



2026 LOCAL RULES

INTRODUCTION

Winters Little League (WLL) is committed to providing youth in the community with a baseball program that promotes a healthy atmosphere, geared in providing a fun activity, through good leadership. Therefore, all Player, managers and Coaches are responsible for adhering to Little League Baseball® Rules, the WLL Constitution and the Local WLL Rules established in this document.

Failure to abide by the rules as stated may result in suspension, removal, expulsion, or other discipline identified by the Board.

Manager's Code of Conduct

Winters Little League is concerned about the conduct of all coaches, officials, players and fans during practices and games at all levels. WLL seeks to ensure that games are a fair, positive and an enjoyable experience for all the children and adults involved. WLL expects all managers and coaches to conform to this code of conduct, at all times.

1. As a Manager with WLL, it is your responsibility to ensure that you create a positive environment of safety, learning, fun and reinforcement.
2. The Manager will treat all of his/her players fairly and with respect at all times.
3. The Manager will communicate his/her expectations to the players and their parents as clearly, consistently, and as early as possible.
4. The Manager is expected to advise parents/guardians of the players on his/her team to be timely and responsible in dropping off and picking up their children for all practices and games. WLL seeks to always maintain player safety.
5. The Manager is an example of dignity and patience, and a role model to players.
6. The Manager should introduce himself/herself to officials and opposing coaches before the game.
7. The Manager is responsible for the sportsmanship of the players during the game.
8. The Manager is responsible for the conduct of the parents of his/her players during the game. It is imperative to explain acceptable player and parent behavior in a preseason meeting. Encourage them to applaud and cheer good plays by either team. Clearly, forcefully, and directly discourage them from being derisive toward officials or opposing players.
9. The Manager is responsible for the conduct of spectators rooting for his/her team during the game.
10. During the game, the Manager will not address the officials of the game inappropriately. If there is an issue or dispute, discuss it with the official calmly and patiently. If the complaint is unresolved, or if the Manager thinks the official was unfair, biased, unfit or incompetent, the Manager should report his/her opinion in writing to the Player Agent.
11. After the game, the Manager and his/her players should thank the officials, opposing players, and managers.

The example of a manager is powerful. As a Manager with WLL, your role is to ensure fair play, support the officials, and focus on the players' enjoyment of the game and their overall long-term development. Managers who do not follow the expectations described above will be removed from managing.

MAJOR, MINOR, AND FARM DIVISIONS

Health and Safety: **SAFETY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH AND EVERY INDIVIDUAL**

NO PARENTS WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE FIELD.

- i. Permission for any professional photographer business and/or media to be permitted to enter the field must be obtained from the Home Plate Umpire and/or "on-duty" board member.

The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages, in any form, is prohibited on the playing field, benches, dugout, park, or practice sites, bleachers, stands, snack bar, etc. - Smoking is allowed on the center island of the parking lot.

GROUND RULES:

Only WLL approved Manager and Coaches (2) of record, in addition to Players are allowed in the dugout during the game. If Manager or Coaches substitute are required for a given game, the substitution needs to be preapproved by the President prior to the start of the game.

- **Exception:** Farm Division is allowed (1) additional adult volunteers to aid during coach pitch.

PITCHING DISTANCE

Minors and Majors Pitching distance is at **46 feet**.

Farm Pitching distance is at **38 feet**.

NO ON-Deck Batters, Coaches are to be in the dugout when team is on defense.

STEALING:

- NO Leading off allowed. Base runners can only leave the base after the pitched ball reaches the batter.
- **NO Stealing** allowed in **FARM**.

Players must not wear jewelry such as but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, nor any hard cosmetics/decorative items.

Exception: Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.

Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color. The pitcher's undershirt sleeves, if exposed, **shall not be WHITE**.

Uniforms must be worn in a neat manner; **shirts must be tucked in**, pants pulled up, and hats worn correctly (bill facing forward).

