



Baseball/ Softball Event Guide

VHSL STATE BASEBALL SITE REQUIREMENTS

QUARTERFINAL REQUIREMENTS

A. FIELD REQUIREMENTS

In order to host a VHSL State Baseball quarterfinal game, the school/facility must be able to provide a properly marked, well maintained baseball field that meets the requirements (including those for the elevation of the pitcher's mound) specified in the current NFHS Baseball Rules Book. The following additional requirements must also be met. **Any deviation from these regulations requires agreement of both schools and a waiver signed by the host school Principal/Designee with a copy forwarded to the opposing school and the League Office.**

1. Lights **should be available** and must provide for adequate and uniform lighting of the field. **In situations where lights are not available a game time later than 3:00 p.m. will not be acceptable.**
2. Fence Distances
 - a. Left Field - 300 feet (minimum)
 - b. Center Field - 350 feet (minimum)
 - c. Right Field - 300 feet (minimum)
3. Backstop Distance (from home plate to nearest point) - 25 feet minimum (50-60 feet preferred)
4. Infield surface - grass or turf
5. Pitcher's mound
 - a. The top of the pitcher's plate must be 10 inches above the top surface of home plate.
 - b. The degree of slope from a point 6 inches in front of the pitcher's plate to a point 6 feet toward home plate shall be one inch to one foot, and such degree of slope shall be uniform.
 - c. The pitching mound is an 18-foot diameter circle, the center of which is 59 feet from the back point of home plate.
 - d. The front edge of the rubber is 18 inches behind the center of the mound.
 - e. The front edge of the rubber to the back point of home plate is 60 feet, 6 inches.
 - f. The slope starts 6 inches from the front edge of the rubber.
 - g. The slope shall be 6 inches from the starting point (6 inches in front of the rubber) to a point 6 feet in front of the rubber.
 - h. The level area surrounding the rubber should be 6 inches in front of the rubber, 18 inches to each side and 22 inches to the rear of the rubber. The total level area is 5 feet x 34 inches.
6. Dugouts
 - a. Two - one for each team; must be comparable
 - b. Seating for at least 21 individuals

7. Pitching warm-up areas
 - a. Two – one for each team
 - b. Mound and plate at regulation height and distance
 - c. Pitchers protected from playing area
8. Warning Track – a five foot (minimum) warning track is required if the outfield fence is a permanent (solid) structure.

Note: A college/university baseball facility may be used.

B. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. Scoreboard – must be working and visible from all player and spectator vantage points
2. PA/Sound system
 - a. Adequate for projecting intelligible announcements to all areas of bleachers
 - b. Capable of playing music between innings
3. Seating
 - a. Permanent or portable bleacher seating (meeting all state and local codes) to accommodate anticipated attendance (see chart)
 - b. Accessible (ADA compliant)
4. Parking
 - a. Safe/secure area for team buses and officials
 - b. Spaces to accommodate anticipated attendance (see chart)
 - c. Lighted
 - d. Accessible (ADA compliant)
5. Secure entry point
 - a. Must be able to control admission to facility
 - b. Must allow for timely access by event patrons
6. Concessions – to accommodate anticipated attendance (see chart)
7. Restrooms – minimum of two (2) on-site public restrooms (1 per gender), or access to same in adjacent buildings
8. Locker rooms
 - a. Two (2) team locker rooms
 - b. 1 officials' locker room
 - i. Private
 - ii. Free from intrusion
 - iii. Large enough for 4 umpires to dress
 - iv. Shower (with hot water) and restroom facility
9. Media requirements – must be able to accommodate anticipated media coverage
10. Event security
 - a. Crowd control

- b. Escort for officials
 - c. Gate receipts
 - d. Parking area
11. Emergency plan
- a. Certified Athletic Trainer
 - b. EMT or on-call medical assistance available
 - c. Lightning plan (VHSL Policy available in this document)
 - d. Emergency evacuation plan
12. Event personnel
- a. Event director/manager
 - b. Ticket sellers/takers
 - c. Pass/Team gate supervisors
 - d. Team hosts
 - e. Officials' host
 - f. Announcer
 - g. Media/press coordinator
 - h. Official scorer
 - i. Statistician
 - j. Scoreboard operator
 - k. Program sellers
 - l. Concession workers
 - m. Hospitality workers
 - n. Custodial and maintenance services
 - o. Security
 - p. Additional workers, as needed

C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. Playability in the event of inclement weather
 - a. Tarps/Covers for pitcher's mound and home plate area or for the entire infield
 - b. Field drainage
2. Location and accessibility
 - a. Access from major thoroughfares
 - b. Lodging for out-of-town teams, spectators and officials
 - c. Area restaurants
3. Historical
 - a. Has this site been used in the past, and if so has it been acceptable to participating teams

VHSL STATE SOFTBALL SITE REQUIREMENTS

QUARTERFINAL REQUIREMENTS

A. FIELD REQUIREMENTS

In order to host a VHSL State Softball quarterfinal game, the school/facility must be able to provide a properly marked, well maintained softball field that meets the requirements specified in the current NFHS Softball Rules Book. The following additional requirements must also be met.

