



Mechanicsville Little League 2017 Procedure for Umpiring

Our goal at Mechanicsville Little League is to provide all of our players with a fun, positive atmosphere that provides the opportunity to learn the fundamental skills and rules of Little League Baseball/Softball. Player's safety is always our top concern. The selection of managers is extremely important and is done with great care.

BASICS OF MLL UMPIRING

Introduction

Mechanicsville Little League uses umpires for its Triple A and Majors Divisions in the spring season. Any person who resides or works in Mechanicsville, and who is at least 13 years old can be an umpire for Mechanicsville Little League.

Umpires who are under 13 years of age are typically assigned to player-pitch Double A games; umpires who are age 13 year of age or older are typically assigned to Triple A and Major games. The system is flexible, however, so there are opportunities for younger umpires to work games at higher levels, and older umpires to work games at lower levels, depending upon experience, ability, and the needs of the League.

The spring season will begin in early April and will run through mid-June. Games are played on weeknights and weekends. Each game will be staffed by two umpires – one behind home plate and one in the field. All equipment – chest protectors, shin guards, face masks - is provided by the League and is contained in the blue umpire shed next to the women's bathroom. Each umpire is responsible to provide their own cup, clicker and brush. Each umpire will be provided with a handbook containing the Little League rules.

If you need further information, or have questions, please contact the Mechanicsville Little League Umpire-in-Chief, Jack Meriwether, at jckdm79@comcast.net or via phone at 703-498-4130.

Umpire Training and Registration

Mechanicsville Little League is recruiting umpires for the Spring Season

Anyone who is age 12 or over, and who attends the Umpire Registration and Training clinic, is eligible to be a Mechanicsville Little League umpire. The clinic will be held at the Mechanicsville Little League in the middle of March. Questions may be directed to Director of Umpires.

Umpire Payments

All umpires will be paid by the League per game as follows:

AAA Baseball and Softball – home plate (\$20); bases (\$15).

Majors Baseball and Softball – home plate (\$25); bases (\$20).

Senior Softball – home plate (\$30); bases (\$25)

In order to get paid, each umpire (or umpiring team) must fill out the umpire pay sheet for each game and have it signed by home and visiting managers. The sheet must then be placed in the mailboxes located in the umpire shed. The sheets must contain the following information:

full name (First and Last) for both home plate and field umpire
date and time of game
level (AAA, Majors, or Senior Softball);
Field Number (1-10)
Signature of Home and Visiting Team Managers

It is important that an umpire provide this information as soon as possible after a game or he might not get paid. Checks will be given to umpires at the scheduling meetings every 2 weeks during the season. If you cannot attend the scheduling meeting, your check will be mailed to the home address we have on file

Umpire Scheduling

Umpire scheduling will be done every Sunday during our umpire meetings. Meetings will be at 7PM every Sunday in the Mechanicsville Little League Bingo Hall. If you cannot attend a meeting, please email Jack no later than Saturday night at 8PM to let him know your availability for that week. Jack will do his best to schedule you for games around your availability.

All Umpires MUST work a minimum of 1 game per week, unless otherwise discussed with Jack, in order to remain in good standing and receive games.

There are ten (10) baseball fields that will be used for games as follows:

Once you are scheduled for a game, it is YOUR responsibility to show up for that game. If you are unable to work a scheduled game, it is YOUR responsibility to notify Jack at least 48 hours in advance. Jack will then assign another umpire to the game, or direct you to contact other umpires to see if they can cover your game. If you are scheduled for a game and do not show up, you will be given a written warning. Should you miss another game without prior notice, you will be removed from the Mechanicsville Little League Umpire Program for the remainder of the season. The umpire MUST BE SURE that he does not have some other conflict (like playing baseball or another sport, family commitments, travel plans, etc.). The umpire needs to be sure that he will not be missing any homework or other necessary school work (book reports, projects, etc.). School work takes priority over umpiring!! Games will be played every night during the week, with the exception of Sunday, and all day on Saturday. Please keep in mind that games are scheduled in 2 hour blocks. You must be available for the entire 2 hours if you are scheduled.

