledgeable in the rules of the game.
- I will Attend and Participate at every practice/game that I can.
- I will Properly Maintain uniforms, equipment and park facilities.
- I will demand a Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Free environment.
- I will encourage and promote a Safe and Healthy playing environment.
- I will Respect all administrators, coaches, officials, parents, players and spectators.
- I will place the emotional and physical Well Being of the kids ahead of myself.

I WILL REMEMBER THAT YOUTH SPORTS ARE FOR THE KIDS.
III. Goals & Objectives

A. Intent

Gainesville Parks and Recreation Youth Sports Program is geared towards providing an outlet of healthy activities and training under good leadership in the atmosphere of wholesome community participation. This policy is aimed at meeting the spirit and intent of this goal.

The goals & objectives for the Gainesville Parks & Recreation Youth Sports Programs are:

I. TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF OUR PARTICIPANTS.
   i. Routine and Preventative Maintenance at Facilities and Parks
   ii. Provide Quality Equipment
   iii. Provide Proper Training

II. TO OFFER PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES TO BOTH YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED, RELIGION, OR SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS.
   i. Recreation Scholarships

III. TO TEACH BASIC FUNDAMENTALS, SKILLS AND RULES.
   i. Qualified Volunteer Coaching
   ii. Accessible Rule Books, Training Manuals, Videos

IV. TO DEMAND PROFESSIONALISM FROM STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.
   i. Continued Education Opportunities

V. TO EXPECT THAT SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY IS THE STANDARD.
   i. Enforce the “AGREEMENT”
   ii. Enforce NAYS Code Of Ethics

VI. TO MAINTAIN FINANCIAL STABILITY.
   i. Registration Fees
   ii. Sponsorship
   iii. Special Events
B. The Value of Sports

Sports are one of the greatest tools that exist in today’s society to help children develop positive character traits and life values. Early adolescence is a time when children are looking for basic values that they can count on in their lives. Under the right conditions, many youth sports experiences can be enormously beneficial, teaching the importance of teamwork, cooperation, and hard work, among many other qualities. In spite of this enormous potential for good, many youth sports experiences, in which the focus on what’s truly best for children strays, can be emotionally damaging and that damage can last a lifetime.

During the years in which most children are typically involved in organized sports they are learning about themselves psychologically, physically, emotionally, and socially. During this juncture their personalities are being molded, their bodies are going through all sorts of changes, and their minds are forming lasting impressions on the importance of sports in their lives. It is at this level that parents, coaches and administrators play the greatest role in making the sports experience positive, healthy, and safe. Clearly, the results of a child’s experiences during these years are crucial, especially when we consider the positive role sports can play in their overall development.

Children learn a multitude of important lessons through sports that are basic to leading productive adult lives in our society. Sports provide an ideal forum to teach such valuable fundamentals as ethics, abiding by the rules, winning and losing with grace, coping with success and failure, respecting authority figures, always striving to do your best, etc. These traits provide the building blocks that help young citizens of our communities become well-balanced adults, and which translate into leading productive lives.

A study conducted by Hardiness Research of Wyoming found that by a 2:1 ratio for boys and a 3:1 ratio for girls, those who participate in sports perform better in school, do not drop out, and have a better chance to get through college.

The foundation for human development occurs during the early years of life. Individuals are exposed to many different learning situations that contribute to their potential for successful development in future endeavors. Activities at home, church, schools and clubs, to name just a few, all play a big role in a child’s growth and development. Organized sports are certainly at, or near the top, of that list.

Regardless of which sports they choose to pursue, children will reap the positive benefits since regular physical activity is the basis for a healthy and active lifestyle.
IV. Policies & Procedures

A. Registration

*Am I a resident?* - A resident is any person who lives within the City Limits of Gainesville. This is not to be confused with school attendance. City and School District boundaries are not the same. Even though your mailing address is Gainesville, this does not necessarily mean you are a City Resident. Most programs/classes have different fees for residents and non-residents. Non-residents must pay an additional surcharge established by the Parks & Recreation Board. (Participants in many of our programs live outside the City of Gainesville, and the cost of supplying these programs comes exclusively from city taxpayers, fairness requires that non-city residents share the burden of expense). Gainesville Parks and Recreation reserves the right to remove anyone falsifying information from our programs. Please call our office at 770-531-2680 if you have any questions regarding residency.

*Residency Verification* - Gainesville Parks and Recreation requires residency verification for first time registrants that have relocated to the City. (Driver’s License or Utility Bill). If currently registered, this procedure will not be necessary. A copy of the participant’s birth certificate is required.

*Recreation Scholarship Fund* - Financial assistance for children under the age of 18 is available to City residents through the Children At Play Fund on a first come first serve basis for all programs.

*Refund Policy* - A 100% refund will be given for activities cancelled by Gainesville Parks and Recreation. Refund requests made prior to the program will be granted without explanation.

*What if the program is full or you have missed the registration deadline?* You are encouraged to register early for all programs! Participants for all programs are on a first come, first serve basis. Please check registration information on each individual program. For baseball, softball, football & cheerleading your name may be placed on a waiting list and if an opening comes available you will be charged an extra $15.00 late fee and added to a team again on a first come, first serve basis.

*Registration Payment* - Parents and guardians are responsible for providing registration payment for their own participants. Volunteer Coaches are NOT allowed to provide payment for a participant in the league that is not their own child, or a family member, unless prior approval is in writing from the volunteer coach to GPRA. The parent/guardian is still responsible for the registration process in providing GPRA documentation for the child. Parents should not expect their team’s coach to pay or assist with their registration fees.
B. Parent Orientation Meeting

Gainesville Parks & Recreation requires that all teams conduct a “mandatory parent meeting” during the first week of practice. In order for your child to play in the league, it is mandatory that one of the parents/guardians attend. Important information such as policy and procedures, safety and first aid, medical alerts, expectations, responsibilities and team rules will be discussed in detail. This meeting is held in order to lay the foundation for open communication among coaches, parents and participants. Don’t forget your handbook! See appendix 5 for meeting highlights.

C. Medical Information

Please notify the Parks and Recreation Office if your child has a pre-existing medical condition (i.e. previous surgeries, allergies, medications, physical impairments, etc.) on the registration form. Also, notify the coach at the mandatory team meeting. This is essential in order to determine the severity of an accident and to assist medical personnel who respond to the scene.

- 911 will be called immediately
- Parent/Guardian will be contacted
- Based on the professional decision of the Emergency Response unit, the participant may be transported to the closest medical facility for immediate care. If medical transportation is required, the charges incurred will be billed to the parents/guardians and/or parent’s guardians’ insurance policy. It is prohibited to transport a participant in a personal vehicle. A doctor’s Release Form must be submitted to GPRA before a player/participant may resume play.

All minor injuries will be treated by the league coordinator or coach. Any major or life threatening injury or accident that may occur on the playing field or at the facility, during scheduled game/practice times will be handled using the procedures listed above.

Gainesville Parks and Recreation has Automated External Defibrillators (AED) at City Park, Candler fields and Lanier Point Athletic Complex.

D. Uniforms/Equipment

A portion of the registration fee for a particular program may be used to supply the team with uniforms. If a refund is granted for dropping a program, he or she may be required to return the uniform or have a portion of the refund retained for the cost of the uniform. Uniforms are expected to be worn in the condition that they are given out. DO NOT USE BLEACH or other harsh abrasives to clean uniforms/equipment. Unauthorized alterations to the uniform (i.e. cutting the sleeves off, helmet decals, scuffing caps, patches, etc.) will require the parent/guardian to pay for a replacement uniform. All teams must wear the uniform provided by Gainesville Parks & Recreation. No additional uniforms should be purchased for any team, and will not be allowed to be worn during Gainesville Parks and Recreation competitions. If you have any additional questions, please speak with the youth athletics’ administrators.
E. Weather

The safety of the participants, officials, and spectators is the primary concern in cases of inclement weather (rain, snow, ice, smoke, hot or cold temperatures). Once a game has started, the league coordinator and/or officials will have the responsibility to remove the players from the field if the conditions become extreme. If ordered to do so, please find a safe shelter until instructed to return to the playing field or told that the game has been cancelled. The storm will be considered over 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning. Light rain showers, without thunder and lightning, will not justify delaying or cancelling a game.

Policy/Guidelines for Extremely Low Temperatures

The Individual participant or parent of the participant MUST make the ultimate decision as to whether or not to attend a scheduled athletic activity. GPRA will use a temperature/wind chill threshold of 32° F, as a limit. Anytime, that the temperature/wind chill is forecasted to be below 32° F for an extended period of time during outdoor scheduled activity, GPRA will cancel the activity.

A. GPRA Athletic Staff, or designee, will make the final decision as to whether outdoor practices/games will be conducted. The health, safety, and welfare of the participants WILL be the determining factors. However, the Individual participant or Parent of the participant MUST make the ultimate decision as to whether or not to attend a scheduled athletic activity.

B. The wind chill factor will be used to determine the severity of the cold temperature, NOT just the temperature alone.

C. Participants should warm-up and stretch properly immediately before the competition or practice.

D. Clothing should be selected for comfort. Do not overdress. Multiple layers provide good insulation.

E. Properly cover the head, neck, legs, and hands. Much of your body heat is lost through these areas.

F. Extreme cold blocks some sensations of pain. Thus, frostbite can easily affect the fingers, toes, ears, and facial areas. Check these areas regularly.

G. Hypothermia is dangerous. Add extra clothing and move to a warm environment immediately after game or practice. Drink warm fluids if possible. Hypothermia has occurred in air temperatures of 50°-65°F.

H. Early signs and symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, euphoria, confusion, and behavior similar to intoxication. Severe signs include lethargy, muscular weakness, disorientation, depression, hallucinations, and even combative behavior.

WIND CHILL CHART

(Reading=Apparent Temperature)

Temperature With 0 mph wind With 10 mph wind With 20 mph wind With 30 mph wind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>With 0 mph Wind</th>
<th>With 10 mph Wind</th>
<th>With 20 mph Wind</th>
<th>With 30 mph Wind</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40°</td>
<td>40°</td>
<td>34°</td>
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<td>32°</td>
<td>32°</td>
<td>24°</td>
<td>20°</td>
<td>18°</td>
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F. Cancellations

Program cancellations due to inclement weather will be updated on our Hotline at 770-297-5453 and our website at www.gainesville.org/recreation. A decision regarding evening programs will be made at 4:00 PM. If a game is cancelled due to weather or other unforeseeable circumstances, all efforts will be made to reschedule that game. However, due to time restraints and/or field usage conflicts, some games may not be made up. It will be the decision of Gainesville Parks and Recreation when and if the games are made up. Special circumstances may be taken into consideration. **GPRA will always make the best decisions for the safety of all participants.**

G. Online Communications

Status Me and Team Sideline provides yet another means of communicating to our participants when we change the status of our facilities.

