

# **Pace Athletic and Recreation Association, Inc. Official Athletic Rules and Regulations**

## **PARA Rules Baseball Rules and Regulations**



This document comprises a summary of the rules and regulations for the Baseball leagues at PARA Sports Complex. The Baseball Committee compiled and edited these for the Spring 2015 season and it has been approved by the Board of Directors. The following is intended to supplement the Pace Athletic and Recreation Association By-Laws. All implied or unwritten rules are hereby void.

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# **Official Park Rules and Regulations**

## **Operating Expenses**

PARA is a non-profit organization that raises its funds through several primary means; sponsorships, registration fees, fundraisers and concession revenues.

## **Registration Fee**

The registration fee is a nominal fee charged to cover operating expenses, equipment, and umpires not covered by other fundraisers. The registration fee is set by the Board of Directors and is due on registration day.

## **Team Obligation**

Each team will be required to help in a mandatory park fundraiser established by the board of directors, participate in park wide duties, and also be responsible for getting team sponsors. Specific requirements may vary between the Spring and Fall seasons.

## **Work Day**

Work days will be scheduled for all teams to make needed repairs to PARA facilities, as needed. Vice President of Baseball will contact team Head Coaches and each team must provide two parents from each team. Head Coaches whose team representatives do not participate will be brought before the Board of Directors. Penalty shall be forfeit of next winning game. The league Vice President reserves the right to make arrangements with teams that are not able to attend work days. Teams not able to attend work days will have to volunteer their time to clean up the park or perform some sort of community service for the park at the Vice President of Baseball's discretion. If a team does not meet the expectations of the Vice President of Baseball, then they shall forfeit their next winning game. The Vice President of Baseball will enforce this policy.

## **Maintaining Fields and Surrounding Areas**

This park is run and maintained by volunteers (i.e., parents, grandparents, etc.). At some point during a season, everyone will be needed to volunteer for work days, to mow their fields, pick up trash, etc. However, if we do not get volunteers, assignments will have to be made. If your family fails to participate, it will go before the PARA Board of Directors, for the consequences to be rendered. It is everyone's ultimate responsibility for the condition of their side of the playing field to include trash and garbage around the field, in the dugouts, and the bleachers. Teams failing to do this will forfeit,

automatically, their next winning game. This policy will be enforced by the Board Member on duty and League Commissioner.

## **Sportsmanship**

While the Board of Directors recognizes that Coaches will make mistakes in their handling of situations on occasion and that the “heat of the moment” will evoke strong reactions to on the field conditions, the Board will not provide implicit or explicit approval of unsportsmanlike behavior. Coaches can expect that the use of language which will in any manner refer or reflect upon opposing players, coaches, umpires, referees or spectators or incite of and precipitate fights or other physical confrontations will be grounds for Board action for the offending coach or player. The Board holds managers ultimately accountable for the conduct of his team’s fans and officials.

## **Safety**

For safety and liability reason, no persons under the age of fifteen are authorized inside the concession stand during operating hours. All members of the Park are encouraged to stop any unsafe activity they witness or bring it to the attention of a Board Member. Board Members shall take swift and decisive action to prevent unsafe practices and violations of Park Rules.

## **Distribution of Rules and Regulations**

1. Commissioners will have a meeting with all Head Coaches and/or Assistant Coaches to cover all Park and League Rules. All coaches must sign a form which shows that they understand and will obey these rules through-out the season.
2. Coaches will have a meeting with parents before the first scheduled practice to go over rules of conduct for players, parents and coaches.

## **Tobacco and Alcohol use and Pets**

Smoking or use of any tobacco product shall not be allowed by anyone while on the PARA Sports Complex. Coaches and players shall not be allowed the use of any tobacco during their game. First offense will constitute suspension of coach and/or coaching the next scheduled game. Second offense could result in dismissal of position.

No alcoholic beverages will be allowed on the premises by anyone.

For the safety of all, no pets of any kind are allowed PARA premises.

## **Food**

Coaches and Team Moms are allowed to bring drinks and snacks for the players only. Spectators are NOT allowed to bring any food items or beverages into the park. Please understand that this applies to all other parks as well.

