

# City of Jackson Parks and Recreation Dept.

## 2026 Softball Program

- Softball Coordinator:** James Wagner  
(517) 990-6288  
[softball@cityofjackson.org](mailto:softball@cityofjackson.org)  
161 W. Michigan Ave.  
Jackson, MI 49201
- Softballs:** **All Leagues will be using**  
52 core 300 compression Softballs  
Men & Seniors use the 12" ball  
Women use 11" ball
- Bats:** Any bat deemed illegal by USA is NOT allowed in the City of Jackson Softball Leagues. Only bats on the ASA certified list will be legal in league play. Please check the USA Softball of Michigan website for a list of legal bats. Bats again this year must have an approved **2026 sticker** to be used in league play.
- Practice:** Teams may reserve fields for practice beginning Monday, April 1st. Reservations are \$5.00 for one hour, and must be made on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall.
- USA Registration:** With your entry fee, you will be registered with USA Softball of Michigan. Each team will receive a Rules Book and Scorebook.
- New website:** [www.usasoftballmi.org](http://www.usasoftballmi.org)  
**Other websites:** gosoftball.com  
registerUSAsoftball.com

District Commissioner, James Connors, 734-216-678



# LEAGUE PLAN & ENTRY FEE PROCEDURE

<u>ENTRY FEES:</u>	Includes USA Softball of Michigan fee		
\$550	Men	Tuesday & Thursday	14 games
\$450	Men	Sundays	12 games
\$650	Men	Tuesday & Thursday DH	20 games
\$550	Women	Thursdays	14 games
\$650	Senior	Mondays Double Header	20 games
\$450	Co-ed	Mondays and Sundays	12 games

## REGISTER ON LINE

Just scan the QR Code to register online and e-mail your roster to James Wagner at [softball@cityofjackson.org](mailto:softball@cityofjackson.org) or register on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall (161 W. Michigan Avenue) between Tuesday, March 10 thru Monday April 13, 2026.



## ENTRY FEE & UMPIRE FEE

With your entry fee, each team will be registered with USA Softball of Michigan, along with a scorebook and rule book. Since the umpires are not on payroll with the Recreation Dept., they are considered independent contractors. The USA SOM will cover the insurance for each umpire and team that is registered.

**TEAMS WILL NOT BE SCHEDULED UNTIL ENTRY FEES ARE PAID IN FULL**

NOTE: Roster sheets are the responsibility of the manager and MUST BE SIGNED by each player before participating in the softball program.

On game days, each team will have to pay the field umpire \$15.00 each. Since they are independent contractors, they will be collecting each teams' money before the game starts.

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## **FIELD RESERVATIONS:**

1. Reservation weeks begin on Monday and go thru Sunday. You must come to the Recreation Office between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday to reserve a practice field for that week or fields may be reserved on Friday for the following week. **NO PHONE RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** There will be a \$5 fee per hour for use of practice field.
2. Each team may reserve a field twice a week. Reservations will be taken on the hour only, i.e. 6:00, 7:00, 8:00. . .

**SEASON BEGINS SUNDAY, MAY 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026**

## **SCHEDULES:**

Schedules can be picked up at the Recreation Department the week of April 20<sup>th</sup>. Please phone 788-4040 if you would like us to hold your schedules. Schedules will be posted on the City of Jackson website under Parks and Recreation. [www.cityofjackson.org](http://www.cityofjackson.org)

## **RAIN-OUT PROCEDURE:**

Every effort will be made to make up rain out games on your league night. If there is not a way to make up a game on your normal league night, we may have to make up on a Friday. The rainout line is 517-788-4690.

## **STORM POLICY:**

If thunder and lightning are observed or dark clouds are approaching, our umpires have been instructed to stop play and advise everyone involved to seek shelter until playable conditions return. The safest places are a sturdy building or a car. Stay away from metal sheds or under trees. Remember that NO ball game is important enough to risk the danger of being struck by lightning. We can always resume games at a later time.

## **LOCAL TOURNAMENTS:**

Information received by the Recreation Department will be posted at the City Hall Office. Teams are usually notified by mail and/or email when a local tournament is sponsored or information is available in the Sports Section on [www.mlive.com](http://www.mlive.com).

## Jackson Recreation Department

# 2026 Women's Softball

### Players

- A. Must properly and completely fill out roster information.
- B. Must conduct themselves properly with an emphasis on good sportsmanship.

### Teams

- A. Must carry a minimum of 12 players. No maximum number of players.
- B. Players may be added any time, but cannot be released to play with another team. (Once the roster is turned in, that player is with that team the entire season.)
- C. Players signing more than one roster in the same league may be ineligible for the remainder of the season.

