



## 2026 LOCAL RULES

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## Northern Little League

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Northern Little League's brand of baseball and softball is meant to be a fun and rewarding experience for all involved (players, coaches, umpires, family and friends). The following policies and local rules have been approved by the Northern Little League Board Members for the 2026 Spring and Fall Seasons.

### COVID Guidelines

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Northern Little League will adhere to the guidelines set forth by state and local governments, along with health officials in terms of public gatherings. Please see the current COVID guidelines published by the Columbus Consolidated Government, the Georgia Department of Health and the CDC.

### The Players

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#### 1. Eligibility Policy

It is the intent of this policy to define and clarify the eligibility requirements for draft and replacement drafts at Northern Little League. It is not meant to replace or circumvent Official Little League Rules as outlined in the Little League Manuals. (In this document: Draft will refer to the initial draft at the beginning of the season. Replacement drafts will be referred to as replacement draft.)

- a. No player living outside the official boundaries of Northern Little League will be allowed to participate unless approved in writing by Little League International. This also includes post season play. Exception: Beginning Spring 2014, any player attending a school that is located within the official boundaries of Northern Little League is eligible to play at Northern (a Little League School Enrollment form is required). Exception II: Starting with the 2025 season, children at the youngest level of the Little League® Baseball and Softball

program (League Age 4-7) will have the ability to register for any Little League program they choose, without respect to any geography- or school-related eligibility requirements. Those players who register under this option will also be fully eligible to participate in all aspects of league play, including International Tournament play, for the duration of their Little League careers provided they have continuous and unbroken participation within the specific league where initially registered and provided all other participation eligibility requirements have been met. In addition to those children League Age 4-7, siblings of a League Age 4-7 player who is an active participant are also eligible to participate in all aspects of league play. More details can be found at [littleleague.org/playing-rules/2025-regulation-2-update/](http://littleleague.org/playing-rules/2025-regulation-2-update/).

- b. Players wishing to be considered for the Majors, Minors, or Junior/Senior draft must participate in the required minimum tryout sessions as noted at registration held prior to the beginning of the season. Failure to do so will eliminate the player from the league draft unless a written excuse for the absence is presented to the league president or the appropriate player agent and approved by the Board of Directors prior to the draft. Failure to do so will result in that player participating at the lowest level for which they are age eligible.
- c. Minor league (Player pitch or Coach Pitch) players not attending the required tryouts will be placed into a player pool for the minor league draft.
- d. All players who are playing on a Minor Player Pitch League team may be eligible for the Replacement Draft throughout the season as outlined in the Little League Replacement Policy. Refusal to accept the invitation to move to the Major division will follow the Little League rules governing player replacement and will prevent the player from participating on the District 8 All-Star team.
- e. Players who move into the official boundaries of Northern Little League after the draft will be placed on a Minor League team (If an opening is available and approval by Executive Committee).
- f. All late signups will be placed on a waiting list and then placed on teams with an available opening.
- g. Once teams are selected, registration is officially closed, unless approved by the league president, depending on the number of players already assigned in a given age group.
- h. Little League rules state that there will be no more than 15 players on a team.

## **2. Age Pairings**

Northern will align their age pairings to match the Little League Post-Season divisions. The Northern All-Star Teams will be selected based on the Little League format of 7U Coach Pitch, 8U Rookie, 9U Sandlot, 10U District, 11U District, and 12U District (aka Little League).

- a. Baseball and Softball
  - Tee Ball – 4 to 6 year olds
  - Minor Coach Pitch – 6 to 8 year olds (9 year olds on an exception basis)

- Traditional C-Ball Structure
- Minor Player Pitch – 8 to 10 year olds (Some 11 year olds)
  - Strong 8 year olds will be encouraged to “play up”
- Majors – 10 to 12 year olds (some 9 year olds)
  - For those players who are league age 9,10, 11 & 12 for the current spring season and have been drafted to the Major division, they will be considered the top candidates to be selected for the 10U, 11U and 12U District All-Star teams. The 12U team can only be selected from this division. If the 10U and 11U All-Star teams are not fully rostered (minimum 12 players) from this division, the league can select players from the Minor Player Pitch division to complete the roster.
- Junior/Senior – 13 to 16 year olds

Northern recognizes and allows for our 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 year olds to play up to the next highest league. It is important for every parent to understand that there are **NO guarantees** that a player will move up to the next highest league.

- a. There must be positions available in the league a player is trying to enter after all of the traditional age pairings have been assigned to a team.
- b. The player must try out in the league they are attempting to enter.
- c. A manager must select the player to that league during the draft process.

Any player who attempts to move up a league and is **not selected** for that league during the draft process will be eligible for draft of their traditional league pairings.

- a. Major (A-Ball) Division Notes:

The only players guaranteed to make a Major Division Team are those players who were assigned to the league last year. All other players must try out and be drafted into Majors.

- i. All 9, 10 and 11 year olds who sign up for A-Ball must try out to be drafted to A-Ball.
- ii. 12 year olds must play A-Ball unless requested in writing by the parents and approved in advance by the League President and the District Administrator.

### 3. Minor Leagues Player Replacement Policy

If a team manager loses any players on the roster during the current season through illness, injury, change of address, or other justifiable reasons, another player could be transferred within that Division, through the player agent, to replace the one lost, or a player may be obtained, through the player agent, from a list of participants who registered after the teams were formed. No player can be replaced on a team roster until the League President has agreed that a Legitimate Vacancy exists and authorizes the Player Agent to contact a replacement. Once the replacement has been secured, under current policy, the Board of Directors will have the authority to review the action and if any violations have occurred, can revoke the replacement and require that the

process start over. It is imperative that the Replacement Policy be followed to the letter to protect the player's rights.