No trips to the snack bar while your team is playing a game. Only sunflower seeds, gum, water and/or sports drinks are allowed in the dugout. No sodas, glass or any other food are allowed. Gum must be always kept in the Player's mouth and is not to be discarded on the dugout floor.

Rain-Outs: Will be called by 3:00PM & will not be re-scheduled due to field availability.

Thrown Bat: If a batter unintentionally throws a bat, the offending player and manager will receive a verbal warning. If the same batter repeats the offense, the coach will remove the player from the remainder of the game. Note: Intentionally throwing the bat (or helmet or any other piece of equipment) is unsportsmanlike

conduct and the umpire may eject said player under rule 9.01(d). Such ejection shall not occur while a play is in progress and will take effect when no further action is possible in that play.

Pitching Limits (Effective through 4/11/26):

- Until April 11th, a pitcher must be replaced when they reach whichever comes first:
- **6 consecutive outs** (2 innings).
- **The maximum pitch count** for their division.

This approach ensures coaches are developing as many pitchers as possible and helps establish a healthy rotation for the entire roster. **Starting April 12th**, the "6 consecutive outs" limit will be lifted, and standard pitch count maximums will apply.

Managing Pitch Counts & Rest:

With many of the games scheduled back-to-back or with only one day off, please be aware of pitch counts. If a pitcher exceeds the daily threshold for their age group, they **will not be eligible** to pitch in the following game(s).

We recommend using this "Pitching Limit" period to give your 3rd, 4th, and 5th-option pitchers meaningful mound time.

3-Minute Inning Timer:

We are also introducing a **3-minute timer** between innings to pick up the pace. Efficiency here results in more innings played, which means more opportunities for your pitchers to get into the rotation.

March: No penalties. Use this month to practice "hustle in, hustle out" with your players.

April: Penalties will be enforced for exceeding the 3-minute limit (specifics to be announced soon)

FARM DIVISION (only)

Farm NO Stealing Allowed.

- On a ball hit to the outfield (meaning the ball doesn't touch the infield dirt), a runner can advance until the ball comes back across the infield. **Example:** if the runner has touched third base when the outfielder's throw passes the dirt/grass line, he/she may try to advance for home. If the runner has not yet touched third base, he/she must not advance past third base.
 - Balls in infield, runners can advance one base only and **may not advance on overthrows.**

Coach pitch (March 09th – April 5th) and player pitch (Starting April 6th).

- The pitching distance is 38 feet (players and coaches).

Coach Pitch – 5 Pitches or 3 Strikes

Coaches must pitch from the rubber and must throw overhand.

The coach pitching is not a base coach. **You may not tell the runners what to do.** Have the players look to their 1st or 3rd base coaches when running for direction.

- **Kid pitch innings will be played as follows:**
 - A. Kid continues pitching until he/she throws 4 called balls by the umpire. The coach will come in and the batter will receive 1-3 pitches depending on the strike count prior to coach coming in, and all coach pitches are strikes. If the batter fouls off the third pitch, then the batter receives only one more pitch. If the batter fails to put the ball in play, he/she is out.
 - B. If the pitcher hits the batter, batter gets first base.
 - C. If the pitcher hits 3 batters IN ONE INNING, the pitcher must be pulled from the mound.

Home Team will be responsible for: Official Scorekeeper, Scoreboard and announcing all regular season and playoff games. **When playing an out-of-town team**, the home team will be responsible for both **scorekeeping and pitch counter**. Additionally, the home team will be responsible for prepping the field prior to the start of their game **and** dragging the field after the game if playing an out-of-town team.

Visiting Team will be responsible for: Official Pitch Counter. Additionally, the visiting team is responsible for dragging the field and putting away bases at the end of the game.

Age Limits – By Division:

THE LITTLE LEAGUE CUT-OFF DATE FOR DETERMINE A PLAYER'S AGE IS AUGUST 30.

