

## 2026 New Mexico District 9 Little League - Interleague Rules

- All interleague rules are used in conjunction with the “official” playing rules and regulations of Little League Baseball & Softball.
- All leagues will adhere to the “Official Sunset Schedule” provided by the District. The game ends promptly at the official sunset time listed on the schedule. If the inning is not complete, the score shall revert back to the last completed inning. NO INNING SHALL START 10 MINUTES BEFORE THE OFFICIAL SUNSET TIME as determined by the umpire in chief of the game. Play shall continue past Sunset Time if your field is equipped with lighting systems as regulated and approved by Little League standards and/or regulations. Games continuing past sunset time on fields with lighting systems will be determined by the Umpire-in-Chief of the game.
- All leagues will adhere to time limits set. **MAJORS & BELOW: 1 hour and 45 minutes; JUNIORS & SENIORS: 2 hours. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. No new inning will begin once the time limit has been reached.** in conjunction with Regulation VII, following Rule 4.10(c)(2) and/or Rule 4.11 on ALL INTERLEAGUE GAMES. It is required that both teams are aware of set time limits prior to the game starting.
  - Note: Weekday games played at a leagues fields with lights may implement a time-limit.**
  - Note: If the local league does not have a time-limit set on their games, it shall be decided AT THE PLATE MEETING WITH THE UMPIRE(S) or PRIOR TO THE START OF THE GAME, how the game will be declared a regulation game, either by setting a time-limit or by completing a full six-inning [Juniors & Seniors: seven-inning] game.**
  - Note: The decision on how a game will end, MUST be discussed and decided at the plate meeting and/or prior to the start of the game.**
  - Example #1**
    - Situation:** *Hometown Little League is playing a minor division game against Volunteer Little League. Volunteer is the HOME team and Hometown is the AWAY team. The game started at 6:00 PM. The league has lights on their fields and implemented a time-limit for all games due to the amount of teams they have. At 7:40 pm, the game is in the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the score as Volunteer – 2 and Hometown – 6. It is now, 7:45 pm. How do they proceed?*
    - Ruling:** *The inning was started prior to the time limit expiring; therefore, they will finish the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. If Volunteer Little League ties the game at the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, it is declared a tie and a regulation game.*
  - Example #2**
    - Situation:** *Volunteer Little League is playing a senior division game against Smithville Little League. Volunteer is the HOME team and Smithville is the AWAY team. The game starts at 9:00 AM. Volunteer Little League couldn't get any league umpires for the game so they had to have two parents step in. Their knowledge is par. There is no plate meeting prior to the start of the game. There are no scheduled games after this game. The game is started. At 10:45 AM, the game is in the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the score as Smithville – 4 and Volunteer – 5. Volunteer is able to get the third out, sending it to the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. The manager of the Smithville team lines his team up to shake hands thinking the game is over. The Volunteer team is getting ready for their at bat. How should this be handled?*
    - Ruling:** *The managers of both teams should have met prior to the start of the game to decide if they were going to set a time-limit or complete the full seven innings. It is only the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and is therefore, not a regulation game. The game must either be suspended and resumed at a later date OR resumed and complete the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning or play until the 2-hour time-limit has been reached to qualify as a regulation game or play all seven innings.*
- Each league will provide a list of names and phone numbers of managers to aid in communication between the leagues. The manager of the visiting team shall contact the home team manager with a “**Mandatory 24 hrs. in advance**” notice to confirm game time and field location and to note cancellation of games. Each team will have a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the scheduled start time to field a team. If after fifteen (15) minutes a team is unable to field players, the game shall be forfeited with a score of zero (0) to seven (7) as documented in the scorebook with pen by the chief umpire of the game.
- Cancellation of games due to inclement weather will be decided by the board of directors of the home team. Visiting teams who just don't show up will forfeit that game unless a reschedule is agreed upon by both managers.
- The use of “Continuous Batting Order” is MANDATORY for the 2026 season for Juniors & BELOW.
- Mandatory Play is in EFFECT. Regulation IV(i) – The Players. Every rostered player present at the start of a game will participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.
- All teams must use players listed on their team's roster only! Exception: Substitute players may be used from the list of pool players created by each league. **ALL PLAYERS MUST BE LITTLE LEAGUE REGISTERED PLAYERS AND POOL PLAYERS MAY NOT PITCH.** Pool players shall also play a minimum of nine (9) consecutive outs and at least one (1) at bat.
- Each team will provide a new game ball at each game.
- Minor Player Pitch, Major, Junior and Senior Baseball Divisions: Managers shall present a valid pitching affidavit to the opposing manager before the start of the game to determine eligibility of pitchers. After game, pitching affidavits for both teams must be completed with required signatures. If no pitching affidavit is presented prior to game time, the game may be played under protest.
  - The “Pitching Affidavit” shall be signed in pen. **Note: The use of pencil is not permitted.**
- Umpires will allow five (5) warm up pitches or ninety (90) seconds of warm up in between innings.
- There is a five (5) run cap per inning for Rookie and Minor divisions, six (6) run cap per inning for Major Division and a seven (7) run cap per inning for Junior divisions and above, for both baseball and softball. Three (3) offensive outs for each team shall be considered an

inning in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning for Major divisions and below (7<sup>th</sup> inning for Junior division and above). **UNLIMITED RUNS IS ONLY IN EFFECT IN THE LAST INNING OF A COMPLETE REGULAR GAME (6<sup>TH</sup> INNING FOR MAJORS & BELOW, 7<sup>TH</sup> INNING FOR JUNIORS AND SENIORS).** Once the cap has been reached, NO consecutive runs will be counted in the scorebook, even if the ball is still a live ball. **EXCEPTION:** In the case of an over the fence home run, all runs count.

