

SERRA MESA LITTLE LEAGUE

LOCAL RULES

Approved by the Board of Directors on February 16, 2026

Tracking Table of Proposed Local Rules Changes

Section	Change	Date Approved
N/A	N/A	January 16, 2026
1.6; 5.6	Amended to update playing rules	January 28, 2026
Multiple	Amended all-star selection to 2023 rules. Minor revisions to add clarification	February 16, 2026

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SECTION 1 — GENERAL RULES

1.1 Little League Rulebook Precedence

If the official Little League® Rulebook updates or changes a rule that conflicts with these Local Rules, the Little League Rulebook prevails.

SMLL always defaults to the most current Little League rules and regulations.

SMLL, its Board, managers, coaches, volunteers, and members shall act in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of Little League rules, Bylaws, and values. No individual shall manipulate, circumvent, or exploit any rule, placement, policy, or process for personal, competitive, or team advantage.

1.2 Registration Requirements

All players must complete registration, medical release forms, and proof-of-age documentation before participating in any League activity.

1.3 Conduct Requirements

- All participants must follow the League Code of Conduct.
- Only the Manager may address the umpire.
- Verbal or physical abuse of umpires results in immediate removal.
- Managers may not approach umpires after games for any reason.
- Parents may not confront coaches after games; a 24-hour cooling-off period applies.
- No warm-up swings outside the batter's box; only the current batter may hold a bat.

1.4 Player Equipment

- Helmets must be worn by batters, runners, and base coaches.
- Catchers must wear full protective gear, including a throat guard and cup.
- Metal cleats are permitted only in the Intermediate & Juniors division.

1.5 Dugout Rules

- The home team uses the first-base dugout.
- Only the Manager, two Coaches, and rostered players may be in the dugout.
- One approved adult must be present in the dugout at all times.
- CAPs and below divisions require a minimum of four approved adults present during games to safely support play, including pitching machine operation, base coaching, and dugout supervision.
- Rookies and below may have additional approved adults on the field to provide instruction, including in the outfield, as appropriate for player development and safety
- No food, gum, or seeds allowed inside the dugout.
- Electronics are limited to GameChanger scoring devices.
- No climbing fences, benches, or engaging in horseplay.
- Dugout gates must remain closed and latched during play.

1.6 Minimum Play

a. Minors Division and below:

No player may sit out a second defensive inning until all players on the roster have sat out at least one defensive inning. These divisions shall use a continuous batting order.

b. Majors Division:

The Majors Division shall use continuous batting and shall also follow Little League International's minimum play rule as defined in the Official Playing Rules.

c. Intermediate and Juniors Divisions:

Intermediate and Juniors divisions shall follow Little League International's standard minimum play rule as defined in the Official Playing Rules.

Managers must report any violations to the Player Agent. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Players must meet all Little League minimum play requirements.

1.7 Borrowed Players

- Borrowed players must bat last and may not pitch.
- They may not displace rostered players from their normal batting order positions or mandatory fielding positions.

1.8 Chain of Communication

To resolve concerns, families must follow this order:

- First, Manager;
- Second, Division Coach Coordinator;
- Third, Player Agent;
- Fourth, President.

Skipping steps is not permitted except in emergencies.

SECTION 2 — GAME PROCEDURES

2.1 Game Start Times

Games may start at 4:30 PM before the start of Daylight-Saving Time and at 5:00 PM after the start of Daylight-Saving Time, unless otherwise required for interleague play, field availability, or League scheduling needs.

For divisions using time limits, the official game time shall begin at the first pitch. The home plate umpire is responsible for maintaining the official game time and has final authority in all timekeeping decisions.

2.2 Game Cancellations

Before the first pitch, only the President or Vice President may cancel a game.

After the first pitch, the umpire has full authority over cancellations or suspensions.

2.3 Field Preparation & Breakdown

- Field prep and breakdown are required responsibilities for each game and do not count toward volunteer hours.
- The home team is responsible for field prep
- The visiting team is responsible for the cleanup & breakdown

2.4 Scorekeeping & Pitch Count

- The home team keeps the official scorebook.
- Visiting team tracks pitch count.
- Managers must ensure a trained GameChanger scorekeeper is assigned.

