El Paso County Sportspark

BASEBALL LEAGUE GUIDELINES

1780 N. Zaragoza, El Paso, TX 79936 -(915)857-7676

Introduction

The management of the El Paso County Sportspark welcomes you and your team(s) to **the Sportspark Competitive Baseball Leagues!** Thank you for your hard work and dedication to baseball! You make a tremendous contribution to organized youth sports at the County Sportspark.

Our goal is to make the County Sportspark the best ballpark in the area! We continue to make improvements that will enhance the opportunities for youth sports in El Paso and the surrounding areas.

If there is something specific you want management to address, please feel free to speak to us. Together, we can ensure a successful season for the youth players.

Objectives

The County Sportspark is a safe, specialized venue for participants of organized youth T-Ball, Coach Pitch, Fast Pitch, and Baseball programs. Our facility is dedicated to the following objectives:

- To Have Fun
- To Promote Sportsmanship
- To Increase & Encourage Youth Sports Participation
- To Enhance Learning in the Sport of Baseball
- To Teach Fundamental Social Skills With A Strong Emphasis On Teamwork
- To Develop Sound Baseball Skills
- To Promote Volunteerism Through Coaching
- To Introduce Competition
- To Meet New Friends

Registration Information & Deadlines

EACH HEAD COACH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING:

- Minimum of 9 complete (with parent or guardian signature) player individual registration forms. For players that registered in Spring or Summer of 2019, we have the birth certificate. NEW PLAYERS must have the original birth certificate.
- Parent Acknowledgment Form for each player.
- Minimum of 9 players' fees, payment must be in the form of cash, money order, cashier's check or credit card. Personal, business, team, or sponsor checks **will not be accepted.**
- Coaches Acknowledgement Form(s) and Coaches Registration Form(s)
- All Coaches and Team Representatives must complete a Background Check Form to be certified with the County.
- **DEADLINES FOR REGISTRATION WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.**

Registration Dates/Deadlines for Spring, Summer, Fall, & Winter Leagues are available on the Sportspark website at: https://www.epcountyparks.com/sportspark/

Office Hours for Registration

(Hours may vary around holidays, please call to confirm)

- Monday through Thursday – 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- Friday – Office Closed
- Saturday – 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- Sunday – Office Closed

Coaches Meeting

Prior to the start of each season, a coaches meeting is scheduled. This meeting is conducted by the League Manager and Umpire in Chief, and is intended to cover rules and answer questions that coaches may have about the program. **All teams must have at least (1) representative at the mandatory coaches meeting.** ***A team CANNOT participate in league unless a member of the coaching staff attends the coaches meeting for that season.***

Coaches Meeting Dates for Spring, Summer, Fall, & Winter Leagues are available on the Sportspark website at: https://www.epcountyparks.com/sportspark/

Coaching Requirements

A coach may only be the head coach or assistant coach for one team per age division. Violation will result in the forfeiture of all games played in this program in which that individual coached.

All coaches/team representatives (18 yrs. & older) in any youth sport must submit a Background Check Form to the Sportspark office prior to the first game of the season. The background check, once approved, is valid for a two (2) year period.

Roster Guidelines

- **Original Birth Certificates** are required for new players. If a player has participated in Spring or Summer 2019, the birth certificate will be on digital file in the Office.
- **Parent acknowledgement form** is required at the time of registration. No Exceptions.
- All players must be registered prior to the deadline for registration. A player cannot change teams once they have played a league game. Fees are non-refundable once the season begins. Under no circumstances will a player be allowed to play in any game without being on a roster.
- Coaches should check their roster during the first week of regular season play to ensure that the players on the team are registered. This will eliminate problems in the event of an illegal player protest.
- Staff will conduct random "on the spot" roster checks throughout the league season, as needed. It is the coaches' responsibility to make sure all players are cleared with all proper Sportspark requirements 24 hours before the first contest or the game will be automatically forfeited.
- Please check the status of your team 24 hours or more in advance, and not at game time. It is the responsibility of the coaches and parents to make sure the team is cleared to play at the park.
- For 4/5u, 6/7u, 7u CP and 8u CP/KP division, there is no limit on the amount of players on a team.
- For 9u/10u/11u/12u/13u/14u, each team must have a minimum of 9 players and a maximum of **15 players**. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

League Rules & Regulations

Unless modified by the local league rules as published in this document and the Age Division Rules online, all leagues and play-off games will be conducted pursuant to the *Official Rules of Baseball* (National League) as published by the Sporting News & the "USSSA Official National Baseball By-Laws," found at http://www.usssa.com – Current Year Baseball Bylaws & Rules are applicable.

