



# New Jersey State Little League 8 Year Old Softball Tournament Rules



These rules, as listed below, shall be used for all Section and State 8 Year Old Softball Tournament games. It is strongly recommended, though not required, that they also be used in District level tournaments.

## **Administrative**

- Districts shall indicate their intention of participating in the 8 Year Old Tournament on or before June 15.  
(Note: For 2026, we need to have an idea of the number of teams participating by the Spring Meeting)
- Team contact information shall be provided to the Host District Administrator as soon as the team has been determined.
- Combined teams are permitted for leagues that combine for Minors during the regular season
- Rosters for participating teams will consist of a minimum of 12 players and a maximum of 14 players.
- Players must be eligible in accordance with Little League Tournament Regulations.
- Teams must complete a New Jersey State Little League amended affidavit form which will be reviewed and approved by their respective D.A. and, again, by the tournament host D.A. Affidavits must be accompanied by a copy of each player's birth certificate and copy of the parent's driver's license or the Little League issued School Enrollment Form.

## **Playing Rules**

**Game play will follow Regular Season Minor League Rules as outlined in the current year Little League Rules, including these points of emphasis:**

- 35 foot pitching distance.
- An 11 inch softball will be used.
- Infield Fly rule will not be enforced.
- Pitching rules as described in Little League Regulation IV.
  - Maximum of 12 innings pitched per day
  - Pitching in 7 innings requires one day rest
    - One pitch counts as an inning.
  - A pitcher who has been removed from the circle may re-enter as pitcher anytime in game, but only once per inning.
- Mandatory play requirement of six outs on defense which do not have to be played consecutively.

**Modifications to Regular Season Minor League Rules to be used in the 8 Year Old Baseball Tournament.**

- Games will be five (5) innings.
- Games may not start with less than nine (9) regular rostered players. If a team drops to eight (8) players during a game, they may borrow a defensive player from the opposing team. If during the game, a team drops below eight (8) players, that team shall concede defeat.
- There will be a four-run limit per offensive half-inning for the first 4 innings.
- There will be a nine-run limit per offensive half-inning for the 5th inning.
- If the game is tied after five complete innings,
  - The 6<sup>th</sup> inning, and each half-inning thereafter, will begin with a runner on second base.
  - That runner will be the batter in the order who is furthest from batting in that half inning.
  - There will be a four-run limit per offensive half-inning for all extra innings.



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- Mercy Rule will be 15 runs after three at-bats by the trailing team; and 10 runs after four at-bats.
  - The game will end if the Visiting team goes ahead by 10 in the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning.
- Teams will be allowed a total of four adults (one manager and three coaches) during games. One coach must be placed at the backstop to retrieve balls that get by the catcher while their team is on defense. This coach shall not provide instruction to players or comment in any way on balls and strikes.
  - If the backstop is too close for a coach to safely stand, the requirement to place a coach at the backstop may be waived by the Tournament Director.
- A continuous batting order shall be used in accordance with Little League Tournament Rule #9.
- A Courtesy Runner can be used for the catcher and/or pitcher of record with two outs. Courtesy Runner shall be the player who made the last batted out.
- “Stealing” bases is not permitted. Runners may only advance on a batted ball, or when forced due to base on balls, hit by pitch, or catcher’s interference.
- Minor League rule 5.07 will NOT apply.
- Runners may advance one base the first time the ball is “overthrown” into foul territory on a given play. Runners may be put out when attempting to advance. Runners may NOT advance on any subsequent overthrow regardless of being in fair or foul territory.
- “Slash Bunting” is not permitted.
  - Penalty – A team warning shall be issued for that game if the first violation is NOT put into play. A batter shall be called out if any slash bunt attempt is put into play or any subsequent attempts are made after the team warning. On any called Slash Bunt attempt, the ball is dead and runners may not advance.

*Approved by the State Association, November, 2025*