

Chicagoland Roy Hobbs Baseball League

2026 OFFICIAL RULES

Unless indicated otherwise by these rules, the *Official Baseball Rules* of Major League Baseball shall be the authority used for all CRHBL games. These rules apply to all age divisions unless indicated otherwise in a different color text (**30+**, **38+**, **48+**, **60+**, **65+**). Detailed rules for the **65+ Division** can be found in the Appendix at the end of these rules. Rules for 18+ (SCMBL) can be found in a separate document.

New rules and “points of emphasis” are displayed in bold orange text.

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1.00 EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

1.01 BASEBALLS

Both teams must provide two new baseballs to the home plate umpire before every game. Teams will be provided baseballs for the season at the League meeting prior to Opening Day.

The official League baseball is the Wilson 1010 ball. Only baseballs sanctioned by the League are allowed for game use. Other League-approved baseball include:

Wilson: A1010-Pro, A1010-HS1, NCAA, A1029+, MSBL 1010, and A1039+.
Diamond: D1 (all models), DHS, and DOLA,
Rawlings: RO, RO-A, RO-N, and R-100.

No rubber-coated, plastic, youth league, defective, or inferior baseballs are permitted.

Unapproved baseball must be immediately removed from the game. The manager of a team that repeatedly uses substandard baseballs is subject to disciplinary action.

1.02 BATS

Bats must be wooden and meet the requirements outlined by MLB Rules. Exception: The hybrid bat that is comprised of a wooden barrel and a handle partially made of metal is permitted.

As prescribed by MLB rules, a batter entering the batter's box with an illegal bat will be called out and ejected from the game.

1.03 HELMETS

All batters and on-deck batters must wear either a double-earflap protective helmet or a protective helmet with a single-earflap that faces the pitcher.

All players must wear a protective helmet while running the bases.
All catchers must wear a protective helmet while fielding their position.

The wearing of helmets by base coaches is optional.

1.04 BASEBALL SPIKES

Metal, plastic, and rubber spiked shoes are approved for League games.

Exception: The wearing of metal spikes is prohibited on synthetic baseball fields; only plastic cleats or turf shoes are allowed to be worn on these fields.

Any player discovered to be wearing sharpened spikes will be subject to ejection and suspension.

1.05 STORING EQUIPMENT

No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in foul or fair territory. All equipment must be kept inside the team's dugout, including gloves, bats, baseballs, and personal bags.

The manager of a team that repeatedly violates this rule will be subject to a penalty.

Should any loose equipment on the field alter a play, the umpire has the authority to award bases, declare outs, and/or return runners.

1.05 UNIFORMS

Game participants must be in full uniform which shall consist of baseball pants, baseball jersey, and baseball cap or protective helmet. Uniforms of team members shall be the same style and color. Players must wear individual numbers that are sewn or silk screened on the jersey and not handwritten. Participating players are not allowed to wear sweatpants, sweatshirts, shorts, jeans, tank tops, or T-shirts.

Teams are permitted to have a sponsor's name and/or logo on their uniform, but only after receiving approval from the League President.

A team ordering new uniforms may request from the President a grace period of up to three weeks to comply with the uniform rule. (This allowance also applies to new players joining a team during the season). If a team requires a longer grace period, it must first receive permission from the President who will then issue the team a dated exemption note that may be displayed to the umpire and opposing manager before the game.

Regardless of any grace period, all players participating in a game must be outfitted in an acceptable baseball uniform. The umpire determines an "acceptable" baseball uniform.

2.00 GAME LENGTH RULES

2.01 REGULATION GAME

A regulation game consists of seven complete innings unless:

- a) the home team needs none or only part of its half of the seventh;
- b) extra innings are necessary because of a tie score, or
- c) the game is shortened by weather, darkness or the Slaughter Rule (see Rule 2.04).

A forfeited game is regulation regardless of the number of innings played.

2.02 TIME LIMIT

(a) **The scheduled game time limit will be strictly enforced.** The only exceptions are those rare situations that are beyond the control of either team or the umpires, such as the field gate being locked, no bases available, or water sprinklers inadvertently being turned on.

(b) **All games, including postseason games, will not be longer than 2:45 hours from the scheduled game time (not 2:45 hours from the first pitch).** The plate umpire is responsible for the time clock. Any game ending in a tie after 2:45 hours will remain a tie in the standings.

(c) No new inning will start 2:30 hours after the first pitch is delivered, unless directed to by the chief umpire. Rain-delays are included in the time limit.

(d) Oak Lawn field only: On weeknights and on Saturday night when the game start is 7:30 p.m., the time limit may be extended a little over the 2:45 limit (at the umpire's discretion).

(e) The umpires have the authority to suspend, cancel, or call a game if, in their judgment, the safety of the players is compromised because of rain, darkness, or other conditions.

2.03 GAME START GRACE PERIOD

To avoid a forfeit, teams have a 15-minute grace period after the scheduled game start to obtain the required eight players to begin the game. This rule applies only when a team has fewer than eight players. As soon as the eighth player arrives, the game shall start immediately.

2.04 SLAUGHTER RULE

The 10-run Slaughter (Mercy) Rule is in effect for all games including the postseason.

a) If the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs and the home team has completed an equal number of innings with a minimum of five innings being played, the visiting team shall be declared the winner.

b) In the fifth inning or later, the home team is declared the winner the moment it scores 10 or more runs than the visiting team.

2.05 SHOOTOUT RULE

If a game is tied at the end of seven innings, the Shootout Rule will be used but only if:

a) No scheduled game follows the tie game;

b) The time limit has not expired (2:45 hours from first pitch); and

c) There is sufficient light and field availability to allow further play.

If the Shootout Rule is unable to be employed, the game shall remain a tie (see Rule 2.06 below).

The Shootout Rule:

a) Every extra inning will begin with the last two batters from the previous inning being placed on first base and second base (the player higher in the order on second base.)

- b) Each batter comes to the plate with a 2-2 count. If the pitch is a strike (either called or missed swing), the batter is out. If the pitch is fouled off, the count remains at 2-2. It takes two more called balls for the batter to be awarded first base on a walk.
- c) As long as all conditions are met—including the time limit not having been reached—every extra inning will be played under the Shootout Rule until there is a winner. Otherwise, the game remains a tie and will be recorded as such.

2.06 TIE GAMES

A game ending in a tie will not be rescheduled and completed at a later date. Exception: The League, in its discretion and subject to budget and field availability, may schedule a Tie Game for completion later if it affects the final standings and/or postseason.

2.07 RAINOUTS

The umpire has the authority to “call” a game for any reason, including rain, lightning, and darkness. The League will give the teams a minimum of 48 hours’ notice as to the date and time of the rescheduled regular season game.

If a scheduled game is cancelled beforehand for any reason (weather, forfeit, etc.), the League will notify both managers and the umpires at least one hour before the scheduled game start. If the umpire rules that the game is unplayable because of weather conditions, the game shall be considered official if:

- a) at the end of five or more complete innings, the visiting team is ahead in the score; or
- b) the home team is ahead in the score at the end of 4 ½ innings or during any complete or partial inning after five or more innings.