The "USSSA Official National Baseball By-Laws" takes precedence over the *Official Rules of Baseball*. The El Paso County Sportspark Official Rules and Sport Rules document(s) take precedence over all other rules.

- Please check for an additional rule sheet if playing in a specialty league. Coaches, assistant coaches, and other program volunteers agree to abide with the spirit and intent of these rules and the objectives of the program.
- Please ask for clarification of any rule or situation prior to game time.

PLAYERS AND EQUIPMENT

Eligibility of Players: Age cutoff dates are posted on the Sportspark website, along with registration deadlines. These ages must be met for all players. NO EXCEPTIONS. Each coach must document that players are within the legal age limits and have not misunderstood or falsified the age requirements.

Baseballs (*Summer/Winter Leagues*): All teams are responsible for retrieving balls hit out of play. All balls used must be approved by the El Paso County Sportspark. Official Sportspark baseballs are: 4/5u & 6/7u - M-ball; Coach Pitch & Kid Pitch - AD Starr 200 USSSA; 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u – AD Starr 200 USSSA. Back-up ball(s) must be El Paso County Sportspark ball(s). No game balls will be provided for the regular season, the playoffs, or the consolation games.

Baseballs &Lineup Sheets (*Fall/Spring Leagues*): All teams are responsible for retrieving balls hit out of play. All balls used must be approved by the El Paso County Sportspark. Official Sportspark baseballs are: 4/5u & 6/7u - M-ball; Coach Pitch & Kid Pitch - AD Starr 200 USSSA; 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u – AD Starr 200 USSSA. Back-up ball(s) must be El Paso County Sportspark ball(s). Teams will receive 18 game balls and 18 lineup sheets at the beginning of the regular season (after background checks are complete). No game balls will be provided for the playoffs, or consolation games.

Bats:

All bats for age divisions 4u thru 8u should not exceed the 1.15 BPF.

- **4/5u & 6/7u:** All bats must be T-ball and can be comprised of wood, composite, or half and half, and must include the USSSA hologram logo on it. No fast pitch bats are allowed.
- **7u & 8u CP & KP:** T-ball bats, fast-pitch bats, carbon fiber bats are not allowed. The bat shall be constructed of wood, alloy, aluminum or titanium not to exceed two and three fourths (2 3/4") inches in diameter and the maximum length shall not exceed thirty-six inches (36"). All bats bearing the USA/USSSA baseball mark (both composite, aluminum, titanium and alloy barrel bats) will be allowed.

All bats for age divisions 9u thru 13u must be permanently stamped with the new USSSA 1.15 BPF Mark, or BBCOR.50 Certified Mark or made of wood and manufactured by a licensed USSSA manufacturer.

- **9u thru 12u -** The bat shall have the permanent USSSA Mark on its taper or be a qualified BBCOR bat or be Wood bat. The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and three fourths (2 ¾") inches and the maximum length shall not exceeded thirty-six (36) inches.
- **13u & 14u –** Bat weight must be (minus 3) & have the permanent USSSA New Mark on its taper or be a qualified (minus 3) BBCOR bat or be Wood bat. The maximum diameter shall not exceed two and three fourths (2 ¾") inches and the maximum length shall not exceeded thirty-six (36) inches.

Any altering of bats (i.e. corking, hollowing, filling …or any other type of enhancement) will result in team forfeit of any games in bat violation, and the suspension of the head coach for remainder of the season. It is the head coach's responsibility to check and approve all bats used by players.