- a. If a Player Pool has any candidates awaiting placement, Minor League Player Pitch Teams who have any roster vacancies **MUST** fill those vacancies from the Pool immediately (see B below). If the team has at least 10 active players on their roster, they are not required to draft replacements. If they have less than 10 active players, they **MUST** fill vacancies until they have at least 10 players.
- b. Minor League Player Pitch Teams must exhaust any Player Pool that exists before transferring a player from within that division or drafting from the waiting list. The Player Agent is not restricted to any order based on date of sign up. If only one player is in the Player Pool, then that player automatically becomes the replacement player. The Player Agent will make contact with the Pool players and parents to inform them of their selection.
- c. Drafting replacement players from the Minor League Player Pitch is restricted as follows:
  - i. From the time the League President declares that a legitimate vacancy exists, the Minor League Player Pitch Manager will have 3 days to select a Replacement Player. Once they select the player by notifying the Player Agent of his choice, the Player Agent must contact the player's parents immediately and notify them of the selection.
  - ii. Once notified of the Replacement Draft, the player has 24 hours to respond. Failure by the player or the parents to respond within 24 hours will be interpreted as a rejection of the draft and the Manager will be notified. They will then have 24 hours to make another selection.
- d. Teams with a legitimate vacancy (that requires filling) must fill that place on the roster within 3 days (if there are at least 2 weeks or 4 games remaining in the regular season). No team may replace a player through draft if there are less than 2 weeks or 4 games remaining in the regular season. If a manager does not select a replacement and notify the Player Agent within 3 days after the League President declares the legitimate vacancy or 24 hours after a rejected draft, the Player Agent will select a replacement for the team.
- e. As soon as a Minor League Player Pitch Manager identifies that a potential roster change may be necessary (i.e. unexcused absences from games or practices, discipline problems, Major League Replacement Draft etc.), they should notify the League Player Agent and President. The Player Agent will then investigate to determine if a vacancy is legitimate and get approval from the President to begin the Replacement Procedure. Failure of a manager to notify the Player Agent within a reasonable time (2 weeks maximum) can result in suspension for 2 games. The intent of this rule is to prevent a manager from hiding a legitimate opening in their roster to avoid having to select a replacement player.
- f. If a player approves a draft to a Minor Player Pitch League Team as a replacement, they will join the new team on the following Monday. Until then they will remain an active player on their current Team. The League will provide players approving a replacement

draft with a team jersey, pants, cap and socks for the new team. Until the new uniform is available, the replacement player will be allowed to participate on their new team wearing a suitable substitute to include his current team uniform.

- g. No Minor League Player Pitch Coach or Manager may contact potential replacement players to discuss a possible draft unless the Player Agent or the designated substitute (another board member) is present. Any coach or manager who violates this rule may be suspended by the Board of Directors for 2 games.
- h. Minor League Coach Pitch players declaring their intent to play baseball cannot be drafted onto a softball team. Minor League Coach Pitch players declaring their intent to play softball cannot be drafted onto a baseball team.

#### **4. Major/Junior/Senior Leagues Player Replacement Policy**

Occasionally players are removed from a team's roster for reasons such as quitting, moving away, discipline, etc. When this occurs, it is the responsibility of the Player Agent to coordinate the replacement procedure. No player can be replaced on a team roster until the League President has agreed that a legitimate vacancy exists and authorizes the Player Agent to contact a replacement. Once the replacement has been secured, under the current policy, the Board of Directors will have the authority to review the action and if any violations have occurred. The board reserves the right to revoke the replacement and require that the process start over. **It is imperative that the Replacement Policy be followed to the letter to protect the player's rights.**

- a. Major League Teams may draft replacements from draft eligible Minor Player Pitch League players. Major/Junior/Seniors divisions must fill vacancies by drafting players from any existing Player Pool if one exists. If only one player is in the Pool, they become the replacement. If more than one exists, the manager can draft their choice from the available candidates. Major league managers will identify the players comprising the pool and these players names will be communicated to Minor Player Pitch league managers as possible replacements on draft day.
- b. As soon as a Major/Junior/Senior manager identifies that a potential roster change may be necessary (i.e. player not attending 2 games and/or practices, discipline problems/ etc.) they should notify the League Player Agent or President, of that age group, in writing. The Player Agent will then contact the player and their parents to clarify their intentions with regards to remaining on the team. Failure of a manager to notify the President or Player Agent within a reasonable time (2 weeks maximum) can result in disciplinary action against the manager. The intent of this rule is to prevent a manager from hiding a legitimate opening in their roster to avoid having to select a new player. **Failure of a manager to follow this rule will result in an automatic indefinite suspension.**
- c. Teams with a legitimate vacancy **MUST** fill that vacancy within 3 days (if there are at least two weeks or 4 games left in the regular season). No team may replace a player unless at

