

Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Baseball and Softball Field Use Policy

Revised: November 2018

Adopted by Park Board: November 20, 2018

A. Baseball

If a team 5th Grade and up, meets or exceeds the 80% residency requirement, they will be given access to field space as defined in Section 7. Teams that meet these requirements, will be required to register with the Park and Recreation offices directly. The cost for registering directly through P&R can be found on the P&R fee sheet.

Teams that wish to register directly with Parks and Recreation must do so by January 15 for the spring season and August 15 for the fall season.

Teams that do not meet the minimum age requirement will not be allowed to register (“playing up” will not be allowed). Teams will be “promoted” on August 1 each year.

1. Definitions: The terms below shall have the following meaning:

- a. “Facilities” shall mean facilities owned by the City of Vestavia Hills or otherwise controlled by the Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Board, including Vestavia Hills Board of Education facilities that are used by Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation programs.
- b. “VHBC Regular Season” shall mean: the VHBC spring season that starts in March and ends in April that has at least a 10 game season and a single elimination tournament.
- c. “VHBC Postseason” shall mean: the VHBC season that starts in May and ends in June that includes open weekends as to allow VHBC Postseason Select Teams to play in tournaments.
- d. “VHBC Postseason Select Team” shall mean:
 - i. Grades 5th – 6th a team organized through VHBC for play during May and June with 100% of its players who participated in the VHBC Regular Season,
 - ii. Grades 7th – 8th a team organized through VHBC for play during May and June with 80% of its players who participated in the VHBC Regular Season and/or Developmental League.
 - iii. VHBC Postseason Select Teams for all age groups are considered “select” by the fact the coach selects the entire team. These teams are not drafted teams by VHBC but are governed by VHBC.

iv. Grades 9th – 12th a team organized through VHBC with at least 80% of its players who are residents of Vestavia Hills.

v. However, for teams with players who will participate in Vestavia Hills High School (“VHHS”) baseball programs for the current season OR the season during the next school year, such teams shall not have more players participating in VHHS baseball programs than allowed by AHSAA rule, Section 6 (B) – (“Fifty Percent Rule”). Coaches should note that the Fifty Percent Rule affects eligibility for both the current and the following school year and shall educate themselves on the application of this rule and/or seek advice from the VHHS Athletic Department

e. “Travel Team” shall mean:

i. Grades 5th – 8th : a team organized for play outside of the VHBC Regular Season or VHBC Postseason with 80% of its players who are residents of Vestavia Hills;

ii. Grades 9th – 12th a team organized for play outside of the VHBC Regular Season or VHBC Postseason with at least 80% of its players who are residents of Vestavia Hills.

iii. However, for teams with players who will participate in Vestavia Hills High School (“VHHS”) baseball programs for the current season OR the season during the next school year, such teams shall not have more players participating in VHHS baseball programs than allowed by AHSAA rule, Section 6 (B) – (“Fifty Percent Rule”). Coaches should note that the Fifty Percent Rule affects eligibility for both the current and the following school year and shall educate themselves on the application of this rule and/or seek advice from the VHHS Athletic Department.

2. All coaches must be certified per the requirements set forth by the Vestavia Hills Park and Recreation Board and the Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Superintendent. For the latest requirements, please contact the Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation offices.

3. As long as VHBC holds a VHBC Regular Season (with a time period as defined in the definition above) and a VHBC Postseason that starts by May 1 and ends in July based upon age and final VHBC season schedule for VHBC Postseason Select Teams, the Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Board will not require any weekends off during the months of March, April and May.

4. Fields will be available for use during the following time frames:

February 1 - June 30 and August 1 - October 31

Anyone wishing to use the fields outside of these dates will coordinate and make reservations directly with the Parks and Recreation office. Please note, fields may be closed July 1-31 and November 1 - January 31 to allow for repair, rest and recovery.

