



2024-2025 MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

MINNESOTA MODIFICATIONS

Softball, Girls

- A. **Bench and Field Conduct Rule Modification:** Coaches, players, or other team personnel must be in the dugout (bench area) or dead-ball territory (as defined by Rule 2, Section 22, Article 4) during the opponent's infield practice prior to the start of each game. **Penalty:** The umpire shall warn the offender unless the offense is judged to be major, in which case an ejection shall occur. Any subsequent offense shall result in restriction to the dugout and/or ejection of the offender(s).
- B. **On-Deck Circle:** All on-deck batters must use the on-deck circle that is located behind the batter, with the exception of the on-deck batter who is leading off the $\frac{1}{2}$ inning – that batter may remain in front of their dugout.
- C. **10-Run Rule:** Calls for the game to end if a team is ahead by at least 10 runs after 5 innings of a 7-inning game.
- D. **15-Run Rule:** A game ends after 4 innings (3-1/2) when a team is 15 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat. This is effective for regular and post-season play.
- E. **Regulation Game:** It is a regulation game if: (a) 5 full innings have been played; or if the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 4 or 4 and a fraction terms at bat than the opponent has scored in 5 terms at bat; or (b) play has gone beyond 5 full innings.

In (b), if the game is called when the teams have not 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; unless the home team, in their half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.

- F. **Suspended Games (Regular Season and Postseason):** A suspended game is any game that is ended before it becomes a regulation game, or a regulation game that has a tie score after the last completed inning or is tied in the bottom half of the inning. If darkness, rain or other circumstances interfere with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire-in-chief before it is a regulation game, such game shall be declared a suspended game. The suspended game shall be resumed from the point of interruption at a later date.

If a called game is a regulation game that has a tie score after the last completed inning or is tied in the bottom half of the inning, it shall be declared a suspended game and must be continued from the point of suspension at a later time. 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. All other games that are called (ended) by the umpire-in-chief will revert back to the score after the last completed inning (except in cases where the home team takes the lead in the bottom half of the inning) and will be final.

- G. **Tie Regulation Season Games:** Each year during regular season play some conference games, after going five full innings or more are called because of rain, darkness or other cause while the score is tied. According to the rule this is a tie game. Batting and fielding records are counted but the game is not counted in computing percentages of games won or lost. There is, however, by rule this choice; by conference adoption, a regulation called game with tie score shall be counted as half game won and half game lost for each team.
- H. **Time Limit Procedure:** In invitational tournaments games may be played with a time limit as prescribed by the host tournament team. Under this rule, no new inning will start after the prescribed time limit unless the game is tied. If a game is tied the tie-breaker rule, identified in I. below, will be used to determine a winning team. The host tournament team will decide in which inning the tiebreaker rule will be used.
- I. **Tie-Breaker Rule:** In the event that the Tie Breaker rule is used the following procedures shall apply: At the start of the inning in which the tie-breaker rule is used, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in the respective half inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the number 5 batter is the leadoff batter, the number 4 batter in the batting order will be placed on second base). The umpire and scorekeeper will determine that the proper runner has been placed at second base and the inning shall begin.
- J. **Double First Base:** Double first base is required for all regular and post-season games.
- K. **Umpire Uniform:** The uniform for softball officials is: NCAA style dark gray pants or like colored charcoal & black belt. Heather gray pants are acceptable for 2025. Smitty MSHSL electric blue shirt with midnight blue side panels is the default (expected) shirt. The midnight blue shirt with electric blue panels is optional. This shirt is expected for all postseason and State Tournament games in 2025 and will be expected for all varsity games in 2026. All crew members must match. A powder blue pullover with white and navy-blue trim (default) can be an alternative umpire shirt, provided the crew matches in color and style. Mostly black shoes, navy blue-sized hat, Navy blue ball bag(s), Official jacket is navy blue – all should be the same

(powder blue/white stripes will be the default in 2026). NCAA-style uniform jackets are acceptable. No emblems, printing, or markings on uniforms are acceptable.