

## MASO Softball 2026 – Rules by Leagues (Revised 3/10/2024)

### Baltimore County:

#### Varsity

- 10-run mercy rule after losing team has batted five times. Includes V, JV and MPSSAA regional and state tournament.
- Maryland tie breaker will be used starting 8<sup>th</sup> inning.
- Ball must be .47 core and 375 lbs. max compression. Must have NFHS logo.
- During cold and/or inclement weather, players may wear anything over their uniforms.
- No time limit for varsity
- Metal cleats are permitted.
- Doubleheaders, varsity plays two 7 inning games and JV will consist of two 5-inning games.

#### JV

- All games have two-hour time limit.
- Once limit is reached, current inning is completed.
  - Exception: If game is tied at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning or after the two-hour completed inning (whichever occurs first), the Maryland tie breaker is used until a winner is determined.
  - 10-run mercy rule after five innings. Includes V, JV and MPSSAA regional and state tournament.
  - Team may concede at any time.
  - No run limit per inning for Division 1a and 1b JV teams. This also applies when an out-of-county school plays.
  - Division 2a and 2b Teams Only will have a 5 run per inning rule, until the final inning (unlimited runs). The following also apply:
    - Should time not permit the unlimited run (last inning) to be played & both teams have had an opportunity to bat (unless the home team is winning), the game is over. Umpires should be aware of the time, to try to play the unlimited inning, if possible.
    - A Maryland Tie Breaker inning could be played, so long as it starts prior to the 2-hour time limit expiring.
    - A game could end in a tie.

### Baltimore City:

#### Varsity

- Follows rules 1 through 4 as Baltimore County above.
- Doubleheaders, varsity two 5 inning games.
- All Regular season games have two-hour time limit.
  - Once limit is reached, current inning is completed.
  - Exception: If game is tied at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning or after the two-hour completed inning (whichever occurs first), the Maryland tie breaker is used until a winner is determined.
  - There is no time limit for playoff games.

#### JV

- All JV games have 2-hour time limit.
- Follows rules 1 through 3 as Baltimore County JV above.
  - Six-run limit per inning until the last inning.

**Note: Metal cleats are not permitted in Baltimore City.**

### Carroll County:

No rule modifications. Both Varsity and JV follow rules 1 through 7 of Baltimore County Divisions 1a & 1b Varsity above.

### IAAM League:

#### Varsity

- Three Divisions
- Division A and B
  - Follows rules 1 through 7 as Baltimore County above.
- Division C:
  - Follows rules 2, 3, 4, 6 & 7 as Baltimore County above.
  - Varsity has a 15-run mercy rule after five innings.
  - Regular season games have a two hour time limit.
    - Once time limit is reached, current inning is completed.
    - Exception: If game is tied at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning or after the two-hour completed inning (whichever comes first), the international tie breaker is used until a winner is determined.
    - There is no time limit for playoff games.
  - The batter may not wave the bat in the strike zone on an attempted bunt.
    - First offense is a team warning.
    - Second offense is a dead ball strike.

#### JV – All Divisions:

- 13-run mercy rule after five innings.
- Six-run per inning limit until the last inning.
- International tie-breaker is in effect if game is tied after seven innings.

### Cross-Over Games

- Home team rules prevail:
- If the home team is from the IAAM C Division:
  - The teams **usually** follow the federation mercy rule of 10 runs after five innings with no time limit.
  - Home team has the final say.
  - Teams must agree at the pre-game which of the two formats will be used.

### Middle School:

- Games 7 innings
- Teams may not exceed five runs per inning with continuation of play, except last inning.
- Ninety-minute time limit. Complete the inning.
- Mercy Rule: 15-run rule after five innings. If home team is behind, they get to bat.
- No dropped third strike, batter is out.
- Coaches have the option of 9 or 10 fielders. Both must agree.
- Coaches may choose to bat 9 or 10 or entire lineup.
- Pitching distance is 40 feet.
- Runners may steal after pitcher releases the ball and may steal 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> only.
- Runners on 3<sup>rd</sup> may only advance to home by way of a hit or a walk.