## **Use of Fields**

1. There will be no warm-ups on any field prior to a game if the warm-ups will run into the scheduled playing time.
2. Make good sound judgment to ensure the fields are in good playing condition prior to commencing practices after inclement weather.
3. No vehicles other than those used to complete field work shall be on the fields at any time.

## **Game Time**

All Coaches are responsible in seeing that they do not delay the progress of a ball game with their coaching techniques:

1. Talk it over with your coach.
2. Talk to your league commissioner.
3. Bring the problem or concern to the monthly Board Meeting. This meeting is the first Wednesday of each month.

## **Approval of Head Coaches**

Head Coaches are approved by the Board of Directors and serve at the pleasure of the Board. The ultimate responsibility of the board is to sustain the Association; it chooses Head Coaches who it believes serve the best interests of the Association on the playing fields. In this respect, Head Coaches are park officials who represent the President and the Board of Directors on the playing field. All persons interested in a head coaching position must request to the league Vice President for a vote of acceptance. The league Vice President will place all requests before the Board of Directors for a vote of acceptance and in the case of where two or more persons are nominated; the league Vice President will make a recommendation. In the case where two or more persons are nominated for the Head Coach of one team, the person receiving the majority of the votes shall be selected.

## Assistant Coaches

All Head Coaches must nominate coaches that will be assisting them during the season for approval by the Board of Directors and have a completed and current background check complete and on record with PARA. COACHES MUST BE APPROVED BY the Board of Directors prior to commencement of league play. Head Coaches are ultimately responsible for the actions of the coaching staff.

## Background Checks

All Coaches, Team Moms, or anyone that will be on the field around the children will have to complete a background check to ensure the safety of our children as much as possible. Once you are approved by the county your background check will be valid for a **1 calendar year**.

## Conduct

1. If a player throws any equipment, the umpire or referee will issue a warning to the Head Coach. If any player throws any equipment thereafter, that player will be ejected from the game.
2. If any Head Coach has a problem with a player or parent, which he/she cannot resolve, he/she will submit the problem to the league Commissioner first before submitting same to the PARA Board.
3. Conduct of Coaches will be in accordance with the By Laws of the Association and league participation rules as established, or they will be subject to dismissal.
4. Head Coaches are responsible for their team and/or parents' behavior at practice, games and any other event sponsored by PARA.
5. Coaches must show good conduct on and off the field at all times.

## Ejections

1. Coaches pre-warning: All coaches should be communicated the following policy before coaching the first game.
2. Officials pre-warning: The Officials Association should be aware of rule before umpiring or refereeing first game.

**Rule:** It is a coach's responsibility not only to teach the activity, but to be a positive role model for his team and the opposing team. This rule is presented as a deterrent to insure that our coaches, as well as parents and players, provide an example of class and sportsmanship to all children who participate in our programs. This rule concerns coaches and parents being ejected (removed) from an activity sponsored by PARA. It

will be the umpire's/referee's discretion when they should remove a coach and /or parent from a game.

3. One (1) ejection will equal a \$50.00 fine and 3 game suspension for any coach or parent. (May include suspension from the park.)
4. On the 2nd ejection, the coach and/or parent will be suspended for the remainder of the season (may include the entire park) and it will be a board decision as to his/her status as a coach the following year.
5. **Any player ejected from a game will be subject to a 1-3 game suspension, based on the severity of the infraction. The VP of Baseball and/or the Baseball Committee will determine the length of the suspension, and the suspension shall be served immediately upon notice. If a coach plays a suspended player, the game in which the player participated in will result in a forfeit.**
6. **Any player ejected a 2<sup>nd</sup> time in the same season will serve a 3 game suspension.**

## Appeal

Coaches may appeal the suspension and fine, by filing a written appeal within 24 hours to a Board Member and/or league Commissioner. All fines and suspensions will be levied after the PARA Board of Directors has made a decision as to if suspension and fine are deemed appropriate.

**Players are not permitted to appeal a suspension.**

## Eligibility

1. **League Age (Baseball only)** - League age is that age attained 'by a player prior to May 1 of the season in question. Baseball players must play in the league that coincides with their age.

