

# Avon Little League

## Rules for Minors Softball

This league shall be primarily governed by the "Official Rules of Little League Softball," as published by Williamsport, PA. The following exceptions and modifications to the existing rules have been generated and Board approved in the interest of safety, fair play, and more even competition. These rules are for Avon Little League Minors Softball Division.

### **I. Pre-Game and Post-Game Rules:**

#### **A. Home team duties and responsibilities**

1. Uses the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout
2. Has the field for practice from 35 to 20 minutes prior to the start of the game
3. Furnishes a new game ball

#### **B. Visiting team duties and responsibilities**

1. Uses the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout
2. Has the field for practice 20 to 5 minutes prior to the start of the game.
3. Furnishes a good back-up ball

#### **C. Dual responsibilities**

1. Coaches are expected to act as adults at all times during the games.
2. Only managers may call time to RESPECTFULLY discuss a call with the umpire.
3. Visitors will be listed first on the game schedule unless otherwise noted.
4. Any available practice time prior to 35 minutes shall be shared equally. If a prior game or event on the field reduces combined practice time to less than 30 minutes, available time will be shared equally.
5. All players and equipment not directly involved in the game must remain on the bench.
6. No batting practice is permitted on the field, within 1 hour before the start of any game. No soft toss into the fence is permitted at any time. Pre-game soft toss into hitting nets is permitted but can only take place in the outfield. **Pre-game batting practice in the outfield is permitted only if using wiffle balls.**
7. There is no on-deck position in Little League. No batter may warm up outside the field of play.
8. Each team is responsible for cleaning trash from their respective dugout.
9. Batting orders must be exchanged prior to every game, scanning from Game Changer is recommended..

### **II. General Rules and Avon Little League Rules:**

#### **A. Game Play: general rules**

1. The time limit will be 1 hour and 45 minutes from the start of the game. Once the time limit has been reached, the current inning should be finished. This is the actual start time, not game time. The next inning begins after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out or 5<sup>th</sup> run is scored. This will also be used for the post-season tournament as well.
2. The maximum number of innings played will be 6 innings. If there is a tie after 6 innings, and the time limit has not been reached, extra innings will be played until there is a winner or the time limit has been reached. **We will use the international tie breaker, with the last batted out being placed on 2nd base when a new inning begins.**
3. Each inning will have a 5-run limit. An inning is over after 3 outs or 5 runs are scored.
4. Teams will have 1 minute between innings to transition and for a maximum of 2 warm up pitches, unless it is a new pitcher. A new pitcher will have 5 warm up pitches.
5. Teams will have a maximum of 10 defensive players on the field. This includes 4 outfielders and 6 infielders. All fielders must assume normal defensive positions (no short center fielder). Outfielders must play at least 20 feet past the baseline and cannot field a ball being thrown from the SS, 2nd base player or outfielder. We are eliminating an outfielder being placed behind 2nd base with the idea they can get a force out at 2nd base.

6. Extra bases can be taken on fielding errors. Once the pitcher has the ball in her possession and is back in the pitching circle, runners will be frozen at their base, the play is dead.
7. On a walk, continuous movement to 2<sup>nd</sup> base is NOT permitted.
8. The score will be kept. Wins and losses will be used to determine tournament seeds.
9. The mercy-rule is in effect. If a team is up by 15 runs after 4 innings, or 3 ½ innings for the home team, the game will be over.
10. The infield fly rule is NOT in effect.

