



Objective of PAL Girls Softball

Definition

The objective of the Los Banos PAL Girls Softball Program is to provide a quality, adult-supervised program that allows all girls the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of the game. Adults involved in the program must make decisions that are in the best interest of the girls and the program and not what is best for themselves.

Ages

Any female between the age of five(5) years and sixteen (16) years is eligible to play. The cut-off date for eligibility is April 30th, 2026. Players must turn age 5 during the season dates to be eligible to play.

Coaches/Assistant Coaches / Dug-Out Moms & Volunteers

- A. **Eligibility** - Only those adults that are of good character and in good standing in the community and Los Banos PAL can apply to be a volunteer for girls softball. All adults must register as a volunteer and be fingerprinted by the Los Banos Police Department. An extensive background check will be conducted on each adult volunteer.
- B. **Credibility** - No adult can serve as a volunteer of the Los Banos PAL Girls Softball Program if they:
 - a. Have been convicted of a serious misdemeanor or felony within the last ten (10) years.
 - b. Are currently a registrant with the Los Banos Police Department.
 - c. Are not properly fingerprinted.
 - d. Do not pass a background check.
 - e. In our opinion do not represent the league in a positive manner.
 - f. Have had recent negative police conduct.
 - g. In the evaluation of the Los Banos PAL Board of Directors, they have not or do not conduct themselves in the best interest of the league or in the best interest of the players or other volunteers.
- C. **Longevity** - A coach, assistant coach, dug out mom , or volunteer can only be involved for the length of each season. At the end of each season, the adult can re-apply for the next softball season.
- D. **Number of Coaches / Volunteers** - During any game, only the coach, assistant coach, dug out mom, or registered volunteer are allowed in the player's dugout. At least one (1) of these volunteers MUST be FEMALE. One adult female MUST be in the dugout and at practices at all times. Any team can recruit other volunteer parents to assist during practices, but they must be registered as a volunteer, fingerprinted through PAL, background passed, and badged with PAL for the appropriate season.

- E. **Volunteer ID** - All volunteers must wear a PAL issued ID card. The PAL ID must be worn at all practices, games, and whenever representing PAL in any way. Parents will be told they may check your ID to assure you have complied with all PAL rules and regulations.
- F. **Conduct** - If any coach, assistant coach, dug out mom, or other volunteer adult that assists the team in any way uses profane language, makes any rude or sexual gestures, intimidates any girl, or does not conduct themselves in the best interest of the girls and the program, they will be dismissed from their duties immediately.
- G. **Coaches / Assistant Coaches Children** - Only the coach and assistant coach will automatically have their children placed on the team. There can be no more than four (4) players on one team whose parents are the coach or assistant coach. If there are more than two (2) players who qualify as pitchers and/or experienced softball players, then in the best interest of the program, the coach and assistant coach are strongly encouraged to work with less experienced coaches or assistant coaches.

Parents & Spectators

- A. **Parent/Family Participation** - Parents, grandparents, family members, and family friends are strongly encouraged to attend all games that their daughter/friend is involved in.
- B. **Parent Responsibility** - It is the responsibility of parents to bring and pick up their daughter to all practices and games.
- C. **Out-of-Control Parent or Spectator** - Parents, grandparents, family members, and family friends are encouraged to support their daughter/friend and their team in positive comments. However, if there is an out-of-control spectator who is using inappropriate language, degrading remarks, or any negative gestures against any person participating in a game or against the umpires, who is in the judgement of the umpires or league officials, the team will be given one (1) warning to the team coach. Failure to conform to the warning can result in forfeiture of the game.
- D. **Smoking, Vaping, & Alcohol Policy** - **ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING, VAPING, OR ALCOHOL** are permitted at the Officer Noah Jones Ballfields (aka PAL Fields) at any time. Any violation will result in immediate removal from the facility and may lead to further disciplinary action, including possible forfeiture of the game and/or suspension from future PAL activities.



PAL Softball Divisions 9-10, 11-12, 13-16 Rules

Practices:

- A. Only badged coaches/volunteers are allowed to run and interact with the players at practices.
- B. A badged dugout mom must be present for the entirety of all practices.

Field Dimensions:

- A. Base paths: 60 feet
- B. Pitching distance: 35 feet for 9-10, and 40 feet for 11-12 & 13-16.

Game Setup:

- A. Teams must have a minimum of seven (7) players to start a game, but should play 9 players on the field.
- B. Games are 7 innings or 75 minutes, whichever comes first. There is no minimum on how many innings must be played. If **FIVE (5) minutes** are left, an inning **MUST** begin. All that is needed is one player on the field of play from EITHER team for an inning to begin.
- C. Once an inning has begun, it must be completed even if time has lapsed, unless the home team is ahead when the top half of the inning is over.

Pitching:

- A. The game will begin with the players pitching.
- B. Player pitchers may only pitch 3 innings per game.
- C. Pitchers will be given 5 warm-up pitches or two minutes, whichever comes first.
- D. Coaches are allowed two (2) conferences per pitcher per game.

Batting:

- A. No play shall be declared if a batter hits the ball with one or both feet outside the batter's box. If the pitch is the fifth pitch, the batter will be declared out.
- B. For safety reasons, coaches will caution players about throwing/slinging the bat. Each player will receive one warning from the umpire for throwing/slinging the bat. On the second offense, the player will be called out.
- C. Each team must allow all players to bat, according to the batting order. If a player is sick, hurt, or refuses to bat, this must be brought to the attention of the other coach, umpire, and the scorekeeper.
- D. Failure to bat constitutes a team out. The individual batter will resume their correct position in the batting order when returning to the game.
- E. There will be NO infield fly rule.

