

2025 LMK Rule Changes and Interpretations – State Tournament

ZERO TOLERANCE:

Once again, it is the resolve of the LMK Board of Directors that there be a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy regarding **unruly, disruptive and/or unsportsmanlike** behavior and as such, any coach, player, official and/or spectator exhibiting this behavior during the State Tournament will be subject to immediate ejection from the game, premises and/or tournament in its entirety.

This notice, being provided to LMK, District and League leadership, will serve as the initial warning and no further warning may be provided.

REVISED MERCY RULE

5.07 A regulation game shall consist of six innings unless shortened due to the following:

A. The home team needs none of its half of the sixth inning or only a fraction of it.

B. When the visiting team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more after four complete innings or the home team has a lead of fifteen runs or more after three and one-half innings, **OR the visiting team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more after five complete innings or the Home team has a lead of ten (10) or more runs after four and one-half innings,** the Umpire-In-Chief shall call the game.

Rule 5.07 is the revised Mercy Rule that was implemented in the 2024-2027 Rule Book which instituted a 10-run lead option after 4-1/2 or 5 innings. The 15-run lead rule after 3-1/2 or 4 innings remains in effect.

5.28 LIMITATION ON TIME OUTS

A team is allowed no more than **six (6) total time** outs during a regulation game. **Only one time out may be used in a half inning without penalty by each team.** During a time out, coaches and players on both teams may confer without penalty.

In the event of extra innings, each team will receive one additional time out at the start of extra inning play and after every three (3) innings of extra play, but still only one (1) time out per half inning can be used without penalty.

This is a reminder of the change to Rule 5.28 concerning Time Outs. There is a limit of 6 Time Outs during a regulation game. An extra Time Out will be given at the start of extra inning play.

Only one Time Out may be used without penalty in a half inning by a team. Each team may use one time out in any and every half inning until their allotment of Time Outs is exhausted. Requesting a subsequent Time Out in the same half inning will result in the removal of the pitcher of record.

9.04 EJECTION PENALTY

Any Player, Coach, Volunteer or Spectator ejected from a game (regular season or tournament) is automatically suspended from the next game as well (the team must still field the team of at least nine (9) players for the next game). The League, District or LMK Corporation may impose additional disciplinary actions as each deems appropriate based on the conduct exhibited.

Rule 9.04 was implemented to enforce a 1 game suspension on any individual who gets ejected during a game. For the State Tournament, all ejections will be reviewed by the LMK President and Rules Directors who have the authority to enforce the one game suspension, extend it further or eliminate it completely based on the circumstances surrounding the ejection.

Rule 13.04 The official scorekeeper shall keep the official record of the game by recording in the official score book the following (not all items are listed here):

F. The number of time outs called by each team in each half inning;

J. During Tournament play, each Coach's Protest requested (by writing a "P" in the Time Out Grid for the appropriate team and inning) to facilitate tracking the protests.

Rule changes affecting the number of **Time Outs** allowed per team/per game and the number of **Coach's Protests** during tournament games took effect with the 2024 season and State Tournament. It is the responsibility of the official scorekeeper to track both items as they are used in the course of the game and to assist the Umpire-in-chief with managing the use of these.

The official scorekeeper must track the Time Outs by recording them in the scorebook in the designated space. The same applies to the use of Coach's Protests. The official scorekeeper should record a **"P"** in the **Time Out Grid** each time a **Coach's Protest** is

used. The scorekeeper should make the Umpire-in-chief aware of any team that exhausts its allotment of Time Outs or Coach's Protests.

14.02 LIMITATION ON COACH'S PROTESTS

- A. Each team will be limited to three (3) official Head Coach's protests (hereafter, "coach's protest") to start each game. Once a team has exhausted its available protests, that team will no longer have the ability to file an additional official protest, unless the game extends into extra innings.
- C. In the event of extra innings, each team will receive one (1) additional Coach's Protest at the start of extra inning play and after every three (3) innings of extra play. The same rules will apply for these protests as are in place for other protests. A team may not possess more than three (3) unused Coach's Protest at any time.