2.08 SUSPENDED GAMES

Any game that is ended prior to completion (i.e., before reaching time limit) because of field light failure or field availability, and does not constitute an official regulation game, shall be a Suspended Game. No winner shall be declared until the game is completed.

A Suspended Game shall be resumed at the exact point of suspension of the original game. It is simply a continuation of the first part of the game. The lineup, batting order, and other game conditions remain exactly the same as at the moment of suspension. If all the original players are not available, both teams, of course, are permitted to substitute players. These substitutes should be discussed with the opposing manager to ensure that the lineups are correct. Players previously removed from the game may only re-enter under the league’s re-entry rules. Any player who was not present at the first part of the game may be inserted in the lineup as replacing an absent player, sharing a slot with another player, or in his own slot at the bottom of the order.

As with tie games (Rule 2.06), the League, in its discretion and subject to field availability and budget, might not reschedule a Suspended Game, particularly if it does not affect the final standings and/or the postseason.

2.09 FORFEITS

A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team:

- a) Is unable to field at least eight defensive players;
- b) Refuses to continue play or walks off the field;
- c) Uses an illegal player who doesn't meet the age/roster requirements;
- d) Ignores the umpire's warnings and persistently violates the rules of the game;
- e) Fails to obey the umpire's order for removal of a player from the game; or
- f) Is uncontrollable and the umpire declares a forfeit in the best interests of the game.

Once a game has been declared a forfeit, the umpires are not authorized to officiate a "practice" game and may leave the premises.

The League board will review all forfeited games and, under special circumstances, may change its status to a Suspended Game.

2.10 POSTSEASON GAMES

All postseason games shall consist of at least seven innings unless the game is shortened because of forfeit or the slaughter rule. Any postseason game that is halted for any other reason—such as darkness, inclement weather, and light failure—shall be declared a Suspended Game.

3.00 PLAYING THE GAME

3.01 LINEUP CARD

Each team has an offensive batting order and a defensive "lineup" that are independent of one another. A player may play either defense or offense—or both. Defensive players are not required to play offense. Offensive players are not required to play defense.

The league will furnish triple copy line up cards to each team. On the left side, you must list all players who are present, using legible, print. Include Last Name and Uniform Number. On the right side of the card, list your batting order. Once again, include Last Name, First Name and Uniform Number. No Scripting, Print Only.

5 minutes prior to game start, pre-game meeting will be held at home plate to discuss ground rules and exchange lineups.

If visiting team is not prepared, home team will take the field at game time and strikes will start to be called on the visiting team.

If home team is not prepared, then visiting team will become home team and strikes will start to be called on original home team.

If both teams are not prepared, the umpires will warn both teams they have 5 minutes to get lineups into umpire hands otherwise game will be forfeited.

Each team must provide their offensive lineup card to the opposing manager *before* the start of every game. Teams are supplied a lineup template.

The names of players listed on the lineup card must be legible and include the player's first name, last name, and jersey number. (It is not necessary to include the player's fielding position because there is free and unlimited defensive substitution.)

As a courtesy to the opposing team, the lineup card should also include the names of all the team's substitutes. See Rule 9.03 (d) for lineup details concerning players on the Injured List.

The lineup cards in possession of the game are the only official lineup cards. During the progress of the game, it is the umpire's responsibility to record all changes to the lineup.

New Rule: Within 24 hours after the conclusion of the game, the umpire must send a photo of both lineup cards to the League office. The names of the umpire(s) working the game must be written on the lineup cards.

3.02 BATTING ORDER

(a) If a team does not have nine players, it is allowed to have only eight in its batting order.

In such instances, the ninth slot in the order is an "automatic out" until it can be filled.

There is no rule prohibiting intentionally walking batters to reach the "automatic out" slot, should the defense choose to use this strategy.

(b) A team must be able to field at least eight players. If at any point during the game, a team is unable to field eight players, it shall lose by forfeit.

The visiting team may start the game with seven players, in which case the eighth and ninth batting order slots are "automatic outs". However, when the third out occurs and the team is still unable to field at least eight players, it shall lose by forfeit.

(c) There is no maximum number of players a team can have in its lineup.

If a batting order consists of more than nine batters, the manager is not permitted, at any time, to drop the batters following the ninth slot and bat the lead-off hitter.

(d) Players may be inserted into the lineup at any time and may either share a batting slot with another player(s) or be placed at the bottom of the order in his own batting slot.

(e) When a player is inserted into a batting slot in the lineup, he is locked into that slot for the remainder of the game and may not be moved to another slot.

(f) Batters may not be deleted or skipped over, regardless of their batting position or when they were added during the game. (The exception is a player leaving early under Rule 3.03 below).

(g) Team members attending a game are not required to play; nor can a manager force a player to play. The manager is also not obligated to give a player a minimum amount of playing time.

3.03 PLAYER LEAVING GAME EARLY

(a) Players who will be leaving a game early must be declared to the opposing manager before the game. Obviously, this does not apply for unforeseen emergencies or injuries that compel a player to leave early.

PENALTY: When an undeclared player leaves the game early (other than a legitimate injury or emergency) and the team is using a nine-man batting order, the player's batting slot becomes an "automatic out" for the remainder of the game—unless an eligible substitute is used to fill the slot.

(b) When there is an offensive lineup of more than nine batters and a player leaves early, and there are no reserve players available, the batting order will be compressed with the batters following the absent player all moving up in the order. In these instances, the "automatic out" does not apply.

If there is a reserve player available and he is not placed in the vacant batting slot for whatever reason, the slot does become an "automatic out".

(c) If a player is ejected from the game and there is no eligible substitute available to replace him, the ejected player's batting slot becomes an "automatic out".

3.04 SHARED BATTING ORDER SLOT

Under the Shared Lineup Slot Rule, managers have the option to have more than one player in any batting order slot.

A manager may insert an unlimited number of players in any one batting slot, as long as there are at least nine batting slots in the lineup.

Once inserted into the lineup, the player is locked into that batting slot and may not be used elsewhere offensively.

A shared position in the offensive lineup may be initiated at any time, at the manager's discretion.

Offensive substitution is unlimited for players sharing the same slot. For example, one player may bat every time, players may alternate at-bats, one player may always run for the others, etc.

3.05 SUBSTITUTIONS

(a) An eligible substitute is any player who has not yet been used offensively.

Once a player has been inserted into the batting order and is subsequently removed from the game for any reason, he is no longer an eligible substitute under any circumstances.

Note: A player doesn't necessarily have to come to bat to be considered in the "offensive lineup". Players who enter the game as pinch-runners are recognized as having been placed in that particular lineup slot.

(b) To avoid possible penalties, it is practical for managers to always have available an eligible substitute on the bench. This player may then be used to replace a teammate who is compelled to leave the game, such as for being ejected, injured, or leaving early for personal reasons.

- (1) If there is no eligible substitute available, the "hole" created by the player leaving the game becomes an "automatic out" every time that slot comes up in the order.
- (2) If there is no eligible substitute available to replace a player and the team is left without the minimum eight to play defense, the team shall lose by forfeit.