Any deviation from these regulations requires agreement of both schools and a waiver signed by the host school Principal/Designee with a copy forwarded to the opposing school and the League Office.

1. Fence Distances – 185 feet – 235 feet
2. Backstop Distance (from home plate to nearest point) – minimum of 25 feet; maximum of 30 feet
3. 60-foot skinned infield (measured from the front center of a 46-foot pitcher's plate, even though a 40-ft. pitching distance is used)
4. On-Deck Circles must be in a safe location, to the side and 30 feet (if space allows) from home plate.
5. Lights **should be available** and must provide for adequate and uniform lighting of the field. **In situations where lights are not available a game time later than 3:00 p.m. will not be acceptable.**
6. Dugouts
 - a. Two - one for each team; must be comparable
 - b. Seating for at least 21 individuals
7. Pitching warm-up areas
 - a. Two – one for each team
 - b. Plate at regulation distance
 - c. Pitchers protected from playing area

Note: A college/university softball facility may be used.

B. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. Scoreboard – must be working and visible from all player and spectator vantage points

2. PA/Sound system
 - a. Adequate for projecting intelligible announcements to all areas of bleachers
 - b. Capable of playing music between innings
3. Seating
 - a. Permanent or portable bleacher seating (meeting all the state and local codes) to accommodate anticipated attendance (see chart).
 - b. Accessible (ADA compliant)
4. Parking (on site)
 - a. Safe/secure area for team buses and officials
 - b. Spaces to accommodate anticipated attendance (see chart)
 - c. Lighted
 - d. Accessible (ADA compliant)
5. Secure entry point
 - a. Must be able to control admission to facility
 - b. Must allow for timely access by event patrons
6. Concessions – to accommodate anticipated attendance (see chart)
7. Restrooms – minimum of two (2) on-site public restrooms (1 per gender), or access to same in adjacent buildings
8. Locker rooms
 - a. Two (2) team locker rooms
 - b. 1 officials' locker room
 - i. Private
 - ii. Free from intrusion
 - iii. Large enough for 3 officials to dress
 - iv. Shower (with hot water) and restroom facility
9. Media requirements – must be able to accommodate anticipated media coverage
10. Event security
 - a. Crowd control
 - b. Escort for contest officials
 - c. Gate receipts
 - d. Parking area
11. Emergency plan
 - a. Certified Athletic Trainer
 - b. EMT or on-call medical assistance available
 - c. Lightning plan (VHSL policy available in this document)
 - d. Emergency evacuation plan
12. Event personnel
 - a. Event director/manager

- b. Ticket sellers/takers
- c. Pass/Team gate supervisors
- d. Team hosts
- e. Officials' host
- f. Announcer
- g. Media/press coordinator
- h. Official scorer
- i. Statistician
- j. Scoreboard operator
- k. Program sellers
- l. Concession workers
- m. Hospitality workers
- n. Custodial and maintenance services
- o. Security
- p. Additional workers, as needed

C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. Playability in the event of inclement weather
 - a. Tarps/Covers for pitcher's mound and home plate area or for the entire infield
 - b. Field drainage
2. Location and accessibility
 - a. Access from major thoroughfares
 - b. Lodging for out-of-town teams, spectators and officials
 - c. Area restaurants
 - d. Support (financial and other) within the community for the event
3. Historical
 - a. Has this site been used in the past, and if so has it been acceptable to participating teams.

Baseball/Softball Event Checklist

Participating Teams

- _____ Receive Entry forms
- _____ Schools provide legible rosters for inclusion in event developed program
- _____ Provide entrance and exit for facility and tournament entrance procedure
- _____ Pre-game off field warm-up locations
- _____ Pre-game on field warm-up/umpire procedure and Location:
 - Home team infield – 45 minutes prior to game time
 - Visiting team infield – 30 minutes prior to game time
 - Umpire meeting at home plate – 15 minutes prior to game time
- _____ Provide list of appropriate host phone numbers (Athletic Office, Tournament Director, Athletic Trainer, Hospital)
- _____ Provide a local map and directions
- _____ Provide and designate dressing facilities for teams and umpires
- _____ Bench locations
- _____ Designate training staff contact and location
- _____ NO team will be allowed to take batting practice prior to a game. Soft toss and cage work will be allowed as long as all teams are afforded equal opportunity.
- _____ Team Admittance List

Game Personnel

- _____ Ticket Takers – at least 1 per gate
- _____ Pass Gate – 1 per gate or 1 dedicated location
- _____ Program Sellers
- _____ Announcer – counseled in appropriate announcing etiquette
- _____ Scorekeeper
- _____ Athletic Trainer(s)
- _____ Statistician – one
- _____ Pre and Post Game Coordinator
- _____ Security – Adequate to maintain appropriate pre-game, game and post-game atmosphere.
- _____ Police – as necessary