The minimum age as of prior to May 1 will be:

Pre-Tee	3 years old
Tee Ball	5 years old
Coach Pitch	7 years old
Minors	9 years old
Majors	11 years old
Teeners	13 years old

2. **Birth Certificates** - Birth certificates are not required to be presented for league play within our park. If a coach or parent questions a player's age, the player's parent will have 24 hours to present a valid birth certificate to the VP of Baseball. Note: Birth Certificates may be required for the Mid-Season Tournament, and ARE required for All-Stars or any other tournament played outside our park.



## Obligations

1. **Presence at Opening Day Ceremonies** - All teams shall be present at the opening day ceremonies. This is where our County Commissioners and Team Sponsors are recognized for their support at our ballpark. All teams will be asked to stay until all teams and sponsors have been recognized.
2. **Team Obligation** - Each team will be required to help in a fundraiser, participate in game day duties and also be responsible for getting team sponsors. Fall baseball teams are not required to participate in a park wide fundraiser and do not need to seek out sponsors.
3. **Team Trophies** - The park purchases trophies for each league champion and runner up at the end of the season. The league commissioners will hand out these trophies at their last game. Individual teams may purchase team "participation" trophies for their players at their cost.
4. **Baseball Equipment** - The park will provide a catcher's helmet, shin guards and a chest protector to each team upon presentation of a \$50 refundable equipment fee by the Head Coach. All park issued equipment must be returned to the league Equipment Director or League Commissioner by the date set by the Board of Directors. Once the Head Coach has returned his/her equipment PARA will refund the \$50 equipment fee paid at the beginning of the season via check. Any coach who does not return their equipment will not be allowed to coach the following year. The park will purchase league game balls for each team and issues them to the team managers through the league commissioner. The number of balls issued to teams relates roughly to the number of home league games scheduled for the year. The home team for each game is responsible for providing two new game balls for the game (which the team retains after the game). Except for T-Ball and Coach Pitch, they provide one new ball per game. If a team chooses to participate in tournaments (Pre-Season, Mid-Season, All-Star) they will be responsible for providing game balls at their own expense. (Distribution of game balls for fall ball will vary each year, please consult the VP of Baseball.)
5. **Uniforms**- During Spring baseball PARA will supply each team with jerseys and hats, which are purchased with the registration fees. These jerseys and hats SHALL be the uniform during the Spring season. Pants, socks, and belt color/type are up to the discretion of the manager/head coach of each team. Every effort should be made to have the players in matching uniforms. In Fall, PARA does not provide jerseys or hats, and teams are permitted to choose a uniform as they see fit. During fall each team is responsible for purchasing their entire uniform out of their own pocket.
6. **Field Preparation and Clean up** - It is the responsibility of the early home team to have the playing field ready for play. It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that all

equipment is put away if their game is the last game of the evening. Additionally, at the end of each game the Home team is responsible for raking/leveling the batter's boxes, while the Away team is responsible for raking/leveling the pitcher's mound. It shall be the responsibility of both teams to pick up the trash and garbage around the fields at the end of the game. Teams with the final game of the evening have ultimate responsibility for condition of their side of the playing field to include trash and garbage around the field, in the dugouts and the bleachers as well as empty trash cans into the dumpster. Teams failing to do this will forfeit, automatically, their next winning game. This policy will be enforced by the Board Member on duty and League Commissioner.

7. **Score Keepers** - It will be the responsibility of the visiting team to have an official score keeper. The score keeper shall maintain the score book and keep score at the designated area of their league. The score keeper shall remain neutral in spite of their team affiliation. The score keeper's responsibilities include:
  - a. If a game is protested or play suspended, the score keeper shall make note of the exact situation at the time of the protest or suspension, including the score, the number of outs, the position of any runners, and the ball and strike count of the batter.
  - b. The score keeper shall not make any decision conflicting with affiliated official playing rules, PARA By- Laws or Regulations, or with an umpire's decision.
  - c. The score keeper shall not call the attention of the umpire or of any member of either team to the fact that a player is batting out of turn.
  - d. The score keeper shall record and keep the official time of the game and notify when the time limit has been met. The score keeper shall also record innings pitched by each pitcher in accordance with affiliated league pitching rules. The score keeper shall also ensure both manager and the head umpire sign the score book once the game is complete.