(c) OFFENSIVE SUBSTITUTE

As a courtesy to the opposing team (and to avoid complications later), the manager should always inform the opposing team of all offensive substitutions.

He should also apprise the other team (manager or scorekeeper) where the substitute is being placed in the lineup—either sharing a batting slot with another player or occupying his own slot at the bottom of the order.

- (1) If no notification is made when an offensive substitute first enters the lineup, MLB rules shall apply. The player is recognized as an "unannounced substitute" and, if otherwise legal, there is no penalty. The player shall be considered as entering the game when he takes his place in the batter's box (as a hitter) or positions himself on a base (as a runner).
- (2) If an "unannounced" eligible substitute comes to bat immediately after the last batter in the lineup, he shall be considered to have been placed in his own batting slot at the bottom of the order, as opposed to replacing or sharing the slot with the lead-off batter.

- (3) If an “unannounced” eligible substitute comes to bat in the “middle” of the order, he shall be considered to have been placed in the slot following that of the previous batter.

Example: An unannounced substitute enters the batter’s box after the #6 hitter has completed his plate appearance. This substitute is considered to have been placed in the #7 batting slot and now shares it with the player already occupying that slot.

- (4) If an “unannounced” substitute enters the game as a runner, he shall be recognized as having been placed in the batting slot occupied by the runner being replaced.

(d) DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTE

Defensive substitutions are unlimited and are permitted at any time. They do not affect any player’s status in the batting order. Players sharing the same batting slot are even allowed to play different defensive positions at the same time. Therefore, it is not necessary for a manager to inform the opposing team of any defensive substitutions.

3.06 BATTING ORDER INFRACTIONS

It is the responsibility of the opposing team to appeal any batting order infractions to the umpire.

As stated under Major League rules: *“This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams.”*

Major League rules dictate the appropriate procedure and penalties for batting-out-of-order infractions.

If an ineligible substitute comes to bat and the opposing manager fails to bring it to the umpire’s attention, all actions as a result of that player’s plate appearance are legal. The opposing manager is left only with challenging the illegal substitute during his subsequent at-bats if and when they occur.

Managers are advised to remind their scorekeeper to immediately bring to his attention instances in which the opposing team is batting-out-of-order (or using an ineligible substitute), so that he can bring it to the umpire’s attention.

3.07 PITCHER/CATCHER COURTESY RUNNER

To expedite the game, managers have the option of using a “courtesy runner” for the catcher and/or pitcher, regardless of the number of outs.

The player allowed to serve as the courtesy runner is the player who made the last out prior to the pitcher/catcher reaching base. It does not necessarily have to be a “batted out”; the player could have been forced out or otherwise called out on the bases.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If the catcher or pitcher is sharing a batting slot with another player or players, the Courtesy Runner Rule does not apply. The only player who can run for them is an eligible substitute or a player sharing the same batting slot was the catcher/pitcher.

The courtesy runner may only be used for the catcher and pitcher of record and not for a player who is projected to be the catcher the next half-inning.

Managers should anticipate instances in which they will use a courtesy runner. The purpose of the rule is to “speed up” the game by giving the catcher time to put on his gear. If the courtesy runner is not employed within a reasonable amount of time (as determined by the umpire), the catcher shall be called out.

3.08 ADDITIONAL COURTESY RUNNERS

In addition to the pitcher and/or catcher, each team is permitted to use courtesy runners for two or more additional players, depending on the division. These additional players must be declared before the start of the game and noted on the lineup card (except for the 65+ Division). The same conditions apply to these runners as those used for the pitcher/catcher (see Rule 3.07).

Prior to game:

30+ DIVISION: May designate up to TWO additional Courtesy Runners

38+ DIVISION: May designate up to TWO additional Courtesy Runners

48+ DIVISION: May designate up to THREE additional Courtesy Runners

60+ DIVISION: May designate up to THREE additional Courtesy Runners

65+ DIVISION: Unlimited number

Any player in a shared batting spot could run for the next hitter, if the next hitter was designated needing a courtesy runner.

3.09 REPLACING EJECTED PLAYER

When a player is ejected from a game, he may be replaced by a reserve player or eligible substitute. If the player is ejected during a time-at-bat, the substitute will assume the batter’s count.

If no reserve or substitute is available, the ejected player’s batting slot becomes an “automatic out” for the remainder of the game until it can be filled.

3.10 REPLACING INJURED RUNNER

If a player becomes injured on the base paths, he may only be replaced by an eligible substitute, by a legal courtesy runner (see Rule 3.07), or by a player sharing his batting slot. If none of

these conditions exist, the incapacitated player shall be declared out. If there is no player available to replace the player, the rules for a compressed lineup shall apply.

3.11 REPLACING INJURED BATTER

If a player has to leave the game while at bat because of injury, an eligible substitute or a player sharing the batting slot assumes the at-bat and any count the removed batter might have.

If no eligible substitute is available, the batting slot is skipped over and the lineup compressed, with no penalty to the affected team. The next player in the lineup assumes the at-bat, as well as any count. However, if the injury results in the lineup having only eight batting slots, the slot immediately becomes an “automatic out” (Rule 3.03b).

3.12 BASE ADVANCEMENT

60+ DIVISION: On a clean hit to the outfield, an outfielder is not permitted to throw out the batter at first base; however, an outfielder may force out a runner at any other base, including home plate. This rule also applies to the **65+ DIVISION.**

3.13 PITCHING RULES

(a) Any legal player on a team roster is allowed to pitch with the following exceptions:

30+ DIVISION: Player must be at least 25 years old to be eligible to pitch.

38+ DIVISION: Player must be at least 37 years old to be eligible to pitch.

48+ DIVISION: Player must be at least 47 years old to be eligible to pitch.

60+ DIVISION: Player must be at least 60 years old to be eligible to pitch.

65+ DIVISION: Player must be at least 65 years old to be eligible to pitch.

Note that in the 38+ and 48+ Divisions, players are allowed to pitch if they are 37 and 47 years old respectively.

(b) There is no limit to the number of innings a legal pitcher can pitch (except for 65+ Division).

65+ DIVISION: Players in this division are allowed to pitch only four innings per game. Any inning in which a pitch is delivered is recognized as being one full inning.

(c) A visit to the mound by a manager playing a defensive position constitutes a “trip to the mound,” the same as if the manager had left the dugout for the visit. Two such visits (other than an injury check) in the same inning shall result in the removal of the player as pitcher.

(d) PITCHER RE-ENTRY

As outlined under MLB rules, a pitcher is allowed to be moved to a different defensive pitcher and return as pitcher during the same half-inning. Upon such return, no warm-up pitches shall be granted.

65+ DIVISION: A pitcher is allowed to “rest” on the bench for an inning and still be allowed to return as pitcher the following inning. This is allowed one time per game. (See Appendix for a more detailed explanation.)

(See Rule 6.80 for pitching rules regarding batter safety.)