- least 2 weeks or 4 regular season games remain on the schedule. A **legitimate vacancy** is defined as one approved by the League President. If a manager does not select a replacement and notify the Player Agent within 3 days after the vacancy is approved, the Player Agent will select a replacement. (Any player who quits during the last 2 weeks of the season will be reserved for his original Major/Junior/Senior League Team for the next season, should they elect to return to the league.)
- d. The manager of any team with a Legitimate Vacancy must work through the League Player Agent in securing replacement players. No direct contact between the requesting manager and lower league manager, players or their parents should occur regarding a possible draft without the Player Agent or his/her designated substitute (another Board Member) being present. Any manager who violates this rule will be suspended for 3 games. (Replacement drafts will be made in the order that legitimate vacancies occur).
  - e. Once the Major/Junior/Senior League Manager has drafted a replacement, the Player Agent will contact the drafted player and their parents and notify them of the draft. The player must respond to the draft within 24 hours with respect to their willingness to be drafted to that team. Failure of the player to respond will be viewed as a rejection of the draft. (See ii. below.)
    - i. If the player accepts the draft, they will join their new team on the following Monday. Until that time, the player will remain on their original team and can participate in any league games played during that time.
    - ii. If a player rejects the replacement draft, the player will be ineligible for replacement draft by any team for the remainder of the season.
  - f. Any Minor League Player Pitch player who is drafted up to the Majors/Junior/Seniors during the season will be provided by the League with a new team jersey, pants, cap and socks. Until the new uniform is secured, the player may play games for their new team wearing suitable substitute attire to include their current league uniform.
  - g. Any replacement player drafted during the season will become a member of their new Major/Junior/Senior team throughout their remaining Little League eligibility as outlined in the Little League Rule Book.
  - h. There will be a list of pool players made after the Major/Junior/Senior drafts from which the player must be pulled from.

## 5. League All-Star Selection Process

Northern Little League will follow the traditional age pairings for the 2026 All-Star selection process. The Northern All-Star Teams will be selected based on the Little League format of 7U Coach Pitch, 8U Rookie, 9U Sandlot, 10U District, 11U District, and 12U District (aka Little League). The 10U District, 11U District, and 12U District All-Star teams will be voted on by the Major division managers. *Depending on the number of 10U and 11U players in the Major division, the 10U and 11U District All-Star Teams could require players from the Minor League Player Pitch division to finalize their rosters. If needed, the Major division managers should consult with the*

*Minor League Player Pitch managers and/or VP.* The 9U Sandlot team will be voted on by the Minor League Division Player Pitch managers. The 8U Rookie team will be decided on a year by year basis. This is due to some 8 year olds will be playing in the Minor Player Pitch division which is the 8U Rookie tournament format. Even if an 8 year old plays Minor Player Pitch for the current spring season, it does not guarantee they will make the 8U Rookie team. The 8U Rookie team can consist of players from the Minor Player Pitch and Coach Pitch divisions. The 7U Coach Pitch team will be voted on by the Coach Pitch Divisions managers.

In the days leading up to the All-Star drafts, the President will nominate a manager for each All-Star team and those managers will be voted on by the Board. The nominee must obtain a majority vote. If the nominee doesn't obtain a majority vote, the President will present a secondary nomination to be voted on by the Board. If the secondary nomination doesn't obtain a majority vote, there will be a run-off vote between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> nomination. Whichever nomination receives the most votes will be considered the manager of that All-Star team.

The following only applies if the selected manager of an All-Star Team is not a current head coach/manager but is an assistant coach of a league team:

- a. The selected coach will be allowed to vote for All-Stars but only for the team in which they have been selected as the manager.
- b. If the assistant coach is voting for the All-Star team in which they have been selected, the manager of the league team (which the assistant also coaches), will have to recuse themselves from voting for that specific All-Star team. This is to avoid the same league team having two representatives voting for the same All-Star team.
  - If this occurs in A-ball, the league team manager will resume their voting for the other 2 All-Star teams.
  - (a) and (b) above will also apply to 7U, 8U and 9U All-Star teams
  - The 8U manager, just like the 8U All-Star players, will be determined on a year by year basis due to the possibility of players being chosen from both Minor Player Pitch and Coach Pitch Divisions.

Managers will vote 11 players per All-Star team. All unanimous selections will make the All-Star team. Once all unanimous players are selected, voting will continue until the 11 spots are filled. Any players who do not receive unanimous votes must have a majority of the managers' votes to be selected to the All-Star team. If there are ties or no majority, additional votes will be conducted until 11 are selected.

Once the teams of 11 are selected, the elected manager of each respective All-Star Team will have the final (12<sup>th</sup>) pick to round out the All-Star Team. Those managers need to select their final player and assistant coaches before conclusion of the draft. After the manager selects their coaches, the board will ratify those selections.

## 6. Uniform Policy

Northern Little League has adopted the following guidelines for player uniforms. Please note the costs shown are only a range of costs team managers should try to stay within. This does not prohibit teams from securing sponsors or donations, as well as holding fundraising activities to pay for additional costs associated with uniforms. Uniforms must be paid for before games start.

### a. Baseball and Softball

- Junior/Senior - \$175.00
- Majors - \$175.00
- Minor Player Pitch - \$150.00
- Minor Coach Pitch - \$125.00
- Tee Ball - \$75.00

If a team has a sponsor and wants to include a logo on the uniform, the NLL Board of Directors must approve the logo prior to agreement with the sponsor. For a sponsor to have the right to add a logo on uniforms, the sponsor must provide 50% of the total team uniform cost. Proof of cost and payment would need to be provided to the Board of Directors. If no logo is being requested, the sponsor would simply donate whatever amount to the respective team. This applies to regular season only.