1. Benefits
   - Field status information comes to you the moment it changes
   - Status updates come to you in the manner you want (i.e. emails, and text messages).

2. Status Me
   - Go To [www.statusme.com](http://www.statusme.com)
   - Select JOIN NOW
   - Complete the Registration Page
   - Input An Email and Phone #
   - Join Gainesville Parks and Recreation
     
       a. Select Georgia in the “State” pull down menu
       b. In the “Select a Group” pull down menu, find “Gainesville Parks & Recreation”
       c. In the “Select a Club” pull down menu, select “Gainesville & Rec”
       d. Click Join

3. Team Sideline
   
       a. Go To [www.teamsideline.com/gainesville](http://www.teamsideline.com/gainesville)
       b. Select Communication Sign Up
       c. Complete information (i.e. name, email address and phone number)
       d. Click Submit

H. Calendar of Events

A calendar of events handout will be available at the time of registration regarding all important dates. Game schedules will also be available online at [www.gainesville.org/recreation](http://www.gainesville.org/recreation) prior to the season. Team pictures will also be scheduled at the most appropriate time. Pictures are purchased separately from registration.
I. Coaches Meetings

It is mandatory and very important for all coaches to attend the preseason and postseason coaches meetings. All pertinent information regarding the youth sports seasons will be discussed, such as: policies and procedures, schedules, important dates, evaluations and drafts, etc.

J. Insurance

Gainesville Parks and Recreation encourages parents to have insurance coverage on their children. GPRA does not cover participants engaged in athletic activities.

K. Common Rules: Little League Baseball

All Rules not covered below shall revert to the Little League Rule Book for Major League and Minor League. Rookie League Baseball will revert to the GRPA Athletic Manual.

a. Age Control Date: As of August 31st, 2019 for Major League and Minor League. Rookie League age control date will be ON or BEFORE September 1st, 2019.

b. League Divisions:

   a) Rookie League Baseball (Ages 7 & 8) - 6 year olds will be allowed to play up in this division.

   b) Minor League Baseball (Ages 9 & 10 KID PITCH) - 8 year olds will be allowed to play up in this division.
      • There will be a Max of 8 teams in the Minor Division.

   c) Major League Baseball (Ages 10,11 & 12) - 10 year olds will be allowed to play up in this division, but must be drafted on a team by a Major League Coach. If any 10 year old is not drafted, they will be placed on the Minor League draft board, and drafted onto a Minor League team.
      • There will be a max of 8 teams in the Major Division (96 players), and 11 & 12 year olds will be drafted first. If spaces are still available, they will be filled with drafted 10 year olds.

   d) Junior League Baseball (Ages 13 & 14) - Will play under Dizzy Dean Rules in the Hall County League.

c. Playing Field Requirements

Base Paths and Pitching Distances for youth baseball

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Bases</th>
<th>Pitching</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tee – League</td>
<td>60’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rookie League</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor League</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>46’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major League</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>46’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
d. Equipment
   a. Game balls will be furnished.
   b. All players must be fully uniformed.
   c. Metal spikes are PROHIBITED in age divisions 12 and below.
   d. The catcher must wear protective gear, which includes, mask, chest protector, shin guards, protective cup, catcher’s helmet and throat guard.

e. Players
   a. Teams must begin play with 7 players.
   b. Players removed from game due to illness or injury will NOT be counted as an out in the line-up.

f. Bats: For a list of approved bats please visit the Little League Website [www.littleleague.org](http://www.littleleague.org)

g. Infield Fly Rule will apply to all age divisions except the Rookie and Tee Ball Leagues.

h. Fake Bunt and Swing: A batter may NOT show the intent to bunt and then swing away during the same pitch. If the batter does this, whether contact is made or not, the play will be ruled dead and the batter will be declared out.

L. Common Softball Rules: Dizzy Dean Softball

All Rules not covered below shall revert to the Dizzy Dean Rule Book.

a. Age Control Date: Prior to January 1st of the current year.

b. League Divisions:
   a. The Farm League Division (Ages 7 & 8)
   b. The Minor Division (Ages 9 & 10)
   c. The Freshman Division (Ages 11 & 12)

c. Playing Field Requirements

Base Paths and Pitching Distances for youth Softball

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Bases</th>
<th>Pitching</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm League</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>40’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor Division</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>35’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Division</td>
<td>60’</td>
<td>40’</td>
</tr>
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d. Equipment

1. Game balls will be furnished.
2. A circle 16 feet in diameter shall be drawn with its center at the midpoint of the front edge of the pitcher’s plate.
3. Every player on a team must wear a uniform identical in color and style.
4. A NOCSAE approved protective helmet with full ear flaps will be worn by all batters, base runners and catchers (*coaches are not required to wear a helmet*).
5. A catcher must wear a chest protector, shin-guards, NOCSAE approved helmet, mask and a throat protector. Shin guards MUST have knee and metatarsal protection (soccer style shin guards are NOT acceptable).

e. Bats: For a list of approved bats please visit the Dizzy Dean Website www.dizzydeansoftball.com

f. Infield Fly Rule will apply to all age division except the Farm League.

g. Fake Bunt and Swing: A batter may NOT show the intent to bunt and then swing away during the same pitch. If the batter does this, whether contact is made or not, the play will be ruled dead and the batter will be declared out.

M. Player Selection (Draft)

Evaluations will be held in order to give coaches an opportunity to evaluate “ALL” eligible players. In order for them to accomplish this, it is recommended that eligible players attend ALL evaluation sessions. Eligible players attending less than half (1/2) the sessions due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness, will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation staff to determine if they will be eligible for league draft. If in any way the spirit and intent of evaluations or draft is abused, the athletic staff may make decisions on player placement in the best interest of the program.

a. Rookie League Baseball (Ages 7 & 8) 6 year olds will be allowed to play up in this division.

b. Minor League Baseball (Ages 9 & 10 KID PITCH) 8 year olds will be allowed to play up in this division.

c. Major League Baseball (Ages 10,11 & 12), 10 year olds will be allowed to play up in this division if drafted by a Major League Coach.

d. Junior League Baseball (Ages 13 & 14)

e. Girls Softball (Ages 7 & 8, 9 & 10, 11 & 12)

N. Evaluation & Draft Process

1. Gainesville Parks and Recreation will schedule evaluation dates, times and locations. Each participant will be given a written copy of this schedule at registration.

2. A coach’s meeting will be held prior to evaluations to inform coaches of the draft dates and procedures. **Note: Only two Coaches will be allowed to attend draft sessions. This includes the Head Coach and an Assistant Coach, or two Assistant Coaches in the event of the Head Coach not being able to attend the draft.**
3. All registered participants must attend player evaluations in order to be placed in the draft process. At the discretion of the GPRA Staff, protected players (Coaches’ children) who do not attend evaluations, at least one day, will be placed in the first round of the draft, if a proper round placement is not able to be determined. All participants who do not attend evaluations will be randomly selected for ALL leagues. Any 10 Year old interested in playing in Major league must attend both Minor League and Major League evaluations.

4. Participants living in the same household or siblings will be placed on the same teams. (Exception) Siblings in the Major and Minor League Baseball could possibly be split due to the evaluation process. All combinations of siblings and same household participates will be taken in the normal rounds of the draft.

5. Player evaluations (test of skills) will be rated on a scale of 1 to 5. Head Coaches, and at least (1) one member of the GPRA staff will be allowed to evaluate the players.

Example:

#1 needs the most improvement
#5 is at an advanced level of play

6. There will be two (2) days of evaluations for each age group.

7. All participants will be evaluated (including coaches son/daughters). Head Coaches will get their child. Children of the Head Coach will not be frozen and will have to go through the draft process. This will ensure that each child is placed on the draft board in the correct slot due to their rating numbers.

8. Each Head Coach is allowed to protect (2) players for the use of assistant coaches in baseball/softball. If a Head Coach does not have a child playing in respected league, the Head Coach will be allowed to protect (3) players for the use of assistant coaches.

9. Head Coaches must announce prior to the draft, their assistant coaches, and all coaches for the team must have already completed a coaching application and background check to Gainesville Park & Recreation. Assistant coach’s sons/daughters are not frozen and must be drafted in the normal drafting procedure.

10. At the conclusion of evaluations, each coach will hand over their evaluation sheets to a Gainesville Parks and Recreation Department employee. The recreation department will tally all total scores for each participant and have a final copy of evaluation numbers to hand out to head coaches ONLY at the beginning of the draft process. Only recreation employees and head coaches will see the final numbers.

11. The number of participants that are registered will determine the number of teams.

12. Draft Process
**a.** A returning head coach may protect up to six (6) players from their previous season’s roster. All coaches’ kids **SHALL** be protected within these six (6) players. Players will be ranked appropriately based upon evaluations. In the event a protected player does not attend evaluations and GPRA staff is not able to determine their skill level, said player will be placed in the first (1st) round.

**b.** An assistant coach from the previous season that wishes to become a head coach will only be able to protect up to 3 coach’s kids.

**c.** The six (6) protected player’s names must be turned into the league administrator seventy two (72) hours prior to draft day for Major League and Minor League. Rookie League protected players must be turned in forty eight (48) hours prior to draft day. **ALL** protected players are required to participate in evaluations.

**d.** Protected players that are NOT a child of a certified GPRA coach must complete a Player Protection Form to be protected prior to the draft. If said form is not completed then the player will be placed into the normal drafting procedure.

**e.** Any players who did not attend evaluations will be placed on teams via a blind draw.

13. **NO TRADES** will be allowed during or after the draft!

**O. Post Season Coach and Player Selection**

1. All-Star teams will be selected from the Major, Minor, and Rookie Leagues ONLY.

2. There will be one (1) All-Star team selected from the Major League, one All-Star team selected from the Minor League, and one (1) selected for Rookie League. There will be one (9&10), one (11&12), and one (7&8) teams.

3. All post season official games must be approved by GPRA staff. Teams which participate in approved post season play will be composed of All Stars chosen from the teams in the program.