DO NOT LEAVE A GAME UNCOVERED

Rain-outs, Make-up Games, and Weather Conditions

During the week, Mechanicsville Little League makes decisions, usually by 3:00 p.m., about which fields are closed and cannot be used due to rain or other weather conditions.

You can check the field status by visiting the MLL website at www.mllball.org.

Also, an umpire can call the MLL Weather hotline (after 3:00 p.m.) – (804) 730-5948 – to determine whether a particular field has been closed.

If MLL has closed the field, then there is no game and an umpire should not go to the field.

If MLL has not closed the field, then an umpire should go to the field unless he gets a telephone call from the Umpire-in-Chief telling him that the game has been postponed. Umpires must use their common sense – if it is pouring rain but the field has not been officially closed, the umpire should check with the Umpire-in-Chief before going to the field.

If it starts raining as or after the umpire arrives at the field, he should discuss the situation with both managers and should use common sense. If the rain results in unsafe playing conditions, the umpire should call the game. It will be rescheduled. The umpire is not committed to working the make-up game. The Umpire-in-Chief will be responsible for obtaining two new umpires for the make-up game once the date, time, and field are known.

The same applies if it starts raining during the game. The umpire should assess the situation, talk to both managers, and use common sense. If the rain persists and playing conditions become unsafe, then the umpire should call the game. It may be resumed on a different date (depending on the inning). The umpires will be paid for that game.

If a game is postponed or stopped due to weather, the League Scheduler will schedule a make-up game. This schedule will be posted on the website and will be available to the Umpire-in-Chief.

Mechanicsville Little League Lightning Policy

If an umpire sees LIGHTNING immediately before or during a game, the umpires shall immediately suspend the game for thirty (30) minutes. If a manager or coach sees LIGHTNING immediately before or during a game, and an umpire did not, the managers of both teams must confer with each other and with the umpires to discuss the matter. If there is agreement that LIGHTNING was seen then the umpires shall immediately suspend the game for thirty (30) minutes. If there is disagreement between the managers as to what was seen or heard, then the umpires will make the final decision, in their sole discretion, whether to suspend the game.

In the event that the game is suspended for LIGHTNING, then all players, coaches, spectators and umpires MUST leave the Mechanicsville Little League Complex and go to their cars. No one is allowed to stay in the dugout, on the field, under the pavilion, or on the complex during a lightning delay EXCEPT MLL Directors and Employees.

It is the responsibility of the managers and the coaches to ensure that all players on their team, and the umpires, are provided shelter in a vehicle. In the event that there are thunderstorm watches or warnings in the weather forecast before the game, then it is the responsibility of the managers and the coaches to ensure that a sufficient number of parent vehicles remain at the game to provide adequate shelter for all players and the umpires.

If an umpire sees LIGHTNING during the thirty (30)-minute waiting period, then the waiting period resets for another 30 minutes. If the umpire determines that rain has made the playing field unsafe, then the umpires shall call the game. If a manager or coach sees LIGHTNING during the thirty (30)-minute waiting period, and an umpire did not, the managers of both teams must confer with each other and with the umpires to discuss the matter. If there is disagreement between the managers as to what was seen then the umpires will make the final decision, in their sole discretion, whether to call the game.

After 30 minutes, if no THUNDER and LIGHTNING is seen or heard and the field, in the sole discretion of

the umpire, is playable, the game will resume from the point it was suspended.

In the event that a game is called before it has become a regulation game -- 4 innings for a Little League game -- the game will be completed at a later date from the point at which it was called.

Pre-Game Matters

Umpires should arrive at the field at least 15 minutes before the start of the game. At the beginning of the season, the weeknight games start at 6:00 p.m. Umpires must make sure they know when their game is starting.

The umpire equipment will be inside the blue umpire shed. You must be dressed and ready to go at the field you are assigned 10 Minutes before official game start time.

Umpires should wear the light blue MLL shirt that will be provided to them. Plate umpires must wear a cup.