2.5 Warm-Ups & Safety

- No live-bat warmups near bleachers or spectators.
- No swinging bats outside the batter's box.
- Pitcher warm up areas are designated just outside the foul lines.

2.6 Umpire Authority

- Umpires maintain authority over all gameplay and safety decisions.
- Only the Manager may address the umpire.
- Recording umpires for critique, dispute, or social media use is prohibited.

2.7 Board Member On Duty (BMOD) Authority

- The Board Member on Duty may remove spectators or halt play when:
- Enforcing any safety or conduct rules.
- Providing harassment/ threat protection to umpires

SECTION 3 — SAFETY REGULATIONS

3.1 General Safety

Play must stop immediately if conditions become unsafe.

3.2 Lightning Protocol

Suspend play for 30 minutes after each lightning strike within 10 miles.

3.3 Air Quality Policy

- AQI >150: no practices or games
- AQI 100–150: modified activities only

3.4 Injury Return-to-Play

Players removed due to injury must be cleared by a parent/guardian or medical professional before returning to play.

3.5 Mandatory Volunteer Training

All managers, coaches, and on-field volunteers must complete all Little League–required trainings, including:

- Abuse Awareness for Adults
- Concussion Training
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training (if required)
- Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons (via Positive Coaching Alliance)

Proof of completion must be submitted before the first practice.

Individuals who do not complete all required training may not participate in practices or games until fully compliant.

SECTION 4 — PRACTICES & DIVISION STRUCTURE

4.1 Practice Frequency

- Preseason: No more than two (2) required team practices per week. All activities, including batting cage sessions, count toward this total.
- In Season: One (1) team practice and one (1) batting cage session per week. Batting cage sessions must be team organized and supervised by a rostered manager or coach. (Tee Ball may vary)

4.2 Practice Progression Standard

All team managers and coaches are required to:

- Review the League’s official practice progression each season
- Incorporate the minimum required elements into team practices
- Maintain warm-up, throwing, and safety routines aligned with League standards
- Participate in preseason training/briefing on the practice progression

Coaches retain flexibility in teaching style while adhering to the League’s developmental and safety standards.

4.3 Approved Practice Facilities

Cabrillo, Juarez, Wegeforth, Serra Mesa Recreation Center, Angier, Kearny Mesa Recreation Center, plus any Board-approved location, including batting cages and indoor facilities.

4.4 Supervision

A Manager or approved adult must supervise all practices.

4.5 Communication Platforms

GameChanger, WhatsApp, and email are the official communication platforms for League business.

4.6 Division Leadership & Conflict of Interest

A Manager or Coach may not serve as the Coach Coordinator for a division in which their team or child participates. This applies to both:

- Upper Divisions Coach Coordinator (Minors–Juniors)
- Lower Divisions Coach Coordinator (Tee Ball–Caps)

SECTION 5 — DIVISION PLAYING REGULATIONS

These rules apply to all divisions unless superseded by the Little League® Rulebook (see Section 1.9).

5.1 Player placement

Shall be based strictly on Little League age, safety considerations, and demonstrated developmental readiness as outlined in Little League Regulation IV.

5.2 Tee Ball Division

- No official scores or standings
- No outs recorded
- All players bat each inning
- Coaches may be on the field
- Safety balls only
- Games consist of three (3) innings or a one (1) hour time limit, whichever comes first
- The last batter each inning clears the bases
- Coach pitch may be introduced during the second half of the season, as appropriate for player development

5.3 Rookies Division

- Coach pitch
- 3 strikes or 5 total pitches, whichever comes first
- No walks
- 3 outs or full lineup batting (League option)
- No base stealing
- Coaches allowed on the field for defense
- Official game time begins at the first pitch
- No new inning may begin after one (1) hour of elapsed game time
- The inning in progress at the one (1) hour mark shall be the final inning
- A hard time limit of one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes shall be enforced, and the game will end immediately when the time limit is reached, regardless of inning status

