



2026 MHSAA Softball Items & Reminders

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1. Online rules meetings will launch on February 2 and will close on April 16. The head varsity coach **MUST** complete a rules meeting or the coach is prohibited from coaching at any level in the MHSAA tournament. Assistant varsity coaches and subvarsity coaches must also complete the rules meeting requirement, or have their Athletic Director attest to them doing so.
2. Bats: For the 2026 softball season, National Federation playing rules again require that all non-wood bats must (1) display the **ASA** certification mark from 2000 or 2004 or the USA Softball All-Games Certification Mark to be a legal bat and not appear on the USA/ASA “banned bat” list and (2) must not appear on the list of the [USA Softball Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks](#).
3. MHSAA tournament sites and groupings are posted on www.MHSAA.com
4. Umpires are not required to inspect bats and helmets prior to the game. Head coaches shall attest at the pregame conference that all players are legally equipped.
5. Health & Safety: Information regarding concussion protocols and heat & hydration policies can be found by [Clicking Here](#). For all MHSAA tournaments conducted at either school or non-school facilities, an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is required to be within visible distance of the event.
6. Umpires are required to collect, and coaches submit a lineup card to the plate umpire at the pre-game conference. Umpires must maintain a line card throughout the game, and all substitutions, including CR, must be reported to the plate umpire. If a DP/FLEX is used, it must be on the lineup card properly at the pre-game conference, when lineups become official.
7. Again in 2026, the season maximum is 38 games for a team and individual during the regular season. A school may not schedule more than 38 regular season games. MHSAA Tournament games do not count toward the 38-game maximum.
8. **2026 MHSAA Tournament Dates**
 - Districts: May 30 (or May 28, May 29)
 - Regionals: Saturday, June 6
 - Quarterfinals: Tuesday, June 9
 - Semifinals: Thursday & Friday, June 11-12 - Secchia Stadium, East Lansing
 - Finals: Saturday, June 13 - Secchia Stadium, East Lansing

2026 NFHS SOFTBALL RULE CHANGES

Rule 1-9-6: No player shall transmit or record audio or video from the playing surface. New language further clarifies the use of electronic devices and what is not permitted.

Rationale: This change clearly defines the types of electronic devices prohibited by the rule.

Rule 8: Rule 8 has been reformatted for clarity. Changes have separated longer articles, and organized exceptions, penalties, and effects into outline format for improved comprehension.

Rationale: Added article references to PENALTIES and EFFECTS, and Section 4 was separated into two sections addressing runners entitled to advance with and without liability to be put out to delineate differences.

Rule 10-4-2: Umpires have the option of wearing heather gray, charcoal gray, or navy blue slacks. Effective January 1, 2027, heather gray slacks will no longer be permitted as part of the umpire's uniform.

Rationale: Manufacturers have discontinued producing heather gray umpire pants. This change will assist umpires in the purchase of pants that are currently being manufactured.

Equipment - 9Strap: the NFHS Softball Rules Committee has determined the product 9STRAP TECHNOLOGY to be compliant for use in high school varsity softball competition.

2026 SOFTBALL EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-6, 2-25-3, 3-2-3a & b, 4-3-2, 7-1-1, 7-2-2, 8-2-4 EXCEPTION, 8-2-12 PENALTY 2, 8-5-2 PENALTIES 1 & 2, 8-7-14 PENALTY 2, 8-7-16 PENALTY 2, 8-9-15c, 8-9-15 PENALTIES

2026 SOFTBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Obstruction
2. Maintaining an Unobstructed View