



## 2023 Minors Division Regular Season Rules

1. **Rules:** All games will be played under the 2023 Little League Baseball Official Regulations, Playing Rules and Operating Policies (the “**Rulebook**”) except as stated otherwise herein. Managers, umpires and assistant coaches are expected to read, understand and comply with all Little League rules, with emphasis on rules that address safety, pitch count limits, and eligibility for pitchers and catchers.
2. **Minimum Player Rule:** A team must always have a minimum of seven (7) players to play an official game. A team that has less than seven (7) players must forfeit the game. In the event of this rule not being met, all efforts should be made to play a “scrimmage” game by splitting up the available players. A team may play with seven or eight players without penalty.
3. **Pitching Distance:** Pitchers may pitch from either the pitching rubber (46 feet) or from the chalked line at 42 feet. The intent of this rule modification is not to in any way gain a competitive advantage, but rather to encourage players to develop and to allow for more balls to be thrown in the strike zone to facilitate hitting. It is the expectation of the league that the rule is used in this way. During the playoffs all pitchers must pitch from the pitching rubber.
4. **Strike Zone:** The strike zone is essentially from a few inches below the knees to the armpits, across the plate plus one ball width, but is in fact that zone in which the Umpire feels the player can reasonably hit the ball. Umpires in this Division are encouraged to have large strike zones and not require exacting accuracy from pitchers.
5. **Pitching/Catching Eligibility and Limits Rules:** All Managers, coaches and umpires are expected to read and be fully aware of the content contained in Regulation VI of the Rulebook. MANAGERS MUST UPDATE THEIR PITCHING ELIGIBILITY FORM AFTER EACH GAME AND HAVE IT AVAILABLE WITH THE TEAM SCOREBOOK AT EACH GAME.
6. **Player Replacement Rule:** If a pitcher walks three consecutive batters must be replaced with a new pitcher.
7. **Pitcher Warm Up:** A pitcher cannot be warmed up at or near the diamond when a game is being played. During the game, a pitcher can warm up by playing catch with another player.
8. **Limit on Runs per Inning:** The side is retired upon recording three (3) outs, or scoring five (5) runs, whichever occurs first. There is NO “open” last inning format in regular season play. An “open” last inning format will only be used in the playoffs.
9. **Batter Counts:** A batter will start with a count of Zero (0) Balls and One (1) Strike. This rule is in place to encourage batters to swing, accelerate play and compensate for pitchers who are still developing.
10. **Base Runner Rules:** Players are not allowed to lead off of bases and there are no “straight steals” allowed in Minors. Runners may only advance on a batted ball, a base on balls, or on a passed ball (a ball that goes past or bounces away from the catcher beyond the outline of the



batter's boxes). On hits contained in the infield, runners may advance one base only. On hits to the outfield, runners may advance until the ball is thrown back into the infield. Players between bases when the ball is thrown by an outfielder to the infield may continue to the next base at their own peril and must stop at that base. The infield is defined as the shale area of the diamond. Base runners cannot advance on overthrows (this includes throws from the catcher to any base on a passed ball or throws from the catcher back to the pitcher). A runner on third base may only advance if a ball is hit or they are forced in by a base on balls. They may not score on a passed ball.

11. **Base Runner & Batted Ball:** Base runners hit by a batted ball shall be called out. Base runners hit by a thrown ball shall not be called out (Rule 7.09).
12. **Defensive Throws:** The ball must be thrown to all bases OVERHAND and in the air. If a violation occurs the runner is safe at the base. EXCEPTION: A fielder may only toss the ball underhand when the fielder and baseman are in close proximity. "CLOSE PROXIMITY" shall be at the Umpire's discretion.
13. **Thrown Bat:** Any time after a warning has been issued to both teams (which should occur at the first instance of a thrown bat), a batter who dangerously throws his bat can be removed from the batting order for the remainder of the game, at the discretion of the Umpire. It is not a violation if a batter intentionally drops or tosses the bat to a clear area in foul territory, with the obvious intent of removing it safely from the home plate area. If the thrown bat does not cause interference, the play stands (a base hit, any runs scored, outs made), and the batter may continue as a base runner for that hit. If the thrown bat causes interference, then the batter is out, and no runners can advance.
14. **Continuous Batting Order:** All players present for the game shall be placed in the batting lineup and will bat throughout the game in that order, regardless of whether they are playing defensive innings or not. If a player is injured while on base, the player who was the previous out for the team shall take the place of the injured player on the bases. See Rule 4.04 of the Rulebook for full details on the continuous batting order. Note that special pinch runners and courtesy runners are not permitted (Rule 3.04).
15. **Length of Games:** For weeknight games until May 21<sup>st</sup>, no new inning will begin after 8:00 pm; beginning May 22<sup>nd</sup>, no new inning will begin after 8:15 pm. For all weekend games, no new inning will begin after two hours have elapsed from the scheduled start time (i.e. games with a 2:00 pm start time cannot have a new inning start after 4:00 pm).