**Note:** Failure of the visiting team to provide a score keeper will result in the forfeiture of that game to the home team. This policy will be enforced by the league Commissioner.

8. **Managing a Team**- Head Coaches/Managers desiring to coach a Baseball Team must submit a request to the PARA Board of Directors for approval or disapproval. All managers and coaches must be members in good standing of the Association.
9. **Players Options** – In Spring, each Manager/Head Coach may choose to freeze 6 (six) players before going into the draft. A PARA Freeze Form must be filled out completely and turned in to the league commissioner by a set date.

**Note:** A Manager/Head Coach must take his own child as a frozen player unless the manager indicates in writing that he desires his child to play on another team other than his own.

In Fall, a manager can bring a full team to the league. If a manager does not bring a complete roster, individuals will be assigned to their team until their roster is complete.

10. **Tryouts- (Spring Only)** All Players not frozen by a manager/head coach should attend tryouts that are scheduled for a specific date scheduled by the Board of Directors. Players that do not attend the tryouts will not be allowed to be drafted, they will become hat picks.
11. **Draft – (Spring Only)** Each team will receive 1200 points going into the draft on draft day. The sibling of any frozen player will be assigned to the player's team at the request of the parent and that team will be charged 50 points before the draft per sibling. (The sibling must be a sibling by marriage; children of cohabitant parents are not considered siblings.) The draft will be the same day of the try outs, if possible. All managers/coaches should contact all of his or her players within 48 hours of-the draft. No team shall have more than eight (8) players that are playing as the oldest age within his respective age group. For instance, a minor league team may have no more than eight (8) 10 year olds, since it is a league of 9 & 10 year olds. There is an exception to the draft procedures. That exception exists for Pre-T (4U) teams only. There will be no points granted. Teams will draw numbers from a hat and sit around the table in the order of their respective number. First, if any of the coaches know a kid (neighbor, relative, etc.) that they would like, it can be discussed among the coaches to get that player. If 2 coaches want the same player, there will be a coin toss for the player. After all known kids have been selected, the remaining kids will go into a hat to be selected by draw. The integrity of number of players on a team will be maintained during the procedure. For example, if team 1 has 3 players because of relatives, neighbors, etc., then the first hat pick will go to Team 2 provided they have fewer than 3 players and so on.
12. **New Managers/Head Coaches** - If a new manager is selected within a week of the draft they will have an option to select six registered players prior to the tryouts, of the 6 players selected, 3 players will be of the older age and 3 will be of the younger age.
13. **Game Postponement** - The decision to postpone games before the game commences will be made first by the PARA Board member on duty, by then the league Commissioner, Vice President of Baseball and then by the Park President. In the event none of these directors or officers is present, any attending Board Member will make the decision. The primary responsibility resides with the Board member on duty. After commencement of game, the decision will be made by the umpires. Appropriate time must be allowed from the time the game is stopped before the game is terminated by the umpires.
14. **Rain Delays** - In the event of a rain delay during the first game, that game will be completed, if possible and, if necessary, the second game will be rescheduled.
15. **Rescheduled Games** - Rescheduled games will be played as followed:
  - a. Monday and Tuesday Games will be played on Wednesday
  - b. Thursday and Friday games will be played on Saturday

16. **Shortened Games** - The time limit shall not come into effect until the game has become a regulation game.

## PARA Baseball Rules

PARA has adopted the USSSA Baseball Rules. It is the responsibility of the VP of Baseball, League Commissioners, and team coaches to adhere to the most recently adopted USSSA Rules and By-Laws. Exceptions to the USSSA rules, which supersede USSSA rules in our park, are outlined herein. (The most recently updated USSSA rules can be found at [ussa.com](http://ussa.com).)

1. **League Age**- League age is that age attained by a player prior to May 1 of the season in question. Baseball players must play in the league that coincides with their age. The minimum age as of May 1 will be:

Pre-Tee	3 years old
Tee Ball	5 years old
Coach Pitch	7 years old
Minors	9 years old
Majors	11 years old
Teeners	13 years old

Baseball players must play in the league that coincides with their age. Fall ball age will be dictated by the league they will play in the following spring, i.e. no kid that will play pre-T the following spring can play fall ball if registration numbers do not allow for a pre-T league. If an exception is made to the above rule, and a kid is allowed to move up to the next league for fall ball, they will return to the league dictated by their age the following spring.