- _____ Coordinator of hospitality areas – Coordinate and control food areas for press, officials and working staff
- _____ Field Maintenance crew – before, during and after game
- _____ Foul ball chasers – as needed
- _____ Coordinate with Martin Screen Print regarding event sales and procedures

Meetings

Meet workers agenda

- _____ Review policies on conduct at state event
- _____ Review issues involving event (example: fans to remain off field at end of games)
- _____ Review post game/awards procedure
 - use school administration in presentations
 - individual awards should be given first to runner-up followed by runner-up team trophy; same procedure to follow for Champion.
- _____ Announcer

Announcements

Appropriate announcing etiquette is followed

Pre-game – All sponsors will be recognized and VHSL announcement; teams will be given a verbal cue on warm-up situation for their teams, then

10 minutes prior to game-

Announce visiting team line-up

6 minutes prior to game-

Announce home team line-up

2 minutes prior to game-

National Anthem

Post-game –

Announce that everyone is to stay off the field.

Announce where teams will locate for picture opportunities for fans

Award Procedure - if applicable

Runner-up Team Individuals with help from school admin

Runner-up Team Trophy with help from school admin

Champion Team Individuals with help from school admin

Champion Team Trophy with help from school admin

Coaches/ Team agenda

- _____ Introduction
- _____ During game contact and location
- _____ Pre-game procedures
 - Introductions
 - National Anthem
 - Any special events
- _____ Post game procedures
 - Awards – if applicable
 - Pictures
 - Fan Expectation and involvement of School personnel in maintaining appropriate atmosphere

Involvement of School Personnel
Provide adequate post game security for officials
Provide results as soon as possible after event; obtain necessary information to accomplish

Facility

- _____ Provide appropriate restrooms for event and have available custodial services for issues
- _____ Provide adequate admission areas
- _____ Media area designated on the field
- _____ Pitcher warm-up areas are comparable
- _____ Provide appropriate public address for the event
- _____ Identify and secure areas for awards, spectators, memorabilia sales and banners
- _____ Designate areas for respective team fans
- _____ Organize the awards consistent with VHSL format
- _____ Game interruption and inclement weather arrangements should be made for both teams and umpires; these should be separate if at all possible

Sportsmanship

- _____ Provide schools with VHSL sportsmanship expectations
- _____ All teams should be treated equally
- _____ Unsportsmanlike acts must be reported to league staff
- _____ Designate areas for working staff that will help alleviate potential issues
- _____ Remind school that a VHSL Sportsmanship Award will be given that encompasses all components of the State experience (fans, teams, coaches, hotel, game and event staff relations). The award will not be presented at the event.

Finances

- _____ Complete and submit Tournament Contract to League Office prior to the event
- _____ Alert Assistant Director if contract costs exceed those agreed to in the contract
- _____ All financial information provided to the league office in a timely manner (within three weeks)

Sportsmanship

VHSL State Tournament School Administrators

Welcome to the State Tournament. We hope you, your team, your student body, and your fans will enjoy their experience.

As you know, good sportsmanship is a top priority of the Virginia High School League. The manner in which your school is represented is far more important than whether your team wins or loses the games they play here. Good sportsmanship is all about respect – respect for oneself, for teammates and coaches, for opposing players and coaches, for contest officials, and for the game. Inappropriate behavior is easy to identify. One need ask only two questions:

1. Is the observed behavior respectful of the targeted audience?
2. Does the observed behavior reflect positively on your school?

If the answer to either question is no, then the behavior is inappropriate and must not be tolerated. Respect for players and coaches of participating teams, game officials and tournament personnel must be a priority at all times and in all situations.

As school administrators, you bear a huge responsibility for making sure that good sportsmanship is valued in your school community. The VHSL State Tournament draws state-wide media attention. Inappropriate behavior on the part of players, coaches or fans can be an embarrassment to you, your school, your community and the VHSL.

Attached to this memo you will find a number of documents outlining tournament procedures. Please review them carefully with your coaches, players, student body and community, as appropriate. You are urged to meet with student leaders before coming to the state event venue to stress with them the importance of positive behavior. Your familiarity and understanding of these procedures will help make your state tournament experience more enjoyable.

Once again, congratulations on a fantastic season and welcome to the State Championships. If there is anything that VHSL or tournament staff can do to help you while you are here, please let us know. Good luck to you and your team!



TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES – ADMINISTRATORS

Each participating school should provide active supervision of their student body during your games and address inappropriate behavior if or when it occurs. Individuals who behave inappropriately will be escorted from the facility.