A new inning is deemed to have started once the third out is made in the preceding inning. When to call the final inning is decided solely by the plate umpire and not the Managers, even if both teams agree. Note that an "open inning" may or may not be declared by the umpire, depending on the time limit and length of prior innings. Managers and umpires shall ensure that both teams are ready for "first pitch" at the game's scheduled start time.

16. **No Mercy Rule:** The mercy rules stated in the Little League rulebook do not apply in Minors.



17. **Number of Visits to the Pitcher:** See Rule 8.06 of the Rulebook for limits related to the number of mound visits per inning and per game. Note that the 2<sup>nd</sup> time a pitcher is visited in any inning requires the player to be removed as pitcher.
10. **No On-Deck Batters Allowed:** Rule 1.08 (note 1 of the Rulebook) prohibits on-deck batters anywhere on or near the playing field.
11. **Avoiding Contact and Avoid High Tags:** No tags are permitted above a runner's shoulders. If a runner is tagged above the shoulders, the runner will be called safe. When there is a play at any base, including home plate, the runner must avoid contact with the defensive player. As stated in Rule 7.08(a)(3) of the Rulebook, any runner is out when they do not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag. There is no "must slide rule" and the runner's primary responsibility is to avoid contact. Sliding into a defensive player that results in contact is not permitted. Head-first slides are not allowed, unless the player is returning to a base (see Rule 7.08(a)(4) of the Rulebook).
12. **Manager/Coach Dress:** Per Rule 1.11 (i) of the Rulebook, Managers and coaches must not wear conventional baseball uniforms, but may wear a cap, slacks or shorts and shirt.
13. **Ties:** For regular season games, if a game is called by an umpire or ends after 6 innings and the score is tied, the game is over. Extra innings will only be played in playoff games.
14. **Fair/Equitable Play:** All Managers are expected to ensure players get an equal amount of playing time. Throughout the season, All players should be rotated through all defensive positions. As a rule, no player ever sits for a second inning before every player has sat for one inning, and no player sits three innings before every player has sat for two innings. Pitchers can remain in the game continuously until they are removed, then must sit out to satisfy fairness. Because catchers cannot share equipment this season, exceptions to this rule can be made if only one player with catcher's gear is in attendance for a game. Every effort should be made to ensure at least two eligible catchers with gear are in attendance for each game.
15. **Scorekeeping/Pitch Count/Dugout Assignments:** Both teams will provide a scorekeeper and pitch count recorder. The home team is the official scorekeeper and will occupy the third base dugout. The visiting team is the official pitch count recorder and will occupy the first base dugout.
16. **Rainout Games/Rescheduled Games:** Regular season games cancelled due to weather can be rescheduled. The Majors Coordinator and/or VP will find an available time slot to schedule the makeup the game.
17. **Sportsmanship:** Good sportsmanship is expected by all participants, coaches, players and spectators. No abusive comments towards umpires, players, coaches or diamond officials will be tolerated. No warning is required by an umpire to eject or remove a participant, coach or player. Once an individual is ejected, that person must promptly leave the playing field and surrounding area, and the ball game shall not resume until that person has left the playing field and surrounding area to the satisfaction of the umpire. While an umpire does not have authority to eject a spectator, an umpire may stop the game and direct both teams to their dugouts until the



manager of the team to whom the spectator is affiliated with directs the spectator to leave the playing field and surrounding area. The umpire may cease play until such time as the spectator leaves. Any league official (board member) present at a game may also direct a spectator to leave for violation of the District 8 zero tolerance policy. Any incident resulting in a participant, coach, player or spectator being ejected will be reviewed by the Division VP and Board of Directors, and further actions, including suspension, may be taken.

18. **Replacement Umpires:** In the event a District 8 umpire does not attend the game, coaches will ump the game. Each coach will umpire from behind the mound when their team is playing defense.
19. **Player Safety Equipment:** ALL players must wear an athletic supporter or compression shorts. Catchers must wear an athletic protector (i.e. cup). When batting, players must wear a helmet with a face mask – no exceptions.
20. **Injury During Play:** Any obvious injury results in an immediate stoppage of play. If any player is obviously injured during the course of a play where the ball has been hit, the ball is dead at that point and runners only advance to the base to which they were headed (Little League Rule).
21. **INFIELD FLY:** The infield fly rule is in effect. An infield fly may be called after the ball is dead, if the call was warranted. It is up to the Umpire's discretion as to what is "reasonable ease" for a 9 or 10 year old (Rule 2.00).