2. **Game Time Limits** – Games times will be amended as follows:

Pre-Tee	One Hour
Tee Ball	1 hour 15 minutes
Coach Pitch	1 hour 15 minutes
Minors	1 hour 30 minutes
Majors	1 hour 30 minutes
Teeners	1 hour 45 minutes

A new inning will not begin if there are less than 5 minutes left on the official game clock.

3. **Pitching Rules** - The USSSA innings limits and mandatory days of rest rules are in place to protect our players' young arms and prevent over use. Since the health and safety of our players is of utmost importance we are taking this one step further by saying that

ANY violation uncovered during, or any time after a completed game, will result in a forfeit by the team violating the pitching rules.

4. **Playing Time-** All players on the roster shall bat, at all age levels, **each time their turn comes up in the batting order. Additionally, each player must** play at a minimum one full inning in the field.
5. **Protests-** All protest procedures are outlined in the USSSA rules. During PARA league games all protest fees shall be paid via check for tracking purposes. Any protests during tournaments (i.e. Pre-Season, Mid-Season, etc.) must be paid in cash at the time of the protest per USSSA rules.

## **PARA Minors Rules**

As of the Fall 2014 season the Minor league will return to the official USSSA rules governing 10u play. This means there will be lead offs, stealing, balks, and drop ball third strikes. Umpires will be allowed to let a pitcher balk once, without making a balk call. This will allow the umpire and coach an opportunity to coach the pitcher on proper mechanics/method of picking off.

## **PARA T-Ball Rules**

1. **Player alignment** – We have to remember that the intent of T-Ball is to teach kids the game of baseball. With that in mind, players need to remain in their respective infield position. “Stacking” players at one infield position shall be prohibited. Infield players, however, may be shifted. The second baseman and first baseman shall remain in the area from second base, to the first base line (on the clay) as long as he or she is not in front of, nor behind another player. The shortstop and third baseman shall remain in the area from second base to the third base line (on the clay) as long as he or she is not in front, nor behind another player. The umpire shall have discretion as to whether a player is in front of or behind another player. **Additionally, outfielders must position themselves on the grass, and cannot come onto the clay until the batter makes contact with the ball.** The pitcher’s alignment is dictated in USSSA rules.
2. **Batter Alignment** – The T-Ball batter shall be aligned to hit it in any direction. Once the ball is put on the Tee, the batter shall swing without “shifting” his or her rear foot to another alignment.
3. **Bats** – No big barreled bats will be allowed in Pre-Tee or Tee Ball.
4. NO STRIKEOUTS IN TBALL.
5. **Base Running Rules:**

**Infield Hits-** If a ball is hit in the infield, time shall not be called until the lead runners forward progress has stopped. At this time the umpire shall call time.

**Outfield Hits-** On a ball hit into the outfield, the runners may advance as many bases as they can until the ball is in possession of an infielder and in the field of play (between the foul lines, in fair territory, and on the dirt). As soon as the ball is in possession, as defined above, the umpire shall call time. If the lead runner has not made it half way to the base that he/she is going to when the ball comes into possession the umpire will make the decision to send that runner back to the previous base that was touched.

6. **The Overthrow Rule:**

There is no automatic free base for overthrown balls that are playable inside the fenced field. If player/runner elects to take the next base after a ball is overthrown to a base or home plate, he/she shall only be allowed to take one base, at his/her own risk. Compound overthrows to any base shall not occur. Overthrows to the defensive catcher ARE considered to be compound.

The lead runner may continue to advance until his forward progress has stopped or the ball has made it back into the field of play (between the foul lines, in fair territory, and on the dirt) and in possession of an infielder.

(Example: Overthrow to any base, runners may take one extra base if they so elect, but are in jeopardy of being thrown out. If a play is made on a runner at a base but the ball is overthrown, no more advancement will be allowed.)

## **PARA Pre-Tee Rules**

PARA' s Pre-Tee was not designed to be played competitively, it was developed to introduce a younger age group to the game of baseball, while separating the age and physical difference of 5 year olds and 6 year olds. We have to remember, these children are only 3 and 4 years old.