5.4 CAPs Division

Game Length

- Official game time begins at the first pitch
- No new inning may begin after ninety (90) minutes of elapsed game time
- The inning in progress at the ninety (90) minute mark shall be the final inning
- A hard time limit of one (1) hour and forty five (45) minutes shall be enforced, and the game will end immediately when the time limit is reached, regardless of inning status
- Every effort should be made to complete the final inning once started; however, if time expires, the game will end at the time limit
- If the game is tied at the time limit, the game ends in a tie
- If time expires during an at bat, the batter shall complete the at bat

Scoring Structure

- Each half inning ends when five (5) runs have scored, three (3) outs are recorded, or the lineup has batted once through, whichever occurs first
- The sixth inning shall be an open inning

Defensive Alignment & Rotation

- A fourth outfielder may be used
- No player may sit more than one (1) inning per game until all players have sat once
- No player may play the same defensive position for more than two (2) consecutive innings
- Each player must play at least three (3) different defensive positions per game, including:
 - One (1) inning in the infield
 - One (1) inning in the outfield

Batting Order

- Continuous batting order
- All players present must be in the lineup
- Late arrivals are added to the bottom of the lineup

Base Running

- No stealing
- No leadoffs
- Runners may only advance when the ball is put into play
- No advancement on overthrows
- Only feet-first slides are permitted

Base Advancement — Season Progression

- First Portion of the Season (First half of scheduled games)
 - Runners may not advance once the defense has control of the ball in the infield
 - A maximum of two (2) bases may be advanced on any ball put into play, unless the ball is hit out of play
 - No advancement is permitted on overthrows
- Second Portion of Season (Second half of scheduled games)
 - Ball hit to outfield must be returned and controlled by an infielder on the infield dirt
 - If runner is less than halfway, they must return to previous base
 - If runner is more than halfway, they may advance
 - Infielders may make plays on runners without penalty of further advancement

Pitching Format

- First Portion of Season
 - Machine pitch (or coach pitch if machine unavailable)
- Second Portion of Season
 - Player pitch for the first 2 innings
 - Machine pitch for remaining innings

Player Pitch Restrictions

- Only players league age 7 or 8 may pitch
- Player pitchers may pitch a maximum of:
 - 1 inning per game
 - 40 pitches per game
- Player pitchers may not pitch in consecutive games
- A batter hit by a pitch is awarded first base
- A pitcher who hits two batters must be removed unless both managers agree otherwise

Defensive Play

- Outfielders may not record an unassisted out on the infield (except on fly balls)
- Ball must be thrown to an infielder to record an out on the infield

Catcher Position

- Catcher should properly play the position and wear catcher's gear
- If catcher does not properly play the position, that inning does not count toward required infield innings

Coaches on the Field

- Managers and coaches are permitted on the field
- At least one approved coach must remain in the dugout at all times

Conduct & Safety

- Bat throwing results in warnings; repeated offenses may result in removal
- Only the Manager may request time-out for rule interpretation
- Judgment calls are not contestable
- All participants must follow League Code of Conduct

5.5 Minors Division

Game Length

- Official game time begins at the first pitch
- No new inning may begin after one (1) hour and forty five (45) minutes of elapsed game time
- The inning in progress at the one (1) hour and forty five (45) minute mark shall be the final inning
- A hard time limit of two (2) hours shall be enforced, and the game will end immediately when the time limit is reached, regardless of inning status
- If time expires during an at bat, the batter shall complete the at bat

Batting Order

- Continuous batting order
- All rostered players present must be in the lineup
- Late arrivals are added to the bottom of the lineup

Minimum Play / Rotation

- No player may sit out more than one inning per game until all players have sat once

- Each player must play a minimum of three innings per game
- Each player must play at least one inning in the infield per game
- If a player misses required infield innings:
- The player must start the next game
- The player must play two innings in the infield before being benched or placed in the outfield
- If a player does not complete three innings due to a shortened game:
- The player must start the next game and play at least the first three innings

Scoring Structure

- Five-run maximum per inning, except for the final declared inning
- The sixth (6th) inning shall be the final inning and is an open inning with no run limit
- If the sixth inning is not reached, the last inning started prior to the no new inning time shall be considered the final inning and is an open inning with no run limit
- When a team bats through the entire lineup in an inning, the inning ends regardless of outs
- Latecomers must be added to the lineup