Field Dimensions are as follows:

Age Division	Rubber-to-Plate Distance	Base-to-Base Distance
4/5u & 6/7u T-Ball	40’	55’
7u & 8u CP & KP	40’	60’
9u & 10u Division	46’	65’
11u & 12u Division	50’	70’
13u & 14u Division	60’	90’

Pitching Rules:

The following pitching limits are in effect:

Age Division	One day Maximum to pitch the next day	One day maximum	Three days maximum or end of the week
8u	9 outs	12 outs	18 outs
9u – 12u	9 outs	18 outs	24 outs
13u – 14u	9 outs	21 outs	24 outs

Number of Outs:

A pitcher may have no more than 24 outs in any calendar week. (Sunday thru Saturday)

One day maximum to pitch the next day: The maximum number of outs a pitcher can legally pitch in 1 day & still legally pitch the next day.

One day maximum: The maximum number of outs a pitcher can legally pitch in 1 day. The pitcher would not be allowed to pitch the next day.

Three days maximum or end of the week: The maximum number of outs a pitcher can legally pitch in 3 consecutive days or end of the week.

Mandatory Days of rest:

- A player that pitches more than 9 outs in one day must rest the next day.
- A player that pitches 24 outs in two or three consecutive days must rest the next day.
- A player that pitches three consecutive days (regardless of total quantity of outs pitched) must rest the next day (includes the start of new calendar week).

The pitcher may remain in the game defensively if placed at another position; however, if removed from the game, he will be ineligible to re-enter that game in the pitching position. He may reenter, if he enters in the same batting position that he previously occupied. (see Trips to the Mound, pg. 8).

Pitching Limits: Failure to comply with pitching limits will result in pitcher in question being declared illegal, forfeiture of game, and pitcher becoming ineligible to pitch for 72 hours or as prescribed under Number of Outs, whichever applies. If a pitcher goes over their limit on a last out being a multiple out, they will not be deemed illegal if removed immediately from the pitching position; all other cases will result in pitcher being declared illegal, forfeiture of game, and 72-hour ineligibility.

Spikes: No steel spikes of any kind will be permitted in the 4u to 12u age divisions. Any 4u to 12u player found wearing steel cleats during a game will be ejected. No steel spikes of any kind will be permitted on the pitcher mound in the 13u and 14u division. A player entering as a pitcher must change footwear. If a team has only 8 players at the time of this infraction, the game will be forfeited.

Squeeze Plays: If an offensive team attempts a suicide/squeeze play with a runner on third and the batter shows bunt but then regroups and swings away:

- The ball is dead
- The batter is out and ejected
- The runner returns to third
- The third base coach is ejected

In the enforcement of this rule, it is not necessary for the third base runner to be any specific distance from home plate and the provisions apply also if (in the judgment of the umpires). The defense third baseman is put at risk by the actions of the batter.

Uniform: Player uniforms must have a team name and be numbered with a single or double-digit number on the back of the shirt. No taped uniforms are allowed. Players are required to be in uniform with shirts tucked in at all times. Protests on uniform will not be allowed. All coaches (to include head coach, asst. coach, scorekeeper and anyone on the field & in the dugout) must wear the team uniform. Violation will result in the offending coaches being confined to the bleachers.

SEASON SCHEDULES AND GAME TIMES

The Sportspark cannot accept special requests when scheduling (this includes time or day requests during the regular season and during the playoffs).

Scheduling: There are NO ALLOWANCES for teams to request reschedules or postponements. Sportspark reserves the right to postpone or reschedule games due to inclement weather, disaster, field maintenance or other necessary situation.

Number of Games: Teams are guaranteed ten (10) regular season games in the Summer & Winter Seasons. Teams are guaranteed eighteen (18) regular season games in the Fall & Spring Seasons.

Season Schedules: All schedules can be obtained on www.quickscores.com/epcounty. Once this schedule is distributed, all game times, dates, and playing teams are official. The League Manager or the Sportspark Manager has the authority to modify the season schedule, as needed, and inform teams by email.

