



## **NEW AGE CUTOFF DATE EFFECTIVE 2024**

The Prospect Park Baseball Association has unanimously voted to revise the age cutoff date to coincide with the public school calendar so that classmates could to play together. This has been a long-standing issue that we are now addressing.

This means that for the 2024 spring season the age cutoff will be moved to December 31, 2023. For example, for the 11-12 year-old Bantam hardball and Broncos softball divisions, a player cannot be older than 12 on December 31, 2023 for the 2024 spring season. This is intended to be a permanent change that will apply to all future years.

In some cases, since most age divisions contain two age groups, there are players who participated in the 2023 season who will be overage in 2024. For example there may be a few 12 year olds on 2023 Bantam or Bronco teams predominately composed of 11 year olds. In 2024 those few 12 year-olds would be overage in 2024 and would have to move to a team in the next older division (Super Bantam for hardball or Colts for softball). As a result we've had to extend our analysis out four years, through the 2027 season to make sure we have a more complete understanding of the effect of this rule change.

From this multi-year review, we've determined that based on the new cutoff date about only a very small percent (less than 2%) of all players from all organizations' 2023 teams would become overage at some time in the next four years.

Instead of requiring those few players be moved from teams they may have been on for years, we've decided to let them continue to play with their friends (if they so chose) and grandfather them onto their 2023 teams without any playing restrictions for the entire duration that they play on that team. Also influencing that decision are the facts that:

- 1/ having moved the cutoff date back four months lessens any impact since, on average, the teams would be older any way,
- 2/ those players would be so distributed among the different teams that very few of the teams would have more than two overage players,
- 3/ with so many teams in a division we can subdivide many of the divisions into tiers (North, South, etc.) which allows us to take into consideration age and skill levels of the teams particularly with the few grandfathered-in players, and
- 4/ this would only apply to those who played in the 2023 season.

Since grandfathering-in those players would only apply to those who played on a team in 2023, they must, over the years, continue on that same team. A list of those players will be posted on the PPBA website on the Coaches Page in the "Resources" section at

the beginning of the 2024 season and must be specifically identified on the individual team rosters as "GF" for Grandfathered-In. We are also planning to post every team's initial roster at the same time. Since there are usually additions and subtractions to rosters in April, they will be updated into final rosters as of May 1.

Should a grandfathered-in player decide to move to a different team or that player's team contain less than 50% of the original 2023 team, then the player must move to an age appropriate team based the new age cutoff date. Also, if, in the future, teams decide to combine and they each have grandfathered-in players, the PPBA will review the situation on a case-by-case basis to determine whether, and under what conditions, to allow all the grandfathered-in players to join on the same team.

The language of the actual rule is on p.6 of the PPBA Baseball & Softball Rules 4-1-24 found in the "Playing Rules" section of our website ([www.ppba.info](http://www.ppba.info)).

As a result of this rule change, all 2024 players who did **not** play in the league in 2023 must play on teams based on the new age cutoff requirement and the only other exception to the playing down rule will be players with disabilities. Disability exceptions and any related restrictions will be decided by the PPBA board on a case by case basis.

This rule applies only to PPBA, which only plays in the spring.

With more than 2,000 players, this is a complicated process. We appreciate your understanding and your patience as we implement this new policy.

In addition to the age cutoff change, there are a few more rules that have been changed or clarified beginning with the 2024 season. They are listed in the "Playing Rules" section. Also on the "Playing Rules" page link is a series of audio explanations created by our excellent umpire organization of most frequently applied or misunderstood rules.

Thanks for your support. As always, your comments and suggestions are welcome.

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