3.14 OFFICIAL SCOREBOOK

The home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook. If the home team does not have enough personnel to keep score, the managers may agree that the visiting team’s book is the official one. **The lineup cards in possession of the umpire, however, are the official lineups.**

It is encouraged that both teams compare their scorebooks after each half-inning to avoid any discrepancies over the score later in the game.

Upon request, both teams must present their scorebook and lineup card (or copies) to the League’s Protest Committee. If there are discrepancies between the two books, the home plate umpire’s account will be official.

It is the winning team manager’s responsibility to call the League office of the game result within 24 hours of its conclusion. Failure to do so may result in the game being recorded as a tie.

4.00 TEAM-RELATED RULES

4.01 TEAM ELIGIBILITY

When a team becomes a League member, it agrees to abide by all its rules including disciplinary decisions made by the President and League Board.

To maintain membership in the League, a team must always remain in good standing. This includes meeting all financial responsibilities and following the standards of good behavior.

The League maintains the right to suspend and/or expel any team that does not abide by its rules.

4.02 TEAM LEAVING LEAGUE

Teams leaving the League are subject to losing all player fees, forfeit bonds, and payments made. If a team leaves in mid-season, all its remaining scheduled games become forfeit losses.

All players on a team that have been expelled from the League, such as for non-payment of fees or for disciplinary reasons, are placed on indefinite suspension until the board reinstates each player individually.

4.03 TEAM ROSTERS

The maximum number of players on a team's official roster is 30.

A team may not change its roster after the League's April meeting unless it first receives approval from the President.

Every team's roster is available for downloading from the League website.

No player may participate in a game unless they are a member of that team's roster.

Every team must identify its manager on the team roster. If the manager is not available at a particular game, the team must identify who will serve as manager for that particular game.

Teams failing to abide by any rules concerning the roster are subject to games being deemed forfeit losses in which an ineligible player has participated.

4.04 PLAYER MOVEMENT

During the off-season, a player is a free agent and may become a member of any League team, requiring only the approval of the manager of his new team.

From Opening Day through May 31st, a player may move from one team roster to another team roster but must first receive approval from his former manager, his new manager, and the League President.

After May 31st, a player may not become a member of a different team unless he first receives special permission from the President.

4.05 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

All players must meet the age and roster requirements or risk forfeiture of his team's games in which he participated, as well as risking his team's expulsion from the League.

A player is not allowed to be a member of more than one team in the same age division.

Managers must strictly abide by the League's age restriction rules or risk severe penalties.

A player meets the age requirement if he becomes of age by December 31st of the playing season.

30+ DIVISION: Teams are permitted to have three players ages 21 through 24 on their roster after receiving Board approval. These players are not eligible to pitch (Rule 3.13a).

38+ DIVISION: Teams are permitted to have two players age 37 on their roster after receiving Board approval. **NEW RULE: This player is eligible to pitch. (Rule 3.13a)**

48+ DIVISION: Teams are permitted to have two players age 47 on their roster after receiving Board approval. **NEW RULE: This player is eligible to pitch. (Rule 3.13a)**

60+ DIVISION: Teams are permitted to have three players ages 58 and/or 59 on their roster after receiving Board approval. These players are not eligible to pitch (Rule 3.13a).

65+ DIVISION: Teams are permitted to have two players ages 63 and/or 64 on their roster after receiving Board approval. These players are not eligible to pitch (Rule 3.13a).

4.06 CHALLENGING PLAYER’S ELIGIBILITY

A team may question a player’s eligibility in much the same manner that a team would make any appeal to the umpire (such as batting out of order, missed base, etc.) The manager simply requests that the umpire check the player’s identification card.

All participating players must have the proper documentation with them at every game that proves their age and/or identity.

If a player’s identity is challenged, he must produce either a government-issued photo identification card (driver’s license, passport, etc.) or two non-photo pieces of identification (checkbook, credit card, etc.)

If a player’s age is challenged, he must produce: 1) a government-issued ID card that includes his date of birth; or 2) an official document that includes his date of birth (such as a birth certificate) accompanied by a photo ID that does not include his DOB (such as a work or school identification card).

If a challenged player is unable to produce said documentation:

- (1) The player is immediately ejected; is subject to further penalties as determined by the President; and his position in the batting order becomes an “automatic out” for the remainder of the game (unless it can be filled by a legal substitute or he is sharing the slot with a teammate); and
- (2) The player’s team manager is ejected but, if he is in the lineup, his batting order slot does not become an automatic out. He is either replaced by a substitute, the slot’s at-bats are assumed by another player sharing the slot, or the lineup is compressed.

If a manager violates the League’s age restriction rules, he shall receive a two-suspension for the first offense; a five-game suspension for the second offense; and suspension for the remainder of the season for the third offense.

Notes concerning this rule:

a) If a player is unable to produce the proper documentation, the manager who made the challenge must notify the President within 24 hours of the incident. If this requirement is not met, the protest will not be considered for a possible forfeit, regardless of whether or not the player is subsequently found to have been ineligible.

b) If a player's eligibility is challenged *before* the player has participated in the game and he is unable to produce the proper documentation, there will be no penalty levied other than the player not being allowed to play that particular game. Nonetheless, the incident must still be reported to the President.

5.00 CODE OF CONDUCT

Everyone associated with the League—players, managers, umpires, fans—must abide by its Code of Conduct which is, simply put, always exhibiting the basic principles of good sportsmanship and fair play.

Bench jockeying, trash talk, and malicious comments are never tolerated, let alone cursing, racial slurs, obscene language, and acts of intimidation and physical violence.

5.01 MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY

To serve as a manager in the League is a privilege, not a right. Managers are honor-bound to abide by all our rules and regulations. They must recognize their responsibility to not only the League but also to the game of baseball itself and not cross the line in which winning becomes more important than integrity.

The manager is his team's official representative and is responsible for:

- (a) the behavior of his players; and
- (b) the conduct of his team's fans.

The manager is the only one permitted to question and discuss an umpire's ruling. If anybody is ejected from a game, it should be the manager and not a player. That being said, the manager serves as a role model for his players and should not engage in any behavior that would warrant an ejection. A manager ejected three times during the season is subject to having the privilege of serving as manager revoked.

If the team manager is not present at a particular game, another player shall serve as interim manager and assume all the responsibilities of the position.

Opposing managers should work in concert in providing an atmosphere of good sportsmanship. If an umpire fails to properly eject a player for a particularly egregious offense, even after being shown the rules prohibiting such behavior, the manager should ask the other manager to remove the player himself to prevent a possible protest or forfeiture of the game.

The League makes all efforts to support the manager in their important and often difficult task. If a manager encounters any problem whatsoever, or has a particular concern or question, he should contact the President or board member. They are there to assist you.

5.02 ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

Alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs are strictly prohibited on or near any baseball field (including the parking lots) before, during, and after every game.

This rule particularly concerns High School campuses in which alcohol and illegal drugs are also prohibited by municipal, county, and state laws.

This rule applies to all managers, players, coaches, umpires, and friends, family, and fans of the players attending the game.

Umpires have the authority to rule a forfeit if there is any problem involving alcohol or illegal drug use at any game or facility, as well as ejecting any player they believe to be intoxicated.