## Zero Tolerance Policy

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Northern Little League's brand of baseball and softball is meant to be a fun and rewarding experience for all involved (players, coaches, umpires, family and friends). To ensure the appropriate atmosphere for these activities to be achieved, the league has adopted a Zero Tolerance Policy. In an effort to make Little League a desirable and rewarding experience for all participants, Northern Little League has instructed the Umpires to adhere to points of emphasis relating to sportsmanship and conduct for managers, coaches, team moms, players and spectators. This campaign is designed to require all players, coaches, parents/spectators, umpires, team moms and Board Members to maintain a sportsmanlike and educational atmosphere before, during, and after all Little League games. Thus, the following points of emphasis will be implemented and monitored by all umpires and board members.

### 1. Players

A player may be removed from the game for any of the following reasons:

- a. Openly disputes or argues any decision made by an umpire.
- b. Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including swearing, regardless if it is directed at a particular person or not.
- c. Visually demonstrates any sign of dissatisfaction associated with an umpire's decision.
- d. Conducts himself or herself in an unsportsmanlike fashion.

## **2. Managers / Coaches**

A manager and/or a coach may be removed from the game for any of the following reasons:

- a. Openly disputes or argues, in an unsportsmanlike or unprofessional manner, any decision by an umpire.
- b. Uses obscene or vulgar language at any time, including swearing, regardless if it is directed at a particular person or not.
- c. Visually displays any sign of dissatisfaction with any umpire decision with the intent of inciting the umpires, players, or spectators.
- d. Is unable to control the conduct of their respective team's players and parents/spectators.
- e. If any manager or assistant coach has any misconduct before, during or after games towards umpires, parents, other coaches, players, board members, or any spectator at the park, they will also be subject to disciplinary action by the board/corrective action committee.

Any time a manager and/or coach participates in any of these actions, they will be removed from the game and will also be required to miss the next game in accordance with Little League Rule 4.07. Managers/coaches who have been ejected from a game must leave the park immediately (game won't resume play until manager/coach has left). They must also stay away from the park the following game. If a manager and/or a coach is removed from 2 games, they will be required to appear before the board of directors to explain their actions, at which time they may be removed from the team pending a board of director's review. Ejection does not automatically disqualify a manager or coach from consideration as an All-Star manager or coach.

## **3. Parents / Spectators / Team Parents**

A game will be stopped by the umpires when parents or spectators display inappropriate and disruptive behavior that interferes with other spectators or the game. The umpires will place each team in their respective dugouts and communicate in a professional manner to each manager the reason for stoppage of play.

The umpire will identify violators to the manager as well as a board member for the purpose of removing the parents or spectators from the game and park. Should the spectators refuse to adhere, Northern reserves the right to contact local law enforcement to escort the individual(s) from the park.

Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by the Board of Directors. Inappropriate and disruptive behavior shall include, but not limited to:

- a. Use of obscene or vulgar language to anyone at any time.
- b. Taunting of players, coaches, managers, umpires, or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence, or use of physical violence.
- c. Throwing any object in the bleachers or playing field directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.

- d. Consuming any alcoholic beverages within the park is a violation of City regulations. Individuals found to be intoxicated in a team setting will be deemed in violation of the Northern Little League Code of Conduct and subject to suspension and or dismissal from Northern Little League.
- e. Any actions that breach the Northern Little League Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct.

If Parents / Spectators / Team Moms are ejected a 2<sup>nd</sup> time, they will be suspended indefinitely from Northern Little League. At such time, the individual(s) reserve the right to appeal their suspension before the Board of Directors.

#### **4. Board Members**

Board Members are the face of our organization and will be held to a higher standard. If any of the below items are observed, the board will reserve the right to remove that person from the board. A meeting will be held to determine the extent of the actions and the proper consequence for said action(s).

- a. Use of obscene or vulgar language to anyone at any time.
- b. Taunting of players, coaches, managers, umpires, or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence or use of physical violence.
- c. Throwing any object in the bleachers or playing field directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.
- d. Consuming any alcoholic beverages within the park is a violation of City regulations. Individuals found to be intoxicated in a team setting will be deemed in violation of the Northern Little League Code of Conduct and subject to suspension and or dismissal from Northern Little League.

#### **5. Umpires**

See section on Umpire Policies.

## Sport Parent Code of Conduct

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We, the Northern Little League, have implemented the following Sport Parent Code of Conduct for the important message it holds about the proper role of parents in supporting their child in sports. Parents should read, understand and sign this form prior to their children participating in our league. Any parent guilty of improper conduct at any game or practice will be asked to leave the sports facility and be suspended from the following game. Repeat violations may cause a multiple game suspension, or the season forfeiture of the privilege of attending all games.

### **Preamble:**

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles:

- Trustworthiness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Caring and
- Good Citizenship

The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these “six pillars of character.” I therefore agree:

1. I will not force my child to participate in sports.
2. I will remember that children participate to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults.
3. I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
4. I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.
5. I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, umpires and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event.
6. I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any umpire, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language.
7. I will not encourage any behaviors practices that would endanger the health and wellbeing of the athletes.
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
9. I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
10. I will teach my child that doing one’s best is more important than winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or his/her performance.
11. I will praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard, and make my child feel like a winner every time.
12. I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a competition.
13. I will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my child over winning. I will also de-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups.
14. I will promote the emotional and physical wellbeing of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my child to win.
15. I will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches at the game field, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
16. I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.
17. I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.