- If a team cannot attend a scheduled game a forfeit will be given. Coaches are to notify the League Manager 72 hrs. prior to any game the team cannot attend. This 72-hour notice is a courtesy to the other team scheduled as well as to the umpire scheduled to call your game.
- If a coach fails to notify the League Manager on a "no show", the team will not qualify for the play-offs.

**Disqualification: ****Teams forfeiting more than two games (regular season) will not be eligible to win the league championship or qualify for play-offs.

Game Times: Teams should verify game times online at www.quickscores.com/epcounty. The EP County Sportspark will not be responsible for incorrect game times given over the phone.

Game Time is forfeit time. There is a five (5) minute grace period for the first game of the day.

Game Tie Breakers: During the regular season, at ALL LEVELS, a tie is recorded as a tie. No extra innings will be played (see playoffs for policies for tournament games).

Game Time Limits and Rainouts:

The following time limit and inning standards apply.

Age Division	Time Limit	Full Game	Rain-Out Game
T-Ball 4/5u & 6/7u	1 hour 10 minutes	4 innings	2 innings
7u CP & 8u CP & KP	1 hour 15 minutes	5 innings	2 ½ innings
9u & 10u Divisions	1 hour 25 minutes	6 innings	3 innings
11u & 12u Divisions	1 hour 40 minutes	6 innings	3 innings
13& 14u Divisions	1 hour 40 minutes	7 innings	4 innings

- If the home team is ahead and at bat when time expires, the inning immediately ends, and the game is over.
- No new inning will start if there are four (4) minutes or less left on the play clock (including in playoffs).
- In the above number of innings have not been played in an inclement weather or other stoppage of play game, the game will be considered a suspended game. Suspended games, when resumed, shall resume from the point of suspension.

Run Rules:

A winner is declared if any team's run differential exceeds the totals in the following tables:

4/5u; 6/7u; 7u CP; 8u CP & 8u KP	
Maximum Runs	After _ Innings
15 runs	2 innings
10 runs	3 innings
8 runs	4 innings

9u - 12u	
Maximum Runs	After _ Innings
20 runs	2 innings
15 runs	3 innings
8 runs	4 innings

13u – 14u	
Maximum Runs	After _ Innings
20 runs	2 innings
15 runs	3 innings
12 runs	4 innings
8 runs	5 innings

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Field Conditions: In the event of inclement weather, coaches can call the El Paso County Sportspark Weather Line (915.875.8580) for information about cancellations/postponements. Games cancelled due to inclement weather will be made up during the season as scheduled by the League Manager. The league manager will notify the teams between 4:00pm-4:30pm if games must be cancelled. However, because it is possible for inclement weather to occur at any time, cancellations could occur just before games or during play.

Suspended & Complete Games: A game shall be ruled as official and complete if umpires or the League Manager rule as such due to inclement weather, lighting failure, or other reasons beyond management control. In case of rain delays, games can be reduced in time, as needed, regardless of innings played. If a game is ruled as a complete game, the final score will revert to the last complete inning unless the home team is at bat and ahead, in which case the final score will be the score at the time the game is called. Suspended games (see Game Time Limits and Rain Out chart, pg.6) are only in cases of inclement weather, lighting failure, or other reasons beyond our control. Suspended games, when resumed, shall resume from the point of suspension. A "No Contest" ruling will not be allowed.

LEAGUE GAME PLAY

Coaches – Baseball: Teams may have four (4) adults coaching from the dugout. Defensive coaches must stay in the dugout or within an arm's reach to the entrance of the dugout. Any coach attempting to coach outfielders must do so from the dugout area. Penalty for violating the rule will result in only two (2) coaches allowed to be on the field and in the dugout. All others will be confined to the bleachers.

Coaches – Tball, Kid Pitch, and Coach Pitch: See individual age group rules for coaching regulations.

Coaches – Coach Pitch: Having more than one adult coach that can pitch for a team is recommended. Teams cannot change a game because the adult pitcher has a conflict with the game time or date.

Home Team:

- The home team will be determined by www.quickscores.com/epcounty for regular season games.
- The dugout is on a first-come, first-serve basis. (except for playoff or consolation games; see Playoff section)

Lineup Cards: Each manager must prepare a written copy listing each player and substitute by name and uniform number prior to each game. Lineups must be provided to the plate umpire and the official scorekeeper.