### Pre-game

- A. All official line-up cards are to be given to the scorekeeper **ten** minutes prior to game time. Line-up cards provided by Recreation department.
- B. Managers are to use first and last initial when filling out line-up cards.
- C. Teams must be ready to take the infield when the umpire calls for their team.
- D. Infield practice will be allowed only if time permits.
- E. **No batting practice is allowed on the game field at home plate or at the back stop.**
- F. Teams will be permitted to have an infield ball for practice between innings.
- G. Pitchers are allowed 3 warm-up pitches for the first inning and 1 pitch` for the remainder of the game.

### Game

The game is to be 7 innings and play under the rules as published by the Joint Rules Committee on Softball with the following exceptions:

- A. The game will be terminated and official if. . .
  - 1. The home team has a 10 run lead any time after 4 ½ innings.
  - 2. If either team has a 10 run lead after the completion of any succeeding innings.
  - 3. If either team has a 15 run lead after 4 innings.
- B. Maximum 5 run per-inning rule. Once a team has scored 5 runs in an inning it shall take the field on defense.

- C. Last inning of game teams may score as many runs as possible.
- D. Free substitution and everyone on team at game may bat.
- E. Players may request a pinch runner, after reaching base; limited to any player to be used as a pinch runner once per inning. If a pinch runner is on base when her time comes to bat, the player stays on base as a runner and is ruled out as a batter.
- F. Batters will start with a 1 - 1 count. Batters are allowed one foul ball after you have 2 strikes.
- G. Legal pitch is at least 6' to a maximum of 10'
- H. Any players may play on defense in any inning, if available.
- I. All games will have a 1 hour and 10 minute time limit.
- J. The game will be official if 5 or more completed innings have been played or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead.
- K. If after seven innings and the game is tied we will use the International Tie Breaker Rule. The last person to bat will begin the extra inning at second base, no courtesy runner until base runner advances one base. The game will be played until there is a winner.
- L. The umpire must announce last inning unless it is the seventh inning.

### **Forfeit of Game**

- A. Teams forfeit with less than 8 (legal) players 5 minutes after first game time. Game time is forfeit time on succeeding games. Teams may start with 8 (4 men/4 women).
- B. If a team forfeits 2 games, they may be expelled from the league.
- C. Umpires may forfeit a game, if after due warning any rules are willfully broken or the game is made a travesty of.
- D. Team that forfeits the game is responsible for both team umpire fees

### **Conduct**

- A. Any team member having been expelled from one game shall be ineligible to play or participate in his team's next Jackson Recreation game.
- B. Each player is responsible for his or her conduct before, during and after the game.

- C. No hanging jewelry is allowed during play.
- D. Any team who intimidates or uses physical violence toward an umpire, scorekeeper, or league official before, during, or after a game may be suspended indefinitely from the league and any sports sponsored by the Recreation Department.
- E. The Recreation Department, for due cause, can suspend team members and managers.
- F. Teams members may appeal suspension under provision above. They must appeal within once week of the suspension by presenting the request in writing to the Rec. Dept.
- G. Any use of alcohol in dugout, near dugout, bleachers or near field, will result in suspension from that game, and the teams next game.
- H. Any player intentionally colliding with a catcher at home may be subject to automatic ejection. Catchers are not allowed to block the plate or baseline. If a catcher blocks the plate without the ball, obstruction may be called and the catcher is subject to ejection from the game.

### Equipment

- A. No metal spikes allowed. Tennis shoes or multi-purpose rubber soled shoes are recommended.

### Bats

- A. Any bat deemed illegal by USA is not allowed in the City of Jackson Softball Leagues. Only bats on the USA certified list will be legal in our local league. If a bat is not on either list, that bat has yet to be tested and is not yet legal for play. Any player that uses an illegal bat will be declared out and disqualified from that game per USA Rules.
- B. Use of an illegal bat manager and player will be automatically ejected from game.
- C. Any bat which has been altered, the team manager and offending player will receive a 6 game suspension. And must apply in writing for a hearing and reinstatement.

### Softballs

- A. We will be following the USA Rules of hitting the 11 inch softballs. **USA 52 core 300 compression.**
- B. All teams must provide and hit their own ball. A new ball may be put in play only when the existing ball is out of play and at the beginning of a new inning.

- C. **It is the pitchers responsibility** to check to make sure that it a legal ball. If the pitcher has an illegal ball it is a warning to the batting team and the ball is put out of play. If it happens again the batter is out and the ball is put out of play.

