

# Spotsylvania County Little League



## 2026 Local Rules and General Points of Emphasis

**Spring/Fall Specific Rules are notated as such.  
All other rules are applicable to both Spring and Fall.**

Significant changes or additions from previous year are highlighted.

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## Local League Rules

### All Levels Local Rules

1. No manager, coach, umpire, or parent may make any agreement that overrules any Little League Regulation or Rule or these by-laws.
2. Regulation X (a) is revised to read: "Tee Ball, Minor League, Little League (Majors) Division, Intermediate (50-70) Division, Junior, and Senior League games may be played after sundown under artificial lights. This responsibility shall rest with the Local Leagues. In any event, no inning of a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday game shall start after 9:00 p.m. prevailing time (8:00 p.m. for Tee Ball; 10:00 p.m. for Senior League). In accordance with Rule 2.00, an inning starts the moment that the third out is made, completing the preceding inning." (Charter Case #12-03-278).
3. The home team shall occupy the first base dugout. The visiting team shall occupy the third base dugout. In accordance with Rule 3.17, only eligible players in uniform, a manager, and not more than two coaches (three for T-Ball and Coach Pitch / Machine Pitch) shall occupy the dugout.
4. The on deck batter must remain in the dugout for T-Ball, CP/MP, Minor League, and Little League (Major) divisions. In accordance with Rule 1.08, there is no on deck circle for these divisions. Only the first batter of an inning may be outside of the dugout.
5. The home team shall be responsible for game balls, field preparation, and all equipment and material within the "blue box" storage units. It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure these units are locked at all times when not in use.
6. Regulation XIV (d) – Field Decorum – is revised to read: "A manager or coach shall not leave the bench or dugout except to confer with a player or an umpire and only after receiving permission from the plate umpire." (Exception: In Tee Ball and Coach/Machine Pitch divisions, managers and coaches may be on the field for instructional purposes, but shall not assist runners or touch a live ball. At least one rostered adult manager or coach must accompany players in the dugout at all times.)
7. All on-field participants must wear appropriate closed-toe athletic-style shoes during all games and practices. Croc-style shoes, sandals, and flip-flops are prohibited for safety reasons.
8. Suspended games that are later rescheduled resume with the same amount of time remaining. Umpires, if present, and scorekeepers should ensure that game start time and suspension time are recorded in the Home scorebook before leaving the field.
9. Family friendly music may be played in between innings and during player walk-up sequences. It must, however, cease promptly when the batter has both feet inside the batter's box, ensuring no disruption to the concentration or communication between players. Family friendly music includes songs with clean lyrics, and appropriate themes for children of all ages. It avoids explicit language, inappropriate content, or themes that are not suitable for a family audience.

### **Local League Rulebook Options (Does not apply to Tee Ball)**

1. SCLL has adopted optional Rule 6.02(c) requiring batters to keep one foot in the batter's box during their at-bat.
2. SCLL has adopted optional Rule 9.01(d), which determines that the stealing and relaying of pitch selection and location is to be considered unsportsmanlike behavior.
3. SCLL has adopted tournament Rule 3(d) in accordance with Rule 7.14, which limits the use of the Special Pinch Runner to twice per game. Use of a Special Pinch Runner is not permitted in divisions utilizing a Continuous Batting Order.
4. SCLL has adopted Rule 4.10(e) in its entirety to include the 15-run after three (3) innings (Intermediate, Junior, Senior four (4) innings), the 10-run after four (4) innings (Intermediate, Senior five (5) innings), and the 8-run after five (5) innings (Intermediate, Senior six (6) innings) run rule. Run rules do not apply to the non-competitive divisions of Tee Ball and Coach Pitch / Machine pitch.
5. SCLL has adopted the courtesy runner option in accordance with Rule 3.04 and the corresponding COURTESY RUNNER definition in Rule 2.00 – Definition of Terms.
6. SCLL has adopted the option to allow games to be started and played with 8 players in accordance with Rule 1.01, 4.04, 4.16 and 4.17, and has decided to allow the 9th position in the batting order to be skipped over without penalty in accordance with Rule 4.04 and 6.05.

### **Tee Ball (Baseball and Softball) Local Rules**

1. The Tee Ball division is for players League Age 4-6.
2. Tee Ball games shall be a maximum of three (3) innings in length. However, no inning shall begin after the official game clock reaches 1 hour.
3. Tee Ball games shall use a continuous batting order and each team shall bat once through the batting order. The half-inning is finished when the ball has been thrown to any infielder attempting to make a play. There is no automatic "home-run" for the last batter.
4. There will be no strike-outs and no official score shall be kept for the Tee Ball Division.
5. When an offensive player is retired by an out, they shall no longer be a base runner and should return to the dugout.
6. The defensive team shall take the proper positions in the infield, with an extra player positioned directly behind second base. The remaining players shall be placed in the outfield in the grass. There are no catchers in the T-Ball division.
7. Batter/runners may advance only to the base that is earned by the hit. There is no running on over-thrown balls.

