

South Dakota VFW Baseball Rules

16U and 14U
February 1, 2019

ELIGIBILITY

1. Competition is open to boys and girls who have not reached his/her 17th birthday (16U) or 15th birthday (14U) before **January 1st** of the current year. In order to be eligible for the VFW 16U and/or 14U Baseball program, his/her name must be on the state tournament roster.
2. If a player is found ineligible he/she shall be disqualified immediately. In the case a player is found guilty of losing his or her amateur status only, the player should be disqualified. In all other cases where the player is found ineligible the entire team shall be disqualified and all games forfeited that have been played up to that point in time.
3. A local baseball association or community attempting to register with the VFW for postseason play must register their oldest team (16U, 14U, 12U, 10U), if the community has that particular team. If the association chooses not to do so, the VFW baseball administration will not recognize them as a governing body of local baseball in their specific area. This may void any and all registrations from said community/association. Exceptions and extenuating circumstances will be ruled on by the VFW administration.
4. A VFW Baseball team and players must register online at www.sdvfwbasesball.com
 - a. Early registration fee is \$125 per team until **May 1**.
 - b. Registration fee is \$150 per team from May 2 until June 15. Entry form and rosters are **due by June 15th**.
 - c. **14U and 16U** late registration is **\$175** per team from June 16 until **June 21st**. It is imperative **14U and 16U** registration/rosters be completed by **June 21st** to allow region brackets/seeding to be completed no later than **June 25th**.
 - d. **10U and 12U** late registration of **\$175** will be accepted until **June 30th**.
 - e. Extremely late registration: All age division team initial registration may be accepted on a case-by-case basis until **July 2nd** and the fee will be **\$200**. **After** brackets are posted, **14U and 16U** team acceptance into tournament requires 2/3 approval of the teams in their prospective region and the fee will be \$200.
 - f. Team registration will include Team's name, Sponsor's name, Coaches Name, information, phone, cell phone, address and email.
 - g. You may list unlimited players on the team roster. The player registration will require the following information: city of primary residence, school attended the last school year and date of birth.

- h. July 2nd is the cutoff date for all roster changes, late roster changes for all age divisions will be on a case-by-case basis.
5. All protests of player's eligibility must be specific with definite proof.
- a. Regional Coordinators will decide on issues on the local level. If a regional coordinator is a coach of a team within that region, consultation with the Director of Baseball Operations and/or Department of SD Baseball Chairman should take place and if conflict of interest is apparent, the ruling shall be made by the Director of Baseball Operations and/or Department of SD Baseball Chairman.
 - b. Director of Baseball Operations, Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman, SD VFW Commander, or SD VFW Quartermaster shall render decision as they pertain to the protests directed to any of them on the state level.
 - c. All appeals on all levels must be in writing to the next higher authority within 48 hours after the decision has been rendered at each level. No protests will be allowed on judgments by umpires in league and/or tournament competition.
 - d. All protests of this nature will be settled on the field at the time of the dispute.
 - e. In regional, state or league competition on the field, decisions governing interpretation of rules may be appealed to the tournament officials; however, in most cases the umpire's decision will be upheld.
 - f. No questions of eligibility may be raised after the first pitch of the second round in tournament play if all rosters and age verification certificates have been checked and the same player's name as appears on the score book appeared on the checked roster for the complete tournament. In league play, player eligibility may be raised until the conclusion of the season league games.
6. A team seeking entrance into a South Dakota VFW State Baseball Tournament (Regional & State Tournaments) must be sanctioned by their local VFW post. If the local VFW Post does not provide a VFW program for its area youth, a team seeking to participate in a South Dakota VFW Regional, League play and/or State Tournament must be sanctioned and/or approved in the following priority order:
- a. Local Youth Baseball Association
 - b. City Recreation Department
 - c. Highest Ranking City Official
7. A notice of approval must be included from the governing body with registration. The entry form and fee must be presented by the local governing unit. For the purposes of clarification, the mailing address of the registering team shall be used as the point of origin. The youth baseball association nearest to a team's "point of origin" must grant approval.
8. If a player attempts to play for another team outside of his or her local governing baseball association where he or she attended school the previous year, he or she is required to be released by his or her local governing baseball association.

9. Any team is allowed two pick-up players from other towns/schools as long as those towns/schools do not have a team at that particular age group. However, more than two release players from another town/school on a roster mean all Average Daily Members (ADM) numbers, as defined by the South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA), will be added to the ADM of the registering team's ADM based on what school district they pair with. The addition of ADMs to a team may/may not reclassify them into a higher class. Private and/or Homeschooled kids are exceptions to being added to the registering team's ADM, and/or being required to be released but will be decided by the Director of Baseball Operations and/or Department of SD Baseball Chairman. Extenuating circumstances (non-custodial parents, etc.) will be taken under advisement.

10. A team wishing to register must have a minimum of at least 80% of their players from its local governing baseball association from where they are attempting to be sanctioned.