This is a reminder of the change to Rule 14.02 concerning Protests. There is a limit of 3 Coach's Protests during a regulation tournament game. An extra Coach's Protest may be given at the start of extra inning play.

A denied protest will result in a charged time out for the protesting team but will not require the removal of the pitcher.

Decisions of the Protest Committee are final and are not subject to appeal.

15.09 Use of mobile phones or other communications devices are not permitted by the official scorekeeper/operator or anyone in the scorebox.

EFFECT: Violators may force their team to be charged a timeout or potentially forfeit the game in which the violation occurs.

"Other communications devices" includes smart watches, notepads and walkie-talkies."

Initially, this rule was established to ensure that no one in the score box was communicating inappropriately with members of a coaching staff during a game. The implementation has been expanded to include players and coaches in the dugout as well.

The key words in this rule are "**USE OF**" which is not the same as having a device in one's possession. While it is preferred that no cell phones or electronic communications devices be in the dugout, the advancement of these devices as a potential medical device makes it nearly impossible to rule them out completely, therefore, during the

state tournament, teams will be encouraged to keep these devices out of the dugout but may only be penalized if there is unauthorized active use of them during the game. If a coach or player must have the device with them throughout the game for medical reasons, inform the Umpire-in-Chief of this situation at the start of the game.

No cell phones or other electronic communications devices, including smart watches and notepads, will be allowed in the scoreboard during the game except by LMK and/or Host League officials. If you have a volunteer who would like to keep the scorebook or work the scoreboard but cannot do so without the communications device on their person, it is recommended that another volunteer be selected.

Likewise, cell phones, smart watches and notepads are discouraged from being in the dugout and their use is prohibited. Should a coach or player utilize a cell phone, smart watch or notepad in the dugout, they will be asked to remove the device and the team will be charged a time out. Continued use may result in the forfeiture of the game by the offending team.

15.10 All-Star Game Lineup. All-Star Game Lineups should be exchanged at the time of the coin flip prior to the game. Failure to do so will result in the offending team losing the coin flip option. If both teams fail to exchange lineups, the coin flip will occur as usual. Failure to exchange lineups by game time will result in a forfeit in favor of the non-offending team.

As we have done in the past few years, game Lineups are to be exchanged at the time of the coin flip. If a team is not prepared to do so, **NO COIN FLIP will occur** and the other team will have the choice of **HOME or VISITOR**. If neither team is ready, the coin flip will occur as usual. Both teams must exchange lineups by game time or risk forfeiture.

Again, the intent of this rule is to help keep games running on schedule during the tournament. It is imperative that coaches be prepared to exchange lineups at the coin flip so that the games can start on time.

15.12 Air horns and drums are not allowed at the All-Star Tournament – in the dugouts or in the stands or surrounding areas.

EFFECT: Violators will force their team to be charged a timeout and may potentially forfeit the game in which the violation occurs

Effective with the 2024 State Tournament, air horns and drums are prohibited from the All-Star Tournament. Offending individuals will force their team to be charged a time

out and if the devices are not removed, may result in the forfeiture of the game. Failure of the individual to comply with the directions to remove the devices may cause the individual to be ejected from the tournament.

15.13 The ejection of a Player, Coach, Volunteer or Spectator during the State All-Star Tournament must be reported to the LMK President and LMK Rules Directors by the official who issued the ejection for review upon completion of the game in which the ejection occurs.

The LMK President, in conjunction with the LMK Rules Directors, is empowered to modify the effect of the ejection as deemed appropriate.

Effective with the 2024 State Tournament, the ejection of any player, coach, volunteer or spectator will undergo a post-game review by the LMK President and Rules Directors to better ensure the actions and penalty are appropriate. The LMK President and Rules Directors are empowered to adjust the penalty (increase or decrease the impact) as they deem appropriate.