Managers should inform their players and fans of Rule 5.02. Managers should persuade any player or spectator that is in violation of this rule to leave the premises immediately.

Any player in violation of this rule will be assessed a minimum two-game suspension and is subject to more severe penalties. A second violation is possible expulsion from the League, either to an individual player or the entire team.

5.03 BEHAVIOR TOWARD UMPIRES

The umpire has the authority to eject any player, manager, or coach who objects to a decision, violates any rule, or displays unsportsmanlike conduct or language. Any player that approaches the umpire to argue is subject to ejection.

As mentioned above, only the manager is permitted to discuss an umpire's decision; however, once the official has given his explanation, the manager must abide by the ruling and not further argue the decision.

Any act of physical contact, verbal abuse, and threat toward an umpire is strictly forbidden. Violators of this rule are subject to not only being expelled from the League, but criminal charges may also be levied against the offender.

Any discussion that involves the game is limited to the playing field. Managers and players who follow an umpire off the field are subject to severe penalties.

An umpire is required to give his name to a manager, if requested to do so. If he refuses to give his name or if there are any problems with a particular umpire, the manager should notify the President, a board member, or chief umpire after the game to lodge a formal complaint.

5.04 PENALTIES

In its mission to provide a safe, family-friendly environment in which to play and enjoy the great game of baseball, the League maintains its authority to levy various degrees of penalties to players and managers who are in violation of the rules, including:

(a) RESTRICTION TO THE BENCH

If the umpire believes disciplinary action is necessary but that the offense does not warrant ejection, the umpire has the authority to restrict the offender to the bench for the remainder of the game. The offender may no longer participate in the game either as a player or base coach.

Unlike an ejection, “restriction to the bench” does not require the offender to leave the area or serve a one-game suspension. However, should the restricted player or manager exhibit further acts of misbehavior on the bench, he shall then be ejected and levied the additional penalties. Distinction between an ejection and restriction is totally up to the umpire’s discretion.

(b) EJECTION FROM GAME

Any player ejected from a game shall be assessed an automatic one-game suspension in addition to the game the player was ejected, effective immediately. (The League President maintains his authority to extend the game suspension, dependent on the severity of the offense.)

The ejected player shall serve his one-game suspension during his team’s next scheduled game.

(The only exception to the above is if the ejection occurred during the first game of a double-header and his team has only eight or nine players for the second game, including the ejected player. In this case, the offender will serve his suspension on the date of the team’s next game.)

A rainout, suspended, or cancelled game does not constitute as serving the one-game suspension.

If the ejection of the player or manager occurs after the game (that is, the offender vehemently argues on a game-ending play), the offender must still serve the additional one-game suspension, as well as being subject to further penalties.

Ejected players must leave the vicinity of the field immediately. An offender refusing to leave within a reasonable amount of time risks his team forfeiting the game. This decision is at the umpire’s discretion.

Incidents involving the ejection of a manager or player must be reported immediately after the game to the President or board member by the umpire and team managers.

(i) Multiple Ejections

A player who is ejected twice in the same season shall be assessed a five-game suspension. The penalty for a third ejection will be determined by the board and, depending on the seriousness of the previous offenses, may result in expulsion.

(c) SUSPENSION

Suspended players are permitted to attend their team's games but only if they comply with the following restrictions:

They may only sit in the stands, well removed from the playing field. They are prohibited from wearing their uniform; from participating in any of their team's pre-game drills; and may not serve as the team's scorekeeper. Suspended players may not communicate with their team during the game, nor may they direct any comments to the opposing team or the umpires.

Any violation of the above will subject the player to being suspended for the remainder of the season or possible termination from the League.

(d) PROBATION

In addition to the penalties of ejection and suspension, a player may be placed on probation by the President and board. A player found in violation of the League's code of conduct while on probation is subject to being suspended for the remainder of the season or possible expulsion.

5.05 FIGHT RULE

One of the more disturbing events that occurs on a baseball field is when both teams engage in a brawl involving several players. It can result in serious injury and, if observed by park officials, possibly the loss of the playing field. To help prevent such incidents, the League has adopted the college baseball "fight rule".

Whenever a confrontation (collision, argument, etc.) between two or more players occurs on the playing field (including foul territory and the general premises), all personnel of both teams *must* remain at their respective position on the field. The position of a team member is determined by where the individual is standing at the time of the confrontation (e.g., dugout, on-deck area, coach's box, defensive position, etc.)

The only game participants who are permitted to approach the scene of the confrontation are the two managers—and then only to restore order—and the umpires. All other team personnel must remain at their respective positions.

Any participant who disregards this rule and leaves his position and enters or approaches the scene of a confrontation is subject to ejection. If the violator's actions contribute to the confrontation itself (either by verbal or physical actions), the player shall be immediately ejected and is subject to the additional penalties levied by the President and board. Of course, the player or players who initiated the confrontation are also at risk of being ejected, as well as being levied additional fines and suspensions.

It is up to the umpire's judgment whether the offender shall be ejected, dependent on the seriousness of the player's actions.

Should several members of a team run from the dugout or their position to the scene of a confrontation, while the team's other players properly remain at their positions, the team violating the rule risks losing the game by forfeit should they be unable to field at least eight players following the bench restrictions and ejections.

Should both teams violate the rule and are unable to field at least eight players, the umpire will declare the contest a Double Forfeit with both teams receiving a loss.

The manager has the responsibility of maintaining order on the playing field concerning his players. This rule assists the manager in meeting this responsibility during a confrontation because he need only be concerned with controlling the player or players actually involved in the incident, rather than his entire team rushing to the scene.

Managers should inform new players to their team of this rule to prevent them from rushing to the scene of a confrontation, which may have been their machismo baseball practice in the past.

5.06 OTHER DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

For most violations of League rules, the President will quickly make the determination regarding the appropriate disciplinary measure taken. However, occasionally (but thankfully not often), the President and board will conduct a hearing to determine the penalty for particularly egregious offenses.

These violations include, but are not limited, to:

- (a) Breaking the League's age and roster rules
- (b) Continually violating League rules
- (c) Appearing at a game intoxicated
- (d) Extraordinary verbal attack or intimidation
- (e) Racial slurs and personal threats
- (f) Employing unnecessarily rough tactics on the playing field
- (g) Engaging in fights and physical attacks
- (h) Cheating
- (i) Throwing equipment in anger; damaging property
- (j) Being under the influence of an illegal controlled substance
- (k) Arrested and given any verdict other than not guilty
- (l) Making physical contact with an umpire or player
- (m) Causing extreme embarrassment to the League

Upon notification of a serious infraction such as those listed above, the President and board will conduct a full investigation and hearing to determine the appropriate penalties. (For incidents involving conflict-of-interests concerns, such as the offender being a teammate of a board member, an impartial person will be selected to replace that board member.)

The investigation shall include interviews of various witnesses and written reports from the managers and umpires. Great weight is given the impartial umpire's report of the incident, unless the board determines that the umpire is obviously biased. The player committing the violation has the right to appear before the board and state his case.

