

## Official FVBL Playing Rules

### ALL LEAGUE RULES



#### 1. GENERAL GAME RULES:

- A. If any FVBL playing rule is violated, coaches & players involved are subject to disciplinary action, & game is subject to forfeiture upon FVBL Board review.
- B. Games must start within 10 minutes of scheduled time except umpiring or field difficulties. Before the game, the umpire shall announce the start time in collaboration with the Managers.
- C. Umpires have complete control and authority of games. Prior to the game, the home team shall rule on field conditions and the umpire governs safe playing conditions.
- D. Umpires and coaches are responsible for keeping bats and all unused equipment off the playing field during games.
- E. Pre-game meeting will determine Head Coach roles for each game. Umpire shall ONLY be addressed by the determined Head Coach for any in game rules or clarification. Players, Assistant Coaches, & Spectators are not to address the Umpire.
- F. Home Team uses 3rd base dugout. Visiting team uses 1st base dugout.
- G. Only registered adult coaches are allowed to be in the dugouts with the players. All other spectators are not allowed in the dugouts or on the field.
- H. All adult coaches either in the dugout or on the field must submit to & pass a background check. It is the responsibility of each town's organization to screen every coach on their teams.
- I. Adults must coach behind base paths & are to avoid interference at all times.
- J. Home team responsibilities include lining the base paths and batters' box, placing bases, and providing 2 game balls prior to start of the game. Visiting team to assist when necessary.
- K. A minimum of eight (8) players must always be fielded during the game. Late arriving players must be added to the bottom of the batting order.
- L. Only league registered players can participate in practices or games.
- M. Jewelry shall not be worn, except religious or medical medals. These items must be taped down and worn under uniform, not visible.
- N. **A game is considered official upon reaching the designated time limit, or when the umpire ends the game early due to daylight or weather conditions.**
- O. **Early-called games will not be resumed at a later date.**



- P. Time limits are determined by age divisions. A new inning begins when the third out in the previous inning is made.
- Q. If extra innings and no time limit restrictions, the teams proceed with “California Rules” (start with last out on second base, 1 out and a 1-1 starting count for each batter) for the remainder of the game.
- R. Any rescheduled game must go through FVBL and be approved by field assigner for that specific town.
- S. Official League Standings will be maintained by FVBL and decided through (1) Winning Percentage (2) Head to Head (only if two teams) (3) Run deferential (4) Runs allowed (5) Total Runs Scored

## 2. PITCHING RULES:

- A. Pitching Eligibility Rules vary by league. Age-based limitations based on the grade on the registration form and not chronological age. Please see each league rule for specific age-based limitation and rules.
- B. Pitchers may not return to the mound after being removed.
- C. Pitchers shall not wear non-prescription sunglasses, wrist bands, or light-colored shirts/sleeves under uniform.
- D. The Pitcher must be removed after a second coach visit to the mound in the same inning.
- E. If a pitcher hits 2 batters in one inning or 3 batters in a game, that pitcher must be removed from the mound.
- F. There are no set pitch count limitations. However, a reasonable guideline that should be monitored is 5 pitches for every year of age. ie: 12u pitcher should be able to pitch about 60 pitches per game. Not 100.
- G. There are Innings Pitched (IP) limitations:
  - a. Minor: 3 innings per game
  - b. Major: 4 innings per game
  - c. Pony: 4 innings per game
- H. **No restrictions on pitchers**
- I. Coaches are to use their best judgment regarding player pitch counts. If a player complains or shows signs of fatigue/injury, coaches need to operate in the interest of safety first. Our focus is on learning & development, not winning at all costs or gaining an advantage at the expense of player safety. Communicate this with your players & parents to minimize misunderstandings & excessive pitch count complaints.
- J. Violation for pitching Rule: Pitcher will not be allowed to pitch. 10 game mound suspension – Game subject to forfeiture. Coaches may also be subject to FVBL disciplinary actions.