## Local League Rules

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### 1. Rain Outs

Northern will make every attempt to keep games as scheduled. All weekday rainouts will be called by 4:30pm, if at all possible. Saturday rainouts will be called prior to the first scheduled game. Rainouts will be made up on the next available Wednesday or Friday. Sundays may be used as a last resort. Both teams will need to make every effort to play on the next available make-up day. If one of the teams is unable to field a team on the first makeup day, we will reschedule for the next available day. If the team is unable to play on the second attempt, the team that is unable to play will not be given a win or a loss in the standings unless it directly impacts a playoff or other post-season competition. The team with enough will be given a win. The Board reserves the right to declare a forfeit if a team violates the spirit of this rule.

### 2. Rescheduled / Suspended Games (Board Approved)

If a game is rescheduled and one of the teams is unable to field a team on the rescheduled game day, the opposing team will be given a win. The team that is unable to play will not be given a win or a loss in the standings unless it directly impacts a playoff or other post season competition. Games halted by Power Failure will be considered as suspended games regardless of the number of innings played unless the Mercy Rule, time limit or weather rules take precedence.

### 3. Field Maintenance

It will be the responsibility of all teams to maintain the fields after every practice and game. It will be the responsibility of both the visiting and home team of each game played to prepare and rake the fields after their game. The areas that need to be raked are the batter's box, pitcher's mound, the base lines and around the bases. Fields must be raked in the proper manner in order to eliminate deterioration over the course of the season. Rake infield mix away from the grass to avoid ridges from forming. In addition, sweep infield mix from the grass around the infield/mound/home plate back into the infield mix areas. The pitcher's mound and batter's box should be raked and holes should be repaired and packed to avoid deterioration.

- a. In the spring, teams playing the early game will be responsible for field preparation/maintenance after their game. This will allow the coaches of the late games to prepare for their games. The teams playing the late game will be responsible for field maintenance after their game.
- b. It is strongly recommended that each team recruit at least 2 volunteers to assist with field maintenance while coaches prepare their teams prior to the game and while coaches have team meetings immediately following a game. This will need to be done following games and practices.
- c. Prior to the start of the season and throughout the season, managers, coaches and volunteers are encouraged to attend established work days for various field and park maintenance. These work days are designed to bring the Northern community together.

#### **4. Scorekeeping**

One representative from each team will be responsible for keeping the scorebook and the scoreboard during each game. The home team is responsible for the scorebook and the visiting team is responsible for the scoreboard. It is wise to have your team mom assign these duties at the beginning of the season when other duties are assigned. If a team does not have a volunteer to keep the scorebook or scoreboard, the head coach of that team will be responsible for the duty to avoid any disruption of game time. If a volunteer is operating the scoreboard with one of the wireless remotes, the remote(s) must be given to the manager on duty (board member) after every game. The manager on duty is responsible for providing the wireless remotes to each teams' representative prior to each game and storing the remotes back in the boardroom after the last game ends.

#### **5. Run Rule (formerly Mercy Rule)**

In accordance with Little League Rule 4.10 (e), Northern Little League will recognize the 8-10-15 run rule in all levels of play. If the home team is behind or ahead by the following run rules, the game is over and considered an official game: 15 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, 8 runs after 5 innings.

#### **6. Time Limits**

##### **a. Baseball and Softball**

- Junior / Senior – 120 minutes (2 Hours) \*\*\*
- Majors (A-ball) – 105 minutes (1 Hour and 45 Minutes)
- Minor Player Pitch (B-ball) – 105 Minutes (1 Hour and 45 Minutes)
- Minor Coach Pitch – 90 Minutes (1 Hour and 30 Minutes)
- Modified Coach Pitch (T Ball) – batting twice through the lineup or 1 hour

\*\*\* Must be a completed game as defined in the Little League Rule Book. The game may be suspended and resumed on another day if curfew or another game is scheduled behind it. Also, these time limits are effective for single games in one evening if the field is scheduled for practice immediately following the game.

#### **7. Regular Season Champion**

Regular season champions will be determined by the best record in each division. In the event of 2 or more teams with the same record, the regular season champion will be determined by the following order:

- a. Head to Head
- b. Total runs allowed during the season
- c. Total runs scored during the season

#### **8. League Championship (Playoffs)**

League championship formats will be determined by the Board of Directors each spring season.

## 9. City Championships (Tournament of Champions)

If Tournament of Champions is being held or if the League decides to participate, the winner of the league playoffs in each division will represent Northern at the city championships. If the league is eligible to send 2 teams to the city championships from each division, the 2 teams will be determined as follows:

- a. Team 1: Regular season champion
- b. Team 2: Playoffs champion (if the playoff champion is the same as the regular season champion, the runner-up from the playoffs will be Team 2)

## Local Playing Rules

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Northern Little League's local playing rules listed below are used in conjunction with the Little League Rule Books. Anything not covered below will be ruled upon by the umpires in accordance with the appropriate rule book for baseball or softball published annually by Little League International.