General Rules

1. For all purposes, the first game of the 14U and 16U age division regional tournaments will be considered as the beginning of the season.

2. A boy or girl may not participate in VFW baseball and any other baseball program in the same season. However, subject to approval of the Director of Baseball Operations, an entire VFW Baseball team may be registered in a program covering the ages of 13-14 and 15-16, for example, Babe Ruth, Pony, Colt Leagues and USSSA and if so registered all members of the VFW team shall be eligible even though the team is registered in the Babe Ruth, Pony, Colt Leagues and USSSA or some other formally organized baseball program.
 - a. Exception to this rule will be allowed for teams who are signed up in 16U Class A and 16U Class B VFW Programs. These teams will be allowed unlimited players on their team to play also with a South Dakota Senior American Legion B or A Program.
 - b. Players registered on a VFW team can play on an American Legion team and unlimited players from a registered Senior American Legion Team can play on a VFW team. Names of the players, roster of Senior American Legion team and birth certificates must be attached to the VFW Roster and Team Entry Form.
 - c. Members of teams must be part of the same organized local governing body for baseball in the community. South Dakota VFW pitching rules will always apply. These other affiliations must be noted on your VFW team registration or disqualification may result.

3. Team roster forms must include the uniform number and name of the player, and date of birth. If this information and the player registration is incomplete, it can affect the eligibility of the player. Initial Roster information must be submitted online by June 21st. A player can be listed on two different teams in separate age divisions,

but a boy or girl can only be listed on one 10U, one 12U, one 14U roster and one 16U roster.

4. (16U, 14U, 12U & 10U) A local baseball association or community wishing to register with the VFW will be classified by the Director of Baseball Operations and/or VFW Baseball Chairman. **Exception:** Canova does not have a school and will use a 15 mile radius from their baseball field to determine their ADM. The ADM will be determined by the school where the majority of the team is enrolled. If there are kids outside of the 15 mile radius they will be treated as released players unless they are enrolled at the school that the team's ADM is using.
 - a. Classification is determined by Average Daily Membership (ADM) as defined by the South Dakota High School Activities Association. As a **general rule of thumb** an ADM of 150 and below will be considered Class B and above 150 will be Class A. VFW Baseball may be required to move higher ADM Class B schools to Class A tournaments to facilitate region and state competition. (As a **general rule of thumb**, an ADM of **500** and above will be considered Class AA.)
 - b. Extenuating circumstances (divorce, non-custodial parents/grandparents) will be ruled on by the administration to determine the impact to the base ADM. The player must also have a release for from the team he is leaving.
 - c. **Also, teams may be moved to reasonably balance regions up until July 1.**
 - d. A Class A/B team will be allowed two pickup players without adding their ADM numbers, however Class A and **Class AA** teams will not be allowed more than two. More than two pickup/release players automatically results in a forfeit with no refund for Class A teams. **Reminder**, more than two players from a school or combination of schools will require the addition of ADM to the base school
5. It is the duty of the Director of Baseball Operations to select regional, state tournament dates for VFW Baseball Chairman approval as well as facilitate league schedules.
6. It is the duty of the Director of Baseball Operations to make the drawings for the state tournaments. State tournament A and B classes Regional Champs vs. Regional Runners up pairings will be drawn by the Director of Baseball Operations and/or Baseball Chairman.
7. In accordance with the Department of SD By Laws (dated 06/2018), Each Post or Community that registered a team will receive a delegate vote at the Annual Meeting for each team they registered the previous season not to exceed 4 votes.
8. All proposed rule changes must be submitted in writing to the VFW Baseball Chairman no later than **September 30th** of each year or they will not be considered at the annual meeting unless two-thirds of those present and eligible to vote so determine. Rules committee will meet as directed by the Baseball Chairman. The Rules committee may make rule adjustments for the good of VFW Baseball with the approval of the Baseball Chairman.

9. Proposed rule changes must be submitted to all participating teams three weeks prior to annual meeting to be held on the third Sunday in January.