#### **B. Baserunning**

1. Leading off and steals of 2nd and 3rd base are permitted. The ball must cross the plate prior to the player leading off (leaving the base) or attempting to steal the base. No steals of home are permitted.
2. **No extra bases will be permitted on errors occurring during steal attempts.** Runners at 3rd can only attempt to score on a passed ball. We are encouraging catchers to throw down to 2nd base without the fear of a run scoring from 3rd base.
3. Batters are out on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike, but base runners may advance, including attempts to score on a passed ball.
4. Teams may attempt to score on a passed ball and are allowed to score 1 run per inning on a passed ball for innings 1-3. After 1 run is scored on a passed ball, no further attempts to score on a passed ball can be made that inning. There is no limit on how many times a team may attempt to score, but teams can only score 1 run per inning on a passed ball during the first 3 innings. For example, if a runner is thrown out at home on the passed ball, the team on the bases may attempt to score again. Coaches, it is your job to enforce this as our umpires are not expected to track this. Be adults and handle your business. The exception will be base runners may not attempt to score on a dropped 3rd strike.
5. **After the 3rd inning, teams can score unlimited runs on passed balls per inning.**
6. Sliding is permitted. The Little League International Slide or Attempt to Get Around rule is in effect. Base runners must avoid malicious contact at all bases and home plate (e.g. no shoulder first slides or barreling into a catcher at home plate). Players are not permitted to slide head first while advancing to a base, this includes home plate. The runner shall immediately be called out. The runner is permitted to make a hand-first dive when retreating to a base. This rule is in place to protect the runner and not be used as an opportunity to argue an out.

#### **C. Pitching (including courtesy runners for pitcher and catcher)**

1. Players will pitch to the batters from a distance of 35 feet. The starting pitcher and any new pitcher are allowed 5 warm-up pitches in her 1<sup>st</sup> inning and 2 (maximum) warm-up pitches in the following innings.
2. **Pitchers must pitch from the pitching rubber and MUST be in contact with the pitching rubber.**
3. Pitchers may only pitch 2 innings per game. This league will focus on development vs. having a dominant pitcher. The innings may be consecutive or spread throughout the game. An appearance in an inning counts as an inning pitched, not the number of outs. A pitcher may be removed and reinserted in the same inning.
4. A "Courtesy Runner" may be used at any time for the pitcher and catcher. The courtesy runner is the last batted out, or person farthest away from batting. The courtesy runner may only run for the pitcher and catcher and MUST be used when there are (2) outs or when the offensive team has scored 4 runs, and the catcher is on base. The runner who made the last out will take the catcher's place on base so that the catcher can get on her gear and keep the game pace flowing.

#### **D. Players and Coaches**

1. The defensive team is not allowed to have coaches on the field. The offensive team is allowed 2 coaches on the field – a 1<sup>st</sup> base coach and a 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach.
2. Managers short on players should work with the Softball VP or League GM to find a sub. Players can also be borrowed from the opposing team and those players should play in the outfield. Call-ups will not be used in Minors Softball.
3. All players must play the infield at least 1 inning each game and must do so by the 3rd inning.

4. No player will sit out more than 2 defensive innings each game. These innings must not be consecutive. All players must sit out 1 inning before any player sits out a 2<sup>nd</sup> inning.
5. **No player will be permitted to play the same position more than 3 innings in a game.** Focus is placed on overall player development, not specialization of a position.
6. Defensive players may not be moved during an inning except for a pitching change, an injury or other emergency.
7. All players present will bat in a continuous batting order (roster batting). If a player shows up late, she will assume the last position in the original batting order. If a player is injured or leaves a game early, other than for an ejection, her spot in the order is bypassed and no out is recorded. No outs will be recorded for less than 9 players, except in a tournament game.
8. Managers will not be allowed to cancel any games. Any cancellations due to inclement weather will be decided by the League President or "his/her designee", in consultation with the Avon Parks and Rec Dept. If a conflict exists with a school function affecting several members of the team, the manager must contact the VP of Softball, as soon as possible. The team with a conflict can request to change this game on the schedule.
9. All make-up games must be rescheduled with the league GM, Umpire-in-Chief, and Scheduler.
10. Assistive technology is prohibited and may not be worn during a game: Apple Watch, FitBit, fitness tracker, etc.
11. Reflective sunglasses may not be worn by a pitcher but may be worn by position players. Pitchers wearing sunglasses should wear non-reflective sunglasses that have a dark lens vs. a colored/reflective lens. Nothing that can distract a batter may be worn by the pitcher (10 & 11 above).

#### **E: Equipment**

1. 11" yellow softball will be used.
2. Batters must wear a helmet with a facemask.
3. All players must use an approved softball bat (appropriate stamps required to include USA Softball, USSSA, ASA, ISA, NSA, 1.20 BPF). Illegal bats will be removed from the game and deemed illegal. A player caught using that bat in the same game will be ejected from the game and suspended for the next 2 games.
4. All players must be in full uniform: league issued jersey and softball pants. **Shorts are not permitted.**
5. Jewelry will be permitted, as long as it does not pose a danger or distracts other players.
6. The barrel of the softball bat cannot exceed 2 ¼".
7. All players are required to wear a defensive fielding mask while playing any position on defense, catcher excluded as they will be in catching gear.

