**Adult Softball Return to Play Guidelines**

# Recommended best practices to ensure the safety of all players, umpires and staff

1. FACE COVERINGS: Face coverings are not REQUIRED during game play for players and umpires but are highly encouraged. Physical distancing must be maintained for all whenever possible during play. Staff, players, and umpires are required to wear face coverings when not in play whenever physical distancing is not possible per the City of Sierra Vista Mayor’s Executive Order. Teams who wish to practice must also agree to abide by this guideline.
2. HYGIENE: Staff shall have hand sanitizer on hand at the fields for players and umpires to utilize. Umpires and players are also encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer and/or disinfecting wipes and use them regularly.
3. FIRST AID: Each team will be issued one first aid kit by the City of Sierra Vista. It is the team’s responsibility to have it available at each game.
4. Each team is limited to a maximum of 12 rostered players per game. No exception**. Games will not begin until teams are able to meet the required guideline of 24 players or less per field.**
5. **Teams waiting to play must stage away from the playing fields until the prior teams have vacated the area.**

#  Spectators, family, friends or bookkeepers at games are permitted only beyond the outfield fence. Only players will be permitted to access the field area (area behind dugouts, plate and foul lines.

1. Recommended that players stand and/or bring a chair to sit in outside the dugout area or along the fence line to allow for social distancing. Dugouts will be closed during games.
2. A new softball in the original packaging will be provided at the start of each game. Sierra Vista Sports will provide one used ball that has been disinfected in addition to new unwrapped game ball.
3. The catcher and umpire shall position themselves during a player’s at-bat to allow for social distancing. A ball/strike mat extended from behind home plate will be used during games to allow for better social distancing between the batter, catcher and umpire.
4. Force out at all bases will be in effect. Once a runner starts movement towards next base the runner is committed to that base. The force out applies at the base being taken.
5. It is encouraged that all players and umpires use their own equipment while participating. This includes gloves, bats, helmets, etc. unless the equipment is able to be sanitized between every use.
6. Reduced contact between players and umpires is encouraged. No handshakes or high fives before, during, or after the game. Find new ways to show sportsmanship, for example teams should tip their hats or wave instead.
7. No spitting or sunflower seeds allowed. A warning will be given to the player in violation. Repeated or blatant regard to ignore the rule will result an ejection from the game – umpires discretion.
8. Teams must leave the field immediately after their game concludes. Teams will have 5- minutes to vacate the bench area. No congregating before and/or after games. This includes hanging out in the parking lot after games.
9. Team managers must sign and turn in a team roster with updated COVID-19 guidelines before participating.
10. Sierra Vista Sports Division has the right to change these guidelines at any time for the betterment of all. The guidelines outlined above will be reevaluated, at any point, if the City of Sierra Vista, Arizona Department of Health (ADHS) and/or the Centers for Disease Control updates the recommended COVID-19 sports guidance.
11. **Due to the current and evolving COVID situation, should the season need to be suspended, it will be resumed when deemed safe to do so.**
12. The City of Sierra Vista is currently not issuing alcohol permits, therefore until further notice, there will be no alcohol allowed at the facility. Personal water and/or Gatorade bottles will be allowed. No coolers will be permitted to the fields.