In assessing the penalty, the League will follow precedent and impose stronger disciplinary measures for repeat offenders. A player's history of rule violations and misbehavior is a factor in determining the level of penalty.

As determined by the President, offenders layers committing particularly egregious violations of League rules will be placed on indefinite suspension until a proper investigation and hearing can be completed.

For incidents involving excessive damage to property, the field, or equipment, the offender must pay the fee for repairs before any consideration will be given his return to play.

Any player committing a physical attack on another person will be levied a minimum three-game suspension. A second such offense will likely result in expulsion from the League.

Any ejection, suspension, or banishment does not qualify for a prorated refund of the player's registration payment. A player who is violation of the rules loses the right for any compensation.

Since it is impossible to list all acts of unsportsmanlike conduct, the League reserves the right to impose any penalty for any misbehavior it deems determinantal to the safety, enjoyment, and reputation of the League and its members.

6.00 SAFETY RULES

To enhance the safety of its players, the League employs rules that prohibit dangerous sliding techniques and collisions, as well as rules that forbid acts of misbehavior that endanger others.

6.01 UMPIRE AUTHORITY

Umpires are instructed to strictly enforce all League safety rules and have full authority in determining if any player is in violation of them. Since these are judgment calls, no protests will be allowed concerning the umpire's rulings regarding safety.

6.02 LEGAL SLIDE

A runner is never required to slide.

Other legal options the runner might take, rather than sliding, is running back to the previous base; “giving himself up” by stopping completely; attempting to move around the fielder to avoid a tag; running out of the base path on a force play; or taking other legal action to avoid interference with the fielder.

Nonetheless, if a runner does elect to slide, the slide must be legal.

A legal slide can be either feet- or head-first. If a runner slides feet-first, at least one leg and buttock must be on the ground. The runner’s raised foot shall be no higher than the fielder’s knee when the fielder is in a standing position. A head-first slide may not be “air-borne”; the runner’s body must hit the ground first before making contact with the fielder.

Illegal slides include those in which the runner uses a rolling, cross-body, or pop-up slide into the fielder that alters the play; those involving slashing or kicking; and sliding into the fielder rather than into the base.

NOTE: Illegal slides that involve a fielder may be interference plays. In these instances, the runner shall be called out and a possible double play may be called. Additionally, if the action is deemed flagrant or malicious, the runner is ejected from the game.

6.03 ANTI-COLLISION RULE

A player may not maliciously or flagrantly crash or collide into another player.

Runners may not deviate from their direct pathway to the base to initiate contact with the fielder.

All slides must be legal (as outlined under Rule 6.02 above).

A player may not initiate any act to initiate a collision that could have been avoided.

Although violation of these rules usually occurs at home plate, they apply to all bases.

Violation of these rules will result in:

- (a) The offender being called out, regardless if the fielder maintains control of the ball;
- (b) The ball ruled dead and all other runners returned to the last base they legally acquired before the violation; and
- (c) The offender being ejected from the game and subject to further suspension by the President.

Although the main concern of these safety rules involves runners committing illegal acts, the fielder is also responsible for his actions. Umpires will enforce MLB’s obstruction rule (6.01h) that states: “Obstruction is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of the runner.”

6.04 BASERUNNER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Baserunners should be familiar with the interference rules. Offensive players may not make contact, distract, confuse, or interfere with any player fielding a batted ball.

There is never a valid reason for a runner to illegally collide with a fielder. Malicious or flagrant contact supersedes obstruction. Even if a fielder is illegally blocking the base path, it does not give the runner the right to collide into the fielder. If such violations occur, the runner will be declared safe because of the obstruction—but he will also be ejected and liable for further suspension because of his unsportsmanlike act. (*Any* player, of course, on defense or offense, who commits a dangerous, unethical, or unsafe act is subject to severe penalty.)

If a play is developing near or at a base, the runner must make every attempt to make a legal slide to prevent violation of the Anti-Collision Rule (6.03). If the runner senses that the ball is about to arrive, he should be sliding. It should be remembered that even if the runner is tagged out, he may still be cited for interference if he illegally prevents the fielder from making a subsequent play; should this occur, the other runner on which the fielder was about to make a play will also be called out for his teammate's interference.

If a play occurs too far up the line that prevents the runner from executing a slide, he has other legal options such as running around the fielder's tag, as outlined under Rule 6.02.

6.05 FIELDER SAFETY GUIDELINES

Defensive players should be familiar with the obstruction rules. If a fielder is not in possession of the ball or in the act of fielding the ball, he may not impede a base runner.

Even when the fielder is “in the act of fielding” a thrown ball, he must provide a “pathway” to the base for the runner. He may not completely block this pathway until he has full possession of the ball. The fielder, however, is not in violation of the rule if he impedes the runner's path in a legitimate attempt to catch the ball (such as a wild throw, trajectory of the hop, etc.).

Last season (2024), Major League Baseball made the above “pathway rule” a “point of emphasis” by instructing their umpires to be more rigorous in enforcing this rule. Our League umpires have been instructed to do likewise.

As with all aspects of this rule, the definition of “act of fielding the ball” is purely umpire judgment. To avoid violation of the rule, fielders are encouraged to place themselves in a position that provides a pathway for the runner (such as straddling the plate/base or standing in front of it) while still being in position to tag the runner or block the plate or base after he has secured possession of the ball.

Regardless of the situation, good sportsmanship always remains in effect. A fielder should use his best efforts to avoid unnecessary forcible contact when tagging a runner. If the umpire rules that the catcher has taken any measure to illegally hinder, intimidate, impede or employ unsportsmanlike tactics, whatever the situation, penalties will be levied.

6.06 INCIDENTAL CONTACT

A collision does not necessarily mean the runner is always out—even if a slide is not executed.

There are instances that are described as “incidental contact” and arise when both participants (offense and defense) are performing legal acts, yet a collision occurs. This usually involves an errant throw by an infielder to the first baseman who reaches for the ball and collides with the runner racing to the bag.

Additionally, the force of the contact is not the criterion for judging malicious behavior. A hard, clean slide is legal and does not violate the Anti-Collision Rule. It is up to the umpire’s discretion on whether a slide is legal; if the contact is flagrant or malicious; or if any action taken by the player violates the basic principles of good sportsmanship and behavior.

6.07 EXAMPLES OF ANTI-COLLISION RULINGS

Since this rule is so important to the safety of players and is often misunderstood, the following examples of plays and their appropriate rules are offered:

- (a) Situation—The catcher is guilty of obstruction (blocking the path of the runner—either intentionally or not—while not in possession of the ball nor in the act of fielding the ball):

- (1) The runner attempts to slide or run around the obstructing catcher.

Ruling: The runner shall be called safe no matter the result of the play because of the obstruction. If the catcher is also guilty of an unsportsmanlike act, such as raising an elbow or purposely moving into the runner’s path, he is subject to ejection and suspension.

- (2) The runner coming from third base smashes into the catcher.

Ruling: The runner is safe no matter what occurs later because of the obstruction, but the runner is ejected for his unsportsmanlike act. The infraction by the catcher does not give the runner *carte blanche* to collide into the fielder.