- a) The Junior League division will include 14-year-olds.
- b) The Intermediate 50/70 League division may include 13-year-olds.
- c) The Major League division may include 11 and 12-year-olds. Note 1: Parent authorization must be communicated prior to drafting a 10-year-old to a Major division team.
- d) The Minor League division may include 8, 9, and 10-year-olds. Note 1: Parent authorization must be communicated prior to drafting an 8-year-old to a Major division team.
- e) The Farm League division may include 7, 8 and 9 (safety risk only) year olds.

Other ages may be eligible at the discretion of the WLL Executive Board.

Minimum Playing Time per Game:

- a) Each Player on a Major, Minor and Farm team must play a minimum of 3 consecutive defensive outs and have at least 1 at bat per game.
- b) Managers are solely responsible for ensuring that all players fulfill the requirements of playing participation.

Player Removal:

- a) If a player repeatedly misses games, a manager may request to remove that player from the team, subject to WLL Board of Directors approval. The request for a player's removal should be submitted through the Division representative to the Player Agent along with supporting documentation.
- b) At the discretion of the parents (e.g. disciplinary reasons) a child may be removed from a game and does not have to fulfill the minimum playing time requirements.

Managers and Coaches:

- a) Selection:
 - i. All prospective Managers and Coaches must complete a manager and/or Coaches application form and a volunteer application form (with a copy of current driver's license) to be considered.
 - ii. Selection of Managers will be determined and finalized by the WLL Board of Directors.
 - iii. Managers/Coaches may be removed from their position at the discretion of the WLL Board of Directors.
- b) Responsibilities:
 - i. **There must be at least one Manager or Coach in the dugout at all times.**
 - ii. Prior to the start of any game, Managers must provide the Official Scorekeeper with Pitching Affidavits. Following the game, the Official Pitch Counter will complete the Pitching Affidavits and both Managers are required to sign each teams Affidavit.

Complete Games:

A GAME WILL BE CONSIDERED COMPLETED (REGULATION) PER LITTLE LEAGUE RULES.

- a) For Major league games, the “10 run rule” described in Official Regulations and Playing Rules section 4.10e applies to all games. If after four (4) innings, 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the game will be considered complete.
- b) A “five (5) run rule” described in Official Regulations and Playing Rules section 2.00 (Definitions of Teams – INNING) will apply to Minor and applied to Farm league games (for consistency).

Time Limits: THE FOLLOWING TIME LIMITS WILL APPLY TO ALL GAMES

Majors and Minor Division Games – Regular season time limit for games are no new inning after **1 hour and 50 minutes and no pitch after 2 hours and 15 minutes** (aka “drop dead time for the end of the game”)

- a) **Farm Division Games** – **Drop Dead Game Time is one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes.**
- b) The City of Winters Little League curfew is 10:00PM
- c) The following “mercy” rules will apply to the Minor and Major division:
 - i. If, after 4 innings (3 ½ if home team leads), one team is leading by more runs than the other team can score in their total remaining at-bats (>10 runs), the game will be considered complete.
 - ii. If after 5 innings (4 ½ in home team leads), one team is leading by more runs than the other team can score in their total remaining at-bats (>5 runs), the games will be considered complete.

Continuous Batting Order:

a) The Farm, Minor, and Majors will use a continuous batting order. All players available must bat. Players arriving after the start of the game are added to the bottom of the existing batting line-up. If a player is removed from the line-up due to illness or injury, their spot in the batting line-up will be skipped without penalty.

b) In the Farm, Minor, and majors, a special pinch runner may be used to run for the next innings catcher after there are two outs. The pinch runner cannot have played the field defensively in the previous inning. The intent is to have the catcher ready for the next inning.

Defense: a) ONLY the Farm will use the “Ten Defensive Player Rule”. There shall be ten (10) defensive players, four (4) of which must be stationed on the outfield grass. Players will start in one of the 4 positions and will remain in the position for the entire inning.

c) In the Farm and Minor Leagues, teams may go once through the batting order (unlimited runs) during the 6th inning only.