## Rules

- A. **Strike Zone:** We will be using the mat behind home plate. Any pitch that hits the mat with the proper arch will be called a strike. **A pitch that hits home plate will be called a strike.**
- B. Pitchers may stand up to 6 feet directly behind pitching rubber to deliver a pitch.
- C. Once the players take their positions at the start of an inning, they must stay at that position for the remainder of that inning. **NO SWITCHING OF POSITIONS ALLOWED.** Exception: The pitcher may be removed from his/her position and cannot re-enter as a pitcher during that inning. The pitcher may re-enter as a pitcher later.
- D. Whenever a walk occurs you must touch all bases. (No cutting across field, skipped bases)
- E. Any player who has to leave a game because of an injury can be scratched from the batting order without a penalty of an out if there is no replacement. The injured player cannot return to the game once they leave. This does not apply to a player who is ejected from a game.
- F. All plays at home plate are force outs, the extended line will be used. Base runners are to cross this line rather than touching home plate.
- G. No rough play and unnecessary collisions will be tolerated.

## PROTEST

- 1.if a team uses an illegal player in a playoff or championship game that team will forfeit per the softball Coorinator, no protest necessary.

# Guidelines for Lightning Safety

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

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

When the weather becomes dangerous, the designated weather watcher will announce that all play activities are suspended and all individuals, both players and spectators, should seek appropriate shelter. No place is absolutely safe from lightning threat; however, some places are safer than others. Large, enclosed structures (substantially constructed buildings) tend to be safer than smaller structures or open structures. In general, a fully enclosed vehicle with the windows rolled up tends to be safer than being outside so long as contact with metal surfaces inside and outside the vehicle is avoided. The following areas are not appropriate shelter and should be avoided:

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

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

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

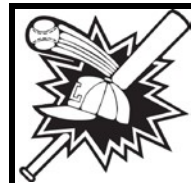
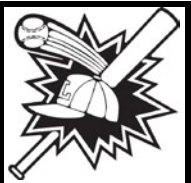
If activity has been suspended due to lightning, the designated weather watcher should wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder prior to resuming activity. Each time additional lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the minimum 30-minute waiting period should be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

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

Jackson Recreation Department

2026 SOFTBALL MANAGER

INFORMATION



**ELIGIBILITY/PLAYERS**

1. Players must be a minimum of 18 years of age and/or a High School graduate.
2. All players are responsible for providing picture identification at the request of the Recreation Department or the officials.

**PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

1. Teams may add players up to Monday, June 29<sup>TH</sup>
2. No player may play under an assumed name. Such players may be ruled ineligible for the remainder of the season. Managers will be held responsible for any player playing under an assumed name. *Any player playing illegally for a team may be ruled ineligible for the remainder of the season for any and all teams he plays on.*
3. **Players are eligible to play in three separate leagues, Sunday thru Thursday.** EXCEPTION: Player's may sign with two teams that play on the same day if one team is in the Men's/Women's Division and the other team is in the Co-ed Division.
4. Players must have played in at least two games in a round to be eligible to play in play-off games. EXCEPTION: Medical reasons keep a player from playing in a particular round (pregnancy, injury)
5. All players' transactions will cease as of TUESDAY, June 30<sup>th</sup> with the following exception:
  - A. Teams with less than 8 players may add players in order to prevent a forfeit.

ALL ADDITIONS MUST MEET THE APPROVAL OF THE JACKSON REC. DEPT.

TURN OVER>>>>>>>>>>

## **EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS**

1. All players should wear a rubber-bottomed, multi-purpose type shoe. The Recreation Department will not permit the use of metal cleated shoes in slow pitch competition. Players in violation of this safety rule must remove the illegal footwear at the time of request and change to an acceptable type of footwear. Failure to comply with this reasonable request will result in dismissal from the game.

## **SOFTBALLS AND BATS**

1. All teams must provide and hit their own ball. A new ball may be put in play only when the existing ball is out of play and at the beginning of a new inning.
2. Approved Softballs: The Jackson Recreation Department reserves the right to declare any ball or illegal, at any time, if it is deemed to be dangerous or otherwise detrimental to the softball program.

**\*Men's Leagues will use 12 inch softballs\***

**-Any 52 Core USA approved ball (300 compression)**

**\*Women's Leagues will use an 11 inch softball\***

**-Any 52 Core USA approved ball (300 compression)**

3. Approved Bats: All bats must meet the 1.20 B.P.F. and must be USA certified. (un-approved list provided) The Jackson Recreation Department reserves the right to declare any bat illegal, at any time, if it is determined to be dangerous or otherwise detrimental to the softball program.
4. Any bat that is hit (banged) against a metal pole will be declared illegal for that game.

**Any bat or ball that is on the USA certified list at the beginning of the season will not be removed from play if that bat or ball is ruled illegal by the USA at any time during the season. However, the Jackson Recreation Department reserves the right to ban any bat or softball that is determined to be dangerous to the game.**