4. The All Star Coach for each age division in each team sport shall be the head coach of the League Champion if he/she chooses. League Champion, meaning regular season champion. In the event there is a tie of two or more teams the tie breakers will be as followed.

   I. Head to head match ups.
   II. Runs Allowed in head to head match ups.
   III. Total runs scored in head to head match ups.

5. A meeting of all head coaches from the league will be held at a specified date to nominate and elect All Stars.

6. All head coaches and Gainesville Parks and Recreation staff may nominate any eligible player in the league and a list will be compiled.
7. All head coaches vote by secret ballot on the specified number of players allowed on the roster from this list of nominations. Agency Staff will tabulate the results. The specified number of players will be determined by the All Star Head Coach with approval from the league administrator.

8. All nominees who receive unanimous votes will be placed on the All Star team.

9. The head coach may choose his/her assistants in accordance with staff approval. If the league champion head coach is not available, the order of finish by league records will be considered until a head coach is secured for the All Star team or named by Gainesville Parks and Recreation staff.

10. The roster will then be filled to the specified limit by majority vote. The All Star Head Coach has the option to fill the final two (2) roster spots from the list of nominations. All coaches except the All Star Head Coach will leave the room while votes are added to finalize roster.

11. The All Star Head Coach and designated assistants will notify players of their election to the team as soon as possible. A player commitment form with practice and tournament dates will be given to each player to sign and return to the Agency. Should a player decline to commit to the schedule he/she may be replaced by a player that was nominated by the coaches.

12. The Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency will rule upon any item not covered above.

P. **2019 Major League Baseball Rules**

2019 Major League Baseball Rules

The Major League is our highest and most competitive league. Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them. There will be one (1) All-Star team formed from this league. All 10, 11 and 12 year olds are eligible to try out for the Major League. Team numbers and roster space does limit the total number of participants into the Major League. Once evaluations are over, ALL teams will be formed by means of a draft.

Please Note: If a 10 year old is drafted up into the Major League, he/she will NOT be eligible to move down and participate in the Minor League All-Stars. 10 year olds MUST BE DRAFTED by a Major League Coach in order to play in the Major League. If a 10 year old does not get drafted, he/she will be drafted onto a Minor League team.

1. **Time Limit:** All major league games played cannot have a new inning start after 1 & ½ hours from the start of the ballgame. Any delay caused by injury to a player or players will not be considered as part of the 1 & ½ hour time limit. If there is any time remaining on the game clock at the time of the third out of the previous inning a new inning will begin. Any time spent
discussing a call or rule interpretation will be considered part of the time limit. Games played Monday through Saturday cannot have a new inning start after 9:15 pm. The time limit is still in effect. Games are considered complete at the completion of 4 innings (3 and ½ innings if the home team is leading).

2. **Playing Time:** Every player who abides by the rules and regulations set forth by Gainesville Parks and Recreation will earn the right to mandatory playing time. Each player will “START” at least ½ of the regular season games. Each regular season game they must play two (2) innings in the field and bat (1) once. This will strictly be enforced. If a player does not play their required time, he/she must start the next game and play three (3) innings in the field. Coaches may be asked to provide documentation of players in question. Any coach failing to follow these guidelines is subject to disciplinary action.

3. **Innings:** Major League games will consist of six (6) regulation innings.

4. **Substitutions:** There will be free substitutions as long as the minimum playing requirements are met.

5. **Batting Order:** There will be continuous bat. All players present at the game will be in the line-up. In the event that a player arrives after the game has started the batter shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order. No penalty shall be charged for a player leaving the game.

6. The coach may talk to the pitcher two (2) times during one inning; but on the third trip to the mound in the same inning, the pitcher must be retired.

7. Only three (3) GPRA approved coaches, and players are allowed in the dugout area during the game.

8. **Pitch Count – Refer to the Little League Rule Book.**

9. If a player is not allowed to play in a game, the coach must inform the league coordinator, opposing coach and official scorekeeper as to the reason the player will not play.

10. Game speed-up rules will be used in the Major League regular season. It is up to the coach to plan and instruct the players of these rules. **When the catcher gets on base with two (2) outs, the second recorded out of the inning will be designated as the substitute runner.** Running for the catcher will not be considered playing time for any player. They must still meet the playing requirements as specified in the rules. For speed-up rules to be worthwhile, it must be taught to the players and be considered a vital part of each team’s game plan. It is not necessary
to give the names of the substitute runners to the scorekeepers during the application of the speed up rules.

11. **Forfeit:** Any team that cannot field seven (7) players on the field or in the dugout at game time shall forfeit said game. However, the two teams involved in that particular game will be allowed to play a scrimmage game or practice during their allotted time.

12. If teams choose to scrimmage, umpires will remain on the field. Teams will divide players so that each team has enough to scrimmage. Pitching rules will not be enforced in the scrimmage.

13. Base Coaches may be eligible players in the uniform of their team and one adult coach/manager. Two adult base coaches are permitted if there is at least one coach/manager in the dugout.

14. **Run Limit:** A fifteen (15) run rule will be in effect after three (3) complete innings or 2 & ½ innings if home team is leading. A ten (10) run rule will be in effect after four (4) complete innings or 3 & ½ innings if home team is leading.

15. There is no on deck batter. The next batter must wait in the dugout area until it is their at bat during the game.

16. The head coach is the only one allowed to discuss rule interpretations with the umpire, only after calling time and permission is granted by the umpire.

17. No infield warm-ups will be allowed prior to the game, however both teams may use the outfield area simultaneously to warm-up. Once the umpire is ready to start the game/inning, the team taking the field will be allowed infield/outfield warm-ups as the pitcher is warming up. When a pitcher takes a position at the beginning of each inning, that pitcher shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed 8 preparatory pitches to a catcher or coach. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time.

18. All equipment must be returned to Gainesville Parks and Recreation at the end of the season.

19. Gainesville Parks and Recreation will rule upon any item not covered above. There will be NO PROTEST.

Q. **2019 Minor League Baseball Rules**

2019 Minor League Baseball Rules
The Minor League is our first kid pitch league. Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them. There will be one All-Star team formed from this league. All 9 & 10 year olds are eligible to try out for the Minor League. Team numbers and roster space does limit the total number of participants into the Minor League. Once evaluations are over, ALL teams will be formed by means of a draft.

Please Note: In baseball, if an (8) year old chooses to move up to the (9-10) division he/she will not be eligible to participate in All-Star play. If a 10 year old is drafted up into the Major Division, he/she will NOT be eligible to move down and participate in the Minor Division All-Stars.

1. **Time Limit:** All minor league games played cannot have a new inning start after 1:15 minutes from the start of the ballgame. Any delay caused by injury to a player or players will not be considered as part of the 1:15 minute time limit. Any time spent discussing a call or rule interpretation will be considered part of the time limit. If there is any time remaining on the game clock at the time of the third out of the previous inning a new inning will begin. Games played Monday through Saturday cannot have a new inning start after 9:15 pm. The time limit is still in effect. **Games are considered complete at the end of 4 innings (3 and ½ innings if the home team is leading).**

2. **Playing Time:** Every player who abides by the rules and regulations set forth by Gainesville Parks and Recreation will earn the right to mandatory playing time. Each player will “START” at least ½ of the regular season games. Each regular season game they must play two (2) innings in the field. This will strictly be enforced. If a player does not play their required time, he/she must start the next game and play three (3) innings in the field. Coaches may be asked to provide documentation of players in question. Any coach failing to follow these guidelines is subject to disciplinary action.

3. **Substitutions:** There will be free substitutions as long as the minimum playing requirements are met. Minor League teams will be allowed 10 players on defense. However, the 10th player must be inserted in the outfield.

4. **Batting Order:** There will be continuous bat. All players present at the game will be in the line-up. In the event that a player arrives after the game has started the batter shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order. No penalty shall be charged for a player leaving the game.

5. **Innings:** Minor League games will consist of six (6) regulation innings.

6. The coach may talk to the pitcher two (2) times during one inning; but on the third trip to the mound in the same inning, the pitcher must be retired.
7. Only three (3) GPRA approved coaches, and players are allowed in the dugout area during the game.

8. **Pitch Count – Refer to the Little League Rule Book.**

9. If a player is not allowed to play in a game, the coach must inform the league coordinator, opposing coach and official scorekeeper as to the reason the player will not play.

10. Game speed-up rules will be used in the Minor League regular season. It is up to the coach to plan and instruct the players of these rules. **When the catcher gets on base with two (2) outs, the second recorded out of the inning will be designated as the substitute runner.** Running for the catcher will not be considered playing time for any player. They must still meet the playing requirements as specified in the rules. For speed-up rules to be worthwhile, it must be taught to the players and be considered a vital part of each team’s game plan. It is not necessary to give the names of the substitute runners to the scorekeepers during the application of the speed up rules.

11. **Forfeit:** Any team that cannot field seven (7) players on the field or in the dugout at game time shall forfeit said game. However, the two teams involved in that particular game will be allowed to play a scrimmage game or practice during their allotted time.

12. If teams choose to scrimmage, umpires will remain on the field. Teams will divide players so that each team has enough to scrimmage. Pitching rules will not be enforced in the scrimmage.

13. Base Coaches may be eligible players in the uniform of their team and one adult coach/manager. Two adult base coaches are permitted if there is at least one coach/manager in the dugout.

14. **Run Limit:** The offensive team may score a maximum of **six (6) runs per inning.** A fifteen (15) run rule will be in effect after three (3) complete innings or 2 & ½ innings if home team is leading. A ten (10) run rule will be in effect after four (4) complete innings or 3 & ½ innings if home team is leading.

15. There is no on deck batter. The next batter must wait in the dugout area until it is their at bat during the game.

16. The head coach is the only one allowed to discuss rule interpretations with the umpire, only after calling time and permission is granted by the umpire.
17. No infield warm-ups will be allowed prior to the game, however both teams may use the outfield area simultaneously to warm-up. Once ready to start the game/inning, the team taking the field will be allowed infield/outfield warm-ups as the pitcher is warming up. When a pitcher takes a position at the beginning of each inning, that pitcher shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed 8 preparatory pitches to a catcher or coach. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time.

18. All equipment must be returned to Gainesville Parks and Recreation at the end of the season.

19. Gainesville Parks and Recreation will rule upon any item not covered above. There will be NO PROTEST.

R. 2019 Rookie League Baseball Rules

2019 Rookie League Baseball Rules

The Rookie League (ages 7 & 8) is designed primarily as an instructional, but competitive league. Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them. There will be 1 All Star team.

