

Liberty Hill Youth League (LHYL)

Softball Player Policies

Protected Players, Draft Procedures, and Player Conduct Guidelines

Overview

The Liberty Hill Youth League (LHYL) Softball Player Policy establishes consistent rules and procedures to ensure fair competition, prevent favoritism, and create an environment where both new and experienced coaches and players can thrive.

This policy outlines guidelines for the player draft, protected players, player eligibility, and conduct expectations to uphold the integrity of the league and promote balanced team formation.

Key Definitions

1. **Eligible Player:** A player who has completed all required registration forms, submitted necessary documentation, and paid all league fees. This includes Board-approved payment arrangements in cases of financial hardship.
2. **Ineligible Player:** A player who has not fulfilled all registration requirements, including fee payment or documentation. Ineligible players may not be drafted or participate in any league activities.
3. **Protected Player:** An eligible player pre-selected by a head coach prior to assessments. This includes the children of the head coach and assistant coaches. Teams are limited to a maximum number of protected players based on division rules. These players are assigned to a team's earliest available draft spots.
4. **Draft-Eligible Player:** An eligible player who is not protected and attends assessments. These players are selected through the formal draft process.
5. **Hat Pick Player:** An eligible player who does not attend assessments and is not protected. These players are randomly assigned to teams after the draft. All coaches must accept assigned hat pick players.

Protected Player Policy

The Protected Player Policy promotes fairness while allowing coaches to retain a core group of players. The rules are as follows:

1. Coaches may protect players per team with parental consent.
6U-4 players, 8U 6-player, 10U-6 players, 12U-7 players, and 14U- 9 players.
2. The children of the head coach and assistant coaches are automatically considered protected.
3. Adding additional assistant coaches after the draft **does not** increase the protected player limit.
4. All protected players count toward the team's protected player total—**no exceptions**.
5. Coaches are responsible for verifying the eligibility and registration status of all protected players prior to the deadline.
6. Coaches are encouraged to consider relevant circumstances, family dynamics, and prior experience when selecting protected players.
7. No requests for additional protected players beyond the limit will be approved.
8. Protected player lists must be submitted to the **VP of Softball no later than 48 hours prior to assessments** for the applicable age division.

Draft Policy

The LHYL player draft process is designed to ensure equitable team formation and eliminate competitive imbalance. All draft activities are overseen by the VP of Softball and Division Commissioners.

1. Protected players are automatically assigned to a team's earliest available draft slots prior to open drafting.
2. The draft order is determined through a random number draw and follows a **"snake" format** (i.e., reverse order every round).
3. Bonded players (e.g., siblings) must all attend assessments to be drafted together. If only one bonded player attends, they are treated as hat pick players and assigned randomly.
4. Coaches draft players until all are selected or team roster limits are reached.

5. **No trades are allowed** during or after the draft.
6. The Softball Competition Committee may modify the draft process in special or unforeseen circumstances. Any changes must be approved by a majority vote of the committee prior to the draft and communicated to all coaches.
7. Last coach in the draft will have the first pick of the practice schedule. In order from last to first.

Additional Player Policies

1. **Age Division Placement:**
 - Players are not permitted to play in a younger division under any circumstances.
 - Appeals may be submitted in writing to the VP of Softball and Commissioners at least five (5) business days prior to the end of registration.
 - The Softball VP will review and respond to appeals at least one (1) business day before registration closes. **Decisions are final and non-appealable.**
2. **Single Division Rule:**
 - Players may register for and participate in only one division per season.
3. **Team Assignment:**
 - Players must remain with the team they were assigned through the draft process, except in the case of pool player use or injury.
4. **Injury Protocol:**
 - If a player sustains an injury during a league activity requiring physician attention, a written medical release must be provided to the head coach and Commissioner before the player can return to play.
5. **Game Ejections:**
 - Any player ejected from a game is automatically suspended for the **next scheduled game.**
6. **Mid-Season Departures:**
 - Players who voluntarily leave mid-season and wish to return will be reassigned to their original team if space allows.
 - Official releases must be approved by the Commissioner and LHYL Board and will only be granted for valid cause. Released players may **not return to the same team.**

Player Conduct and Discipline

The LHYL reserves the right to suspend or remove any player for conduct that undermines the league's integrity, safety, or values. Disciplinary action will be taken by the **Softball Competition Committee** and may include temporary suspension or permanent removal from the league.

Grounds for Suspension or Removal Include (but are not limited to):

- a. Use of foul or abusive language or gestures.
- b. Acts of physical aggression toward players, coaches, umpires, or spectators.
- c. Ongoing behavioral or disciplinary issues.
- d. Intentional throwing of bats or equipment.
- 1st Offense: Verbal warning.
 - 2nd Offense: Ejection from the game and one-game suspension.
 - 3rd Offense: Ejection and mandatory meeting with the Softball Competition Committee.
- e. Possession of any weapon on league property.
- f. Use or possession of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or vaping devices.
- g. Legal charges, such as juvenile probation or deferred prosecution for felony offenses.
- h. Online or in-person bullying, including but not limited to, social media harassment.
- Disciplinary rulings may be **appealed** to the LHYL Softball Board within **48 hours of notification**.