- (b) Situation—The fielder has possession of the ball and is about to tag the runner.

- (1) The runner lowers his shoulder, smashes into the fielder, and jars the ball loose.

Ruling: The runner is called out, ejected, and is subject to further suspension.

- (2) The runner trips and falls directly into the fielder, but the fielder drops the ball as he tags him.

Ruling: The runner is called out because he did not make a legal slide (nor did it involve incidental contact); however, he is not ejected because the act was not malicious.

- (3) The runner legally attempts to run around the catcher, but the fielder drops the ball as he tags him.

Ruling: The runner is called safe because he does not have to slide and he did not illegally collide with the fielder.

- (4) The runner runs directly into the fielder, who drops the ball.

Ruling: The runner is called out because he did not execute a legal slide and he made forceful contact with the fielder. It would be up to the umpire's judgment if the runner is also ejected for malicious/flagrant contact.

6.08 PITCHER WILDNESS AND BATTER SAFETY

(a) The umpire has the authority, at any time, to remove a pitcher from the mound that he determines to be too wild. The pitcher is not ejected. The player is allowed to play any position other than pitcher.

(b) If three batters are awarded first base after being struck by a pitch by the same pitcher in the same game, the umpire must remove the pitcher from the mound. This is not an ejection. The player may play any other position, but he may not re-enter the game as a pitcher.

(c) If a pitcher intentionally throws at a batter, the umpire has the authority to eject him from the game immediately. The decision is at the umpire's discretion. The ejected player is also subject to further disciplinary action.

(d) A pitcher may not wear white or gray sleeves, nor may he wear a batting glove or wristband. A black or skin-colored bandage/support is permitted. The umpire has the authority to order the pitcher to remove any item that is distracting to the batter, such as ragged sleeves, shiny buttons, or jewelry. The pitcher may wear prescription sunglasses unless the umpire deems them too reflective.

6.09 ILLEGAL DEFENSIVE ACTIONS

A "fake tag" is an illegal act by a defensive player who, without the ball, simulates a tag. It is a dangerous practice that results in runners risking injury by making unnecessary slides. Similar illegal acts include pretending to throw or catch a ball near the base to impede the runner.

Note: "Fake tags" should not be confused with legal "decoys" made by the defense, as determined by the umpire.

If such an illegal act occurs, the umpire shall rule "obstruction" and award all runners one base beyond the base obtained after all play stops. The umpire will also inform the offending team's manager that if any of his team's players commit a similar offense in the same game, that player shall be ejected.

6.10 DUGOUT PERSONNEL

For safety purposes and to meet insurance requirements, only team members and authorized personnel are permitted on the field or in the dugout during a game. Friends of players, children, and batboys are prohibited from being on the field or in the dugout during a game. If necessities require anyone under 18 years of age to be in the dugout, they must always wear a protective helmet.

7.00 PROTESTS AND GRIEVANCES

7.01 PROTESTING A GAME

A protest is not allowed on an umpire's judgment call. Protesting of games are confined to the misapplication of a rule, and the use of illegal and ineligible players by the opposing team.

Only the team manager may wage a formal protest.

The protest must be made at the time of the incident and before the next pitch, play, or attempted play. On a game-ending play, the protest must be made before the umpires leave the field.

Exception: A manager has 24 hours to formally protest the use of an ineligible player by the opposing team, which is made by notifying the President.

Following the lodging of the protest to the umpire, the game will continue. A team walking off the field to express its displeasure over an umpire's ruling negates any protest—and the game will be ruled a forfeit in favor of the opposing team.

If the protesting team wins the game, the protest becomes moot, but the incident should still be reported to the President.

7.02 PROTEST PROCEDURE

(a) The manager shall inform the home plate umpire of the protest and it must be done immediately after the umpire's questioned ruling. In addressing the official, the manager must specify exactly which rule he believes is being misinterpreted or misapplied.

(b) The manager and umpire then signs and dates the team's scorebook to register the protest. Any appropriate notations concerning the protest should be made and witnessed by both the manager and umpire on the scorebook page.

Since the Protest Committee may require the scorebooks and lineup cards for the game from both teams, managers should save all relevant material from the game.

(c) The manager must then submit a written report that outlines the particulars of his protest to the President within 24 hours. The umpire may also be required to submit a report.

(d) A \$50 protest fee must accompany the manager's report.

The League Protest Committee is comprised of the President, Rules Director, and other board members. To ensure a fair and impartial ruling, the committee will review the situation thoroughly before rendering its decision.

If the protest is upheld, the \$50 fee will be refunded to the protesting manager. If the protest is denied, the fee is forfeited to the League.

Even if the protest is valid, there will be resumption of the game from the point of contention unless the ruling in question *directly* affected the outcome of the game. In other words, the

protesting team may have their protest upheld but the team still loses the game. In these instances, the fee will be returned to the complainant.

7.03 GRIEVANCES

Any player, manager, or team has the right to file a formal grievance against any other player, manager, or team. To wage such a formal objection against another person, the complainant must file a written report outlining the grievance.

The board will adjudicate all such disputes. To prevent frivolous gripes, a \$50 fee must accompany the grievance report. If the board determines that the criticism is legitimate, the fee will be returned to the complainant.

7.04 DISCIPLINARY APPEALS

No player or manager may appeal an ejection or a one- or two-game suspension; such rulings by the President and/or board are final.

Everyone has the right to appeal any penalty greater than a two-game suspension, including probation and expulsion) and request that an official formal hearing be held in which the complainant may present his case and petition that the penalty be less severe. If the request for a hearing is granted, any decision rendered by the appellate board shall be final.

8.00 THE PLAYING FIELD

The playing fields are an important part of any baseball league. All League members—players, managers, umpires, and board members alike—must work together to ensure that our baseball fields are respected and are not abused.

Although our League pays for the use of the Park District and High School baseball fields, their administrators are not *obligated* to rent them to us. If we do not abide by their regulations, we can be denied use of their fields at any time. Eisenhower High School and South Suburban College, for example, require that their baseball fields be restored to its original condition after every game. The use of every field we play on requires that the dugout and stands be cleaned of debris and litter after every game.

8.01 GROUNDSKEEPING GUIDELINES

- (a) If a field is wet, do not haul dirt, “cat litter”, or any other material onto the surface to make it “playable”.
- (b) If the field cannot be made ready by light raking, do not play on it.
- (c) Do not subject a wet field to footprints or heavy raking.

8.02 FIELD RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) Every team is required to perform basic field maintenance after every game, including filling in holes in the batters' boxes, pitcher's mound, and near the bases. When a team neglects to perform these simple tasks, the entire League suffers, particularly the two teams playing on the field the following day.
- (b) Teams are prohibited from conducting drills in which baseballs are hit into chain-link fences. These drills result in expensive repairs and jeopardize player safety.
- (c) Players may not pitch batting practice from the front of the mound or use the batting boxes to hit.
- (d) Do not climb or jump over fences to gain access to a field. If a field gate is locked and you do not have the key, stay off the field.
- (e) Cutting locks or removing gates to get onto a field or obtain equipment is strictly prohibited.
- (f) Stay off dugout roofs and backstops. Respect all property.