Regional and State Tournaments

1. A regional tournament consists of teams from one area or region participating against each other.
2. The 16U and 14U State Tournament brackets should be considered as **tentative and subject to change**. The draw posted is final but the actual game times on Friday may change. The final state bracket will have all the teams participating listed with the Host Team playing the last game on Friday evening thereby necessitating the swapping of brackets.
3. All 16U and 14U regional and state tournaments shall be played on a diamond (facility) with regulation distances between bases and between pitching mound to home plate. In addition, the distance from home plate to the right and left field corners shall be at least 275 feet. The distance from home plate to straightaway center field shall be at least 320 feet.
4. Entrants in the District or Regional Tournaments must be decided by the SD VFW Baseball Chairman and SD VFW Director of Baseball Operations as soon as possible. Regional Tournament sites will be determined by Regional Coordinators and approved by the SD VFW Director of Baseball Operations. SD VFW Baseball Chairman and/or Director of Baseball Operations will make the drawings for Regional Tournaments. Before any 16U Class A or 16U Class B Regional Tournaments are held, the VFW SD 14U Class A and Class B Tournaments must be completed. This is to facilitate teams who use 13 or 14 year olds for their 16U Class A or Class B teams.
5. Regional Tournaments may be held up to 2 weeks prior to the 16U and 14U State Tournaments. The 16U Regional Tournaments should be completed by the Friday prior to the state tournament start. The 14U Regional Tournaments should attempt to be completed by the Thursday but no later than the Friday prior to the state tournament start. This will allow the State Tournament Host Committees the weekend to communicate and collect data from the attending teams. In addition, this will allow the 14U Regional Tournaments to conclude prior to the start of the 10U/12U State Tournament weekend.
6. All VFW Baseball Tournaments games shall be 7 innings duration unless a team is leading by 10 runs at the end of 5 innings, 4 ½ innings if the home team is leading by 10 runs, or if a team is leading by that number of runs any complete inning thereafter. A team leading by 15 runs or more after 3 complete innings, or any complete inning thereafter until the ten run rule becomes effective will be declared the winner.

7. If a team elects to not play the region championship game, the team forfeits their position in the state tournament and the next placed team will participate in the state tournament. A written (email) request for a waiver will be evaluated by VFW Baseball Administration in coordination with the Host Tournament Director/Area Coordinator to determine validity.
8. All of the umpires for regional and state tournaments must be registered. A certified umpire shall act as the umpire-in-chief. All games must have at least two umpires in state tournaments. It is highly encouraged that an Umpire crew of three be used on Championship Sunday for 16U and 14U Class A and Class B State Tournaments.
9. All 16U and 14U regional tournaments shall be double elimination or pool play with the decision to be made by SD VFW Baseball Chairman and Director of Baseball Operations.
10. All 16U and 14U Class A and B State Tournaments shall be single elimination. When a four region (champions and runner up advancing to the state tournament) format is used, the four regional champions will be awarded home team status in the first round. All registered teams must play in a qualifying regional tournament. If pool play format is used in an "open" state tournament, there would be no need for a qualifying regional tournament.
11. Insurance is mandatory for each team in tournament play. A copy must be submitted online at the SD VFW Baseball Website during initial registration.
12. All teams, including coaches, shall be in baseball uniforms for tournament play. If a coach or team player is not in uniform they will not be allowed on the field. All 16U and 14U uniforms **must have a VFW patch or other VFW identifiable method** on the jersey with a team determined, consistent location. SD VFW Baseball will provide and send 15 patches to each team that didn't receive 15 patches in 2018. Additional patches are available through the Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman at \$2 per patch.
13. When the 16U and 14U Class A and Class B tournaments consists of two teams from each region, the champion and runner-up. The region hosting the state tournament will have a host team, that team will replace the runner-up if it does not place 1st or 2nd in their regional tournament.
14. The Baseball Advisory Committee will announce the site of the State Tournament during the annual VFW Baseball Committee meeting. **State tournament fees** will be based on the following formula: \$25 per team participating in the State Tournament; minimum fee \$200 and maximum fee of \$600 apply.

15. Fee shall be paid to the Department of SD VFW Headquarters within 30 days after the completion of the tournament.
16. The game to determine 7th and 8th place in the 16U and 14U Class A and B State Tournaments will not be played in any of the tournaments.
17. Any team that does not report to play or notify the tournament officials at any regional or state tournament of a justifiable reason for being late by 30 minutes past the time established to play, shall forfeit the game.
18. State tournaments will not be played on any diamond where another baseball tournament is being played on the same diamond on the same dates.
19. Trophies shall be furnished for state tournaments by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars. Trophies for all state tournaments with eight team format shall be awarded to the winner, runner-up, third and fifth place winners. Individual medals will also be presented to the members of all the teams that participate in the tournament. Trophies for all state tournaments with a pool play format shall be awarded to the winner, runner-up and third place winner and in some tournaments there may be a 4th place trophy. Individual medals will be presented to members of the top four teams. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented in the memory of Louie Thury by the South Dakota Baseball Umpire Association for the 16U Class A and B Tournaments. Sportsmanship Team Plaque will be presented in memory of William Radigan by the Department of South Dakota Veterans of Foreign Wars for the 14U Class A and B Tournaments. These awards are the only awards presented at the VFW State Tournament.
20. Photo copies of Birth, Baptismal or Hospital Certificates, Certified Copy from the Bureau of Vital Statistics or a valid Driver's License may be posted with registration. However, the documents **will** also be presented at the regional and state tournaments for cross reference with the official VFW Baseball roster for age verification.
21. The official Team rosters used for age verification to participate in regional and state tournament play will be submitted by VFW Baseball to the region coordinator/tournament chairman as early as possible before the tournament starts. Coaches **are required** to bring age verification documents to all age division regional and state tournaments. It is necessary to check birth age verification certificates and rosters at regional and state tournaments. Teams participating in a VFW State Tournament should send rosters with uniform numbers and a team picture to their Tournament Director to meet the publishing deadline.
22. Tournament officials have complete autonomy on taking whatever action is necessary in behavior problems of participants. Severe cases involving coaches, players and spectators/fans may result in suspension or disqualification. Return to play will be determined by the VFW Baseball Chairman.

