

# The Villages®

## Community Development Districts

### Recreation & Parks



## Recreation and Parks Softball Program Guidelines

*(Effective Fall 2025)*

The Villages Softball Program is a program offered to residents of The Villages and is organized by the Recreation and Parks Department. The purpose of the Recreation Softball Program Guidelines is to provide the softball leagues with guidelines that help promote a safe, enjoyable environment. The following guidelines, in conjunction with the Recreation and Parks Department RLVG Guidelines, encompass all leagues within the Villages Recreation Softball Program. Each Softball Program league is governed by a player-elected volunteer resident board which handles all league operations, which include but are not limited to: game schedules, volunteer coordination, and league rules. For more information about the softball program, including season dates, frequently asked questions, and league websites please visit <https://www.districtgov.org/departments/Recreation/softball>

### 1. Registration:

- A. Registration dates can be found on each league's application form and website.
- B. Players are responsible for submitting an application to the Saddlebrook or Everglades Recreation Centers or to the desired league directly during the scheduled registration dates. Applications include a waiver of liability and the 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
  - Volunteer league representatives will collect the completed applications complete with signed waivers and the Recreation and Parks Department Code of Conduct.
  - 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
  - Volunteer league representatives will collect the completed applications complete with signed waivers and the Recreation and Parks Department Code of Conduct.
  - 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 league.

### 3. Softball Player Eligibility

- A. The age requirements to participate in the softball program are: a male or female player must become at least 50 years of age during the calendar year to be eligible to play in that calendar year.
- B. To be eligible to participate in the softball program each player must have a valid resident or renter ID. Guests may not participate in the Recreation Softball Program
- C. Participants must have a current waiver and code of conduct on file with the Recreation and Parks Department.
- D. All new players joining The Villages Recreation Softball Program 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 league they were evaluated for as either a roster player or substitute for their initial season. Players may decide to move up or down one league per season after their initial season. Please contact your league's volunteer leadership for more specifics and information.
- F. If a player goes undrafted for 2 consecutive seasons that he/she signs up for, he/she must drop down one league for one season beginning the following season. The Villages Recreation Softball Program seasons are winter, summer, and fall.
- G. Newly evaluated players who complete their evaluation while a season is currently underway will enter into the priority sub protocol of their assigned league. Please speak with the volunteer league leaders of your assigned league for more details.
- H. League Leadership is responsible for verifying that players in their league have been evaluated. Each league board may request a one day re-evaluation for a player in the league in which they represent. All requests must be made to the Recreation Department Softball Staff in writing and will be reviewed by Recreation Staff.

- I. 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.
- J. The integrity of the Recreation Softball Program is 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.
- K. Eligibility of players due to violations of the Recreation and Parks code of conduct is the duty of the Recreation and Parks 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 and Parks Department will determine if further disciplinary action is necessary. The Recreation and Parks Department has the sole ability to discipline or suspend players from the Recreation Softball Program.

#### **4. Recreation and Parks Department Responsibilities for League Play**

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

#### **5. Cancellation of League Play**

The Villages Softball Program activities may be cancelled for various reasons, including but not limited to field conditions, weather events, and any other unforeseen circumstances. Cancellations will be determined by Recreation and Parks Department, Property Management, or Public Safety staff.

When 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](http://www.districtgov.org).

**The Recreation and Parks Department reserves the right to alter, modify, or update these guidelines as deemed necessary by Recreation and Parks Department staff.**