DRAFT, PLAYOFFS, ALL-STAR SELECTION AND GREIVANCES

Player Selection for 2025:

a) The Junior, Intermediate 50/70, Major, and Minor league drafts will be serpentine in order (Example: Round 1-1, 2, 3; Round 2-3, 2, 1).

b) Managers draft position will be determined by lottery.

c) The Manager's player and Coach's player are automatically on the team as the last pick. There will be one Coach's Option Pick in the Major, and Minor league.

*Note: The serpentine does not reset when the draft comes to the Manager's or Coach's picks.

d) Players of league age 8 who wish to be eligible for the Minor division draft must try out. Players of league age 6 who wish to be eligible for the Farm division draft must try out.

Note: Draft positions are NEVER to be discussed with the players or parents.

STANDINGS

There are no Regular season standings for the Major, Minor and Farm division

League Tournament Format:

The Farm and Major Division will conduct a single elimination tournament, and Minors will conduct a double elimination tournament to determine which team will represent WLL in the District 64 Tournament of Champions. The Farm Division will conduct a single elimination tournament to determine the league Farm Champions.

All teams competing in the tournament will be as follows:

- Seeding will be based on a straw draw. The tournament will be the home team and in the event of an "if" game the home team will be decided by a coin flip.

All-Star Selections:

All-Star Team selections are meant to recognize players that have excelled in regular season play through game performance, baseball skill, fair-play, and positive attitude. The selected players, Managers and Coaches, will represent the WLL community in a competitive, intra-district, post-season tournament and if successful, higher-level tournaments.

All-Star Teams

- WLL will field All-Star Teams in all Minors, Majors, and Intermediate 50-70 age groups as defined by the Little League Rules.
- The Player Agent will manage the All-Star player and Manager Selection process with the assistance of the President and Vice President.
- The final number of players will be determined by the All-Star Manager.

- All-Star Managers will be responsible for selecting their coaching staff. Only Managers and Coaches from the regular season are eligible to be an All-Star Coach.
- Final approval of the All-Star Team, Manager Selection and Coach Selection must be approved by the WLL Executive Board.

Manager Selection

- WLL Managers and Coaches interested in managing a post season All-Star Team should notify the President one week before the final game of the current season.

Note: Winning the WLL Regular Season does not guarantee selection as an All-Star Manager. Prospective Managers should consider the following before contacting the Player Agent: - Would you be willing to manage an All-Star Team? - Which age group do you want to manage (9/10, 10/11, or 11/12)? - Would you be willing to coach/manage if your child is not selected to the All-Star Team? - Do you understand the commitment involved with managing an All-Star Team? (Tournaments can run through July and August depending on success)

- The names of interested Managers and Coaches will be placed on a ballot and voted on by all Managers of the appropriate Division. The person with the most votes in the age group of interest (i.e. 11/12 All-Star Team or 10/11 All-Star Team) will be named the manager of the associated All Star Team. The person with the most votes in the Minor Division will be named the Manager of the 9/10 All-Star Team.
- In the event of a tie the eligible WLL Board of Directors will cast the deciding vote.

Player Selection

The All-Star selection process will involve both the Players and Managers from each eligible division. The Player Agent will manage the process and all ballots/selections will be kept confidential. The process for all All-Star selections will be done according to the current Little League Rule Book.