1. **Time Limit:** Each game will consist of 5 innings or 1 hour, whichever comes first. No new inning shall begin after fifty five (55) minutes of play. If the regulation game ends in a tie, one (1) more inning will be played. If the game is still tied, it ends in a tie.

2. **Playing Time:** Every player who abides by the rules and regulations set forth by Gainesville Parks and Recreation will earn the right to mandatory playing time. Each player will “START” at least ½ of the regular season games. Each regular season game they must play two (2) innings in the field. This will strictly be enforced. If a player does not play their required time, he/she must start the next game and play three (3) innings in the field. Coaches may be asked to provide documentation of players in question. Any coach failing to follow these guidelines is subject to disciplinary action.

3. **Batting Order:** Each team must bat the entire roster present at the game. No penalty shall be charged for a player leaving the line-up. A player may re-enter the batting order at a later point by being placed in the original spot in the batting order. In the event a player arrives after the game has started, the batter shall be placed at the bottom of the order. There is no on deck batter; the next batter must wait in the dugout area until it is their at bat during the game.

4. **Batter:** Each batter shall receive 6 pitches to hit. A 6th pitch foul ball or subsequent foul shall not count as a pitch. If the batter fails to put the ball in play it will be recorded as an out. Coaches may assist the batter with position in the batter’s box.
5. **Bats**: Bats shall not be more than 33 inches in length and must be USA certified.

6. **Substitutions**: Players who arrive after 2 complete innings are not required to play a minimum of defensive outs. Coaches will be allowed to use substitutions in the field rather than the entire line-up if they deem necessary according to players being in good standing. (discipline, tardiness, injury, etc.)

7. **Pitcher**: Adult pitching distance shall vary according to batter’s ability. Adult pitcher must pitch overhand. The adult pitcher shall be from the offensive team. Once the ball has been hit the adult pitcher must move off of the field (to the opposite side of play) immediately. he/she must remain off the field until the umpire has called time. If in judgment of the umpire, the adult pitcher interferes with the play, the batter shall be called out and all runner(s) must return to their base(s) if applicable. If the adult pitcher is hit by a batted ball, the play shall be ruled dead and treated as a foul ball. A 6-foot radius circle shall be drawn around the pitching area (35’) to designate location for the youth pitcher and dead ball area. The youth pitcher must remain behind or beside the pitching rubber (one foot inside the circle) until the ball is put into play.

8. **Dead Ball Areas**: An arc shall be drawn in front of home plate to designate dead ball area. The umpire will declare any batted ball that does not travel beyond the arc, FOUL.

9. **Base runner**: Stealing is NOT permitted. If a runner leaves their base before the ball is hit, they will be allowed to advance only as far as they were forced to advance as a result of the hit. Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is put into play by the batter. A base runner shall occupy the base to which they are nearest when the play becomes dead. Any runner who misses a base or leaves early when tagging up on a fly ball will be called out by the umpire when play stops.

10. **Run Limit**: The offensive team may score a maximum of seven (7) runs per inning.

11. **Defense**: Teams will use 10 players on defense, using 4 infielders, 1 pitcher, 1 catcher, and 4 outfielders. **Exception**: In the event that a team cannot field its entire present roster, that team may place no less than 7 players in the field, using 4 infielders, 2 outfielders, and 1 pitcher or catcher. Infielders may not be positioned in or within the baseline(s). Outfielders must be in the grass of the outfield at the time of the pitch.

12. **Infield Fly Rule**: Does not apply to this league.

13. **Coaches**:
   a. Two adults may serve as base coaches; coaches may not physically assist batter/runner in running the bases. Penalty for violation – base runner(s) will be called out.
   b. Two adult coaches may serve as defensive coaches in the field. They may position themselves anywhere beyond the baselines (infield) in fair territory.
c. One adult offensive coach may be permitted to stand behind home plate to aid in setting the batter. The coach may help the batter position within the batter’s box. Once the ball is in play, the coach must position themselves out of play.

d. One adult pitcher—See Rule 7

e. Only approved coaches and players will be allowed in the dugout area.

14. Encouragement is the best instruction. Always tell how to do something the correct way instead of saying how bad or wrong it was done. The head coach is the only one allowed to discuss rule interpretations with the umpire, only after calling time and permission is granted by the umpires.

15. No infield warm-ups will be allowed prior to or during the game, however both teams may use the outfield area simultaneously to warm-up prior to the umpire being ready to start the game.

16. All equipment must be returned to Gainesville Parks and Recreation at the end of the season.

17. Gainesville Parks and Recreation will rule upon any item not covered above. There will be NO PROTEST.

18. Postseason play: At the conclusion of the regular season, teams will be seeded by regular season record for a single elimination tournament.

S. 2019 Tee-Ball League Baseball Rules

2019 Tee-Ball League Baseball Rules

The Tee Ball League (ages 5 & 6) is designed as an instructional non-competitive league. All players will hit off of a regulation tee. Players will be allowed to keep their uniform issued to them. There will be no official score kept during Tee League games. There will be no official standings. There will be no All-Star selection.

1. Time Limit: Each game will consist of three (3) innings or 1 hour, whichever comes first. No new inning shall begin after fifty five (55) minutes of play.

2. Playing Time: All players will “START” each of the regular season games. Each game each player must play every inning and be placed in the batting order regardless of playing ability.

3. Batting Order: Each team must bat the entire roster present at the game. No penalty shall be charged for a player leaving the line-up. In the event a player arrives after the game has started, the batter shall be placed at the bottom of the order. There is no on deck batter. The next batter must wait in the dugout area until it is their at bat during the game.
4. **Batter:** Each batter shall receive 3 pitches to hit. A 3rd pitch foul ball or subsequent foul shall not count as a pitch. If the batter fails to put the ball in play the ball will be placed on a batting tee for the player to hit. Coaches may assist the batter with position in the batter’s box.

5. **Pitching:** Adult pitching distance shall vary according to batter’s ability. Adult pitcher must pitch overhand. The adult pitcher shall be from the offensive team. Once the ball has been hit the adult pitcher must move off of the field (to the opposite side of play) immediately. He/she must remain off the field until the umpire has called time. If a batted ball hits the adult pitcher, the play shall be ruled dead and treated as a foul ball.

6. **Bats:** Bats shall not be more than 33 inches in length.

7. **Dead Ball Areas:** An arc shall be drawn in front of home plate to designate dead ball area. The umpire will declare any batted ball that does not travel beyond the arc, FOUL.

8. **Base runner:** Stealing is not permitted.

9. **Defense:** Teams will place the entire present roster in the field, using 4 infielders, 1 pitcher, 1 catcher, and the remainder of the players in the outfield. **Exception:** In the event that a team cannot field its entire present roster, that team may place no less than 7 players in the field, using 4 infielders, 2 outfielders, and 1 pitcher or catcher. Infielders may not be positioned in or within the baseline(s).

10. **Infield Fly Rule:** Does not apply to this league.

11. **Coaches:**
   a. Two adults may serve as base coaches; coaches may not physically assist batter/runner in running the bases. Penalty for violation – base runner(s) will be called out.
   b. Two adult coaches may serve as defensive coaches in the field. They may position themselves anywhere beyond the baselines (infield) in fair territory.
   c. One adult offensive coach may be permitted to stand behind home plate to aid in setting the batter. The coach may help the batter position within the batter’s box. Once the ball is in play, the coach must position themselves out of play.
   d. Only approved coaches and players will be allowed in the dugout area.

12. **Encouragement is the best instruction.** Always tell how to do something the correct way instead of saying how bad or wrong it was done. The head coach is the only one allowed to discuss rule interpretations with the umpire, only after calling time and permission is granted by the umpire.
13. No infield warm-ups will be allowed prior to or during the game; however both teams may use the outfield area simultaneously to warm-up prior to the umpire being ready to start the game.

14. All equipment must be returned to Gainesville Parks and Recreation at the end of the season.

15. Gainesville Parks and Recreation will rule upon any item not covered above. There will be NO PROTEST.

T. Junior Baseball Rules

Please refer to www.dizzydeanbaseball.org and www.hallcountysports.com for league rules and modifications. Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them.

U. 7 & 8 Softball Rules

This program is to teach the boys and girls the rules of softball, how to play defense and how to successfully bat the ball. Emphasis will be on learning how to play the game and learning fundamentals. Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them.

1. Playing Field: Base distance is 60 feet. Pitching distance shall be 40 feet.

2. Batter: Each batter shall receive three (3) swinging strikes or five (5) pitches, whichever comes first. A foul ball on the fifth pitch shall not count as a pitch. Bunting is not allowed; penalty is a strike. If the batter slings his/her bat, the first infraction should be a warning. The second time the bat is slung, the batter will be called out. If the batter is throwing the bat while swinging, this is not safe and coaches need to take the time to teach proper swing technique for safety.

3. Batting Order: All players present at game time must be placed on the lineup sheet in the batting order. The intention is for every player in the batting lineup to bat regardless of whether they are playing defense or not. Everyone will not necessarily bat each inning, but will be in the lineup to bat when their turn at bat approaches. The batting lineup should not change. An inning will end after: Three outs have been made by the defense, OR the five (5) run rule limit has been reached. WARNING – coaches who skip a player without just cause will be brought before the Disciplinary Committee.

4. Pitcher: An offensive coach will pitch to his/her batters. The coach pitcher may not speak to the batter. The youth pitcher may not move or advance forward toward the batter until the ball has been hit. Each batter will be thrown a maximum of 5 pitches. The pitches must be thrown in an “underhand” motion. The batters will be allowed a maximum of five pitches unless pitch five is fouled. A batter is out after three strikes or five pitches. Anytime the batter misses on three pitches, he/she is out. If the batter fouls off the fifth pitch, he is allowed another pitch until he hits, swings and misses or does not attempt a swing. The adult pitcher must pitch underhand.

5. Dead Ball Areas: Play shall be called dead when:
   • All advancement of runners is, in the judgment of the umpire, halted.
• The ball is thrown outside the fence, play becomes dead and each runner is entitled to one extra base.
• If a batted ball hits the adult pitcher, it is considered a dead ball and no pitch.

6. Base Runners:
• Stealing is not permitted.
• Runners must stay in contact with the base until the pitch reaches home plate.
• Penalty for leaving early is an out.
• On an overthrow the baserunner may advance one base.

