



MEMORANDUM

July 14, 2016

VIA EMAIL

TO: Divisions I, II and III Directors of Athletics and Head Softball Coaches.

FROM: Rich Calvert, chair  
NCAA Softball Rules Committee

Vickie Van Kleeck, secretary-rules editor  
NCAA Softball Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: 2017 Softball Fence Height and Distance Requirements.

As a reminder, NCAA Softball Rule 2.11 regarding outfield fence height and distance requirements goes into effect for the 2017 season. This rule, which was approved by the NCAA Softball Rules Committee and Playing Rules Oversight Panel in 2014, is required for institutionally owned fields and highly recommended for municipal/non-institutionally owned fields. The rule is outlined in detail below:

**Institutional field with a 4-foot outfield fence (permanent or non-permanent):**

1. If between 210 and 235 feet down the lines and between 230 and 235 feet in center, it meets the 2017 required distances;
2. If not between 210 and 235 feet down the lines and/or between 230 and 235 feet in center, it must be renovated by the 2017 season.
3. Fields renovated\* after the 2016 season must have a minimum fence height of 6 feet and fence distance between 190 and 235 feet down the lines and 220 and 235 feet in center.

**Institutional field with an outfield fence (permanent or non-permanent) higher than 4 feet but less than 6 feet:**

1. The fence is essentially grandfathered in as compliant regardless of the fence distances and renovation is not required;
2. If renovated\* in the future, the fence must be a minimum of 6 feet high and between 190 and 235 feet down the lines and between 220 and 235 feet in center.

**Institutional field with outfield fence (permanent or non-permanent) 6-foot or higher:**

1. If between 190 and 235 feet down the lines and between 220 and 235 feet in center, it meets the 2017 requirement;
2. If not between 190 and 235 feet down the lines and/or between 220 and 235 feet in center, the field is essentially grandfathered in as compliant and renovation is not required;

N a t i o n a l C o l l e g i a t e A t h l e t i c A s s o c i a t i o n

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3. If renovated\* in the future, the fence must be a minimum of 6 feet high and between 190 and 235 feet down the lines and between 220 and 235 feet in center.

**\*New construction and renovation after the 2016 season must meet the 6-foot or higher specifications listed above. Renovation is defined only as changes to the outfield or outfield fence or full renovation of the field. Changes to the bullpen, dugouts, backstop, etc. are not considered renovations and would not require fence height changes.**

**Municipal or non-institutional fields:**

Beginning in the 2017 season, if you play on or host a tournament on a municipal or other non-institutionally owned field with a 4-foot fence, it is highly recommended (but not required) that the fence be between 210 and 235 feet down the lines and between 230 and 235 feet in center.

For easy reference, the chart below contains the same information:

	New or renovated field after the 2016 season	By the beginning of the 2017 season	By the beginning of the 2017 season	By the beginning of the 2017 season	By the beginning of the 2017 season
<b>FENCE HEIGHT</b>	6' minimum	<b>Institutional</b> field with a 4' fence	<b>Institutional</b> field with a fence <b>higher than 4' and less than 6'</b>	<b>Institutional</b> field with a 6' fence or higher	<b>Municipal</b> field with a 4' fence
<b>LEFT &amp; RIGHT FIELDS</b>	190' minimum 235' maximum	210' minimum 235' maximum	Grandfathered in as compliant with current distances	Grandfathered in as compliant with current distances	210' highly recommended
<b>CENTER FIELD</b>	220' minimum; 235' maximum	230' minimum; 235' maximum	Grandfathered in as compliant with current distances	Grandfathered in as compliant with current distances	230' highly recommended; 235' maximum
		<b>OR</b> renovate field with 6' fence that meets standards listed under new or renovated field after 2016 season	If renovated in the future, fence minimum is 6' with 190-235' down left and right fields and 220-235' in center field	If renovated in the future, fence minimum is 6' with 190-235' down left and right fields and 220-235' in center field	
		<u>Note:</u> If a field is <b>NOT</b> newly built or being renovated after the 2016 season, there is no requirement to change if it has a fence taller than 4 feet. Renovation is defined as only changes to the outfield or outfield fence or full renovation of the field.			

If you have specific questions regarding your field, please contact Vickie Van Kleeck at [ncaasbsre@gmail.com](mailto:ncaasbsre@gmail.com) or 540-819-4655.

RC/VVK:af

cc: Divisions I, II and III Conference Commissioners  
 Divisions I, II and III Senior Woman Administrators  
 NCAA Softball Rules Committee  
 Selected NCAA Staff Members