Pitching Restrictions

- Players who have attained league age 12 may not pitch in Minors
- Pitchers must be removed after hitting three batters with pitched balls unless both managers agree otherwise
- Batters must make a reasonable attempt to avoid wild pitches
- Hands in the strike zone do not count as hit batters

Base Running

- Base stealing permitted (per Little League rules)
- No leading off
- Base advancement governed by standard Little League Minors rules

Safety & Conduct

- No on-deck batter
- Bat throwing results in warnings; continued incidents may result in sitting an inning
- Coaches must stop play to address any safety concern

Adult Base Coaches

- Adult base coaches permitted at 1st and 3rd base if a third adult is present in the dugout
- Player base coaches must wear helmets

Playoffs

- All teams participate in playoffs
- Playoff format determined before the season begins
- Playoffs follow District 33 TOC tournament rules

5.6 Majors Division

- Standard Little League rules apply unless otherwise noted
 - Stealing is permitted; no leading off
 - Continuous batting order shall be used for all games
 - Regulation games are six (6) innings
- Game Length
 - Official game time begins at the first pitch
 - No new inning may begin after two (2) hours of elapsed game time
 - The inning in progress at the two (2) hour mark shall be the final inning
 - If time expires during an at bat, the batter shall complete the at bat
- Run Rule
 - A game shall end if a team is ahead by:
 - Fifteen (15) runs after three (3) innings
 - Ten (10) runs after four (4) innings
 - Eight (8) runs after five (5) innings
- Pitching
 - Pitchers must be removed after hitting three (3) batters with pitched balls

5.7 Intermediate Division (50/70)

- Standard Little League Intermediate (50/70) rules
- 50-foot pitching distance and 70-foot base paths
- Leading off and pickoffs permitted
- 7-inning regulation
- No new inning after 2 hours
- No run limit
- 10-run rule after 5 innings
- Metal cleats permitted except for on portable mounds

5.8 Juniors Division

- Full baseball rules
- Leading off & pickoffs allowed
- 7-inning regulation
- No new inning after 2 hours
- 10-run rule after 5 innings
- Metal cleats permitted except for on portable mounds

5.9 Division Playoffs

Applies to Minors, Majors, Intermediate, and Juniors divisions. Standings and tiebreakers shall be used to determine playoff seeding and, where applicable, Tournament of Champions (TOC) representation.

Regular season standings shall be based on win loss record. The League shall determine prior to the season whether interleague games are included in standings.

Ties in standings shall be broken in the following order:

- Head to head record
- Fewest runs allowed
- Most runs scored
- Coin toss

Playoffs

- All teams shall participate in playoffs unless otherwise specified prior to the season
- Playoff format, number of qualifying teams, and seeding will be communicated prior to the season
- Playoff seeding shall be based on regular season standings

Champion and TOC Representation

- The League shall designate whether the champion is determined by regular season standings or by playoff results prior to the season
- The designated champion shall represent the League in Tournament of Champions, provided all eligibility requirements are met
- If the champion is ineligible, the next eligible team based on standings or playoff results shall represent the League

This is intended to ensure clarity for managers and consistency in how standings, playoffs, and TOC representation are determined.

5.10 Division Pitching Rules

- LL pitch count rules apply: In accordance with Pitch Smart guidelines
- Daily limits
- Rest days
- Catcher-to-pitcher restrictions
- Ineligible pitcher rules
- Players who assess down from Juniors may not pitch in Majors

SECTION 6 — ALL-STARS & TOC

6.1 Tournament of Champions (TOC)

Failure to meet these requirements will result in TOC ineligibility.

A. Representation

Regular-season champions represent SMLL, pending eligibility.

B. Manager & Coach Eligibility They must:

- Complete all required trainings
- Have no ejections
- Have no unresolved conduct issues
- Attend required practices/games
- Umpire Support Requirement
 - Each team is expected to make a good-faith effort to support league umpiring needs with the league UIC. The league may pilot this program with incentives during the current season and evaluate for future implementation.

C. Team Volunteer Requirements

Majors teams must complete 10 verified volunteer hours. Minors teams must complete 10 verified volunteer hours.