8. **Spring Season:** Starting with games after April 25, 2026, managers have the option to pitch the ball to batters.
  - a. The coach must stand half-way between the pitcher's rubber and home plate. The ball may only be pitched under-handed in a "soft-toss manner."
  - b. The player will be given no more than 3 pitched balls, after which the tee must be brought out.
  - c. It is incumbent upon the manager to ensure each member of their team is ready to bat a pitched ball. If a member of the team is not ready or comfortable to hit a pitched ball, the player will be allowed to exclusively hit from a tee.

### **Minor League Coach/Machine Pitch Local Rules**

1. The Coach Pitch / Machine Pitch division is for players League Age 7-8. Players who are League Age 5 or 6 and who have completed at least one season of T-Ball may request an age waiver into the Coach/Machine Pitch division. Only League Age 5 players who are deemed to be a safety risk if they remain in T-Ball will be allowed to waiver into the Coach Pitch or Machine Pitch division.
2. Coach Pitch Softball and Coach Pitch/Machine Pitch baseball games shall be six (6) innings in length. However, no inning shall begin after the official game clock reaches 2 hours. The game is complete after 6 innings or after 2 hours, whichever comes first. If the score is tied at that time, the tie will not be broken.
  - a. With the Home team ahead, if time expires before the 3rd out in the top of the inning, the bottom of the inning will not be played.
  - b. With the Home team ahead in the bottom of the inning, the game is over when time expires.
3. The Minor League five (5) run limit applies to every half inning to include the last. The bottom half of the final inning shall be completed even when the home team is behind by more than 5 runs.
4. The Coach/Machine Pitch division is a free substitution division utilizing a continuous batting order. No player shall sit for 2 consecutive innings and no player present for the entirety of the game, shall sit for more than 3 innings in a 6 inning game.
5. Unless there is a valid safety concern, each player present for the entirety of the game, shall play at least six (6) defensive outs at an infield position. If a half-inning ends because of the five-run limit, and a player on defense has played for the entire half-inning, that player will be considered to have participated for 3 defensive outs. Valid safety concerns must be discussed with the player's parent(s) or guardian(s).
6. For Machine Pitch Baseball, each team will be given a portable pitching machine, which individual teams have the option to use during games. If you wish to use a pitching machine, you are responsible for providing a machine, but can use either team's machine for the game. The pitching machine can remain on the field even when not in use. An SCLL approved volunteer will operate the machine for his/her own team. Rule 5.09(f) shall apply when a fair ball touches the machine or machine operator.
  - a. When using a machine it will be placed 40 feet from the back of home plate to the leading edge of the pitching machine. The pitch speed shall be set at 38 mph according to the chart supplied with the machine. Specifically, the micro adjust will be set on 3;

the release block will be set on 4; and the power level set to 8. The only adjustments permitted during the course of a game are the micro adjustment screw to fine tune pitch delivery and the rear position of the machine for alignment. It is acknowledged that due to machine and age, these settings may need to be altered in order to deliver a hittable pitch from the preferred distance.

7. For Machine Pitch Baseball, when not using the machine, the pitcher must pitch from an area not to exceed 15 feet from the pitcher's plate. For Coach Pitch Softball, the pitcher must pitch from an area not to exceed 10 feet from the pitcher's plate when the pitcher's plate is positioned at the regulation 35 foot distance. Pitchers must pitch while using a full arm motion. The goal is to prepare the players for the next level. The coach pitcher can be any SCLL approved volunteer. Rule 5.09(f) shall apply when a fair ball touches the coach pitcher.
8. The defensive team shall take the proper positions in the infield at proper depth and shall place four players in the outfield (left, left-center, right-center, and right), who must be physically in the grass. If a team has only nine players present, the normal outfield positions will be used.
9. Balls will not be counted in this division. The normal baseball/softball rules governing pitched balls that have been swung at and missed or hit foul shall apply. However, once a player has reached a pitch count of six (6) total pitches his/her time at bat shall be terminated and he/she will be called out. If the sixth pitch is a foul ball, the batter will continue their turn at bat until the batter reaches base on a hit or swings and misses the ball, whichever comes first. If the sixth pitch, while using the pitching machine, hits the ground before crossing the plate or is delivered above the chin of the batter and was not swung at, the batter will receive another pitch.
10. There is no stealing or bunting in the Coach/Machine Pitch division.
11. The play is considered dead and no player may advance when the ball returns to the infield (dirt) area after a hit whether or not a player has the ball. Players may not advance on overthrows to any of the infield positions. For the purposes of this rule, the infield constitutes the entire area of the field covered in dirt, not just the area inside the foul lines.
12. Fielding masks are required for all players positioned in the infield in the Coach Pitch Softball division.