1. All previously mentioned T-Ball rules will also apply to Pre-T.
2. **Game Length-** Will be one hour **or** 3 innings in length, whichever occurs first..
3. **Batting-** All batters will hit every inning.
4. **Fielding-** All players will play the field, coaches will do their best to teach the kids the basics of fielding the ball and making the play. Outs do not count, however make every attempt to ensure the players learn the basics.
5. **Base Running-** Base runners will proceed one base at a time, regardless of how far the ball is hit, you go base to base. If the player is ruled out, they will stay on base.

6. **Score-** We will not keep an official score. We will use the scoreboard but ALL games will finish in a tie, the official scorebook will not be kept, nor will league won/loss records be kept.

## **PARA All-Star Teams**

An All-Star team shall be selected at the end of each spring season for the following age groups: 5 year olds, 6 year olds, 7 year olds, 8 year olds, 9 year olds, 10 year olds, 11 year olds, 12 year olds, 13 year olds, and 14 year olds. If the Head Coaches of a certain league cannot select an All-Star team for any given age group listed above, per the rules outlined herein, then an All-Star team will not exist for that age group for the present year.

1. **Eligibility-** At the conclusion of the regular season each teams' Head Coach must complete the All-Star Eligibility Form. On this form each player/parent on the roster indicates whether or not they wish to be considered for the All-Star team. In order for a player to be eligible for All-Star selections "YES" must be indicated on the All-Star Eligibility Form, and be accompanied by the parent's signature.
2. **Selection Process-** During All-Star selections only the Head Coach of each team is permitted to be present. The younger age group in the league shall have their All-Star team selected first. Per Article X of the PARA Bylaws, "A Player will play on the team that coincides with his/her league age. Example: An eleven year old will not be put on the twelve year old team. Exception: if the twelve year old team does not get enough players signed up, then the eleven year old who didn't make the eleven year old team (due to a lack of votes) will be put on the twelve year old team."

To select the All-Star team for a given age group the process is as follows:

- a. Each Head Coach writes down the top 9 players for the league age group being considered.
- b. The VP of Baseball or Board Members presiding over the selection meeting collect each coach's ballot and determines if there are any unanimous selections. (Unanimous means that EACH coach had the same player listed in their top 9.)
- c. If there are unanimous players from this first ballot, then those unanimous players are placed on the All-Star team's roster.
- d. A second blank ballot is passed out to each Head Coach, and this time each Head Coach lists the top (9-N) players for the league age group being considered, where N is the number of unanimous players voted onto the roster already.
- e. This process continues to repeat until 9 players are unanimously voted onto the All-Star roster for the league age being considered. After each ballot is collected the Head Coaches can discuss players, and state their cases for players to be selected to the All-Star team.
- f. Once 9 players have been unanimously voted onto the roster, the Head Coach of the All-Star team is permitted to fill the roster as he sees fit.

3. **Determination of Head Coaches-** The Head Coaches of the All-Star teams are determined based on the league standings at the end of the season. The Head Coach of the team finishing first in the league has his/her choice as to whether he/she would like to be the Head Coach of the older or younger league aged All-Star team. The Head Coach of the team finishing second in the league, will then have the opportunity to be the Head Coach of the other All-Star team. (If any coach turns down the opportunity to be the Head Coach of an All-Star team, the opportunity will then be given to the Head Coach of the team who finished just below the Coach that turned down the opportunity in the standings.)
4. **Support From PARA-** All All-Stars teams selected as outlined above will be eligible for \$250 from the Board of Directors to use to their discretion for uniforms, tournament entry fees, game balls, etc. The \$250 support check will not be made out to an individual/coach, instead it must be made out to the uniform provider, sanctioning body for the tournament, etc. All All-Star teams must be outfitted with jerseys consistent with the red and royal Pace colors, and the jersey must indicate "PACE". Any fees, or additional monies, needed by the All-Star teams will be the responsibility of the parent/player selected to the All-Star team.
5. **Tee Ball World Series-** The VP of Baseball will ensure that the 5 year old an 6 year old All-Star teams have all the necessary paperwork to register for the Tee Ball World Series, and ensure that each team has properly filled out and submitted the paperwork within the required guidelines.