Managers and Coaches are required to have the field set up and ready. Umpires should walk the field to ensure that bases are secure and the field is lined correctly.

Umpires should introduce themselves to both managers and should get three (3) game balls from the home team. The home team should be sitting on the first base side.

Umpires should talk to both managers at home plate about any ground rules or issues with that field as well as any other rules or issues. Umpires must know what is out of play on that field. All Umpires will be provided MLL "White Sheet Rules" for each age division and should cover these at the plate with both managers during the pre-game meeting.

Calling The Game

The umpires are in charge of the game. They are the boss.

Be decisive. Use a consistent technique. Always hustle to be in position.

Always try to make the right call. Know the rules. Carry your rule book with you to the games. Do not be afraid to consult it occasionally but don't overdo it. All umpires will be provided an official Little League Rule Book for the 2017 Season.

Umpires should call or email the Umpire-in-Chief if they need a rule book.

If an umpire needs to confer with his partner about a call or a rule, he should do so away from the players and the coaches. Do not let them eavesdrop on private conversations about calls. When umpires do consult with each other, they should make sure that they both decide: (1) what call is going to make; (2) which umpire is going to make the call; and (3) the reason why that umpire is making the call (sometimes an umpire who is closer to the play did not see something that his partner saw).

These games are serious business for the players (and the coaches) – treat them seriously and with respect. Do not joke around on the field. Do not text or take calls on your cell phone unless absolutely necessary.

Be firm but courteous. Address managers and coaches as "Coach Smith" or just "Coach" if you don't know his last name.

Show courage. Use your best judgment. Don't be afraid to make the call.

Don't be afraid to call a third strike.

Use common sense.

Ignore complaints and move the game along.

Do not let a manager or a coach intimidate you into not making a call or into changing your call.

Mechanicsville Little League Zero Tolerance Policy

Mechanicsville Little League has adopted a zero-tolerance policy in connection with managers or coaches discussing calls or rules interpretations with umpires. There is to be no arguing or conferring with an umpire on any ruling by an umpire, even for an interpretation of a rule.

If something like this happens during or after a game, the umpires should call or email the Umpire-in-Chief as soon as possible. The umpires will be supported but the Umpire-in-Chief needs to know what happened and why, and needs the umpires' side of the story as soon as possible. The umpires do not need to report everything to the Director – only when the umpire believes that a manager or coach went over the line.

Umpires should use their common sense. Managers or coaches are not arguing with the umpire if they are talking to each other, or their players, on the bench even if the umpire can hear them. Umpires should try to have a thick skin and ignore minor complaints. Taking a little baloney is part of the game. Umpires should not get drawn into a discussion or argument with a manager or coach. Also, remember there are times when the managers or coaches will need to speak to the umpire; this usually involves playing conditions (rain, lightning, darkness), how much longer the game will go on, clarification as to what call was made, how many balls and strikes there are on a batter, etc.

The bottom line is that if a manager or coach argues a particular call during a game, or instructs an umpire how to interpret a rule before or during a game, or makes loud derogatory comments about the umpires to his players in such a manner that the umpires can hear the comments, the umpires should contact the Umpire-in-Chief as soon as possible after the game.

If the situation gets out of hand, simply call time, explain that the game is will be suspended (NOT CANCELLED) until you receive clarification from the Umpire-in-Chief, or an on-site Board Member. Immediately call time and call the Umpire-in-Chief if you are verbally or physically assaulted by anybody. We have ZERO tolerance for that.

Additional Resources

National Little League website – www.littleleague.org

- Click on Umpires at the top of the page for practical pointers about the rules and calling games.

Baseball Umpires website – www.baseballumpires.com

- Has online edition of the rules and practical materials on how to interpret the rules and call games.

John Skilton's website – www.baseball-links.com

- Everything you ever wanted to know about baseball and more. Go down the menu and click on Rules/Umpiring for links to various sites devoted to umpires and baseball rules.

Umpire/Rules website – www.eteamz.com/baseball/rules/obr

- Information and practical pointers on the rules and calling games.