7. There is no appeal in this league. Any runner who misses a base or leaves a base early when tagging up on a fly ball will be called out by the umpire when play stops.

8. Run and Time Limit: For the first three (3) innings a maximum of four (4) runs is allowed. For innings four (4) through six (6) six (6) runs are allowed. Time limit is 1:15 minutes. A new inning shall not start after one hour and ten minutes.

9. Game: A complete game shall be six (6) innings if time permits. Official time is kept by the Score keeper and the Umpire In Chief.

10. Defense: Teams will place 10 players on defense, using 4 outfielders and have free defensive substitution. A missing infielder is not allowed. All standard infielders must play even or behind the base paths except pitcher and catcher. Outfielders must play 15 feet behind infielder. After ball has been hit and play begins, defensive players must not be allowed in the base paths. The catcher will wear full catcher’s gear.

11. Equipment: The softball will be an 11” .47 core yellow optic ball. Helmets must have face mask and chin strap. See Dizzy Dean regulations for bats. No metal cleats are allowed.

12. Starting and Ending Games: Team may have nine (9) players to begin a game and must end with eight (8). An out will be charged in the spot of the lineup for the missing players.

13. Infield Fly Rule: **Does not apply to this division.**

14. On – Field Coaches: There shall be a limit of four (4) coaches per team allowed on the playing field/dugout area during a game. The offensive team will have one (1) coach in the first base box, one (1) coach in the third base box and one (1) coach pitching. The defensive team may not have coaches on the field of play.

15. Other: All players present at game time and who are eligible to play will be placed in the batting order. Free defensive substitution is allowed. The umpire, based on his/her judgment, shall call out any runner who misses a base or leaves a base early when play becomes dead. A request may be made to confer with the umpire but that is completely at their discretion.

V. **9 & 10 Softball Rules**

The Dizzy Dean Softball Association is the governing body, except where noted in this manual. **Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them.**
1. **Time Limit**: A regulation game will be six (6) innings. Time limit is 1:25 minutes. Extra innings are allowed provided there is still time remaining. If it is a tie after the last inning or time is called, it remains a tie – if time does not permit otherwise. The goal is to provide as much playing time as possible for the participants. Coaches who purposely stall or delay will be subject to disciplinary action. Time will be kept by the Official Scorekeeper and Umpire In Chief.

2. **Run Limit**: For the first three (3) innings a maximum of four (4) runs is allowed. For innings four (4) through six (6) six (6) runs are allowed.

3. **Base Distance**: 60 feet

4. **Pitching Distance**: 35 feet

5. **Pitching “Modified”**: All pitchers, for this division, can pitch in a modified form (half wind up) or from a true full wind up. This division has been created in the attempt to develop our young pitchers vs. taking away their strong points.

6. **Catching Equipment**: Mask, helmet, throat protector, chest protector and shin guards required.

7. **Batter/Runners**: No walks allowed. When a batter gets four (4) balls the coach is then allowed to throw 2 pitches to the batter. She will either put the ball in play or it is an out. Stealing is permitted but only one base at a time. They may not advance to the next base via an error by the defense during the same play or any other mishap. Also, at no time will a runner be allowed to steal home – even on a wild pitch. Runners may only steal after the ball crosses home plate (unlike the 12U Division which is after the release – DO NOT get this confused).

8. **Regulations**: A team will use four (4) outfielders. Bunting is permitted. Courtesy runners are allowed for pitcher and catcher provided they are not already in the game. A legal pitch must begin with both feet on the rubber. The first step must be forward, toward the catcher. The pitch must be thrown underhanded. A double base at first is mandatory. Facemasks on helmets are mandatory. Dropped third strike rule is not in effect. Batter is out on strike three whether catcher holds the ball or not.

9. **Equipment**: The softball will be an 11” .47 core yellow optic ball. Face masks and chinstraps are mandatory for batters.

**W. 11 & 12 Softball Rules**

The Dizzy Dean Softball Association is the governing body, except where noted in this manual. Players will be allowed to keep their uniforms issued to them.

1. **Time Limit**: A regulation game will be six (6) innings. Time limit is 1:25 minutes. Extra innings are allowed provided there is still time remaining. If it is a tie after the last inning or time is called, it remains a tie – if time does not permit otherwise. The goal is to provide as much playing time as possible for the participants. Coaches who purposely stall or delay will be subject to disciplinary action. Time will be kept by the official scorekeeper and Umpire In Chief.
2. Run Limit: There will be a maximum of five (5) runs per inning allowed. When a team scores 5 runs, regardless of the number of outs or base runners, the half inning is over. The game will be called after the opposing team has been numerically eliminated by the run rule.

3. Base Distance: 60 feet

4. Pitching Distance: 40 feet

5. Catching Equipment: Mask, helmet, throat protector, chest protector and shin guards required.

6. Regulations: Stealing home is permitted. Base runners may not attempt to steal until the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand. Only three in the outfield allowed. Dropped third strike rule is in effect. ASA pitching and substitution rules will apply.

7. Equipment: The softball will be a 12”.47 core yellow optic ball or equivalent. Face masks and chinstraps are mandatory for batters.

8. Other: The infield fly rule is in effect. Missed bases will be an appeal play. Teams will play ten (10) players.

V. Coaches

A. Responsibilities and Expectations:

1. A coach should be enthusiastic without being intimidating. He or she should be sensitive to the children’s feelings and genuinely enjoy spending time with them. He or she should be dedicated to serving children and understand that youth sports provides physical and emotional growth for participants. Remember, youth sports are for the children.

2. A coach needs to realize that he or she is a teacher, not a drill sergeant. He or she should help children learn and work to improve their skills. Personal gains are never a consideration. The job does not depend on winning. The best interest of the child transforms into the best interests of the game.

3. The safety and welfare of the children can never be compromised. A coach will consider these factors above all others.

4. A coach needs a tremendous amount of patience. Don’t push children beyond limits in regards to practice. Children have many daily pressures and the youth sports experience should not be one of them. Playing sports is meant to be fun.

5. A coach should care more about the players as people than as athletes. The youth sports program is a means to an end, not an end to itself.
6. A coach should encourage his players to dream and set lofty goals. It is important to remain positive and refrain from discouraging remarks. Negative comments are remembered far more often than positive affirmations.

7. A coach needs to remember that the rules of the game are designed to protect the participants, as well as to set a standard for competition. He or she should never circumvent or take advantage of the rules by teaching deliberate misconduct. A coach who puts his or her opponents’ team at risk should not be involved with children.

8. A coach should be the first person to demonstrate good sportsmanship. He or she should take a low profile during the game and allow the kids to be the center of attention.

9. Parents and players place a lot of trust and confidence in the coach. The coach has an important role in molding the athletic experience of the child.

10. A coach can measure success by the respect he or she gets from the players, regardless of victories or defeats. Children who mature socially and physically while participating in sports are the best indication of good coaching.

11. A coach must always be early, be prepared and make it fun! It is your leadership as a coach that children will remember over the games themselves.

12. All coaches will be required to wear Gainesville Parks and Recreation photo I.D.’s at all practices and games.

B. **Section 11:9 – Risk/Safety Management/Child Abuse**

1. The Board has adopted a Risk Management Policy which is contained in the Risk Management Manual incorporated into this policy manual by reference.

2. Suspected Child Abuse Reporting:

   a. **Purpose:** To provide guidance to employees and volunteers regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse as mandated by Georgia State Law.

   b. **Introduction:** Employees and volunteers in a public organization providing recreational programs to children who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused are required by Georgia State Law to report or cause reports of that abuse to be made to the proper authorities.

   I. **How to Report Child Abuse:**

      If the child is in immediate danger:

      1. **Call 911 immediately**
      2. Once the police have been contacted, notify your immediate supervisor.
      3. The immediate supervisor will notify the GPRA Director or, in the absence of the Director, the Deputy Director.
      4. The employee or volunteer who made the initial observation will complete a written **Report of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect** and submit to DFCS with a copy to the GPRA administrative office within 24 hours. (Appendix No. 1)

   II. If the abuse is not actively on-going and the child is not in immediate danger:

      1. Notify your immediate supervisor
2. The immediate supervisor will notify the GPRA Director or in the absence of the Director, the Deputy Director.

3. The employee or volunteer who made the initial observation will contact the Hall County Department of Family & Children Services.
   i. On Monday – Friday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, contact the Hall County Department of Family and Children Services office at 770-532-5298.
   ii. At all other times, contact 911

4. The employee or volunteer who made the initial observation will complete a written Report of Suspected Child Abuse and submit to DFCS with a copy to the GPRA administrative office within 24 hours (Appendix 24)

III. Written Report of Suspected Child Abuse: Employees and volunteers who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused shall complete the Report of Suspected Child Abuse (Appendix 24) for submittal to the Department of Family and Children Services within 24 hours of filing an oral report.

IV. Training: All employees and volunteers who interact closely with children through their work, including but not limited to, camp counselors, class instructors and youth sports coaches will receive training, as a part of their orientation, on the signs of abuse and how to report it.

Such training will include:
   a) An overview of the Georgia state law on Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse.
   b) Definitions and indicators of child abuse according to the Georgia Department of Human Resources.
   c) Procedures as outlined in this policy for reporting suspected child abuse.
   d) Directions on how to complete and submit the written Report of Suspected Child Abuse.
   e) All employees and volunteers who interact closely with children through their work are never to be alone with a child for any reason.

C. Coaches’ Code of Conduct & Code of Ethics

1. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of a personal desire to win.

   Expected Behavior:
   - Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with league officials, game officials, parents and spectators.
   - Including all players in team activities without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, body type, national origin, ancestry, disability, ability, or any other legally protected classification.
   - Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators with dignity and respect.
   - Playing all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league and the spirit of those rules.
   - Encouraging youth to participate in other sports and activities to promote all aspects of their development.
   - Allowing reasonable absences from practice.
2. I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group.

**Expected Behavior:**
- Recognizing the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and well-being.
- Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team and to remain involved in sports.
- Recognizing that some physical tasks, drills and demands are not appropriate for all youth.
- Recognizing that youth may vary greatly in physical, social and emotional maturation and considering these factors when setting up competitions and when interacting with youth.

3. I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players.

**Expected Behavior:**
- Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions.
- Protecting players from sexual molestation, assault and physical or emotional abuse.
- Correcting or avoiding unsafe practice or playing conditions.
- Using appropriate safety equipment necessary to protect all players.
- Seeing that the players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under the coach’s care.