8.03 UNPLAYABLE FIELD

Both team managers are responsible for verifying a field's playing conditions, not just the home team manager. If one manager determines a field is unplayable but the opposing manager disagrees, the umpires make the final decision. If the umpires deem the field playable but either manager disagrees, then the President should be called for his decision and advice.

All unplayable field conditions on any given day should be reported immediately to the President. The League should also be informed of any unsafe conditions on a field so that corrective measures may be taken.

The decision on whether or not the field is playable should be based on what is in the best interests of field and League and not the convenience of the two teams or umpires. The decision should err on the side of caution. It is impractical to ruin a baseball field, possibly for the season, just to play one game that could easily be postponed and rescheduled.

8.04 PENALTIES FOR FIELD NEGLECT

Teams and/or players who abuse the playing field, dugouts, and grandstands because of negligence, carelessness, or general lack of respect are subject to being fined, suspended, and possibly expelled. Reimbursement to the field's owner may also be required to repair any damages. Severe penalties and heavy fines will be levied against any team or player whose actions result in the loss of a playing field for our League.

8.05 DAMAGE TO PARKED CARS

The League and its players, managers, and teams are not responsible for the cost of damages to automobiles caused by baseballs. If payment is rendered to anyone for such damage, it will be done without refund. The League does not carry insurance covering this type of damage.

If there is a problem with anyone complaining about damage to their car, contact the local police. Do not call the President or board member.

9.00 THE POSTSEASON

9.01 TIE-BREAKER RULE

To determine the final standings for teams having the same regular-season record, the tie will be broken in favor of:

- 1) the team with the best head-to-head record;
- 2) the team with the best run differential (runs scored/runs allowed); and
- 3) the winner of a coin toss.

9.02 PLAYOFF STRUCTURE

The board will determine the playoff structure each season, dependent on the number of teams participating. The structure will involve the highest-seeded team playing the lowest-seeded team. Each postseason series will be a best-of-three format. Specific particulars will be made by the board.

NOTE: If it is discovered that an ineligible player participated in a postseason game, the game will be declared a forfeit loss for the offending team. The team, the player, and the manager are also subject to other strong penalties.

9.03 POSTSEASON ELIGIBILITY

(a) To be eligible for the postseason, a player must be on a team's official roster and may only play for the team for which he is a member.

(b) A player becomes eligible for the postseason when he participates in at least one-third of his team's regular-season games.

(c) There are no appeals for players to become eligible for the postseason if they do not meet the game-attendance requirements.

(d) Players on a team that loses by forfeit do not receive "credit" for that game for postseason eligibility purposes. If there is a double-forfeit involving teams either unable to field eight players or violating the fight rule, no player on either team shall receive a game credit.

(e) If a team wins by forfeit on the field of play, every player at the game receives credit for the game for postseason eligibility.

(f) If a team is awarded a forfeit win before they arrive at the field, the manager may select 12 players on his team to receive game credit for postseason eligibility.

(g) Any team or player that falsifies records or statistics to illegally obtain postseason eligibility will be severely punished by the League, including the issuing of heavy fines, suspensions, and possible expulsion.

9.04 INJURY LIST

During the regular seasons, teams must notify the President or board member when one of their players is unable to play because of injury. The League will then place the player on the League Injured List (IL) with the date noted.

A player on the Injured List must still attend his team's games to receive a "game credited" for postseason eligibility. The manager must inform the opposing manager which of his players sitting on the bench is officially on the IL.

If a player is unable to attend his games because of injury, he must receive a special exemption from the President to receive game credit.

10.00 MAJOR LEAGUE RULES

As stated at the top of this document, the *Official Baseball Rules* of Major League Baseball is the authority for all League games, unless indicated otherwise in this rule book.

Rule 10.01 below outlines a rule that our League interprets differently than Major League Baseball.

Rule 10.2 below features a few changed MLB rules from the past few years that managers may not be aware of, and how they are enforced.

Rule 10.3 below outlines recent MLB Rules that have either been adopted or not adopted for our League this year by a vote of the managers during the off-season.

10.01 MODIFIED MLB RULE

(a) PITCH LODGES IN FENCE

Under MLB rules, if a pitch lodges in a fence or enters dead-ball territory, the ball is declared dead and all runners are awarded one base. Our League employs this rule but with a slight

change—all runners are awarded a base *except* the runner on third base, unless the runner was stealing home on the pitch or the batter was attempting a squeeze play.

This concerns only *PITCHES* and not throws from the field in which the awarding of bases remains the same as the MLB.

10.02 SUMMARY OF RECENT MLB RULE CHANGES

The following are MLB rules that have been changed in recent years that have approved for our League. They are outlined below for managers who may not be aware of the rule changes.

(a) INTENTIONAL WALK

When issuing an intentional walk, the pitcher isn't required to deliver any pitches. The defensive manager merely signals to the home plate umpire when he wants to intentionally walk the batter. The umpire then calls the ball dead and awards the batter first base. The “no-pitch” walk may be used at any time during the count.

(b) FIELDER'S DUGOUT CATCH

A fielder may lean into but may not enter the dugout to make a catch. If the fielder makes a legal catch outside the dugout and then enters or falls into the dugout, the out is still recorded, the ball is declared dead, and all existing runners are awarded one base. This is the same as the MLB rule but is repeated here because it is particularly significant for fields, such as Oak Lawn, that have walk-in dugouts.

(c) PITCHER FEINTS THROW TO THIRD BASE

A pitcher, while on the pitching rubber, is no longer allowed to feint a throw to third base. The penalty is a balk.

(d) DROPPED THIRD STRIKE

When a batter strikes out and starts walking toward his dugout, not realizing that the third strike was not caught by the catcher, the umpire shall call the batter out after he has walked approximately 10 feet from home plate. Under the old baseball rule, on a dropped third strike, an unaware batter wasn't called out until he actually entered the dugout.

(e) FIRST BASE RUNNING LANE

This rule involves a batter running to first base in which a play occurs behind him, such as the catcher fielding a bunt or a dropped third strike. Since 1882, to avoid being called out for interfering with the throw on such plays, batters were required to run in foul territory in a specific three-foot running lane. It was always a controversial rule because first base is in fair territory and the runner was required to run in foul territory. This lane is always marked on MLB fields; not so much on the fields in which our League plays.

Last season, Major League Baseball finally enlarged this “running lane” to include two feet in fair territory in which the batter-runner must run to avoid possible interference.

(f) PITCHER WARMING UP IS NOT REQUIRED TO PITCH

A pitcher who warms up at the start of an inning on the playing field (including the sidelines or mound) is required to pitch to at least to the first batter of the inning until such batter is put out or reaches base.

10.03 MLB RULE CHANCES FOR 2025 SEASON

In the past few years, including this year, Major League Baseball has introduced several new rules, including a pitch-clock, restrictions on defensive shifts, limiting the number of pick-off attempts, and larger bases. Because many of these rules are impractical, inapplicable, or unnecessary for our League, our managers have voted not to adopt them.

Our League did not approve any new MLB rule introduced this year.