## 3. HITTING RULES:



- A. All team members present will bat in continuous rotation.
- B. Continuous batting lineups are to be submitted prior to the start of the game. No designated hitter (DH) allowed. Late arrivals are placed at the end of the order.
- C. Dropped third strike and bunting rules vary by league.
- D. Slashing is not allowed (show bunt then swing at same pitch). The batter will immediately be called out and the ball is dead.
- E. **BAT RESTRICTIONS:** Bats must be stamped BPF 1.15, USA, USSSA, BBCOR, or made of wood with a maximum diameter allowed of 2 3/4." If a player uses an illegal bat, they will be called out and bat removed from the dugout.

#### 4. BASERUNNING RULES:

- A. Base path distance, stealing and leadoff rules vary by league.
- B. Players must run within the basepath when there is a tag attempt. Umpire will determine if a player runs out of the basepath.
- C. Players must avoid contact with players by sliding (except at first base). If a player does not slide when there is a play at a base, they will be called out and the play is dead.
- D. No headfirst sliding allowed (except returning to a base). If a runner slides headfirst, they will be called out and ball is dead.
- E. Pitchers and catchers of record may have a courtesy runner if they are on base at any time, but must have courtesy runner with 2 outs. The courtesy runner must be the player who was the most recent out.
- F. Any player who intentionally removes a safety helmet while in the field of play will be called out. The play treated as hit baserunner.
- G. If a safety base is present, it shall only be used for offensive purposes. A runner cannot be forced out if fielder uses the safety base.

#### 5. DEFENSIVE RULES:

- A. All players present at a game will not sit out 2 consecutive innings; nor will they sit out a 2nd inning before all other players have sat out 1 inning.
- B. Coaches are encouraged to utilize players in many different positions for instructional purposes. Care must be taken in assigning players, keeping in mind safety, skill, and ability.
- C. Injuries, illness, early leaving are exceptions to these rules.



- D. Defensive players may not impede the runner by denying access to a base, **unless they actively possess the ball**. Fielders cannot stand on a base or in the base path in an attempt to block or slow down the runner.

#### 6. CALL UP RULES:

- A. If a Manager determines the team will be short players, they may call-up players from one league down only. No lateral callups from same-age teams allowed.
- B. Replacement players must be announced at the start of the game, bat last in the lineup, and will not play more defensive innings than a rostered player.
- C. Only league registered players can be considered for call up, & replacement players cannot play if their original team is scheduled to play at the same time.

#### 7. PLAYOFFS:

- A. Call ups will be allowed during playoffs. Lateral Call up players from another team in the same league are not allowed.
- B. **Playoff games will have NO TIME LIMIT.**
- C. All other regular season gameplay and conduct rules apply.

#### 8. CONDUCT RULES:

- A. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. (unethical or dishonorable behavior: disrespectfully addressing an official, any flagrant behavior, intentional contact, taunting, criticizing, or using profanity directed toward others).
- B. No smoking, vaping or alcoholic beverages on or in the vicinity of the playing field, dugouts or stands.
- C. Managers, coaches, players, and fans may not argue or complain about an umpire's call. Any player or coach ejected from a game is not eligible to participate in the next game played.
- D. Ejection and/or disciplinary actions are at the umpire's discretion.
- E. Managers are 100% responsible for the conduct of their coaches, parents, and players. Parents, coaches, and players are to be informed of the rules before the season begins.
- F. **No protests allowed.**
- G. Each team is responsible for the removal of all trash from their respective dugouts, spectator areas, and the field.
- H. Any conduct violations will be subject to FVBL discipline.



9. **SCHEDULING PROCEDURES:**

- A. **Game schedule will be determined by FVBL, & should not be changed, except in cases of rainout. Teams should utilize call up players in instances of insufficient players.**
  
- B. **Once the regular season begins, schedule changes outside of rainout circumstances may be subject to a rescheduling fee.**
  
- C. **Scores must be reported by the HOME TEAM within 24 hours of game completion. Failure to report within 24 hours will result in a \$50 fine to the respective Team's organization. QR code/survey link provided.**
  
- D. **Score report must include game date, Division, Home Team (Score), Away Team (Score). (ie: 5/22, Majors, STC Blue 7, BYB 6)**