5. Penalties:

Teams that violate Parks and Recreation policies (i.e. using the fields while they are closed due to weather, for maintenance or closed due to already being prepped for games) shall be subject to the following penalties:

- i. First violation: Violating team shall lose 1 week of practice;
- ii. Second violation: Violating team shall lose 2 weeks of practice; and head coach is suspended for 30 days.
- iii. Third violation: Violating team is disqualified from using any facilities for 90 days and head coach is suspended for 12 months.

b. Teams that are not VHBC Regular Season Teams, Travel Teams or VHBC Postseason Teams pursuant to this policy may use the Facilities only with express permission from the Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation Department. Any coach or team manager in violation of this rule will have one warning and then shall be suspended from using the Facilities for 12 months, regardless of whether such coach or team manager later becomes affiliated with a VHBC team or Travel Team.

6. Priority for use of the Facilities shall be as follows:

a. February 1 - May 1:

- i. VHBC Regular Season teams shall have first priority;
- ii. For ages 11 and up, VHBC Postseason Select Teams and Travel teams will have equal priority

b. May 1 – June 30:

- i. For ages 11 and up, VHBC Postseason Select Teams and Travel teams will have equal priority

c. August 1 - October 31

- i. For ages 11 and up VHBC traditional fall teams shall have first priority
- ii. For ages 11 and up VHBC Postseason Select Teams and Travel teams will have equal priority

7. Scheduling; Limitations:

a. Each VHBC Regular Season Team shall have, weather permitting:

- i. up to two practice slots per week in the preseason,
- ii. one practice slot per week and up to two game slots per week during the regular season

b. Each VHBC Postseason Select Team shall have:

- i. one practice slot per week during April,
- ii. up to two practice slots per week during May and June,

- iii. up to 2 game slots per week starting in May (Exception: A Postseason Select Team may have more than two game slots per week if the additional game slots are played as part of a tournament organized through VHBC) during May and June.
 - iv. These slots are not guaranteed, and are subject to availability, priorities and weather conditions.
- c. Each Travel team shall be provided:
- i. up to two practice slots per week
 - ii. These slots are not guaranteed and are subject to availability, priorities and weather conditions
- e. VHBC will designate a Board Member or contractor hired by VHBC to be the principal contact for VHBC Regular Season Teams and VHBC Postseason Select Teams.

B. Softball

1. Vestavia Hills Girls Softball Association (“VHGSA”) shall publish its beginning and ending dates for each season.
2. A Tournament Team shall be defined as follows:
 - a. A VHGSA sponsored team with at least 50% Vestavia Hills residents. This includes any Vortex team playing under the VHGSA organization; or
 - b. For teams with players ages 15-18: such teams must have at least five players who are residents of Vestavia Hills.
 - c. However, for teams with players who will participate in Vestavia Hills High School (“VHHS”) Softball programs for the current season OR the season during the next school year, such teams shall not have more players participating in VHHS softball programs than allowed by AHSAA rule, Section 6 (B) – (“Fifty Percent Rule”). Coaches should note that the Fifty Percent Rule affects eligibility for both the current and the following school year and shall educate themselves on the application of this rule and/or seek advice from the VHHS Athletic Department.
3. Coaches on Tournament Teams must be NCSS certified. Tournament Teams shall register with VHGSA by submitting their team rosters to VHGSA by March 31st.
4. Tournament Team Practices & Games – Wednesday’s after 6, Saturdays after VHGSA games (projected to be after 6) and Sunday’s after 6 will be available for registered Tournament Team use. Tournament Teams may also schedule LAST priority open field slots as available during the week. The last-priority slots and Wednesday's may be bumped by VHGSA for rescheduling and makeup purposes. However, Saturday and Sunday evenings will be completely reserved for registered Tournament Team use. No Tournament Team practices are allowed prior to February 15th.
5. VHGSA will have priority use of softball fields for kids 9 and under. For ages 10-12,

fields will only be available for VHGSA and VHGSA sanctioned Tournament Teams.

6. If a Tournament Team has less than the number of players required by section B(2) of this policy on its team, they will not be able to use Vestavia Hills facilities until after June 1st or once VHGSA season is completed (then subject to last priority slots and subject to field usage rules and cost).

C. Exemptions:

At the discretion of the Board, Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation reserves the right to 1) allow exemptions for organizations that do not detract from Vestavia Hills recreational leagues or 2) allow field use to elite organizations not affiliated with Vestavia Hills which provide significant economic impact to the City.