23. In interest of time all rained out or postponed championship round ball games in tournament play will begin from point of stoppage unless the Ten Run Rule has taken effect. It is recommended during regular league play that if a game is rained out it should be called a game if five or more innings have been played.
24. Gate fees will not exceed five dollars per adult per day.
25. Pool Play Tie Breakers Formats for all VFW Baseball Tournaments.
 - a. Win-loss record in pool play
 - b. Head-to-head competition provided all teams have played each other.
 - c. Fewest runs allowed (overall).
 - d. Best run differential in all pool play games (maximum per game run differential of +10 or -10).
26. If, in the event of a 3-way tie or more, the 3-way tie is broken either before step #4 or upon completion of step #4 and a 2-way tie still remains, the two remaining tied teams will revert back to step #2 and repeat the tie-breaker criteria from that point in order to break the tie. In the event of forfeit in Divisional/Pool Play, the non-forfeiting teams will be credited with a 10 run differential victory. Teams that forfeit a game cannot advance in tournament play.
27. The VFW Creed shall be said before every game of VFW Regional and State Tournaments; **at all levels.**

Equipment

1. Bat requirements for 16U Age Division. All bats must be wood or in accordance with BBCOR Bat Standards and have the official BBCOR stamp. Any illegal bats will be removed from the game and the batter is out.
2. Bat requirements for 14U Age Division. All bats for 14U teams must be in accordance with BBCOR Bat Standard or USABAT Standard. The bat shall include the official stamp of the Little League Baseball organization, BBCOR or state Little League approved. See this [link for USABAT](#). Any illegal bats will be removed from the game and the batter is out.
3. A batter without protective headgear including ear protectors will be declared out when the pitcher comes to the set position, or begins his motion. Protective helmet including ear protectors is required for all base runners, and if the base runner refuses to put on a helmet after being advised by the umpire, he shall be automatically out.

4. Catchers must wear protective headgear, throat protectors, chest pad and catcher's cup. Warm-up catchers must wear protective headgear and throat protectors. Courtesy runners may be used for catchers attaining first base at any time. Courtesy runners are not allowed for pinch hitters for catchers. A player, who has already participated in the game, is not eligible to be a courtesy runner.
5. VFW Patch must be worn on 16U and 14U uniform jersey with a team consistent location to be determined by the team. SD VFW Baseball will provide and send 15 patches to each team that didn't receive 15 patches in 2018. Additional patches are available through the Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman at \$2 per patch.

Regulations

1. If a pitcher is removed from the mound during the game he **may not** return to the mound in the same game though he is retained in the lineup. Designated hitters may be used in VFW Baseball for any player. South Dakota VFW Baseball utilizes the NFHS rule for re-entry. Any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once, including a player who was the designated hitter, provided such player occupies the same batting position whenever he is in the lineup. A substitute who is withdrawn may not re-enter.
2. All protests will be decided by the official on the level where they occur, but may be appealed to the next higher authority. The final authority resides with the VFW Baseball Chairman.
3. Adult managers who are at least 18 years of age only will be allowed in the coaching boxes, with permission granted to use one player in one box through state tournament play. Players in the coaching box must wear a helmet with ear protection. All 14U and 16U coaches must wear helmets in a coaching box.
4. Professional rules of baseball will apply to all VFW Baseball games except in all cases where VFW League Rules and Regulations conflict with major league professional rules, VFW League rules will supersede professional rules. In the event of a serious injury and there are no other players on the bench who have not played, the last player taken out may be placed back in the game in place of the injured player or players. In the alternative, in a serious injury situation, a team may continue to play with eight players and the team shall receive an automatic out at such player(s) turn at bat. The applicability of the rule shall be determined by the head umpire.
5. A courtesy runner may be substituted for the catcher in all age divisions at any point in the game.
6. South Dakota VFW Baseball will apply, execute and enforce pitch count rules in addition to providing several age appropriate recommendations listed below. Pitch

Smart ([USA Baseball's Pitch Smart Guidelines](#)) are a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers. VFW Baseball elected to establish these rules to ensure the safety, wellbeing and yet have fun while playing in VFW sponsored events. However, it's **ultimately the responsibility** of the coaches, parents and the athlete to ensure that the player follows the guidelines for his age group over the course of the year especially since they will often play in multiple leagues with different affiliations covering different times of the year.