SECURITY AND CROWD CONTROL

- School administrators have primary responsibility for observing their student body and team followers, and for taking corrective action when their students or team followers behave inappropriately. Students will react more quickly and more positively to their own teachers and administrators than they will to an unknown security guard.
- The Events Staff is on-site to **assist** school administrators and chaperones in maintaining the proper atmosphere for the games. They are not responsible for making sure your students and fans behave. As school administrators, that is your responsibility. Staff is there to help you should you need it.
- The athletic director and/or other individuals you designate from your school will have responsibility for observing the student body during the game, and taking whatever corrective action might be necessary in the event that someone behaves inappropriately. VHSL and tournament staff will assist when necessary.
- It is suggested that each school have additional chaperones for its student body.
- Fans will not be permitted on the field at any time. No one will be permitted on the field except the players, coaches and game officials.

EXAMPLES OF UNSPORTSMANLIKE BEHAVIOR

The following list is by no means “all inclusive,” but is provided to draw attention to behaviors often witnessed at athletic contests. Please review this list with your student body so that they will know what is not acceptable.

- Turning your back or pretending to read a newspaper during player introductions – this is disrespectful.
- Not standing attentively or shouting “oh” during the National Anthem – this is disrespectful.
- Booing anyone – this is disrespectful
- Taunting or baiting anyone – this is disrespectful
- Singling out an opponent and yelling personal remarks – this is disrespectful
- Mooing, barking, or making other inappropriate gestures or sounds toward anyone – this is disrespectful
- Chanting such things as “over-rated,” or “you, you, you” (after a foul), “warm-up the bus,” etc. – these things are disrespectful.
- Using profanity toward anyone – this is disrespectful
- Using racial, ethnic or other slurs – this is disrespectful

- Throwing things onto the court/field or toward others – this is disrespectful and dangerous

The behaviors above must be addressed by school administrators if/when they occur. Failure to do so is a violation of The League's Sportsmanship Rule.

Remember, good sportsmanship is all about respect. Win with humility; lose with grace; do both with dignity.

PLEASE REMIND YOUR STUDENTS AND OTHER SPECTATORS OF THE FOLLOWING:

- **Body painting is not permitted on site at any outdoor event.** Face painting is acceptable provided that it has been done prior to entering the stadium/arena.
- No containers/products for face painting will be permitted to be bought into the stadium.
- No one will be permitted on the field at the end of the game.
- Outside food and/or beverages may not be brought into stadium unless specifically granted, in advance, by the facility and event directors.
- Individuals who are disruptive, disrespectful, or who fail to comply with event and/or VHSL procedures will be escorted from the facility.

OTHER REMINDERS

- All school faculty members, administrators, school board members, and any other "VIPs" must either have one of the VHSL Accepted Passes (along with picture ID) or must purchase a ticket.
- Individuals with passes must enter via the pass gate. They may not enter via the team entrance.
- Only players, coaches, and non-participating team members will be permitted on the team bench.
- NO ONE (except those participating in the awards ceremony) will be permitted on the field after the game.
- Food may not be taken out of any hospitality area, unless specifically allowed, as stated by, the facility.
- Hand-held signs (in good taste) are permitted but may not be mounted on sticks, poles, etc and should not obstruct the view of others.

GUIDELINES ON HANDLING CONTESTS DURING LIGHTNING DISTURBANCES

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a default policy to those responsible for making decisions concerning the suspension and restarting of contests based on the presence of lightning. The preferred sources from which to request such a policy for your facility would include your state high school association and the nearest office of the National Weather Service.

Proactive Planning

1. Assign staff to monitor local weather conditions before and during events.
2. Develop an evacuation plan, including identification of appropriate nearby shelters.
3. Develop criteria for suspension and resumption of play:
 - a. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty Minute Rule. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - c. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30 minute count, reset the clock and another 30 minute count should begin.
4. Hold periodic reviews for appropriate personnel.

For more detailed information, refer to the "Guidelines for Lightning Safety" contained in the NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook.

VHSL HANDBOOK RULES – Baseball

SECTION 56: BASEBALL.

56-1-1 Pitching Regulations-A pitcher shall not pitch in more than ten (10) innings in any two consecutive calendar days. Pitching one ball or more in any one inning is considered as having pitched an inning. If a game is called due to weather or any other reason, innings pitched by any player in such game shall be counted. **Exception-**If a player is pitching in a district, region or state tournament game that is tied at the end of regulation play, he may finish such a tie game regardless of the number of innings, provided (1) he did not pitch the previous day or in the first game of a double header on the same day and (2) the tie game does not extend into a subsequent day.

56-1-2 Speed-Up Rules-The suggested speed-up rules as listed in the National Federation Baseball Rule Book shall be used in all VHSL baseball contests.

56-2-1 Light Failure-Any regular season or tournament game terminated by artificial light failure shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of suspension at a later time, unless the two teams involved mutually agree otherwise.