- F. Bunting is allowed, the batter will be declared out if the batter attempts a bunt on a 3rd strike and bunts the ball foul.
- G. **The Drop Strike 3 rule is in effect.** If the catcher fails to catch the third strike before it hits the ground and there are fewer than two outs, the batter is not automatically out. In this situation, the batter may try to run to first base, but only if first base is unoccupied when the pitch is made. The catcher must tag the batter with the ball or throw the ball to the first baseman before the batter gets there to complete the force out. However, if there is already a runner on first base and there are fewer than two outs, the dropped third strike is ruled an automatic out.
- H. The plate umpire will award first base to the batter when their person or clothing is hit by the pitch, as long as the batter did not strike at the pitched ball. An attempted strike at the ball prior to being hit by the pitch will count as a strike. Any runners will advance one base if forced due to the batter being awarded first base.
- I. If the pitched ball hits the ground prior to hitting the batter, the ball is a dead ball and the batter is NOT awarded a base.

Base Running:

- A. Runners may leave the base once the pitch is released.
- B. Base stealing is allowed, so long as the ball is in play.
- C. All runners must, without hesitation, go to the next base or return to their previous base once the ball is in the pitching circle. PENALTY: Runner is out.
- D. Any coach touching a baserunner(s) while the ball is in play will result in the touched runner(s) being called out. All other runners may advance at their own risk.
- E. PENALTY: For a runner(s) leaving early, the ball becomes dead, the runner(s) will be declared out.
- F. All players must make an attempt to avoid any contact. This means sliding if a play is being made at the base. This will be a judgment call by the umpire.

Scoring & Game Play:

- A. 5-Up Rule
 - a. In the 9-10, 11-12 and 13-16 divisions, each half inning will end when the defense records three (3) outs or the offense has increased their lead to five (5) runs over the opponent's current score, whichever comes first.
 - i. If the batting team is trailing or tied at the start of the half-inning, they may continue scoring until they lead by 5 runs.
 - ii. If the batting team is already leading by 5 at the start of their half-inning, they may score only 1 additional run before the inning ends immediately.
 - iii. This rule applies to all innings to promote competitive balance, encourage defense, and prevent excessive run differentials.
- B. Scorekeeping: Both teams are responsible for keeping scorebooks. The home team will keep the Official PAL scorebook and it must be signed by both coaches and plate umpire at the end of each game. It is recommended to review the score at the end of each inning.
- C. Home Runs
 - a. Each field's outfield will have a clearly marked line designating the outfield boundary.
 - b. A batted ball that lands on or beyond the line in fair territory is ruled a home run. The ball is dead immediately, all runners score, and it counts as a home run for scoring and statistical purposes. Score not to exceed the 5-Up Rule.

- c. If a batted ball lands before the line in fair territory and then rolls beyond the line, it remains live and in play (runners may advance at their own risk) unless/until it rolls out of the designated playing area and becomes a dead ball (e.g., passed/through a fence, into the stands, or other out-of-play area per field ground rules.) In this case, the umpire will award appropriate bases based on the situation at the time the ball went dead.
- d. Umpires have sole and final authority to determine whether a ball is on/beyond the line, in fair territory, or subject to any other ground rule application. Their call is final.

Equipment:

- A. An 11" softball will be used for the 9-10 division, and a 12" softball will be used for the 11-12 & 13-16 divisions. Game balls will be provided by PAL.
- B. All pitchers MUST wear a Face Guard while pitching.
- C. All fielding positions are HIGHLY encouraged to wear a Face Guard.
- D. Catchers are required to wear full catcher's gear.
- E. Batters and baserunners must wear NOCSAE approved helmets with a face guard and chin strap, this includes batters on deck.
- F. All PAL volunteers including coaches, dug-out Moms, and umpires are responsible for ensuring all jewelry, bobby pins, and hair clips and ties are safe. Any items deemed as unsafe to the player or others must be removed prior to any practice or game play.

General Rules:

- A. Players MUST wear their PAL provided jerseys in order to play.
- B. Players MUST wear their jerseys on the outermost layer of their clothing to ensure their numbers are properly displayed for scorekeeping purposes.
- C. Only water or sport bottles are allowed in the dugouts.
- D. Seeds are not allowed in the dugouts or on the fields.
- E. If any player is injured and is bleeding, they must leave the field to wash up. If a runner is needed, the last out will replace the runner. If blood is on either the player's shirt or pants, they must be changed before the player may return to the field.
- F. If a player leaves a game due to injury and is in need of immediate medical attention or a doctor, the player is out for the remainder of the game. A physician release will be needed before the player can play in the next game.
- G. Only players, badged coaches and female chaperones (badged dug-out mom) are allowed in the dugouts at any given time. Only three (3) badged adults are allowed on the field or in the dugouts at a time. (1 Head Coach, 1 Assistant Coach, and 1 Dugout Mom)
- H. All players present at a game must play AT LEAST two (2) innings per game.
- I. Players are not allowed to leave the dugout without permission from their coach.
- J. In an effort to save time, coaches should hustle their teams on and off of the field. Catchers should be ready in their gear at all times unless they are batting.
- K. Concerns or complaints of any kind shall always be brought to the attention of the Player Agent.
- L. Coaches have the ultimate responsibility for their team and spectators. The umpire will issue coaches one warning, if they are unable to control their team and/or spectators, the game will result in a forfeit.
- M. Umpires make final decisions on rule interpretations.
- N. Encourage position rotation for skill development.

- O. Emphasis on learning, sportsmanship, and enjoyment of the game.
- P. Have Fun!