- a. Pitch count limits and required rest recommendations (**required** for VFW sanctioned events)

| Age | Daily Max Pitch Count | Required Rest (Pitches) | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | 0 Days | 1 Days | 2 Days | 3 Days | 4 Days | 5 Days |
| 7-8 | 50 | 1-20 | 21-35 | 36-50 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 9-10 | 75 | 1-25 | 26-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | 66+ | N/A |
| 11-12 | 85 | 1-25 | 26-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | 66+ | N/A |
| 13-14 | 95 | 1-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51-65 | 66+ | N/A |
| 15-16 | 95 | 1-35 | 36-45 | 46-60 | 61-75 | 76+ | N/A |
| | | | | | | | |

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the Daily MAX Pitch Count limit imposed above for his/her age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. The batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. **NOTE 1:** A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day. **NOTE 2:** Any player who has played the position of catcher in four or more innings in a game is **NOT** eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

A player **may** appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days but will not exceed their zero days rest pitch count per day.

- b. **10U and 12U** additional recommendations
 - i. Focus on athleticism, physical fitness and fun
 - ii. Focus on learning baseball rules, general techniques and teamwork
 - iii. Do not exceed 80 combined **innings** pitched in any 12 month period
 - iv. Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
 - v. Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
 - vi. Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods

- vii. Avoid throwing pitches other than fastballs and change-ups
- viii. Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time
- ix. Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
- x. Players should not pitch in multiple games on the same day
- xi. Play other sports during the course of the year
- xii. Monitor for other signs of fatigue

c. **14U and 16U** additional recommendations

- i. Players can begin using breaking pitches after developing consistent fastball and changeup
- ii. Do not exceed 100 combined **innings** pitched in any 12 month period
- iii. Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
- iv. Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
- v. Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods
- vi. Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time
- vii. Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
- viii. Players should not pitch in multiple games on the same day
- ix. Play other sports during the course of the year
- x. Monitor for other signs of fatigue

- d. For VFW sanctioned events, the host committee and/or the regional coordinator (or designee) is responsible for keeping the official pitch count. During VFW sanctioned games, both coaches, umpire crew chief (or designated official) and official book are responsible for keeping the pitch count. Between innings or as required, the coaches, umpire crew and official book (game changer app if used) will compare pitch count. The official book pitch count will be used as final. Disagreements on pitch count may be brought to the VFW Director of Operations or VFW Chairman for arbitration. When a pitcher has been discovered to have exceeded the above age appropriate daily max pitch count, they will be removed from the mound, IAW with the notes above, and allowed to play any position EXCEPT catcher. In addition, the player will be placed in rest status determined by the number of pitches performed.

7. All games scheduled on a definite date will be considered part of that day's play even though the scheduled is not completed until past midnight. In the event of interruption due to weather conditions and participating teams leave the ball park because the complex is closed for that session, all pitching records will be counted for the calendar day that they are started in.
8. No more than two complete games will be played by any one team in any one day, except when an "open" pool play format is used.
9. A legal slide can be either feet first or head first. If a runner slides feet first, at least one leg and buttock shall be on the ground. If a runner slides, he must slide within

reach of the base with either a hand or a foot. A runner may slide or run in a direction away from the field to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder. A slide is illegal if:

- a. The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide into the fielder, or
- b. The runner's raised leg is higher than the fielder's knee when the fielder is in a standing position, or
- c. The runner goes beyond the base and then makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder, or
- d. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg, or
- e. The runner tries to injure the fielder, or
- f. The runner, on a force play, does not slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases. Any player may be ejected from a game for flagrant conduct, which in the umpire's judgment; either injures or is intended to injure another player.

11. The Director of Baseball Operations is authorized to move a team to a different class after reviewing and consulting the situation with the Department of SD Baseball Chairman. Such ruling should be made by **July 2nd**.

13-14 Year Old Regulations

1. **VFW 16U Baseball rules will apply to all games unless a change is listed above.**
2. Competition is open to boys and girls who are 13 and 14 years of age and eligible to play VFW Baseball. A boy or girl who has reached his or her 15th birthday before **January 1st** of the current year is not eligible for the 13-14 year old programs. A boy or girl who is under 13 years of age may play if permission is secured from the Director of Baseball Operations prior to the time of play.
3. The 14U State A and B Tournament will be completed before any 16U Class A or B region tournaments are held.