56-3-1 Schedules:

- (1) Each member school shall make its own playing schedule. See Sports Season Rule, 27-7-1.
- (2) Each team shall be limited to a maximum of 20 games, excluding district, regional and state tournament games.
- (3) No more than three games should be scheduled in any one week. In making up schedules, schools are advised to make generous provision for games postponed because of inclement weather.

56-4-1 Ending a Regular Season Game-If during a regular season game, darkness, rain or other cause interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if:

- (1) five full innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 4 or in 4 and a fraction of terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or
- (2) play has gone beyond five full innings. However, if play has gone beyond five full innings and the game is called before both teams have had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incompleted inning scores a run(s) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be recorded when the game is called.

Policy Manual 56-4-2

56-4-2 Resolving Ties During the Regular Season-If a regulation called game ends in a tie score, the game shall be counted as one-half (1/2) game won and one-half (1/2) game lost (Rule Book - Rule 4, Section 2). Tie games shall not be completed (or made up) by mutual agreement.

56-4-3 Exception:

- (1) Prior to the start of the season, a district council may adopt for their district games only the VHSL suspended game rule which is published in the Policy Manual.

56-5-1 Ending a Tournament Game-If during a district, regional or state tournament game, darkness, rain or other cause interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if:

(1) five full innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored a greater number of runs in 4 or in 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or

(2) play has gone beyond five full innings. However, if play has gone beyond five full innings and the game is called before both teams have had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incompleted inning scores a run(s) which exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

(3) The Ten-Run Rule required for regular season contests is optional by district adoption for district tournament games and is not in effect for region and state tournament games.

56-5-2 It is not a regulation game if the game is called before completion of the number of innings and conditions specified in (1) and (2) above, in which case the game shall be a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of interruption at the time, date and site designated by the tournament director. The lineup and batting order of each team shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing the game.

56-6-1 Determining District Championships-Each district shall determine a district champion(s) no later than the date specified in the Activities Calendar (inside front cover of the *Handbook*). Only the district chairman can authorize the postponement of determining a district champion(s) beyond the specified deadline date. It is recommended that district champions be determined on a straight percentage basis, with each district council establishing the number of games to be required for championship ranking. A forfeiture should be counted as a game won by the school receiving the forfeit and as a game lost by the team forfeiting. If two or more teams are tied in the percentage standings, the team which has played the larger or largest number of games counted in the ranking should be declared the champion. If two or more teams are tied in the percentage standings and are ranked on the basis of the same number of League games, it is recommended that a play-off be arranged. In the event a tie for a championship exists in a district, the suggestions given above shall, if necessary, be followed in designating a district representative for the regional championship unless the district council has authorized some other method.

56-7-1 Determining Regional Championships-Each regional council shall make appropriate arrangements and determine a regional championship by a single elimination tournament, except as cited in 54-4-1, held no later than the date specified on the Activities Calendar (inside front cover of the *Handbook*).

56-8-1 Determining State Championships-The state championships shall be determined by single elimination tournaments held no later than the dates specified on the Activities Calendar (inside front cover of the *Handbook*). By Group Board adoption, the state championships shall be an eight-team tournament including the regional champion team and the regional runner-up team. Only the executive director can authorize the postponement of state quarterfinal (if adopted by group board), semifinal or final games beyond the specified dates. Regional champions (and runners-up by group board adoption) shall be matched in accordance with regulations adopted by each group board. Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, Group A schools may use a two-division format.

Policy Manual – Baseball

56-1-3 BASEBALL/Pregame Equipment Inspection (2-11) – It is the responsibility of member schools to verify that any equipment used by a player meets the quality and technical inspection standards dictated by NFHS and VHSL rule. While the NFHS rule book requires the umpires to check equipment before the game the burden for compliance rests with the member school. Students/athletes who participate using illegal equipment are subject to ejection from that game and a further suspension for the next two games.

56-4-1 BASEBALL/Doubleheaders (5-00) – By mutual agreement of the competing schools, doubleheaders may consist of only five (5) innings per game.

56-4-2 BASEBALL/Suspended Game Rule (5-96) – (5-96) – Prior to the start of the season, a district council may adopt for its district games (only) the following suspended game rule. An official game (one in which at least 4 1/2 or 5 innings have been completed) called for any reason where a winner cannot be determined, or any game called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended game. The game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the lineup and batting order of each team exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension subject to the rules of the game.

56-8-1 BASEBALL/Determining State Championship (12-01) – If the first game of the state semifinals has been played and the second semifinal is postponed, the state director can reschedule the second game no later than 1:00 p.m. on Saturday and play the championship game at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday.

VHSL Handbook Rules – Softball

SECTION 79: SOFTBALL.

79-1-1 Softball Rules-The fast pitch game rules set forth in the current National Federation Softball Rule Book shall govern all League competition, except in those instances where these rules conflict with the special rules set forth in this section, in which case these special rules shall take precedence.