### 1. Modified Coach Pitch - Tee Ball

- a. All players present at the game may bat in any one inning and all team members will be in a continuous batting order throughout the game regardless of their position on defense. All players must bat in order unless they are too ill or injured to continue.
- b. Uses USA Baseball T-Ball bats with the T-Ball safety balls.
- c. Each Coach/Pitcher can elect to pitch to a player from a point 35 feet from the front of the plate instead of using a Tee.
- d. The pitcher may elect to toss the ball underhand.
- e. Each batter will get a maximum of 5 pitches or three swinging strikes per at-bat. Should the batter foul the third pitch, they will continue until they either hit the ball fair, strike and miss the pitch or let a pitch go by without swinging. If the batter is unable to hit the pitched ball in the allotted throws, the ball will be placed on the Tee until the batter hits a fair ball.
- f. There are no strikeouts or walks.
- g. There is no stealing of bases on a pitch. Base Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit or until it reaches the batter. Runners who leave early are subject to the rules governing leaving early in the respective rules book.
- h. Two adult coaches may occupy the 1st and 3rd base coach's boxes (one each) while their team is batting. In addition, they may have an adult coach to assist at the plate, but that coach must stay clear (10 feet) of any play. The defense may station a coach behind the catcher and one each outside the right and left field lines beyond 1st and 3rd bases. The defensive coaches may not go onto the field at any time and the home plate coach must stay clear (10 feet) of any play at the plate. One adult must be in the dugout at all times if there are kids present.
- i. Late Arrivals will always be inserted into the game.

- j. This league is designed to better prepare kids for minor league coach pitch levels.
- k. Children who are not players are not allowed in the dugout.

## **2. Minor League Coach Pitch (Baseball and Softball)**

- a. Two coaches (either an adult or a player with a helmet) may occupy the 1st and 3rd base coach's boxes (one each) while their team is batting. The defense may station a coach behind the catcher and one each outside the right and left field lines beyond 1st and 3rd bases. The defensive coaches may not go onto the field at any time and the home plate coach must stay clear (10 feet) of any play at the plate. Any defensive coach may not cross the foul line at any time and may not touch a player, live ball, or aid the defensive player in any way other than through verbal coaching. Physically helping a player or obstructing the batters or runners in any way will be deemed by the umpire to be Obstruction and the offense will be rewarded according to the situation.
- b. One adult must be in the dugout at all times if there are kids present.
- c. Children who are not players are not allowed in the dugout.
- d. As with all adults in a volunteer role, the adult must have a completed volunteer form on file and a clear background check prior to taking the field.
- e. Little League rules require all minor divisions to use the Continuous Batting Order. All rostered players on each team will bat in order regardless of whether or not they are playing a defensive position at the time. All players must bat in order unless they are too ill or injured to continue. The umpire must approve the removal of such players from the batting order. If a player is approved for removal, their position in the batting order does NOT constitute an out.
- f. Late Arrivals must be on the book as possible players at the beginning of the game to be eligible to be inserted into the game.
- g. A maximum of 5 runs may score in any one inning, except the 6th inning. The 6th inning will end when the team's lineup has batted one time through in its entirety in their half-inning or when three outs are recorded, whichever comes first. This will also apply to extra innings. The inning shall end when play is stopped by the umpire in accordance with the rules for stopping play.
- h. Each Coach Pitcher must pitch from a point (40 feet Coach Pitch Baseball / 35 feet Coach Pitch Softball) from the front of the plate. Softball coaches may start with both feet inside the pitcher's circle.
- i. The Coach Pitcher must stay out of the way of the defense while the ball is in play. Once the ball is put in play, the Coach Pitcher must leave the pitching circle and head towards foul territory. The Coach Pitcher will not return to the pitching circle until play is over. Failure to attempt to avoid interference will be declared Interference and the umpire will call runners out according to the situation. If a thrown or hit ball accidentally hits the Coach Pitcher, the ball is still in play as if it had hit a defensive player. If a Coach Pitcher catches a batted ball to avoid being hit or to protect the player pitcher, the batter will be awarded first base. All additional base runners will be allowed to move one base if they

- are forced to advance. If the existing runners are not forced to advance, they will return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.
- j. The Coach Pitcher cannot leave the mound area in an attempt to coach or aid the runners. They may coach the batter while the batter is batting to include helping position them in the batter's box, but can only go to the plate for instruction once per batter.
  - k. Each batter will get a maximum of 6 pitches or three swinging strikes per at bat. Should the batter foul the sixth pitch, they will continue until they either swing and miss the pitch, put the ball in play or let a pitch go by without swinging.
  - l. There are no called strikes.
  - m. There are no walks.
  - n. No bunting will be allowed. The player must swing the bat.
  - o. The Infield Fly Rule will not be in effect.
  - p. There is no stealing of bases on a pitch. Base Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit or until it reaches the batter. Runners who leave early are subject to the rules governing leaving early in the respective rules book.
  - q. Lines will be marked halfway between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base and 3rd base and home plate.
  - r. The recommended substitution method is to allow a player on the bench to return to the field every other inning.
  - s. Little League Waiver Committee has approved Northern Little League to use four outfielders in the minor league coach pitch divisions. Teams with only 9 players in attendance at a game will be required to play the game. No team can play with less than 9 players. If a team utilizes the 10-player lineup at the beginning of a game, they must continue with 10 unless they cannot field but 9 due to illness, injury or expulsion from a game. Only then, can they revert to a 9-player lineup.
  - t. Northern has adopted the Little League rule allowing **coach pitch only** to start and finish a game with 8 players. If a team starts and finishes the game with 8 players, the 9<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order will be considered an out. This is to prevent teams with 8 players from having an advantage over teams with 9 or more players. The team with 8 players shall forgo a player occupying the catcher position and use that player in the field. If a team only has 8 players, the head coach must notify the league (division VP and/or Player Agent) as soon as possible so the Player Agent can utilize the player pool to fill the 9<sup>th</sup> spot. The player from the player pool can play any position and bat in any spot in the lineup. If the Player Agent is unable to fill the 9<sup>th</sup> spot, the team can revert back to the 8 player rule.
  - u. The player pitcher must position themselves within the pitcher's circle (left or right or behind the coach pitcher) while the ball is being pitched, but they may never be positioned in front of the coach pitcher.
  - v. When a throw of any type by an infielder attempting to throw out a batter eludes the first baseman, all runners may advance until an out is recorded, the ball is thrown out of play (into the dugout or stands), or play is stopped by the umpire.
  - w. Stopping Play: Play will stop when the ball is controlled by a player in front of the lead

