

2026 TDFL Substitute Player Guidelines

Context

The TDFL and its 2026 team leads met on July 23, 2026 and agreed on the immediacy of implementing a modification to the substitute rules in the TDFL Rules and Regulations.

The following guidelines will supersede the TDFL Rules and Regulations, effective as of July 23, 2026 for the remainder of the 2026 season, including playoffs. The league will revisit these guidelines and consider their incorporation into the TDFL Rules and Regulations for the 2027 season.

Guidelines

1. The TDFL is a community-oriented competitive softball league. Community care, health, and safety of ALL of our players must always be at the forefront of our decision-making, and forms the basis of the following guidelines. These guidelines are intended to prioritize community care and are not intended to be leveraged for strategic or competitive benefit.
2. Teams may field as many substitute pitchers/catchers as needed, or as anticipated needs dictate. Team leads are trusted to use their best discretion as to what is needed, on a given day.
3. Team leads are not required to, and discouraged from, divulging player injuries or details around limitations that may impact a player's ability to engage in a game (in whole or in part).
4. League pitchers and catchers who substitute for another team have the option to sit-out for the balance of a game.
 - a. This entails:
 - i. Only pitching/catching and/or;
 - ii. Not batting in the batting order and/or;
 - iii. Not playing positions other than pitcher/catcher.
 - b. This decision rests solely with the substitute pitcher/catcher.
 - c. If a league pitcher/catcher joins a game as an emergency fill-in, they may opt to bat. The substitute is to be added to the bottom of the batting order for the remainder of the game.
 - d. This option is not transferable to other players.
 - e. This option only applies if a team has at least 9 batters, other than the pitcher/catcher sub.
5. Where #4 comes into effect, with the exception of 4.e, the opposing team has the option to extend this option to its own team's pitcher/catcher.
6. Pay-per-game (external to the league) pitchers and catchers who substitute for another team are required to bat.
7. Where team leads have priority over sub requests in the Team Leads WhatsApp chat, the following exceptions apply:

- a. Priority for non-pitching and non-catching requests is limited to one hour from the time the request is made.
 - b. There is NO priority for pitching and catching requests. Leads are expected to share the request with roster pitchers and catchers as soon as possible following reading of the request.
 - c. The exec may engage pay-per-game pitchers/catchers at any point of the request process.
- 8. Team leads must contact all of their players every time a sub request arrives. Team leads must make every effort to make contact with their players in a timely manner. Team leads must leave a message in the Team Leads chat notifying the group when they have placed the request with their teams.