South Dakota VFW Baseball Rules

12U

Rules as of February 1, 2019

1. VFW 16U and 14U baseball rules will apply to all games unless a change is listed below.
2. Competition is open to boys and girls who are 12 and under years of age and eligible to play VFW Baseball. A boy or girl who has reached his or her 13th birthday by **January 1st** of the current year is not eligible for the 12 and under programs. There will be two classes A and B. Tournament sites and dates will be determined in advance by the Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman and Director of Baseball Operations and then presented to Region Coordinators, Coaches and State VFW Officials during annual VFW Baseball Committee Meeting held in January. The number of teams that register and average daily membership (ADM) of the high school they are in will be factors when teams are placed in a class (see 16U and 14U General Rules #3 for specifics).
3. A 12U Baseball team to be eligible for any tournament play must register online at sdvfwbaseball.com prior to **June 15th** with late registration accepted until **Jun 30th**. See 16U/14U eligibility for registration schedule and fees.
4. Team roster forms must include the name of the player, complete address of the player, name of school attended the last school year and date of birth. If this information is incomplete, it can affect the eligibility of the player. You may list up to (25) twenty-five players per roster for each team.
5. All games in the 12U division will be six (6) innings. The 10-run rule will be effect after 4 innings and the 15-run rule will be in effect after 3 innings. There will be no tie. Games will go extra innings if needed to determine the winner.
6. Bases will be 65 feet apart. Pitching distance for the mound will be 48 feet. Unless waived by VFW Baseball Chairman.
7. Teams participating in 12U age division VFW Baseball sanctioned tournaments will be allowed one extra hitter and a designated hitter (IAW designated hitter rules) for any player

8. South Dakota VFW Baseball will apply, execute and enforce pitch count rules in addition to providing several age appropriate recommendations listed below. Pitch Smart ([USA Baseball's Pitch Smart Guidelines](#)) are a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers. VFW Baseball elected to establish these rules to ensure the safety, wellbeing and yet have fun while playing in VFW sponsored events. However, it's **ultimately the responsibility** of the coaches, parents and the athlete to ensure that the player follows the guidelines for his age group over the course of the year especially since they will often play in multiple leagues with different affiliations covering different times of the year.
- a. Pitch count limits and required rest recommendations (required for VFW sponsored events)

| Age | Daily Max (Pitches in Game) | Required Rest (Pitches) | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | 0 Days | 1 Days | 2 Days | 3 Days | 4 Days | 5 Days |
| 11-12 | 85 | 1-25 | 26-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | 66+ | N/A |

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the Daily MAX Pitch Count limit imposed above for his/her age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: **1.** The batter reaches base; **2.** That batter is put out; **3.** The third out is made to complete the half-inning. **NOTE 1:** A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day. **NOTE 2:** Any player who has played the position of catcher in four or more innings in a game is **NOT** eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

A player **may** appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days but will not exceed their zero days rest pitch count per day. Pitchers once removed from the mound will not return to the mound in the same game.

- b. 12U additional recommendations
- i. Focus on athleticism, physical fitness and fun
 - ii. Focus on learning baseball rules, general techniques and teamwork
 - iii. Do not exceed 80 combined **innings** pitched in any 12-month period
 - iv. Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
 - v. Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
 - vi. Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods
 - vii. Avoid throwing pitches other than fastballs and change-ups
 - viii. Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time

- ix. Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
 - x. Players should not pitch in multiple games on the same day
 - xi. Play other sports during the course of the year
 - xii. Monitor for other signs of fatigue
- c. For VFW sanctioned events, the host committee and/or the regional coordinator (or designee) is responsible for keeping the official pitch count. During VFW sanctioned games, both coaches, umpire crew chief (or designated official) and official book are responsible for keeping the pitch count. Between innings or as required, the coaches, umpire crew and official book (game changer app if used) will compare pitch count. The official book pitch count will be used as final. Disagreements on pitch count may be brought to the VFW Director of Operations or VFW Chairman for arbitration. When a pitcher has been discovered to have exceeded the above age appropriate daily max pitch count, they will be removed from the mound, IAW with the notes above, and allowed to play any position EXCEPT catcher. In addition, the player will be placed in rest status determined by the number of pitches performed.
9. Pitchers will be allowed 6 warm up pitches between innings. There is no balk rule, there will be no balks. If a pitcher takes another position on the field, he/she may not pitch again in that game.
10. Batter, base runners, bat boys, any players acting as base coach and any players out of the dugout must wear a helmet that covers both ears.
11. Catchers must wear a protective headgear, chest protectors, throat protectors, catcher's cup and shin guards. This includes catchers warming up a pitcher.
12. Metal cleats are not allowed.
13. Bat requirements for 12U Age Division. All bats for 12U teams must be in accordance with USABAT Standard. The bat shall include the official stamp of the Little League Baseball organization or state Little League approved. See this [link for USABAT](#). Any illegal bats will be removed from the game and the batter is out.



14. Base running. Stealing is permitted, however, the runner cannot leave the base until the ball leaves the pitchers hand. The runner is out if he/she leaves the base early. The batter may run on a dropped third strike.

15. A courtesy runner is encouraged but not required for a catcher at any point in the game, but must be a bench player.
16. A courtesy runner may be any player who is not currently in the game and does not count as an entry into the game. A courtesy runner may later enter the game at any position.
17. Slide rule is in effect if a fielder has the ball before the run reaches 2nd, 3rd, or home. The runner is out if contact made, umpire discretion will be applied and decision is final.