79-1-2 Ten-Run Rule-The Ten-Run Rule shall be in effect for all regular season and District Tournament games. The Ten-Run Rule provides that all games shall end after five innings if a team is behind by 10 or more runs and has completed its term at bat.
(1) When schools play outside their district, the home district's policy applies.

78-3-2 Exception-Prior to the start of the season, a district council may elect not to use the Ten-Run Rule for its regular season and/or District Tournament contests.

79-1-3 Courtesy Runner Rule-The suggested courtesy runner rules as listed in the National Federation Softball Rule Book shall be allowed in all VHSL softball contests.

79-2-1 Light Failure-Any regular season or tournament game terminated by artificial light shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of suspension at a later time, unless the two teams involved mutually agree otherwise.

79-3-1 Schedules:

- (1) Each member school shall make its own playing schedule. See Sports Season Rule, 27-7-1.
- (2) Each team shall be limited to a maximum of 20 games, excluding district, regional and state tournament games.
- (3) No more than three games should be scheduled in any one week. In making up schedules, schools are advised to make generous provision for games postponed because of inclement weather.

79-4-1 Ending a Regular Season Game-If a regulation called game ends in a tie score, the game shall be counted as one-half (1/2) game won and one-half (1/2) game lost (Rule Book - Rule 4, Section 2). Tie games shall not be completed (or made up) by mutual agreement.

79-4-2 Exception:

- (1) Prior to the start of the season, a district council may adopt for its district games only the VHSL suspended game rule which is published in League publications.

Policy Manual 79-4-2 (1)

79-4-3 If during a regular season game, darkness, rain or other cause interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if:

- (1) five full innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 4 or in 4 and a fraction of terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or
- (2) play has gone beyond five full innings. However, if play has gone beyond five full innings and the game is called before both teams have had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning scores a run(s) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be recorded when the game is called.

79-5-1 Ending a Tournament Game-If during a district, regional or state tournament game, darkness, rain or other cause interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if:

- (1) Five full innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored a

greater number of runs in 4 or in 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent scored in 5 terms at bat; or

(2) Play has gone beyond five full innings. However, if play has gone beyond five full innings and the game is called before both teams have had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incompleted inning scores a run(s) which exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be recorded when the game is called.

(3) The Ten-Run Rule is not in effect for region and state tournament games.

79-5-2 It is not a regulation game if the game is called before completion of the number of innings and conditions specified in (1) and (2) above, in which case the game shall be a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of interruption at the time, date and site designated by the tournament director. The lineup and batting order of each team shall be exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing the game.

79-6-1 Determining District Championships-Each district shall determine a district champion(s) no later than the date specified in the Activities Calendar (inside front cover of the *Handbook*). Only the district chairman can authorize the postponement of determining a district champion(s) beyond the specified deadline date. It is recommended that district champions be determined on a straight percentage basis, with each district council establishing the number of games to be required for championship ranking. A forfeiture should be counted as a game won by the school receiving the forfeit and as a game lost by the team forfeiting. If two or more teams are tied in the percentage standings and are ranked on the basis of the same number of League games, it is recommended that a play-off be arranged. In the event of a tie for a championship exists in a district, the suggestions given above shall, if necessary, be followed in designating a district representative for the regional championship unless the district council has authorized some other method.

79-7-1 Determining Regional Championships-Each regional council shall make appropriate arrangements and determine a regional championship by a single elimination tournament, except as cited in 54-4-1, held no later than the date specified on the Activities Calendar (inside front cover of the *Handbook*).

79-8-1 Determining State Championships-The state championships shall be determined by single elimination tournaments held no later than the dates specified on the Activities Calendar (inside front cover of the *Handbook*). By Group Board adoption, the state championships shall be an eight-team tournament including the regional champion team and the regional runner-up team. Only the executive director can authorize the postponement of state quarterfinal (if adopted by group board), semifinal or final games beyond the specified dates. Regional championships (and runners-up by group board adoption) shall be matched in accordance with regulations adopted by each group board. Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, Group A schools may use a two-division format.

Policy Manual 79-8-1

VHSL Policy Manual - Softball

79-1-1 SOFTBALL/Double first base (9-99) – Schools may use a double first base.

79-1-1 SOFTBALL/Doubleheaders (5-00) – By mutual agreement of the competing schools, doubleheaders may consist of only five (5) innings per game.

79-1-3 SOFTBALL/Pregame Equipment Inspection (2-11) – It is the responsibility of member schools to verify that any equipment used by a player meets the quality and technical inspection standards dictated by NFHS and VHSL rule. While the NFHS rule book requires the umpires to check equipment before the game the burden for compliance rests with the member school. Students/athletes who participate using illegal equipment are subject to ejection from that game and a further suspension for the next two games.