### **Minor League Player Pitch (AA / AAA Baseball and Minor Softball) Local Rules**

1. The Minor League is for players League Age 9-12. Placement within AA or AAA (if applicable) is determined by the player assessment and draft process.
2. Minor League games shall be six (6) innings in length. No new inning shall begin after the official game clock reaches 2 hours. Note: In accordance with changes to Regulation X (c), time shortened games are considered official regardless of number of innings played.
  - a. With the Home team ahead, if time expires before the 3rd out in the top of the inning, the bottom of the inning will not be played.
  - b. With the Home team ahead in the bottom of the inning, the game is over when time expires.

3. If time has expired during the top of an inning with the home team leading, the bottom of the inning shall not be played.
4. The Minor League five (5) run limit applies to every half inning to include the last. The bottom half of the final inning shall be completed even when the home team is behind by more than 5 runs.
5. In accordance with Rule 4.05, players may be a base coach, provided they are eligible players in the uniform of their team and they wear a batting helmet. Persons wearing casts must remain in the dugout and may not be on the field in any capacity during the game per Rule 1.11(k).
6. Stealing any base, to include home, is allowed at the sole discretion of the offensive team with liability to be put out. The offensive team must still comply with Rule 7.13 regarding leaving base before the ball has reached the batter.
7. Fielding masks are required for all players positioned in the infield in the Minor Softball division.

### **Little League (Major) Local Rules**

1. Little League (Major) is for players League Age 9-12. Placement in the Major Division is determined by the player assessment and draft process. Players not drafted into the Major division are drafted into the Minor division.
2. Little League (Major) games shall be six (6) innings in length. No new inning shall begin after the official game clock reaches 2 hours. Note: In accordance with changes to Regulation X ©, time shortened games are considered official regardless of number of innings played.
  - a. With the Home team ahead, if time expires before the 3rd out in the top of the inning, the bottom of the inning will not be played.
  - b. With the Home team ahead in the bottom of the inning, the game is over when time expires.
3. If time has expired during the top of an inning with the home team leading, the bottom of the inning shall not be played.
4. In accordance with Rule 4.05, players may be a base coach, provided they are eligible players in the uniform of their team and they wear a batting helmet. Persons wearing casts must remain in the dugout and may not be on the field in any capacity during the game per Rule 1.11(k).
5. SCLL has adopted the continuous batting order for Little League (Major) games in accordance with Rule 4.04.
6. Stealing any base, to include home, is allowed at the sole discretion of the offensive team with liability to be put out. The offensive team must still comply with Rule 7.13 regarding leaving base before the ball has been released by the pitcher (softball) or reached the batter (baseball).
7. Fielding masks are required for all players positioned in the infield in the Major Softball division.

## **Intermediate / Senior League Local Rules**

1. The Intermediate League is for players League Age 13. The Senior League is for players League Age 14-16.
2. Intermediate and Senior League games shall be seven (7) innings in length. No new inning shall begin after the official game clock reaches 2 hours. Note: In accordance with changes to Regulation X (c), time shortened games are considered official regardless of number of innings played.
  - a. With the Home team ahead, if time expires before the 3rd out in the top of the inning, the bottom of the inning will not be played.
  - b. With the Home team ahead in the bottom of the inning, the game is over when time expires.
3. If time has expired during the top of an inning with the home team leading, the bottom of the inning shall not be played.
4. In accordance with Rule 4.05, players may be a base coach, provided they are eligible players in the uniform of their team and they wear a batting helmet. Persons wearing casts must remain in the dugout and may not be on the field in any capacity during the game per Rule 1.11(k).
5. SCLL has adopted the continuous batting order for Intermediate Baseball and Junior/Senior Softball games in accordance with Rule 4.04.
6. If the on-deck circle is utilized, the on-deck batter must be positioned in the on-deck circle closest to their dugout in accordance to Regulation XIV(b) A.R.

