

The Villages®

Community Development Districts

Recreation & Parks



Recreation and Parks Softball League Policies & Procedures

(Effective Winter 2021)

The Villages Softball Program is a program offered to residents of The Villages and is organized by VCDD Recreation and Parks Department. Under the direction of the District Manager and the Director of Recreation and Parks, the softball program is staffed by a full time Sports Coordinator.

The purpose of the Recreation Softball League Policies & Procedures is to provide the recreation softball leagues with guidelines that help promote a safe, enjoyable environment. The following policies and procedures encompass all divisions within the Villages Recreation and Neighborhood softball leagues. For more information about the VCDD softball program including season dates, frequently asked questions, and division websites please visit <https://www.districtgov.org/departments/Recreation/softball>

1. League Sign-up:

- A. The schedule for Recreation and Neighborhood softball leagues including signup dates is available online and on the softball bulletin boards.
- B. Players are responsible for submitting an application to the Saddlebrook or Everglades Recreation Centers or to the desired league directly during the scheduled signup dates. Applications include a waiver of liability and the VCDD Recreation and Parks Department code of conduct. Players must complete a new application and sign a code of conduct for each season they wish to participate in.

2. Player Placement

- A. Recreation Leagues
 - Division representatives from each recreation softball league will collect the completed applications complete with signed waivers and the Recreation and Parks Department Code of Conduct from Saddlebrook or Everglades Recreation Centers
 - Recreation Staff will reserve a facility for the leagues to conduct player drafts
 - Team managers from each league will draft players in a process to be determined by the league
- B. Neighborhood Leagues
 - Division representatives from each neighborhood softball league will collect the completed applications complete with signed waivers and the Recreation and Parks Department Code of Conduct from the Saddlebrook or Everglades Recreation Centers.
 - Those representatives will select the neighborhood teams. When possible teams will be comprised of players from the same village. If there are not enough players from one village to form a team those players will be placed accordingly onto other teams within the same division

3. Softball Player Eligibility

- A. The age requirements to participate in senior softball are; a male player must become at least 50 and a female player at least 40 years of age during the calendar year to be eligible to play in that calendar year.
- B. To be eligible to participate in the Recreation or Neighborhood softball leagues each player must have a valid resident or renter ID. Guests may not participate in Recreation or Neighborhood softball leagues.
- C. Participants must have a current waiver and code of conduct on file with the VCDD Recreation and Parks Department.
- D. All new players joining The Villages Recreation or Neighborhood Leagues must complete three evaluation sessions. The three sessions do not have to be consecutive weeks, but all three must take place within six months of the first evaluation.
- E. Each player must participate in the division they were evaluated for as either a roster player or substitute for their initial season. Players may decide to move up or down one division per season after their initial season.
- F. If a player signs up for a division higher than the one he/she just participated in and does not get drafted, they will be put in the draft pool of the level below they signed up for. If they go un-drafted in the lower draft pool they will then be placed on a team in next lower division than the one they previously participated, or become a sub.
- G. If a player goes undrafted for 2 consecutive seasons that he/she signs up for, he/she must drop down one division for one season beginning the following season. The Villages Recreation Softball seasons are fall, winter, and summer.

- H. Newly evaluated players who complete their evaluation while a season is currently underway will go into the priority sub protocol of their assigned league. Please speak with the league leaders of your assigned league for details on the policy.
- I. League Leadership is responsible for verifying that players in their division have been Evaluated. A division board member may request a one day re-evaluation for a player in the division in which they represent. All requests must be made to the Recreation Department Softball Staff in writing and will be reviewed by Recreation Staff.
- J. If a former player has not played Villages Softball in 3 calendar years they must attend a Re-Evaluation before they can register to play again.
- K. The integrity of the Recreation and Neighborhood softball leagues are dependent on players committing to be at and participate in their scheduled games. Therefore, each division has the opportunity to create their own rule on attendance. **Players can not be removed from teams or suspended without the approval of the Recreation Department.** The ability for players to request a “leave of absence” due to injury, illness, family emergency, or any other acceptable reason shall be included in that rule. The request shall be in writing and submitted to Recreation Staff. Every request will be considered on an individual basis. The outcome of the request could have many possibilities. Examples of what the outcome of a request could be, but are not limited to; the request being denied, the player being able to sign up the next season with no suspension, the player being classified as a sub, priority sub, or as a roster player.
- L. Eligibility of players due to violations of the VCDD Recreation and Parks code of conduct is the duty of the Recreation Department. A two game suspension is mandatory for any player or manager ejected from a league game. In the case of any physical contact the minimum suspension is 1 month. The Recreation Department will determine if further disciplinary action is necessary. The Recreation and Parks Department has the sole ability to discipline or suspend players from all Recreation sponsored leagues.

4. Recreation and Parks Department Responsibilities for League Play

- Operation and support consistent with the Recreation and Parks facility guidelines
- Policy Creation
- Field Maintenance
- Staffing
- Scheduling of fields
- Disciplinary Issues
- Safety Concerns
- Create and maintain softball budget
- Purchasing of equipment & supplies
- Player Discrepancies

5. ADA Compliance Policy

To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any disabled participant scheduled to participate in any capacity while at the Saddlebrook Softball Complex will play their games on field #1 or #4. Any game scheduled on those fields shall be moved to an adjacent field to accommodate the participant with the disability. All games scheduled at Buffalo Glen or Knudson shall be played as scheduled.

6. Cancellation of League Play

The Villages Softball Leagues fall under the umbrella of the overall Recreation and Parks Department weather policy. Copies of the policy are available at the Saddlebrook Recreation Center or on the District website (www.districtgov.org).

If a cancellation occurs, the Recreation and Parks Department will immediately notify WVLG to make an announcement on the radio. The Recreation and Parks Department will also make every attempt to send an email notification to those signed up for E-Notifications through www.districtgov.org, as well as post an update on ‘What’s Happening’ on www.districtgov.org .

7. The VCDD Recreation and Parks Department reserves the right to alter, modify, or update these policies and as deemed necessary by Recreation Staff.