- Player ballots will be distributed to each team immediately following their final regular season game. The ballots will show the names and league ages for each player in their division. Players may vote for up to 10 All-Star nominations (players, individuals) in their division. Ballots are to be returned to the Player Agent before leaving the field. Late ballots will not be accepted.
- The 8 players in each division Intermediate 50/70s, Majors, and Minors that received the most votes on the Player ballots will be “automatic” selections to the appropriate All-Star team. In the event of a tie vote, all players with the same number of votes will be considered “automatic” selections to the All-Star Team.
- Manager will meet and discuss players recommended to be on the team. Managers may select up to 3-4 players from their own team to add to the pool of “eligible All Star” players. These players are not automatically on the All-Star Team unless they qualify under section ii above.
- After the “automatic” selection is completed based on the results of the Players Ballots, the remaining All-Star players in each age group will be selected from the ‘All-Star Pool’ of players that is created based on the Managers meeting.
- Final Manager Selections will be made from the “All-Star Pool” of players in the following:

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- 11/12 All-Star Team – The Manager may select from the 11 or 12-year-old “All-Star Pool” of players. This team should be selected prior to the 10/11-year-old team in an attempt to build the strongest team for tournament play.
- 10/11 All-Star Team – The Manager may select from the 10 or 11-year-old “All-Star Pool” of players. Every effort should be made to ensure that players selected for this team have had Major Division experience. This team should be selected prior to the 9/10-year-old team in an attempt to build the strongest team for tournament play.
- 9/10 All-Star Team – The Manager may select from the 9- or 10-year-old “All-Star Pool” of players.

Team will be selected prior to June 1st for the All-Star Tournament. Players will be announced at Closing Ceremonies and contacted by the All-Star Manager.

- Note: If necessary, Manager may select no more than two at large selections of any eligible player not listed in the pool of players.

Player Notification

- Notification and release of players’ names on the 11/12, 10/11 and 9/10 old All-Star Team shall be Not announced until June 1 and not until availability and eligibility of all prospective team members have been established.
- If a player gives notification that he/she is unavailable to play on the All-Star Team, then the respective All-Star Manager has the option to replace the player from the original All-Star player pool or not to replace a player at all (final WLL Executive Board approval is required). All efforts should be made not to disrupt the rosters of other All-Star Teams

Grievance Procedures:

When a parent or guardian of a player desires to register or file a complaint upon a Manager, Coach or League Official, the following process will be utilized in an effort to resolve the issue at the lowest level possible:

- i. First Level – issues or complaints should first be discussed with the team Manager. The Manager should document the date, time, location, parties involved, and the subject of the issue or complaint. If the concern is resolved to everyone’s satisfaction. No further steps are necessary. If the issue remains unresolved, the issue will be escalated to the second level, but not until the complaint has been documented per the requirements above. Note: E-mails to mass distribution lists are not appropriate. If e-mails are used to file a complaint to the Manager, Coach or League Official please ensure to include the required information above.
- ii. Second Level – All parties involved shall provide the appropriate Division Representative with an overview of the issues (i.e. documented complaint from the First Level) and any documentation related to previous attempts to resolve the issue. Complaint will not be heard at this level until all appropriate information has been completed per the requirements of the First Level. If the Division Representative is unable to resolve the issue, complaint may be escalated to the Vice President

and/or Player Agent.

iii. Third Level – If a resolution cannot be reached at either the first or second level, the complainant(s) may file a Formal Complaint with the Grievance Board. The Grievance Board will be made up of 5 members of the WLL Executive Board. None of the participants hearing a discipline issue may be involved in the issue. The Formal Complaint must be filed within five (5) calendar days of notification to the Division Representative of the original complaint. The Formal Complaint must document the following:

The topic of the complaint(s) - Date, time, and location of the alleged incident(s) - Thorough overview of the issue(s) - Details of all previous attempts to resolve the issue(s) - Desired resolution Winters

iv. No complaint will be heard at the preceding level unless heard at the previous level.

Note: Anonymous issues/complaints cannot be addressed via this grievance procedure hence the requirement in section 4.a.i (Parties involved are to be listed to hear all issues equally). The Grievance Board will make all efforts to keep the issues/complaints anonymous to the league (i.e. between the impacted individuals).

b) Decisions rendered by the Grievance Board are final and represent the formal position of the WLL. Such decisions will not preclude any complaint from seeking further remedy by addressing such issue(s) at the district or Regional Level.