Volunteer hours must be logged and verified before final standings are posted. Teams that do not meet the required hours are ineligible for the Tournament of Champions (TOC).

Qualifying volunteer hours include:

- Concessions shifts
- Field maintenance or special-project workdays
- League special events
- Any other Board-approved volunteer service

Non-qualifying hours include:

- Manager, coach, or team parent time
- Scorekeeping
- Dugout duty
- Base coaching
- Field prep or breakdown
- Any required team role

6.2 All-Star Manager/Coach & Team Selection

The Minors, Majors, Intermediate, and Juniors divisions may participate in the All-Star tournament after the close of the Spring season. The Board of Directors will determine which divisions will field All-Star teams each season.

Coach Selection

- The Manager and Coaches must be official members of a team during the regular season (they must be listed on their respective Team Roster filed with Little League, Inc. at the beginning of the season or listed on an amended roster during the first 2/3 of the season).

- All-Star Managers and Coaches must have Board of Directors approval by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those attending.
- The President shall appoint, with Board approval, the Managers and Coaches of All-Star teams.
- Coaches will be selected from Managers and Coaches of the Division they were in during the regular season, with the exception of the 9-11 All-Star division, where Managers and Coaches may be selected from either the Major or Minor Division.

Player Qualifications

- There will be a maximum of fourteen (14) players per team unless otherwise specified by tournament rules.
- All players must have acceptable proof of age (Official birth certificate or approved documentation) and proof of residency or school attendance per Little League, Inc. guidelines.
- Players must be in good financial standing with the League to be eligible for All-Stars.
- Players must be available and eligible for All-Star participation in order to be placed on the ballot or selected.
- Players may only be selected to one (1) All-Star team.

Player Selection – General Procedures

- Voting participants shall include:
 - Eligible players within the applicable division or age group
 - Division Managers
 - Up to two (2) Coaches per team
- Voters may vote for players on any team within the applicable division.
- Only players who are eligible and available for All-Stars may be placed on the ballot or submit a ballot.
- The top seven (7) eligible players receiving the highest number of votes shall be selected to the All-Star team.

The Division Managers will propose a list of players from the remaining pool of eligible players.

A committee consisting of the President, Player Agent, and one (1) additional Board member will have final approval over the remaining player selections to complete the roster.

All selections are contingent upon eligibility and availability. If a selected player is unable to participate, the committee may select a replacement from the remaining eligible players.

All ballots, vote totals, and selection discussions are confidential.

8- to 10-Year-Old All-Star Player Selection

- All league-age ten (10) year-old players on Major Division teams shall be named to the 8 to 10 Year-Old All-Star Team unless selected for the 10 to 12 Year-Old All-Star Team.

- Remaining roster positions shall be filled in accordance with the Player Selection – General Procedures.

9- to 11-Year-Old All-Star Player Selection (if the League chooses to field a team)

- Roster positions shall be filled in accordance with the Player Selection – General Procedures.

Junior Division and 10- to 12-Year-Old All-Star Player Selection

- Roster positions shall be filled in accordance with the Player Selection – General Procedures.

Little Stars Program

The League may elect to participate in the Little Stars tournament. The Board of Directors will determine each season whether a Little Stars team will be fielded.

Eligibility

- Players must meet all of the following requirements:
 - Be league age seven (7) or eight (8) during the current season
 - Be in good financial standing with the League
 - Be available and eligible for participation

Manager and Coach Selection

- The Manager and Coaches must be official members of a team during the regular season.
- All Little Stars Managers and Coaches must have Board of Directors approval.
- The President shall appoint, with Board approval, the Managers and Coaches of the Little Stars team.

Player Selection

- The Board of Directors will oversee the selection process.
- Selection may include input from Caps Division Managers.
- Final roster decisions will be made by the Board.

Fees

The Board of Directors will determine the participation fee, which may include uniforms, tournament entry fees, and other related costs.

6.3 All-Star Manager & Coach Selection Managers must:

All-Star managers and coaches will be selected based on their ability to provide a safe, organized, and positive experience for players during tournament play. Selection is intended to prioritize preparation, reliability, and alignment with League values.