You may replace starters during the game, but if he/she re-enters the game, he/she must go into the game for the player he/she was replaced by and also in the same spot in the batting. When the sub comes out, he/she is out of the game. In the event of a serious injury and there are no players left on the bench who have not played, the last player taken out may be placed back in the game in place of the injured player. In the alternative, in case of serious injury, a team may continue to play with eight players and the team will receive an automatic out when that player's turn to bat occurs.

South Dakota VFW Baseball Rules

10U

February 1, 2019

1. Competition is open to boys and girls who are 10 and under years of age and eligible to play VFW Baseball. A boy or girl who has reached his or her **11th birthday by January 1st** of the current year is not eligible for the 10U programs. There will be two classes A and B. Tournament sites and dates will be determined in advance by the Department of SD VFW Baseball Chairman and Director of Baseball Operations and then presented to Region Coordinators, Coaches and State VFW Officials during annual VFW Baseball Committee Meeting held in January. The number of teams that register and average daily membership (ADM) of the high school they are in will be factors when teams are placed in a class (see 16U and 14U General Rules #3 for specifics).
2. A 10U Baseball team to be eligible for any tournament play must register online at sdvfwbaseball.com prior to **June 15th** with late registration accepted until Jun 30th. See 16U/14U eligibility for registration schedule and fees.
3. Team roster forms must include uniform number, the name of the player and date of birth. If this information and the player registration is incomplete, it can affect the eligibility of the player. You may list up to (25) twenty-five players per roster for the team.
4. **VFW 16U-14U baseball rules will apply to all games unless a change is listed below.**
 - A. Bases will be (60) sixty feet apart. Pitching distance is forty-five (44-46 ft.). Unless waived by VFW Baseball Chairman.
 - B. All games in the 10 and under division will be (6) six innings. No new inning after 1 hour 45 minute, however the 10-run rule will be in effect after 4 innings and the 15-run rule will be in effect after 3 innings. There will be no tie. Games will go extra innings if needed to determine the winner.
 - C. South Dakota VFW Baseball will apply, execute and enforce pitch count rules in addition to providing several age appropriate recommendations listed below. Pitch Smart ([USA Baseball's Pitch Smart Guidelines](#)) are a series of practical, age-appropriate guidelines to help parents, players and coaches avoid overuse injuries and foster long, healthy careers for youth pitchers. VFW Baseball elected to establish these rules to ensure the safety, wellbeing and yet have fun while playing in VFW sponsored events. However, it's **ultimately the responsibility of**

the coaches, parents and the athlete to ensure that the player follows the guidelines for his age group over the course of the year especially since they will often play in multiple leagues with different affiliations covering different times of the year.

D. Pitch count limits and required rest recommendations (required for VFW sponsored events)

| Age | Daily Max (Pitches in Game) | Required Rest (Pitches) | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | 0 Days | 1 Days | 2 Days | 3 Days | 4 Days | 5 Days |
| 7-8 | 50 | 1-20 | 21-35 | 36-50 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 9-10 | 75 | 1-25 | 26-35 | 36-50 | 51-65 | 66+ | N/A |

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the Daily MAX Pitch Count limit imposed above for his/her age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. The batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. **NOTE 1:** A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day. **NOTE 2:** Any player who has played the position of catcher in four or more innings in a game is **NOT** eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

A player **may** appear in a game as a pitcher for three consecutive days but will not exceed their zero days rest pitch count per day. Pitchers once removed from the mound will not return to the mound in the same game.

- a. 10U additional recommendations
 - i. Focus on athleticism, physical fitness and fun
 - ii. Focus on learning baseball rules, general techniques and teamwork
 - iii. Do not exceed 80 combined **innings** pitched in any 12-month period
 - iv. Take at least 4 months off from throwing every year, with at least 2-3 of those months being continuous
 - v. Make sure to properly warm up before pitching
 - vi. Set and follow pitch-count limits and required rest periods
 - vii. Avoid throwing pitches other than fastballs and change-ups
 - viii. Avoid playing for multiple teams at the same time
 - ix. Avoid playing catcher while not pitching
 - x. Players should not pitch in multiple games on the same day
 - xi. Play other sports during the course of the year
 - xii. Monitor for other signs of fatigue