79-4-2 (1) SOFTBALL/Suspended Game Rule (5-96) – Prior to the start of the season, a district council may adopt for its district games (only) the following suspended game rule. An official game (one in which at least 4 1/2 or 5 innings have been completed) called for any reason where a winner cannot be determined, or any game called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended game. The game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the lineup and batting order of each team exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension subject to the rules of the game.

79-8-1 SOFTBALL/ Pitching Machines (2-91) – Pitching machines are prohibited in the state playoff games.

VHSL SOFTBALL GAME ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS

Courtesy Runner

A) Courtesy Runner Rule (NFHS Softball Rules) is as follows:

1. The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or the catcher at any time. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances. The same courtesy runner may not run for both the pitcher and catcher in the same half inning or any time during the game.
2. In the top of the first inning only, the pitcher and catcher are identified as those players listed on the lineup as the pitcher and catcher. Thereafter, the pitcher and catcher are identified as the last players who physically played that position on defense.
3. Players who are currently in the game or have participated in the game in any other playing capacity are ineligible to serve as courtesy runners.
4. A player may not be a substitute for any player in the half inning that she ran as a courtesy runner. (Exception: If an injury or disqualification occurs and no substitutes are available, the courtesy runner must be used as a substitute, and take the place of the injured player. Should the courtesy runner be on base, and is entered as a substitute, the pitcher or catcher for whom the courtesy runner is running must run in her place.)
5. The courtesy runner is not permitted to run as a courtesy runner for the Designated Hitter (DH) if the DH is batting for the pitcher or catcher.
6. Once the courtesy runner is designated for that half-inning, the pitcher or catcher for whom she is running may not return to run while that courtesy runner is on base. A courtesy runner cannot run for a courtesy runner. (Exception: Should an injury or disqualification occur to any offensive player, and no substitutes are available, the courtesy runner must take the place of the injured player. In this case, the courtesy runner enters as a substitute and the pitcher or catcher for whom the courtesy runner is running must run in her place.)
7. A courtesy runner must be reported to the plate umpire. If a courtesy runner fails to report, she is considered to be an unreported substitute.

Ten Run Rule

B) The Ten-Run Rule will be used unless a district council has voted not to adopt this rule. (From the VHSL Handbook) 79-1-2 The Ten-Run Rule provides that all games shall end after

five innings if a team is behind by 10 or more runs and has completed its term at bat.

Suspended Game Rule

C) The Suspended Game Rule may be used only in regular season district games if, prior to the start of the season, the district council has adopted this rule. Otherwise, rule (D) below applies. Find out BEFORE the game if the district has adopted the Suspended Game Rule (resume play from point of interruption).

Suspended Game Rule (VHSL Policy Manual 79-4-2(1)) -- A game called for any reason where a winner cannot be determined, or any game called at any time for mechanical failure (i.e., artificial lights, water systems, etc.) will be treated as a suspended game. The game will be continued from the point of suspension, with the lineup and batting order of each team exactly the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment of suspension subject to the rules of the game.

Ending A Regular Season Game

D) Ending a Regular Season Game:

1. If a regulation called game ends in a tie score, the game shall be counted as one-half game won and one-half game lost. Tie games shall not be completed or made up even by mutual agreement.

2. If during a regular season game, darkness, rain, or other cause interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if:

a) five full innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 4 or in 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or

b) play has gone beyond five full innings. However, if play has gone beyond five full innings and the game is called before both teams have had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed terms at bat; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning scores a run(s) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be recorded when the game is called.

Ending A Tournament Game

E) Ending a Tournament Game: If during a district, regional or state tournament game, darkness, rain or other cause interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire, it is a regulation game if:

1. five full innings have been played or if the team second at bat has scored a greater number of runs in 4 or in 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or

2. play has gone beyond five full innings. However, if play has gone beyond five full innings and the game is called before both teams have had an equal number of completed terms at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; except that if the home team in its half of the incomplete inning score a run(s) which exceeds the opponent's score, the final score shall be recorded when the game is called.

It is not a regulation game if the game is called before completion of the number of innings and conditions specified in (1) and (2) above, in which case the game shall be a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of interruption at the time, date and site designated by the tournament director. The line-up and batting order of each team shall be exactly the same as the line-up and batting order at the moment of suspension, subject to the rules governing the game.

Five Inning Doubleheaders

F) 5 Inning Doubleheaders - Schools may, by mutual agreement, schedule 5-inning doubleheaders.

Other Game Shortening Rules

G) Games may not be ended or shortened in any way other than those described above (except in the case of a true emergency). For example, a game may NOT be shortened to 3 innings, regardless of the score, nor may a game be ended after a specified time limit.

Double First Base

H) Double First Base: Is permitted.