## **Game Administration**

### **Score Keeping**

1. Each team must appoint a scorekeeper and a pitch counter that are approved volunteers of SCLL and have passed the required background check. In accordance with Regulation VI (f), the home team shall provide the official scorekeeper and official pitch counter (baseball) for the game. The official scorekeeper should not be a manager or coach of the team or be in the dugout during the game except during inclement weather.
  - a. This rule does NOT apply to the T-Ball Division.
  - b. The home team manager will report the official game score and pitch counts (baseball) or innings pitched (softball) for both teams via the SCLL ([spotsyll.org](http://spotsyll.org)) website within 24 hours of game completion. Teams are not required to submit pitch counts or innings pitched for Out of County teams.
  - c. The scorekeepers and pitch counters for both teams must confer with each other after every half-inning to ensure both scorebooks are kept consistent.
  - d. Discrepancies must be resolved before leaving the field. Once the visiting manager and official scorekeeper have signed the official scorebook, that scorebook is the official record of the game and must be turned into SCLL.
  - e. In baseball, pitch counters must use the [SCLL Pitch Count Log](#).
  - f. All pitching records, including number of pitches per game in baseball and number of innings pitched in softball, must be recorded on the SCLL Pitcher Eligibility Form ([Baseball](#) | [Softball](#)).
  - g. Managers must provide starting line-ups, list of ineligible pitchers, and subsequent player substitutions to the opposing manager and umpire-in-chief of the game.

### **Player Pool**

1. A Player Pool may be utilized in all kid pitch divisions (AA, AAA, Minor, Major, Intermediate, Senior). A manager who believes his/her team will not be able to field enough players to play a game must request additional players from the Player Pool. Borrowing a player from the opposing team is NOT authorized.
  - a. The Player Pool is run by the respective Player Agent.
  - b. If available, players will be assigned by the Player Agent according to a blind order. No manager or coach will be allowed to pick the player to request and cannot add a player to fill a hole without the Player Agent's permission. The names of the authorized player pool players will be sent to both team managers prior to the game.
  - c. Players that are called up to play in a game as a Player Pool player must start the game, play 9 consecutive defensive outs, receive a minimum of 1 at-bat, and may not pitch during the game. Player Pool players may not catch on days that they have another Little League game scheduled for their own team.
  - d. Games in which non approved players are utilized do not count towards the minimum team game totals needed for tournament eligibility.

## **Protests**

1. According to Rule 4.19, a manager may protest a game based on the violation or interpretation of a playing rule, use of an ineligible pitcher, or the use of an ineligible player. The protest must be made and reported in accordance with 4.19(c).
2. Regular season game protests are entirely under the jurisdiction of the local league. The protest committee may however, consult the District Administrator or the Southeast Region for rule or regulation interpretations.

## **Inclement Weather**

1. When lightning is seen or thunder is heard all game or practice participants to include players, managers, coaches, and umpires must clear the field and seek shelter in cars or a substantial building for a minimum of 30 minutes. Under no circumstances should a team be permitted to take the field before the minimum 30 minute delay is completed.
2. The following scenarios determine postponement or resumption of league games:
  - a. Games that begin before 5:30 pm must adhere to a minimum 30 minute delay after the last bolt of lightning is seen or the last roll of thunder is heard. If the delay will continue due to continued lightning or thunder for at least 1 hour, the game will be postponed.
  - b. Games that begin after 5:30 pm and scheduled on a field with no lights will be postponed at the first sign of thunder or lightning.
  - c. Games that begin after 5:30 pm and scheduled on a field with lights must adhere to a minimum 30 minute delay after the last bolt of lightning is seen or roll of thunder is heard. If the delay will continue due to continued lighting or thunder for at least 1 hour, the game will be postponed.
3. The use of weather apps are encouraged to track storms in the area, but do not replace or supersede adverse conditions seen or heard at a field. During a delay, Umpires (when present) and managers can use these apps to determine the likelihood of being able to resume or complete the game.
4. If during a delay, it becomes apparent that field or weather conditions will not allow the start or continuation of play, the practice or game should be postponed.
5. In accordance with Rule 3.10(b) and 4.01(d), once the home team's lineup card has been handed to the umpire at the plate conference, he or she shall be the sole judge as to whether or when play shall be suspended or if a game can be resumed.
6. Depending on resource availability and season game requirements, SCLL will attempt to reschedule postponed games or games which were suspended prior to becoming a regulation game.

7. In the absence of a league decision, the determination to play will be a game time decision made at the field. This decision will be made by either the managers or the umpire, if present, in accordance with Rule 3.10 and 4.01(d). SCLL will attempt to make a determination prior to 4 pm on weeknights and as soon as feasible on weekends.
  
8. Unless otherwise announced by the league, managers have the responsibility to determine if their practice will be cancelled or delayed/resumed as long as the 30 minute minimum delay is adhered to.