Roster Requirements: After the first regular season game, all coaches must verify that all players' names on the roster are on their team and correct in spelling, etc. Anyone not supposed to be on a roster should be taken off. If any player is missing from the roster, please notify the League Manager. **Umpires will not begin a game unless line-up cards are completed. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Scorekeeping: The home team provides the official scorekeeper who must be seated convenient to the home plate umpire. All head coaches will have to initial umpire's scorecard after the game.

Pre-game Warm Up:

- All pre-game warm-ups must take place in the designated warm-up areas only. No infield, batting or pitching practice will be permitted on the infield before a game. Please stay off the fields when maintenance personnel are on the fields.
- Managers must have their lineups ready with first/last name of each player, pitchers and other players warmed up, and in the designated areas before the scheduled start time of the game.

Pre-game Conference: The head coach must attend the pre-game conference with the umpires. The head coach will be restricted to dug-out the whole game if he fails to attend the meeting with umpires.

Game Preliminaries: See the Age Group Specific Rules for: 4/5u T-Ball, 6/7u T-Ball, or Coach Pitch's rules. In baseball, a team may play an official game with an eight (8) player lineup. If a team plays with an eight (8) player lineup, an out shall be declared for the ninth (9^{th}) position in the batting order each turn at bat.

Batting: In baseball, if a batter throws a bat; the umpire will immediately call time. The batter and his team shall be warned that a second such occurrence (from any member of that team) will result in the batter being declared out. A third occurrence shall result in an out and the batters ejection.

Balks: Balks are applicable in all 9u and above divisions, with one warning per pitcher at the 9u division. A balk called with no runners on base is counted as a ball.

Trips to the Mound: In 9u division and above, when a team is charged with its second trip to the mound in the same inning to the same pitcher, the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. The pitcher may be moved to another defensive position. Once a pitcher has been removed from the game as a pitcher, he may re-enter the game in another defensive position, but may not return as a pitcher in that same game (see page 4, Pitching).

STANDINGS & PLAYOFFS

League Standing Tie Breakers: The final league standings will be based on the following, in order: Best Overall Record, Head to Head, Head to Head Run Differential, Head to Head Group, Total Runs For, Coin Flip (including a 3-way tie or more teams)

Playoffs: League playoffs will be held at the end of each season. Playoff format will be single elimination and teams may be divided into divisions based on their finish in the regular season. The highest seeded team will be home team and have choice of dugout. No reschedules or postponements may be requested for the play-offs. Time & day requests will not be honored for the Playoff Tournament. Once released, all play-off bracket schedules are final, unless in the event of inclement weather. Games will be played any day, time, and on any field during the playoffs.

Playoff Tie-Breaker Format: After the completion of regular innings, or when time limits have expired, and the score is still tied, the tiebreaker procedure will begin. The visiting team shall place the last out of the previous inning on second base and play will continue. The same will happen with the home team. The player, who made the last out, assumes a position on 2nd base. If the last out is a ghost player, the player placed on second would revert to the out prior to the ghost out. This procedure would be done at the beginning of each half inning; until a winner is determined.

If the wrong player is placed on second base, the correct runner should be inserted immediately even if a pitch has been thrown, or the runner has advanced a base. All play made while the incorrect runner was on base stands. It is the responsibility of the Umpire and scorekeeper to notify the teams involved as to which player starts the half inning at second.

Dates for playoffs can be found at www.quickscores.com/epcounty.

Awards: All players participating on a team will receive a reward at the end of the season. Awards for the playoffs vary from season to season based on the playoff structure.