A. Eligibility

- All candidates must:
- Be an approved volunteer and properly rostered with Little League during the regular season
- Be in good standing with the League, including no unresolved conduct issues
- Complete all required training and certifications

B. Selection Criteria

- The following factors will be considered in selecting All-Star managers:
- Demonstrated ability to support player development, sportsmanship, and a positive team environment
- Knowledge of rules and ability to manage games safely and effectively
- Reliability, communication, and adherence to League policies throughout the season
- Availability for All-Star practices, games, and tournaments
- Demonstrated support of League operations (including, but not limited to, efforts to assist with volunteer needs such as umpire coverage)

Selection will not be based solely on team record, standings, or regular season results.

C. Manager Interest and Availability

- Managers interested in being considered for an All-Star position must notify the League and provide a brief statement confirming:
- Availability for All-Star practices and tournament play
- Willingness to meet All-Star commitments and expectations
- Coaching approach and commitment to League values

The League will provide guidance on the format and expectations of this statement.

D. Selection Process

- A selection group (which may include the President, Player Agent, and other designated Board members) will review eligible candidates
- A recommended candidate will be presented to the Board
- All-Star managers must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board members in attendance

E. Assistant Coaches

Assistant coaches will be selected after All-Star rosters are finalized and must meet all eligibility requirements. Assistant coaches are subject to Board approval.

SECTION 7 — ADDITIONAL LEAGUE POLICIES

7.1 Travel Ball Field Use

Requires Little League International approval, insurance, adherence to blackout dates, and fields left in good condition.

7.2 Zero Tolerance for Harassment

Any harassment or aggressive behavior toward volunteers, coaches, umpires, players, or Board members may result in immediate removal or suspension.

7.3 Social Media Policy

- No posting photos or videos of umpires without prior League approval
- No negative or disparaging posts about players, coaches, volunteers, or the League
- No photos or videos taken from inside the dugout
- No livestreaming of games or team activities without prior League approval
- Live game streaming through the official GameChanger platform is permitted
- Any verbal or physical abuse of umpires, whether in person or through social media, is strictly prohibited
- Any verbal or physical abuse of umpires will be addressed under Article XIII Safety and Discipline. The Board may impose progressive discipline including removal from the venue, suspension, or volunteer disqualification, depending on the severity of the conduct

7.4 Draft Integrity

- No pre-draft agreements or arrangements between managers, coaches, players, or families
- No promises, assurances, or representations regarding draft selection, team placement, or future roster position
- No discussion of draft placement, rankings, or intentions with other managers, coaches, players, or families
- No attempts to influence, pressure, or coordinate with other managers regarding draft selections
- Communication with players and families prior to the draft must be limited to logistics and general League information. Any communication related to draft selection, recruitment, or team formation is prohibited
- Managers and coaches may not communicate with players or families during the draft, including texting, calling, or messaging
- All draft activities must be conducted in good faith and in accordance with Little League rules and League policies
- Any violation of draft integrity may be referred to the Board for review
- The Player Agent, in consultation with the Board, may impose penalties including loss of draft picks, modification of draft order, removal from the draft process, or other disciplinary action deemed appropriate

7.5 Manager Scorecard (Internal)

Managers may be evaluated on attendance, communication, sportsmanship, compliance, conduct, and parent feedback.

7.6 Dog Policy

Dogs must be on a leash and under control at all times, are not allowed on the field or in dugouts, and handlers must comply with all City and League safety rules.

7.7 Service Road & Parking Policy — Cabrillo Heights

Parking along the Cabrillo Heights service road is strictly prohibited.

Permitted access is limited to:

- Drop-off of heavy equipment
- Delivery of official Little League supplies

Time Limit

- Vehicles may not remain longer than 30 minutes
- First offense → written warning
- Second offense → suspension review Authorized Vehicles (Up to 5 total)

The following may park on the service road only when performing official League or District duties:

- SMLL Board Members
- District 33 staff
- Umpires assigned to officiate games

Event Vendors

- May park temporarily when supporting an approved League event
- Subject to BMOD oversight

Misuse may result in loss of service-road access.