4. I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players.

**Expected Behavior:**
- Keeping basic first aid supplies available in all practice and game situations.
- Recognizing and administering proper first aid to an injured player.
- Demonstrating concern for an injured player, notifying parents and cooperating with medical authorities.
- Protecting the players’ well-being by removing them from activity when injured and not returning them to activity if they are compromised by injury.

5. I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players.

**Expected Behavior:**
- Establishing practice plans that are interesting, varied, productive and aimed at improving all players’ skills and individual abilities.
- Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player.
- Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.
6. **I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all my players.**

   **Expected Behavior:**
   - Adopting the position, teaching and demonstrating that it is our basic moral code to treat others as we would like to be treated.
   - Abiding by and supporting the rules of the game as well as the spirit of the rules.
   - Providing an environment conducive to fair and equitable competition.
   - Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to promote, teach and expect sportsmanship and fair play.

7. **I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all Gainesville Parks and Recreation youth sports events.**

   **Expected Behavior:**
   - Being alcohol and drug free at all team activities or in the presence of your players.
   - Refraining from the use of any type of tobacco products at all team activities or in the presence of your players.
   - Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug or tobacco products to any of your players.
   - Encouraging parents to refrain from the public use of tobacco products or alcohol at team activities.

8. **I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players.**

   **Expected Behavior:**
   - Becoming knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies.
   - Teaching and requiring compliance of these rules among players.

9. **I will use those coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach.**

   **Expected behavior:**
   - Teaching techniques that reduce the risk of injury to both the coach’s own players and their opponents.
   - Discouraging illegal contact or intentional dangerous play and administering swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity.

10. **I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults.**

    **Expected Behavior:**
    - Maintaining a positive, helpful and supportive attitude.
    - Exercising your authority/influence to control the behavior of the fans and spectators.
• Exhibiting gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
• Accepting and adhering to all league rules and policies related to the participation of adults and youth.
• Fulfilling the expected role of a youth coach to adopt a “children first” philosophy.
• Allowing and encouraging the players to listen, learn and play hard within the rules.
• Placing the emphasis on fun and participation.

**D. Enforcement of the Code Of Conduct**

Gainesville Parks and Recreation is dedicated to raising the Standard of service to youth in sports through the enforcement of this Code of Conduct among its membership.

This Code of Conduct defines the expectations for adults serving as coaches in youth sports and provides the tools to be used by GPRA and the City of Gainesville, when necessary, to check behavior and to respond with resolve to protect all children from the psychological, emotional, physical or social abuses that can be perpetrated against them by youth sport coaches.

GPRA firmly believes that for the sports experience to be positive, safe and a learning experience for youth, volunteer coaches must be trained and held accountable for their behavior when working with and around children. Every coach is required to sign and adhere to a Coaches’ Code of Ethics Pledge. The **Code of Conduct** has been developed to help explain how each of the “canons” of the Code of Ethics should be manifested in the actions and behaviors of an GPRA volunteer coach.

It is the duty of Gainesville Parks & Recreation to respond to complaints lodged against a volunteer coach that has allegedly violated the Code of Ethics. This is accomplished by initiating the “Complaint against a Coach Procedure.” The purpose of this procedure is to hear the complaints and to determine what, if any, action should be taken towards correcting the member coach’s behavior. In order to provide the City the flexibility to take appropriate action when a GPRA volunteer coach is found to have violated the Coaches’ Code of Ethics, a range of possible actions has been developed to accompany the Code of Conduct.

1. **Possible actions include:**
   a. Warning to and/or Apology from the coach
   b. Probation
   c. One Game Suspension
   d. Multiple Game Suspension
   e. Season Suspension
   f. Permanent Revocation of Certification

When reviewing a complaint and deciding what action is the most appropriate in a given situation, the administrators must take into consideration various extenuating circumstances.

2. **Factors that might suggest a more lenient sanction include:**
   a. First Offense
   b. Remorse
   c. Apparent Desire to Reform
   d. Other Good Coaching Attributes
   e. Dedication to Youth Sports
3. **Factors that might suggest a harsher sanction include:**
   a. Child Endangerment
   b. Violation of Law
   c. Prior Complaints/Review Action
   d. Lack of Remorse
   e. Number of Ethics Canons Violated
   f. Number of Expected Behaviors Violated
   g. Breach of Duties as a Role Model
   h. Extraordinarily Poor Judgment Around Children

E. **Complaint against a Coach Procedures**

When Gainesville Parks & Recreation receives a complaint about a member coach, the Agency will:

1. Gather information and eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from everyone involved to determine if a violation of the letter or intent of the Coaches’ Code of Ethics Pledge has occurred. This may include the site supervisor, game officials, and other coaches, parents and children.

2. Require the member coach to attend a meeting to address the complaint and to offer his/her side of the incident.

3. The Youth Athletic Administrators under supervision of the Recreation Division Manager have the authority to determine the severity of the situation and whether or not the affected coach has violated the expected behaviors outlined under each of the canons of the Code of Ethics Pledge that comprise the Code of Conduct.

4. The Youth Athletic Administrators, after approval from the Recreation Division Manager, have the authority to enforce the appropriate range of disciplinary actions outlined in the Coaches’ Code of Conduct.

5. If the member coach appeals the decision made by the Youth Athletic Administrators, a local review committee will be organized. It shall consist of three to five impartial, uninvolved individuals who understand the spirit and intent of the Coaches’ Code of Ethics Pledge. Suggested committee members may include member(s) of the recreation advisory board, league administrators, coaches or chapter directors from another league or community that understand the Code of Ethics Pledge. Again, impartiality is essential when selecting the review committee.

What is the formal appeal process?

The coach has two (2) business days from the delivery of the decision to make such an appeal. He or she will be notified that there is a formal appeal process. If an appeal does occur, it must be done in writing to the Youth Athletic Administrators and the Recreation Division Manager.

F. **Coaches Ejected from a Game by an Administrator, Official or Umpire**
When a coach is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field and park immediately and take no further part in that game. Any coach ejected from a game is automatically suspended for their next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site from which they are suspended. If any further altercations/arguments are made prior to leaving the premises, a multiple game suspension or expulsion is possible. There is no appeal process following an ejection.

G. **Philosophy of Youth Sports**

**Standard #1 – Proper Sports Environment**
Parents must consider and carefully choose the proper environment for their child, including the appropriate age and development for participation, the type of sport, the rules in the sport, the age range of the participants, and the proper level of physical and emotional stress.

**Standard #2 – Programs Based on Well-Being of Child**
Parents must select youth sports programs that are developed and organized to enhance the emotional, physical, social and educational well-being of children.

**Standard #3 – Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol-Free Environment**
Parents must demand a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment for their children.

**Standard #4 – Part of Child’s Life**
Parents must recognize that youth sports are only a small part of a child’s life.

**Standard #5 – Training**
Parents must insist that coaches be trained and certified.

**Standard #6 – Parents’ Active Role**
Parents must make a serious effort to take an active role in the youth sports experience of the child providing positive support as a spectator, coach, league administrator and/or caring parent.

**Standard #7 – Positive Role Models**
Parents must be a positive role model exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices, and home while giving positive reinforcement to their child and support their child’s coaches.

**Standard #8 – Parental Commitment**
Parents must demonstrate their commitment to their child’s youth sports experience by annually signing a parental code of ethics.

**Standard #9 – Safe Playing Situations**
Parents must insist on safe playing facilities, playing situations and proper first aid applications, should the need arise.

**Standard #10 – Equal Play Opportunity**
Parents, coaches, and league administrators must provide equal sports play opportunity for all youth regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.
Standard #11 – Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol-Free Adults
Parents as coaches, fans, and league administrators must be drug, tobacco and alcohol-free at youth sports activities.

H. Coaching Youth Athletes

Ten Tips for Coaching Youth Sports

1. Encourage Players to Get Dirty
   (Dive, Tackle, Slide, etc. - Coach Them)
2. Set Clear Goals
   - Facilitate progress and focus their energies.
3. Evaluate Progress Regularly
   - They need to know what they have achieved.
4. Be Mindful of Social Dynamics
   - Cliques and power dynamics are there every day.
5. Take a Process-Oriented Approach
   - Fundamental skills and strategies, not statistics, wins and losses.
6. Respect Each Players Contribution
   - Find each players strength and encourage their development.
7. Create Expectations
   - Before the season begins, let them know what direction you’re headed.
8. Set an Example of Sportsmanship
   - Treatment of officials, staff, opponents and fans - by both players and parents. (The Circle of Criticism.)
9. Help Parents Understand Their Supporting Roles
   - Parental support is key, however demand autonomy in coaching practices and decisions.
10. Focus on Fun
    - After all, that’s what playing is all about, right?

VI. Participants

A. Responsibilities and Expectations

Participation in youth sports programs can have a lasting and meaningful effect on children’s lives. Therefore, it is the goal of Gainesville Parks and Recreation to provide the highest quality of athletic programs to ensure that a child’s experience with sports is a positive one. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved, including the participant, to make this happen.

Therefore, the City has established the following responsibilities for participants to adhere to:

- Players will listen to their coaches and be respectful of their elders.
- Players will take care of the facilities, equipment, and uniforms, which they are given
- Players will make sure to eat the right foods and drink plenty of water before and after practices and games.
- Players will avoid all types of taunting and belittling remarks to their teammates or opponents.
• Players will show good sportsmanship at all times, win or lose.
• Players will not make sports a priority over schoolwork or family.
• Players will refrain from horseplay and all other dangerous activities, in which they may become hurt.
• Players will participate for the love of the game and competition and not to win at all costs.

B. Players Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to be positive about my youth sports experience and accept responsibility for my participation by following this Players’ Code of Ethics Pledge:

• I will encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials and parents at every game and practice by demonstrating good sportsmanship.
• I will attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach if I cannot.
• I will expect to receive a fair and just amount of playing time.
• I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.
• I will treat my coaches, other players, officials and fans with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
• I deserve to have fun during my sports experience and will alert parents or coaches if it stops being fun!
• I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
• I will encourage my parents to be involved with my team in some capacity because it’s important to me.
• I will do my very best in school.
• I will remember that sports are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

C. Corrective Action Policy

Players who fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct or do not live up to their responsibilities or expectations will be subject to disciplinary action. Gainesville Parks and Recreation does not want a problem child to spoil the experience of youth sports for the other children in the programs. Therefore, the City has instituted a Corrective Action Policy to establish appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

The Corrective Action Policy is a guide to assist coaches and the City in operating a quality program. The Corrective Action Policy is a four-step system designed to forgive a mistake but to firmly address chronic misbehavior.