SOFTBALL TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURE

At its March 12, 2003 meeting, the VHSL Executive Committee voted to allow Districts to adopt the NFHS Softball Tie-Breaking Procedure beginning in the 9th inning of any regular season contest. The tie-breaking procedure (often referred to as the "International" or "Olympic" tie-breaker) is as follows:

"While using the tie-breaker, each half-inning begins by placing a runner on second base. That runner is the player in the batting order who precedes the lead-off batter in that inning. Then the game proceeds a full inning or until a winner is determined in that inning."

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Districts must vote to adopt the tie-breaker or it cannot be used.
- The tie-breaker is for regular season contests only. This procedure may NOT be used in District, Region, or State Tournament play.
- The tie-breaker (if adopted) is implemented beginning with the first batter in the 9th inning.
- The player who starts the inning on 2nd base (in the 9th and any subsequent innings) is the player in the batting order who precedes the lead-off batter in that inning. This is not necessarily the person who made the last out in the prior inning (see example below).
- The tie-breaking procedure is played in complete innings -- it is not "sudden death."
- If your District adopts the tie-breaking procedure, PLEASE contact your local commissioner of officials so that they are in the loop!

EXAMPLE

District A has adopted the tie-breaking procedure. In a regular season game between the Falcons and the Eagles, the game is tied 2-2 at the end of eight complete innings. The Eagles are the home team. A recap of the 8th inning is as follows:

In the top of the 8th inning, the first batter for the Falcons, the #8 batter in the batting order, reached first base on an error by the Eagles right fielder. The second batter (#9 in the batting order) struck out. The third batter in the inning (#1 in the batting order) bunted safely, advancing the runner (#8 in the batting order) from 1st to 2nd. The next batter (fourth batter in the inning, #2 in the batting order) struck out. The fifth batter (#3 in the batting order) hit a grounder to the shortstop, who tagged the runner going from 2nd to 3rd (#8 batter in the order) for the third out.

In the bottom of the 8th, the first three batters for the Eagles (#7, #8, and #9 in the batting order) struck out.

The top of the 9th inning will begin with the Falcons' #4 batter at the plate, and the #3 batter on 2nd base. Once the top of the inning is complete, whether or not the Falcons score, the Eagles will bat. The Eagles will have their #1 batter at the plate and their #9 batter on 2nd base. If the Eagles score, the game is over. If the Eagles do not score, additional inning(s) will be played using the tie-breaking procedure. The runner who starts the inning on 2nd base will always be the batter in the batting order who precedes the lead-off batter for that inning.

Miscellaneous Information

Admission Price: State Quarterfinal \$ 8.00
 State Semi-final and Final \$10.00

State Game Officials: Provided and Paid through the League Office

State Event Contract: Must be provided, by the host school, to the League Office with estimated expenses PRIOR to the event.

Waiver of Field Requirements Checklist Form:
 Must be agreed upon by both schools, signed by the host school Principal/Designee and provided to the League Office prior to the game.

Travel Reimbursement Form:
 Should be sent to the League Office as soon as possible following the completion of the tournament and should be accompanied by all necessary documentation of expenses incurred.

State Director's Financial Report:
 This report confirms the actual cost of the event to the host school and is required prior to any reimbursement. A copy of this form can be emailed or faxed to the League Office but the official copy should be mailed with the accompanying check for the gross revenue from the event.

Documents for VHSL Events

Travel Reimbursement Form
<http://www.vhsl.org/forms>
Scroll to Team Travel Reimbursement

VHSL State Contract
<http://www.vhsl.org/forms>
Scroll to State Tournament Contract

VHSL State Director's Financial Report
<http://www.vhsl.org/forms>
Scroll to State Director's Financial Report



Waiver of Site Requirements Checklist- Baseball

The following site requirements for this event, if being considered for waiver, should be noted, agreed upon by both schools, signed by the host school Principal/Designee and a copy forwarded to the League Office. **(Place a check next to the requirements waived)**

_____ Lighted field **(Games approved on fields without lights may start no later than 3:00 p.m.)**

_____ Minimum Fence Distances (300 feet in left and right field; 350 in center field)

_____ Minimum Backstop Distance (25 feet)

_____ Infield Surface (grass or turf)

_____ Dugouts

_____ Appropriate and equal Warm-up areas

_____ Warning Track

_____ Date _____

Host School Principal/Designee

Date received at League Office _____ Initials _____



Waiver of Site Requirements Checklist - Softball

The following site requirements for this event, if being considered for waiver, should be noted, agreed upon by both schools, signed by the host school Principal/Designee and a copy forwarded to the League Office. **(Place a check next to the requirements waived)**

_____ Lighted field **(Games approved on fields without lights may start no later than 3:00 p.m.)**

_____ Fence Distance (Minimum -185 feet; Maximum - 235 in)

_____ Backstop Distance (Minimum - 25 feet, Maximum – 30 feet)

_____ Infield Surface (skinned)

_____ Dugouts

_____ Appropriate and equal Warm-up areas

_____ Date _____

Host School Principal/Designee

Date received at League Office _____ Initials _____