Protests & Ejections

Protests:

A protest is an action that involves a dispute over play between teams or some action/decision made by the umpire against a team. A protest must be made verbally to the umpire on the field at the time of the incident. The coach must inform the umpire of his/her intention to protest. The home plate umpire shall note on his umpire card to validate the protest. Only book rule and eligibility protests are allowed. No protests on balls, strikes, safes, outs, and judgments. A protest fee of $100 must be paid at the time of protest to the Sportspark office. Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered**. *Protests must be made at the time of the incident.***

Ejection:

A game ejection is an action taken by an umpire, when a head coach, assistant coach, or fan flagrantly violates rules, argues balls and strikes, or shows unsportsmanlike conduct. The person ejected will immediately leave the game and the premises of the El Paso County Sportspark. (see the Rule of Conduct document). The Rule of Conduct document is a guide for the El Paso County Sportspark and its members, guests, and other spectators (or participants that are attending other Sportspark functions or meetings) to address violations of certain rules and regulations.

Forfeit:

The following could result as a forfeit:

- If a team fails to appear upon the field or refuses to begin the game for which it had been scheduled at the time the game was assigned.
- If, after a game has begun, a team refuses to play or resume play as directed by the umpire.
- If a team uses tactics noticeably designed to delay or hasten the playing of the game.
- If, for any reason, a team does not have the designated number of players to begin or continue the game
- If, after warning by the umpire, any of these rules are willfully violated.
- The League Manager or Sportspark Manager have the authority to declare a forfeit and notify the El Paso County's sheriff if an ejected player, fan, or coach fails to leave the field and the premises immediately.
- The management of El Paso County Sportspark reserves the right to rule at any time on situations or judgements that may effect the players, coaches, spectators, umpires, or other patrons of the Sportspark.

General Sportspark Policies

Alcoholic Beverages: Alcoholic beverages are not allowed. Alcoholic beverages cannot be consumed in the parking lot at any time. Any person found in possession of alcohol inside or outside of the park will be suspended.

Bag Checks: For safety, all bags and/or belongings are subject to search prior to entering the El Paso County Sportspark. Players, coaches, and guests entering the park gates consent to a search of their bags and/or belongings prior to entry. Players, coaches and guests may refuse a search and return their bags and/or belongings to vehicle prior to entering the Sportspark. Players, coaches, and guests may not bring food and/or beverages, except water, into the Sportspark at any time. Disallowed items cannot be left at the gate and must be returned to a vehicle or discarded.

Destruction of Property: Any person found guilty of willfully destroying property will be required to pay for the damages and will be suspended from the park. In addition, if conditions warrant, the violator will be prosecuted.

Food and Drinks: No outside food or drinks, other than water, are allowed into the park. This policy will be enforced, and patrons will be asked to return all food and drinks to a vehicle or dispose of them at the gate.

Players will be allowed to carry water bottles into the park. Clear water bottles are permitted, one per person. Food purchased outside of the El Paso County Sportspark will not be permitted inside El Paso County Sportspark. This includes sports drinks such as (Gatorade, Vitamin Water, Powerade, etc.) There is no storage area for any items that do not meet security requirements.

Pets and Animals: Service animals specifically trained to aid a person with a disability are welcome.

Prohibited Items:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Animals (except service assisting)
- Bicycles, roller-skates, hover boards, scooters, drones & skateboards
- Chalk drawing is not allowed on Sportspark property (walls, pavement, asphalt, parking lot, etc.).
- Chalk drawings, silly string, or graffiti
- Ice chests and coolers
- Items determined by management to be dangerous or inappropriate
- No vendors inside or outside the Sportspark or its parking lot(s).
- Noise makers, speakers, or boom boxes
- Outside food or beverages
- RV parking is in the dirt area only. No overnight parking or loitering is allowed in the Sportspark.
- Smoking, vaping, or tobacco
- Tailgating, tents, or tables or overnight camping are not allowed in the Sportspark parking lot(s)
- Weapons of any kind

Sportspark gates: Gates open one (1) hour before the first game.

Smoking: Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes, is prohibited in the park. Violators will be ejected immediately. Smoking or the use of tobacco products by players and coaches while in dugouts or on the playing fields will not be allowed.

Questions and Concerns: The management staff at El Paso County Sportspark requests that any and all concerns arising during a game/season, be reported by the respective coaches, in writing, to the League Manager, or to the Sportspark Manager. If a patron would like to voice a concern, the complaint/concern should be in writing and submitted to the League Manager and Sportspark Manager. Anonymous correspondence will not be considered.