For violations of the Code of Conduct or Expectations, the following steps will be followed:

**Step 1 – Verbal Warning** – Coach will discuss undesirable conduct with player and parents and stress that this behavior will not be tolerated.

**Step 2 – Period Suspension** - Coach will bench the offending player for a specified period of time during a game when he/she should be playing. Coach will inform League Supervisor of the problem and why the child is sitting out.
Step 3 – Game Suspension - Coach will bench the offending player for 1 entire game when he/she should be playing. Coach will inform League Supervisor of the 3rd offense, at which time the player and the parent(s) must attend a meeting with the Coach and League Supervisor before the player is allowed to resume playing. The player will be warned that the next offense will result in his/her expulsion from the league.

Step 4 – League Expulsion - The participant on the 4th offense will be expelled from the league and no refund will be given. The parent will then have to make a formal request to be reinstated into this league. The child and parent(s) will then have to meet with the League Supervisor and the Recreation Division Manager prior to the start of the season to determine if the child is capable of playing within the guidelines of this program.

These guidelines are not absolute in dealing with behavioral problems. Severe situations could merit harsher sanctions against the participant.

VII. Parents/ Spectators

A. Responsibilities and Expectations

In order for a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, league administrators, spectators and especially parents. Parents and spectators have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in Gainesville Parks and Recreation Athletic Programs:

1. Parents have a responsibility to their children:
To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child’s performance and effort. This is absolutely essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, showing proper sportsmanship at all times and refraining from negativity of any kind.

2. Parents have a responsibility to the coaches:
Coach’s volunteer their personal time to spend it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you don’t agree with a coach, you are expected to tell that coach, BUT make certain it is done at the right time and place and not in front of the children. Parents are also expected to drop off and pick up their children on time for games and practice, and it is highly encouraged for parents to stay and participate in order to maintain control of the group and to assist the coach as needed.

3. Parents/Spectators have a responsibility to the league:
League administrators cannot be at all games and practices of all teams. Therefore, in order to maintain the protective shell around these programs, it is essential for parents/spectators to report abusive behavior or any other situation that needs to be addressed to the league administrator. This is the only way that these programs can achieve their intended goals.

4. Parents/Spectators have a responsibility to other parents:
Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from a child’s performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent/spectator should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child’s performance. Good plays should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.

5. **Parents/Spectators have a responsibility to themselves:**
   It is your responsibility to enjoy watching your child and other children participate and learn. The joy and pride associated with watching children participate in sports should be experienced to the fullest, because a lifetime of memories is being created before your very eyes.

B. **Parent/Spectator Code of Ethics**

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this Parents’ Code of Ethics Pledge:

1. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports event.

2. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.

3. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.

4. I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

5. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and will refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

6. I will remember that the game is for youth – not adults.

7. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

8. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, ability or religion.

9. I will require that my child’s coach be trained in the responsibilities of being a youth sports coach and that the coach upholds the Coaches’ Code of Ethics.

10. I will read the Standards for Youth Sports and do what I can to help all youth sports organizations implement and enforce them.

C. **Corrective Action Policy**

Parents who do not follow the Code of Ethics will be subject to a Corrective Action Policy. It is the philosophy of Gainesville Parks and Recreation that parents should not spoil the experience of participation in youth sports for the children. Furthermore, the City will never punish a child for
the actions of his or her parent(s). Therefore, the following guidelines have been established for addressing problem parents.

For violations of the Code of Ethics or Responsibilities and Expectations, the following steps will be followed:

**Step 1 – Verbal Warning** – League Administrator/Coach will discuss undesirable conduct with parents and stress that this behavior will not be tolerated. Coach will document this conversation and give to league administrator.

**Step 2 – Written Warning** - League Administrator, Coach or Official will notify the league of continued breach of Code of Ethics and league will bring parent(s) in for a meeting to discuss actions and what the proper behavior is. Furthermore, there will be a formal letter of reprimand given to parent(s) stating that the next offense will lead to parent being banned from the sporting event venue for a period of one game.

**Step 3 – Game Suspension** - League Administrator will ban the parent from attending the next scheduled contest and another letter will be given to parent(s) stating that the next offense will lead to parent being banned from all future contests.

**Step 4 – Season Suspension** - The parent(s) will be banned from attending all league contests after a 4th offense. The parent(s) will then have to make a formal request to be re-instated into this league. The parent(s) will then have to meet with the League Supervisor and the Recreation Division Manager prior to the start of the season to determine if the parent(s) is capable of behaving within the spirit and letter of the guidelines of this program.

These guidelines are not absolute in dealing with behavioral problems. Severe situations could merit harsher sanctions against the parent(s)

Please Remember

1. **These are kids!**
2. **This is a Game!**
3. **Coaches Volunteer!**
4. **Umpires are Human!**

**VIII. Administrators and Officials**

A. **Responsibilities and Expectations**
Gainesville Parks and Recreation is dedicated to raising community standards in youth sports. In order to do so, we must hold ourselves accountable by staying abreast on current topics and trends in the recreation industry. Training administrators and officials is essential in maintaining a level of professionalism and credibility in youth sports.

B. Administrators’ Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to provide support to all youth sports programs in my community, to administer youth sports programs with professionalism and in the best interests of the children involved by following the Youth Sports Administrators’ Code of Ethics:

- I will run youth sports programs for the children involved, not the adults.
- I will ensure that I am knowledgeable in the area of youth sports administration.
- I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for all participants.
- I will provide support for coaches, officials and parents to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
- I will require all coaches and officials to be trained in the responsibilities of being a volunteer within the organization and that they uphold the Codes of Ethics.
- I will implement and enforce the National Standards for Youth Sports.
- I promise to keep informed about current issues involving youth sports programs.

C. Officials’ Code of Ethics

I will hereby pledge to live up to the high standards of ethics and training for an Official by following the Officials’ Code of Ethics.

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support of all players, coaches, fellow officials and league administrators at all times.
- I will ensure that I am knowledgeable of the rules of each sport I officiate, and apply those rules fairly to all participants, teams and coaches.
- I will not allow personal friendships and associations to influence my decisions during a contest.
- I will refrain from the use of tobacco and alcohol products when in the youth sports environment.
- I will remember that youth sports are an opportunity for children to learn and have fun.
- I will place their safety above all else.

IX. Appendix
CITY OF GAINESVILLE
GAINESVILLE PARKS & RECREATION
REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Within 24 hours of making an oral report, a mandated reporter shall complete and submit a written report to the DFCS.

Please print or type.

_________________________________________  □ Male  □ Female  Age or Birth Date
Child’s Name

____________________________________________
Child’s Address

__________________________________________  Address  Phone Number
Name of Parent or Guardian

____________________________________________
Where is Child Staying Present if Not at Home  Phone Number

__________________________________________  Name of DFCS Work to Whom Oral
Date of Oral Report  Date and Time
of Report was Made  of Suspected
Date of Oral Report  of Suspected
of Suspected Abuse

Name of Suspected Perpetrator, if Known  Relationship to Child  Address or Phone #, if known

Nature and Extent of the Child’s Injuries, Maltreatment or Neglect:

Information Concerning Any Previous Injuries, Maltreatment or Neglect:

Describe the Circumstances in Which the Injuries, Maltreatment or Neglect Came to be Known to the Reporter:

What Action, if any, Has Been Taken to Treat, Provide Shelter or Otherwise Assist the Child?:

Gainesville Parks and Recreation Baseball and Softball Youth Handbook  Page 40
Indicate on the diagram to the right the areas in which physical injury is evident, using “X” to indicate the location of superficial injuries, “O” to indicate the location of deep injuries and “shaded areas” to indicate areas of apparent burn. Beside each injury or apparent burn, please note the color, size, pattern, texture, and degree of pain.

Appendix 1

YOUTH WORKER/VOLUNTEER POLICY

I. INTENT:
The intent of this policy is to protect the youth being served by volunteers and contracted staff in youth programs offered by Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency.

II. POLICY:

It is the Policy of the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency Board that all individuals who work with or have any contact with youth under the age of 18, in the capacity of Coach, Sports Official, Volunteer, Instructor, Counselor or Aide with any activity organized by or in conjunction with the City of Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency, must successfully complete an application process which includes a Background Check and be approved or denied by the Director and/or his designee on a final basis.

III. PROCEDURE:

A. A Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency Volunteer/Youth Worker Application and Consent for Background Check must be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Agency. Only fully completed applications will be considered, and applicants will be required to attest to the truth of all statements submitted. No individual shall be denied the right to file an application for volunteer service or considered for work with youth for any open position.

B. After receipt of the application an interview with the applicant will be scheduled and conducted by the Supervisor of the program, a background investigation, including but not limited to checks with the Georgia Crime Information Center (GCIC), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), state sex offender registry, reference check and criminal history are conducted. The results of the background investigation shall be reviewed by the supervisor of the particular Parks and Recreation program and a recommendation made to the Director and/or his designee as to the approval or denial of Volunteer/Youth Worker Status. All information gathered in the background investigation will be kept confidential except as required by law. (Gainesville Parks and Recreation has contracted with SSCI for Background Checks).

IV. DISQUALIFICATION:

CRITERIA FOR EXCLUSION

A person should be disqualified and prohibited from serving as a volunteer if the person has been found guilty of the following crimes:

For purposes of this policy; Guilty shall mean that a person was found guilty following a trial, entered a guilty plea, entered a no contest plea accompanied by a court finding of guilt (regardless of adjudication), or received court directed programs in lieu of conviction.

SEX OFFENSES

All Sex Offenses – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.
Examples include: child molestation, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sodomy, prostitution, solicitation, indecent exposure, etc.

FELONIES
All Felony Violence – Regardless of the amount of time since offense.
Examples include: murder, manslaughter, aggravated assault, kidnapping, robbery, aggravated Burglary, etc.

All Felony offenses other than violence or sex within the past 10 years.
Examples include: drug offenses, theft, embezzlement, fraud, child endangerment, etc.

MISDEMEANORS

All misdemeanor violence offenses within the past 7 years
Examples include: simple assault, battery, domestic violence, hit & run, etc.

One or more misdemeanor DRUG offenses within the past 5 years.

Two or more misdemeanor ALCOHOL offenses within the past 5 years.
Examples include: driving under the influence, simple drug possession, drunk and disorderly, public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia, etc.