- runner. For softball, the ball must be in front of the lead runner or in the pitching circle. At this time the umpire will declare time and determine if a runner advancing is beyond the halfway lines in route to the next base. If the runner was beyond the line, they will be awarded the next base. If not, they will be returned to the previously acquired base.
- x. Once time is called, there are NO appeal plays. Once the coach pitcher has the ball, the ball becomes dead. Proper appeals can be made if done while the ball is alive and done properly.
  - y. Softball players ONLY must have an approved helmet face mask attached to all batters helmets and worn when batting and running the bases.

### **3. Minor League Player Pitch (Baseball and Softball)**

- a. Little League Wavier Committee has approved Northern Little League to use four outfielders in the minor league player pitch division. Teams with only 9 players in attendance at a game will be required to play the game. No team can play with less than 9 players. If a team utilizes the 10-player lineup at the beginning of a game, they must continue with 10 unless they cannot field but 9 due to illness, injury or expulsion from a game. Only then, can they revert to a 9-player lineup. If a team only has 8 players, the head coach must notify the league (division VP and/or Player Agent) as soon as possible so the Player Agent can utilize the player pool to fill the 9<sup>th</sup> spot. The player from the player pool can play any position, except catcher or pitcher, and bat in any spot in the lineup.
- b. All rostered players should appear on the lineup card for each game. Late arrivals must be on the book as possible players at the beginning of the game to be eligible to be inserted into the game. Managers or Coaches should notify the umpire and scorekeeper or their absence. If the child arrives late, they may be inserted at the bottom of the lineup.
- c. Little League rules require all minor divisions to use the Continuous Batting Order. All rostered players on each team will bat in order regardless of whether or not they are playing a defensive position at the time. All players must bat in order unless they are too ill or injured to continue. The umpire must approve the removal of such players from the batting order. If a player is approved for removal, their position in the batting order does NOT constitute an out.
- d. A maximum of 5 runs may score in any one inning, except the 6th inning. The 6th inning will end when the team's lineup has batted one time through in its entirety in their half-inning or when three outs are recorded, whichever comes first. This will also apply to extra innings.
- e. Little League pitching rules will apply for Player Pitch baseball.
- f. Little League softball will observe a maximum of 6 innings in a calendar week, Sunday through Saturday and a maximum of 6 innings in a game.
- g. Baseball ONLY: It is the recommendation of the board for players to wear a batting helmet with an approved full-face guard or C-flap. This recommendation will aid in preventing

injury to the players. The helmet must be worn by batters and base runners. If a player is used to coach a base, the player must wear a batting helmet with the approved face protection.

- h. Softball ONLY: An approved helmet facemask must be attached to all batters' helmets and worn by players when batting and running bases. All players are required to wear face mask protection while playing the infield.

#### **4. Majors / Junior / Senior Leagues (Baseball and Softball)**

- a. All rostered players should appear on the lineup card for each game. Late arrivals must be on the book as possible players at the beginning of the game to be eligible to be inserted into the game. Managers or Coaches should notify the umpire and scorekeeper of their absence. If the child arrives late, they may be inserted at the bottom of the lineup.
- b. Baseball ONLY: It is the recommendation of the board for players to wear a batting helmet with an approved full-face guard or C-flap. This recommendation will aid in preventing injury to the players. The helmet must be worn by batters and base runners. If a player is used to coach a base, the player must wear a batting helmet with the approved face protection.
- c. Softball ONLY: An approved helmet facemask must be attached to all batter's helmets and worn by players when batting and running bases. All players are required to wear face mask protection while playing the infield.
- d. Softball ONLY: Major / Junior / Senior: These leagues will adopt the Continuous Batting Order for all divisions.
- e. Softball Inter-league games ONLY: With the exception of Local Rule (time limit), Inter-league games will be governed by the regular little league. Other local rules may be observed if agreed by both managers and the umpire prior to the start of the game.

#### **5. Fall Ball ONLY specific rules**

- a. The Continuous Batting Order will apply to all divisions; baseball and softball.
- b. All divisions will implement a maximum of 5 runs per inning, except the 6th inning. The 6th inning will end when the team's lineup has batted one time through in its entirety in their half-inning or when three outs are recorded, whichever comes first. This will also apply to extra innings.
- c. Time Limits will be as follows:
  - Major – 90 Minutes (1 Hour and 30 Minutes)
  - Minor Player Pitch – 90 Minutes (1 Hour and 30 Minutes)
  - Minor Coach Pitch – 90 Minutes (1 Hour and 30 Minutes)
  - Modified Coach Pitch – batting twice through the lineup or 1 hour
- d. Major Baseball and Softball will utilize the uncaught 3<sup>rd</sup> strike. The batter becomes a runner if the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is not caught by the catcher.
- e. Minor Player Pitch leagues and above - While batting, if a catcher reaches base with 2 outs or 2 outs are recorded while on base, the offensive team must use a mandatory

special pinch runner to replace the catcher. The player who made the last out will be the runner.