### **III. Umpires:**

Avon Little League utilizes youth umpires, and as a board, we will defend and protect our umpires at all costs. These umpires have limited training and education on the rules and it is expected that the umpires will make mistakes during the game. No manager or coach shall raise his or her voice nor argue or dispute or attempt to change the call of an umpire regardless of any perceived mistake. If a manager disputes or attempts to change the call of an umpire he or she may be subject to disciplinary action. Only managers are permitted to speak with umpires regarding rules or calls that have been made. A manager may ask the umpire to repeat the call if it was not heard, but in no way may make any remarks or suggestions that may be deemed to influence or suggest that the umpire change the call. No manager or coach shall make disparaging remarks about or towards any umpire. Managers and coaches are also responsible for the conduct of parents, family members, and fans when it comes to our youth umpires. **Remember, they are just kids!**

In addition to the sanctions listed above, any member of the Little League Board of Directors, regardless of role in the game in question (if any) is authorized to warn and/or order the ejection of any person violating this rule. If a person ejected pursuant to this rule by the umpire or a Board Member fails to immediately leave, then law enforcement may be contacted on the Board's behalf for assistance. If a manager is

ejected from a game for any reason, the manager will serve a mandatory 2 game suspension, and coaching privileges in Avon Little League may be revoked. Suspended managers/coaches will be required to complete a PCS remedial training course prior to being considered for reinstatement.

**IV. Rules Violations or Disciplinary Issues:**

At the recommendation of the GM and at the discretion of the President and VP of Softball, a player, manager, or coach may be suspended for disciplinary reasons or rules violations for one game. If this occurs a second time, the Board of Directors shall review the player, manager, or coach, for possible expulsion from the league. All league officials can recommend disciplinary action to the Board for all off-field violations by players, managers, coaches, parents, etc., while on Little League property at any time!

**V. Lightning:**

If a lightning strike occurs 30 minutes prior to the start of a game or during a game, ALL games being played at the park where the lightning occurs (Veterans Memorial Park or Little League Park) shall be immediately canceled and rescheduled as set forth under the General Rules and Avon Little League rules section. The official Little League rule pertaining to a 30-minute wait between lightning strikes is suspended in this instance. This rule shall be effective during the regular playing season and the end of the year in-house tournament only.

**VI. Post-Season Tournament:**

The higher seed will be the home team during the post post-season tournament. Seedings are decided through regular season results. In the event of a tied record, head to head results will be used to break the tie. If the tie remains, run differential for the season will then be used (runs scored minus runs allowed). In the event that the tie still remains after that, a coin flip will be used to break the tie.

**VII. Sportsmanship**

Good sportsmanship and adult attitudes must prevail no matter the level of competition. Avon Softball believes in player development and we expect all in attendance to support each other. This applies to all coaches, spectators and players. Umpires have authority to eject coaches, players and fans before, during or after games for any of the following infractions, which the league considers to be unsportsmanlike behavior.

1. Threats of physical intimidation of umpires, players/coaches or spectators including threatening physical contact. (In case of no ejection or where umpires are unaware of such an incident, managers/coaches need to report the incident to league officials for further action)
2. Verbal abuse of umpires, players/coaches or spectators, such as profanity, name-calling, belittlement or excessive harassment. (Balls and strikes calls and judgment calls are not debatable.)
3. Throwing of equipment (Bats, helmets, gloves, etc.)
4. Fighting: Players/coaches involved in fights (regardless of who may have been the instigator) will be suspended for the remainder of the season.

We encourage teams to cheer and chant when they are up to bat. Please know the difference between cheering and screaming. Screaming will not be tolerated and coaches must stop screaming immediately. Cheering must stop once the opposing pitcher begins her wind-up. Continued screaming or cheering by teams, when the pitcher is in her motion or pitching, will result in a dead ball with a strike being issued to the batter.