Any other misdemeanor within the past 5 years that would be considered a potential danger to children or is directly related to the functions of that volunteer.

PENDING CASES
It is recommended that anyone who has been charged for any of the disqualifying offenses or for cases pending in court should not be permitted to volunteer until the official adjudication of the case.

V. APPROVAL

Any applicant whose records fail to show that he/she has been “Sanctioned” or is currently charged in any pending case shall be approved, unless denied based on some other policy or disposition of the City of Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency. Approval shall be valid for a period not to exceed 12 months.

VI. ORIENTATION

Upon satisfactorily completing the application and screening process, and approval of volunteer/youth worker assignment or employment each volunteer/youth worker applicant will complete an orientation session specifically designed for the position in which the applicant will be placed.

Appendix 2

YOUTH SPORTS VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

DESCRIPTION: *Coach of male and/or female athletes, ages 18 and under. *You will be considered a role model for young athletes assigned to your team; therefore sportsmanship, fair play, and full participation are all mandatory.

RESPONSIBILITIES: *Plan and supervise games, practices, and events. *Supervise assistant coaches, managers, or team parents. *Teach the young athlete the fundamentals of the sport. *Encourage the involvement of the parents in the sport. *Schedule and conduct parent and other necessary meetings. *Provide a safe and fun environment for the children. *Learn and follow all league rules, policies, and procedures. *Give each player equal playing time. *Put the feelings of the players ahead of your desire to win. *Attend all league functions and participate in league activities. *Performs other related duties as required. * Uphold and support staff decisions

QUALIFICATIONS: *Successfully complete the application procedure and pass a background check. *Attend any scheduled coaching interviews or meetings. *Successfully complete the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) Certification Program prior to the beginning of the season. *Be enthusiastic! *Not want to win at all costs. *Must be patient, especially with children. *Be organized. Organization is critical to your success! *Be dependable.

INFORMATION: As a volunteer coach, you are treated by local, state, and federal law as being an unpaid employee of the agency which you are associated with; therefore, you must conduct yourself in the same manner as you would your own job. In the same respect, you will receive the same treatment, aside from compensation and benefits, as the employees of Gainesville Parks and Recreation.

I agree that I have read and understand the above job description of a youth sports league coaching position, and that I accept the terms of the job description.

__________________________
Applicant Signature
__________________________
Name (Printed Clearly)
__________________________
Date

Please Note: Failure to sign this page will render the application incomplete and unacceptable.
All applications are evaluated based on individual merit. Information must be complete so all applications can be given equitable consideration. Applications must be printed or written legibly. You must sign and date your application in ink. Incomplete applications will be rejected. Applications are valid for thirty days and kept on file for one calendar year.

NOTE: City of Gainesville will conduct an extensive background check contacting past employers, schools attended, criminal history, and possibly a credit history. Please note any employers you do not want contacted.

Please specify your interest or position desired:

Email Address:

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Special professional training, skills, hobbies:

Special Certification (i.e. CPR, Medical, etc.):

Community Affiliation (Clubs, Service Organizations, etc.):

Previous Volunteer/Work Experience (Include year):

Do you have children in the program?  Yes  No
If yes, give the child’s name and program’s name:

Do you have a valid driver’s license?  Yes  No  Driver’s License #____________________ State__________

Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to any crime(s)?  Yes  No  (A yes WILL NOT automatically disqualify you.)
If yes, explain:

Have you ever been refused participation in any program(s)?  Yes  No
If yes, explain:

Please list three references, at least one of which has knowledge of your participation in a volunteer capacity:

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*The Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency is an equal opportunity employer and provides fair and equal employment opportunities to all applicants for employment and employees without regard to race, color, religion, natural origin, citizenship status, age, sex, disability, veteran’s status or political affiliation.
Volunteer/Youth Services Application

PLEASE READ THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION BELOW, ASK FOR CLARIFICATION IF NEEDED

The undersigned has applied for volunteer/youth services work with the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency and hereby authorizes the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency to contact my current and former employers and references for the purpose of acquiring information regarding me; I hereby authorize such employers and references to supply such information verbally or in writing to the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency. In consideration for their furnishing such information, I hereby waive any and all claims against such former employers and references which may arise from their furnishing such information. I understand the Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency has a Substance Abuse Prevention Program which includes drug testing. I agree to comply with applicable policies. I understand that once offered a position I may be required to complete a medical evaluation and drug screening. I understand that once offered a position I may be required to pass a physical examination as a condition of continued volunteer/youth services work.

I certify that the answers given by me to all of the questions on this application are to the best of my knowledge and belief is true and correct. I further affirm that I have not knowingly withheld any facts or circumstances that would detrimentally affect my application for volunteer/youth service work, and I understand that any misleading or incorrect statement may render this application void and would be cause for dismissal, if employed or volunteering.

I AGREE THAT IF ACCEPTED, THE GAINESVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCY OR I MAY TERMINATE MY SERVICE AT ANY TIME WITH OR WITHOUT CAUSE. I UNDERSTAND THAT NO AGENCY POLICY, PRACTICE, PROCEDURE, OR STATEMENT BY ANY AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE SHALL LIMIT OR ALTER THIS AT-WILL VOLUNTEER/YOUTH SERVICES RELATIONSHIP.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE STATEMENTS:

________________________________  __________________________________
SIGNATURE                              DATE

Appendix 4
PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING

The Gainesville Parks & Recreation Agency requires that all teams conduct a “mandatory parent meeting” during the first week of practice. In order for your child to play in the league, it is mandatory that at least one of the parents/guardians attend. Important information such as policy and procedures, safety and first aid, medical alerts, expectations, responsibilities and team rules will be discussed in detail. This meeting is held in order to lay the foundation for open communication among coaches, parents and participants. Don’t forget your handbook!

1) Introduction (Coaches, Players, Parents, Administrators, etc.)
2) Review of Mission Statement
3) **Review and Signing of Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play Agreement**
4) Player’s Responsibilities and Expectations
5) Player’s Code of Ethics
6) Player’s Corrective Action Policy
7) Parent’s Responsibilities and Expectations
8) Parent’s Code of Ethics
9) Parent’s Corrective Action Policy
10) Special Needs (i.e., disability, behavior disorder, medical alert, etc.)
11) Following the Chain of Command (coach-league administrator-manager)
12) Practice and Game Attendance and Drop Off/Pick Up
13) Inclement Weather Procedures
14) AED Locations
15) Equipment and Uniforms
16) Methods of Communication-OPEN LINE AT ALL TIMES
17) Circles of Criticism and Affirmation
18) Practice and Game Schedules
19) Open Discussion

**REMEMBER THAT YOUTH SPORTS IS FOR KIDS!**
GAINESVILLE PARKS & RECREATION

“GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY AGREEMENT”

By participating as an Administrator, Coach, Official, Parent, Player or Spectator
I hereby pledge to encourage youth sports in a positive manner by following the
Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play Agreement:

- I will demonstrate Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play.
- I will promise to make youth sports Fun for everyone.
- I will become Knowledgeable in the rules of the game.
- I will Attend and Participate at every practice/game that I can.
- I will Properly Maintain uniforms, equipment and park facilities.
- I will demand a Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Free environment.
- I will encourage and promote a Safe and Healthy playing environment.
- I will Respect all administrators, coaches, officials, parents, players and spectators.
- I will place the emotional and physical Well Being of the kids ahead of myself.

I WILL REMEMBER THAT YOUTH SPORTS ARE FOR THE KIDS!

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Youth Sports Member Complaint

To be completed by the person making the claim:

Name: _______________________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip: ___________________________________________________________________

Phone: _______________________________________________________________________

This complaint is being filed against: ________________________________________________

Did the member violate the Good Sportsmanship and Fair Play Agreement?

Did the member violate the Code of Ethics Pledge set forth by the NAYS?

Did the member violate any Rules & Regulations governing the sport?

Have you attempted to discuss this issue with the other party before making a formal complaint?

Please specify in detail your concerns and gather information and eyewitness accounts of the event(s) that took place from everyone involved. This information will be used to determine if a violation has occurred.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Appendix 7
YOUTH ATHLETIC EVALUATION FORM

Please indicate by circling the answer or number that best describes your opinion?
1  Poor  2  Fair  3  Good  4  Excellent

1. Is this your first time to participate in a Gainesville Parks & Recreation Agency activity program?
   ___Yes   ___No

2. How did the Agency Personnel with whom you had contact rate?
   Excellent
   Good
   Fair
   Poor

3. How would you rate the quality of the Program?
   Excellent
   Good
   Fair
   Poor

4. In which activity/program did you participate?
   ________________
   ________________
   ________________
   ________________

5. How would you rate the fee for the program?
   Inexpensive
   Fair
   Expensive

6. How would you rate the overall Customer Service you received?
   Excellent
   Good
   Fair
   Poor

7. How would you rate the facilities used?
   Excellent
   Good
   Fair
   Poor

8. Would you recommend this program to a friend?
   ___Yes   ___No
   If no, please explain your concern.
   ______________________________
   ______________________________

9. Did your child have a fun experience overall?
   ___Yes   ___No

10. How would you rate your coach’s ability for discussing any types of problems or issues with parents?
    Excellent
    Good
    Fair
    Poor

11. How would you rate your overall experience with us?
    1    2    3    4

12. Please rate your coach’s ability to exemplify good sportsmanship at all times?
    1    2    3    4

13. How concerned is your child’s coach about player safety?
    1    2    3    4

14. How knowledgeable is your coach on the rules of the sport they are coaching?
    1    2    3    4

15. How good of a job does your child’s coach do running practice drills that keep all players involved at all times?
    1    2    3    4

Thank you for your time and suggestions. Please return this evaluation to our staff, office, or drop it in a mailbox.

Appendix 8

Gainesville Parks and Recreation Baseball and Softball Youth Handbook  Page 50
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF YOUTH SPORTS HANDBOOK

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy and/or read Gainesville Parks & Recreation Agency's Youth Sports Handbook for the 2017 Baseball/Softball season. I understand it contains important information on the agency’s policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and benefits, that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with the material in the handbook, and that my coaching conduct will be governed by its contents. The most recent version of this handbook can always be viewed at online at:

http://www.gainesville.org/youth-athletics

__________________________________________________  _____________________
Volunteer Coaches’ Signature          Date

Received by: ______________________________________________

Appendix 9
Thank you for selecting Gainesville Parks and Recreation for your youth sports experience!