- f. Fall pitching rules will be determined by the board prior to the beginning of the fall season.
- g. All rostered players should appear on the lineup card for each game. Late arrivals must be on the book as possible players at the beginning of the game to be eligible to be inserted into the game.

Managers or Coaches should notify the umpire and scorekeeper of their absence. If the child arrives late, they may be inserted at the bottom of the lineup

- h. Baseball ONLY: It is the recommendation of the board for players to wear a batting helmet with an approved full-face guard or C-flap. This recommendation will aid in preventing injury to the players. The helmet must be worn by batters and base runners. If a player is used to coach a base, the player must wear a batting helmet with the approved face protection.

## Umpire Policy

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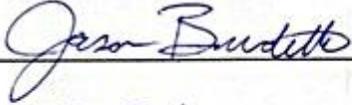
Northern Little League strives to provide the most positive and rewarding atmosphere for all of its participants in baseball and softball. Northern Little League is governed by its elected board of directors and all operations of the league are directed and enforced by the board. It is our desire to provide the best working environment and support to our umpires. Now more than ever, Northern has a reputation as a leader in District 8 and with your help we will continue and even elevate that tradition.

- a. All umpires will wear official umpire uniforms which will include caps, shirts and pants. All umpires will wear a light or dark blue shirt as well as the option of a red shirt. Pants or shorts worn will be gray or khaki in color. Shoes will be black and should be polished. Both umpires will wear the same color uniform when working together. Dark blue shirts will be worn with gray pants or shorts and light blue shirts will be worn with khaki pants or shorts. Shirts should have numbers on the sleeve and the little league patch is required as well. Each umpire will furnish their own shoes and pants. Uniforms must be neat and pressed for each game. The purpose of this dress code is to project a professional image.
- b. Northern Little League will provide bottled water and sports drinks to working umpires. Each working umpire will be provided one meal on Saturdays, not to exceed \$7. Food during weekday games will be at the expense of each umpire.
- c. Umpires will have a dressing room provided where lockers are available to store necessary equipment. This is a designated area for umpires.
- d. Northern Little League will use the following pay scale for umpires:
  - Spring Season:
    - Player Pitch Games - \$50.00
    - Coach Pitch Games - \$40.00
  - Fall Season:
    - Player Pitch Games - \$50.00

- Coach Pitch Games - \$40.00
- e. Payment of games will be coordinated between the Treasurer and the Umpire Scheduler. Payment will be paid based on the game schedule.
- f. Payment method will be by Northern Little League check.
- g. Games involving rain. If an umpire shows up ready to call a game and that game is called due to rain, umpires will be paid in full for that game. If a game is called once the game has started, umpires will be paid in full. Umpires will not be paid for a second game if they were scheduled to call.
- h. In case of rain or inclement weather, a board member will contact the umpire scheduler once a decision is made to the status of the games. The umpire scheduler will then contact the umpires. When possible, the announcement will be placed on the Northern website at [www.northernll.org](http://www.northernll.org) and/or Northern's social media channel.
- i. Protests/Ejections: Any umpire who ejects an individual will be responsible for writing a full report and turning it in to the president and umpire coordinator of the league within 24 hours after the event. If the report is not submitted within 24 hours the umpire will be removed from the umpire game schedule until the report has been submitted and reviewed. Northern will strictly enforce its Zero Tolerance Policy with regards to umpires, spectators, managers, coaches, and players. Any appeals of suspensions will be brought for review before the Board of Directors.
- j. Any umpire having issues with parents or spectators in the stands must approach the manager of the team and notify him of the problematic individual. The manager will be responsible for addressing the spectator. If the spectator continues to be a problem, the umpire will place both teams in their respective dugouts and have a board member address the spectator. Spectators may be removed from the park. If unacceptable behavior continues, the board member on duty should dial 911 to involve local law enforcement.
- k. Any manager, coach or spectator ejected will have to leave the premises. The manager or coach will be required to serve a one game suspension. They will not be allowed to come to the park during the suspension. The park is considered beyond the parking lot area.
- l. Northern Little League will require each umpire to attend a minimum of 1 training clinic. The league will require each umpire to attend the local clinic held in Columbus. It is the desire of the league that all umpires receive as much training as possible.
- m. Northern will implement an evaluation process of all umpires. These evaluations will be administered throughout the season and feedback will be provided by the umpire in charge. This process is intended to help each umpire better themselves not to act as a penalty.
- n. Failure of umpires to report for scheduled games will be addressed by the League President, Umpire Coordinator and the Umpire in Charge at which time necessary action will be implemented.
- o. Schedules will be made by the Umpire Coordinator and the Umpire in Charge. Any requests for changes should be made to the Umpire in Charge a minimum of one day in advance of scheduled game so that arrangements for another umpire can be made.

- p. As mentioned in the Zero Tolerance Policy, umpires are to maintain control of the game, sportsmanship and conduct of the game. The umpire must remember that they are the only participants that are being compensated for their time and all other parties are volunteers. Maintaining a calm demeanor and respecting coaches and spectators, will diffuse many situations that arise.

Revisions Approved by 2026 Board of Directors

President, Jason Burdette   
Vice President, Katie Harralson 