13. **Rookie Division:**

- It is the HOME LEAGUE's ability to decide which equipment they are going to utilize (sling, machine or coach) for the Rookie BASEBALL division games.
- Rookie SOFTBALL will be coach-pitch.
  - The distance the coach shall pitch from is 35 feet from home plate.
- Each league has the ability to adopt Machine Pitch for the Rookie division, in order to standardize pitching speed and prepare players for the Minor player pitch division. Machine speed and specifications are outlined below:
  - The pitching machine will be set at 40 feet. Distance is 40 feet from the front of machine to the apex(point) of home plate.
  - Speed on pitching machine will be set at 30 mph for BASEBALL. Speed on sling-shot type machine will be set at 4.
- Each batter will get 5 pitches or 3 strikes, whichever comes first. In order to be consistent with the concept of teaching fundamentals in this division, the definition of pitches and strikes are as follows:
  - 5 pitches: Any ball swung at or a ball passing through the strike zone not swung at. Balls passing through the strike zone not swung at will not count as a strike but will count as a pitch. It is important to teach these players to swing.
    - **EXCEPTION:** 5<sup>th</sup> pitch must be fouled off or put in play. If foul, batter continues to receive pitches (that must be swung at) until ball is put in play or batter strikes out (pitch is swung at and missed), unless the pitch is considered a "no pitch" due to machine error.
  - 3 strikes: Any pitch swung at and missed. First 2 pitches hit foul will count as strikes.
- Runners can only advance one base on an overthrow. The one base on the overthrow is the base that has yet to be acquired. Advancing bases beyond that one is NOT allowed.
- On a ball that is batted into the outfield, runners may advance a maximum of two bases.
- No scorekeeping is mandatory for Rookie games, both baseball and softball.
  - Scorekeeping is OPTIONAL and may be used to assist in development.
- Bunting is allowed in the Rookie division

14. **Baseball and Softball:**

- Little League Rule 4.10(e) If after three (3) innings (majors and below), four (4) innings (Juniors and above) if visiting team is ahead, two and a half (2½) innings (majors and below), three and a half (3½) innings (Juniors and above) if home is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the opposing team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent. **NOTE: If the visiting team has the lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.**
  - If after four (4) innings (majors and below), five (5) innings (Juniors and above) if visiting team is ahead, three and a half (3½) innings (majors and below), four and a half (4½) innings (Juniors and above) if home is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the opposing team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent. **NOTE: If the visiting team has the lead of ten (10) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.**
  - If after five (5) innings (majors and below), six (6) innings (Juniors and above); four and one-half innings (majors and below), five and one half innings (Juniors and above), if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of eight (8) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. **NOTE: If the visiting teams has the lead of eight (8) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.**
15. In accordance with Regulation VI(j) and Regulation VI(4) - **JUNIOR LEAGUE:** Prohibiting 15 year-olds from pitching within the Junior division [BASEBALL & SOFTBALL]
16. In accordance with Little League Rule 6.02(c), batters in both baseball and softball, after entering the batter's box, must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat. Please refer to the 2026 Little League Rulebook, Rule 6.02(c), for a complete list of the exceptions to this rule as well as the penalty for a violation of this rule. This rule applies to all divisions except Rookies and T-ball.
17. Home team will be responsible for providing the plate umpire and the visiting team will be responsible for providing the base umpire.
18. Both teams are responsible for the field and game preparation, including lining and raking the fields. Each team is responsible for cleaning all trash in the dugout and around the bleacher area before leaving the Little League complex.
19. All protests will be made in accordance with Little League Rule 4.19 and will be reviewed by the Protest Committee consisting of League Presidents and District Board.
20. **Regulation XIV:** The actions, on or off the field, of players, managers, coaches, umpires, and league officials must be above reproach. Any player, manager, coach, umpire, or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, or in an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the game site or any other Little League activity, *including through online or social media*, is subject to disciplinary action by the local league Board of Directors.
21. All managers are responsible for the behavior of their players and coaches. If managers cannot keep control of that behavior, the manager will be ejected from the game. If ejected, they cannot be present for their team's next scheduled game.

**22. ANY VIOLATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED! THERE IS ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE AND THREATS OF VIOLENCE! All violations will be documented by each league and dealt with by their Board of Directors.**