



# Game Issue Resolution and Protest Policy

## Overview

Northern Lights Little League (“NLLL”) is a league that prioritizes development, sportsmanship, and respect above competition. Like our young players, our umpires are human and will make mistakes. When mistakes occur, NLLL wants to use those moments to educate and develop our umpires, especially youth umpires.

We expect that most situations arising during a game will be handled respectfully on the field between managers and umpires, and that the game will continue.

This policy establishes two paths for addressing game issues:

1. **Umpire Feedback**, for most concerns and teaching moments; and
2. **Formal Protests**, for the limited rule-based situations where a protest is permitted.

This policy is intended to supplement, and not conflict with, official Little League rules, applicable district bylaws, and other adopted NLLL policies.

## Umpire Feedback

Umpire Feedback is the preferred process for addressing most game concerns. It is intended to support respectful communication, improve consistency, and help develop NLLL umpires. Umpire Feedback should be used for concerns, including:

1. game management;
2. communication;
3. professionalism;
4. rules knowledge concerns that do not require the game to be played under protest;  
and
5. general feedback regarding umpire performance or conduct.

This is not a forum for complaints about isolated or individual judgment-call disagreements, including safe/out, balls/strikes, fair/foul, and similar calls.

## How to Submit Feedback

Managers are encouraged to address questions respectfully on the field during the game when appropriate and if additional follow-up is appropriate, feedback should be submitted after the game to the Umpire in Chief (“UIC”) and/or League President.

Feedback should be:

1. respectful and factual;
2. submitted as soon as practical after the game; and
3. focused on education, improvement, and player and umpire development.

## Review of Feedback

The UIC and/or President may review submitted feedback with the umpire crew, managers, or other league officials as appropriate. NLLL may use feedback for training, evaluation, mentoring, and development of umpires.

Nothing in this section permits disrespectful conduct toward umpires. Managers and coaches remain subject to NLLL standards of decorum and conduct.

## Formal Protests

Formal protests follow official Little League Rule 4.19, NLLL adopted policies, and any applicable district bylaws. For district-governed games, the district protest process controls.

A formal protest is limited to the following:

1. a claimed misinterpretation or misapplication of an official playing rule;
2. the use of an ineligible pitcher;
3. the use of an ineligible player.

Formal protests do not apply to:

1. Tee Ball and Coach Pitch divisions;
2. judgment calls, including safe/out, balls/strikes, fair/foul, or similar umpire judgment decisions.

## NLLL Protest Process

### *On-Field Resolution*

NLLL encourages managers and umpires to work respectfully to resolve rule-based or eligibility issues on the field whenever possible so that the game may continue. Resuming or rescheduling games is not always practical or possible.

1. The manager must notify the umpire on the field that there is a rule-based issue and, if necessary, that the game is being played under protest.
2. For a claimed misapplication of a rule, the issue must be raised before the next pitch or play.
3. For an ineligible pitcher or ineligible player issue, the issue must be raised before the umpires leave the field at the end of the game, but preferably as soon as the issue is known.
4. The umpire should confer with the other umpire(s), if any, and may speak with both managers as appropriate in an effort to resolve the issue on the field.
5. If the issue is resolved or corrected on the field, the game continues and no further protest process is necessary.

### *Off-Field Resolution*

As a last resort, if an issue cannot be resolved through an on-field resolution process, a formal protest can be submitted to the league for review.

1. The protesting manager must submit the protest in writing within twenty-four (24) hours after the completion of the game to the League President, UIC, and the applicable Vice President / Player Agent of the division.
2. The written protest should briefly identify:
  - a. the teams and division;
  - b. the inning and game situation;
  - c. the rule believed to have been misapplied or violated; and
  - d. the relief requested.
3. The President, UIC, and applicable Vice President / Player Agent will review the protest, with any conflicted person recusing.
4. If the protest is denied, the game result stands.
5. If the protest is upheld, the remedy will follow the applicable official Little League rule or regulation, any more specific NLLL policy governing that issue, and any applicable district or interlock bylaw.

## District Protest Process

For games governed by district bylaws, managers must follow the district protest process. For Colorado District 2 baseball interlock games, that process includes:

1. protests must be filed in accordance with Little League Rule 4.19;
2. the protest must be submitted in writing within twenty-four (24) hours following the completion of the game;
3. the written protest must include the specific rule supporting the protest;
4. the protest must be submitted to the league's representative to the Baseball Interlock Board of Directors or to the Baseball Interlock Coordinator; and
5. protests are decided by the district protest committee under the district bylaws.