- b. For VFW sanctioned events, the host committee and/or the regional coordinator (or designee) is responsible for keeping the official pitch count. During VFW sanctioned games, both coaches, umpire crew chief (or designated official) and official book are responsible for keeping the pitch count. Between innings or as required, the coaches, umpire crew and official book (game changer app if used) will compare pitch count. The official book pitch count will be used as final. Disagreements on pitch count may be brought to the VFW Director of Operations or VFW Chairman for arbitration. When a pitcher has been discovered to have exceeded the above age appropriate pitch count, they will be immediately removed from competition and placed in rest status determined by the number of pitches performed.
- c. No balks, if a pitcher leaves the mound he/she cannot pitch again in that game. No curve balls, curve ball will be called a ball. If curve ball is put in play the offense can choose to accept the play or take a ball. Any violation to the pitching rules (inning pitch) will result in a forfeit of that game.
- E. Batters, base runners, batboys, any players acting as base coach, and any players out of the dugout must wear a helmet that covers both ears.
- F. Catchers must wear a protective headgear, chest protectors, throat protectors, catcher's cup and shin guards. This includes catchers warming up a pitcher.
- G. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- H. Bat requirements for 10U Age Division. All bats for 10U teams must be in accordance with USABAT Standard. The bat shall include the official stamp of the Little League Baseball organization or state Little League approved. See this [link for USABAT](#). Any illegal bats will be removed from the game and the batter is out.



- i. Base running.
 - a. No leading off.
 - b. Players may steal after the ball crossed home plate. If a player leaves early, he will be out. No stealing home or advancing home on a passed ball or wild pitch. A runner may not steal home on an overthrow back to the pitcher nor

can a runner advance home by enticing the catcher with an extended lead to throw to 3rd.

Note: In 1st and 3rd Situations: A runner (at third base) may not advance home if the catcher has attempted a throw down to second base in a steal situation. If an error occurs on the throw, the runner at third **may not** advance.

- c. **This rule will only apply in 1st and 3rd situations.** Rationale: The VFW desires to facilitate the development of catcher's and their ability to throw to 2nd. In other instances of a runner attempting to steal 2nd or 3rd, the runner **may** advance at his own risk on an overthrow/error.

- J. A courtesy runner is encouraged but not required for a catcher at any point in the game, but must be a bench player. The courtesy player must be a player who is not currently in the game and does not count as entry into the game. This rule is to keep time between half innings to a minimum.

- K. Slide rule is in effect if a fielder has the ball before the run reaches 2nd, 3rd, or home. The runner is out if contact is made, umpire discretion will be applied and decision is final. A player may not intentionally create contact with another player at any time. If the defensive player has the ball and a play is being made, the offensive player must either slide or make every effort to avoid contact with the defensive player. Should a player run over or crash into another player, he or she will be ejected from the game and the out is awarded to the offensive team. If a defensive player is in the base path without the ball and makes contact with, or impedes the path of the offensive player, interference may be called on the defensive player. Any runner obstructing a throw to attempt a double play will result in a double play being called.

- L. A minimum of eight (8) players is required to start a game. When batting, the ninth (9) positions will be an out. Any fewer players will require a forfeit.

- M. ALL players will bat through the lineup. This lineup will be exchanged prior to the first pitch and final after the first pitch.

- N. Free substitution for all players except pitchers. This will not affect batting order. Batting order will stay intact and in order as per rule L.

- O. No dropped third strike

- P. Home is open only on an overthrow of 2nd base or 3rd base. -Can't entice the throw.

Q. Bunting is allowed.

R. If a player cannot bat due to an injury there is no out for that, if 9 batting positions are still used, but he is out of the game defensively and offensively. If the injury leaves the team with only 8 players then an out will be charged for the 9th batter.

S. Infield fly rule will be used. *See complete rule below.

INFIELD FLY RULE: An infield fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied before two are out. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder who stations himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" for the benefit of the of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly, if Fair". The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly fall untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly. On the Infield Fly rule, the umpire is to rule whether the ball could ordinarily have been handled by an infielder – not by some arbitrary limitation such as the grass, or the baselines. The umpire must rule also that a ball is an infield fly, even if handled by an outfielder, if, in the umpire's judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder. The infield fly is in no sense to be considered an appeal play. The umpire's judgment must govern, and the decision should be made immediately.

5. Pool Play Tie Breakers Formats for all VFW Baseball Tournaments.
 - a. Win-Loss record in pool play.
 - b. Head-to-head competition provided all teams have played each other.
 - c. Fewest runs allowed (overall).
 - d. Best run differential in all pool play games (maximum per game run differential of +10 or -10).
 - e. Coin toss.

If, in the event of a 3-way tie or more, the 3-way tie is broken either before step #4 or upon completion of step #4 and a 2-way tie still remains, the two remaining tied teams will revert back to step #2 and repeat the tie-breaker criteria from that point in order to break the tie.

In the event of forfeit in Divisional/Pool Play, the non-forfeiting teams will be credited with a 10-run differential victory. Teams that forfeit a game cannot advance in tournament play.

South Dakota VFW Baseball Code of Sportsmanship

(It is recommended that this Code is recited by both teams before a game during the season. At regional and state tournaments, it is a requirement.)

- **Keep the rules.**
- **Keep faith with my teammates.**
- **Keep my temper.**
- **Keep myself fit.**
- **Keep a stout heart in defeat.**
- **Keep pride under control in victory.**
- **Keep a sound soul, a clean mind, and a healthy body.**