

## 2026 Spring LBLL Minor Division Rules

*\*It is the coaching staff's responsibility to know these rules. It is also the coaching staff's responsibility to educate their **players and their parents** regarding these rules. A violation of these rules subjects any team to a forfeit at the discretion of the minors player agent in consultation with the LBLL Board. Coaches are encouraged to resolve any dispute and continue play. If the rules dispute cannot be resolved, teams shall finish the game and submit the protest to the Player Agent post-game.*

### 1. **General**

#### a. **Standard Little League Rules Apply.**

The standard Little League rule unless specifically addressed and thereby superseded by these 2024 Spring LBLL Minor Rules.

Download the Little League Rulebook App here:

<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/little-league-rulebook-app/>.

The below rules are to enhance Minor Division play to benefit the spirit of this level, which is developmental.

#### b. **No Heckling.**

No heckling of batters or players is allowed and shall be cause for dismissal from the game. Bats and helmets thrown in anger shall be considered cause for dismissal. Cheering for your own batters is allowed until the pitcher begins his wind up, at which time all team cheering must cease.

#### c. **Ejections and Suspensions.**

If a manager or coach is ejected from a game, they are automatically suspended for the next game and may not be on the field premises for the game as a spectator. Exceptions shall only be made with majority LBLL Executive Board approval.

### 2. **Pre-Game**

#### a. **Home Team Sets Up / Visitor Cleans Up.**

The home team shall occupy the third base dugout. They are responsible for all pre-game field prep – dragging, chalking, and everything else necessary to get the field game ready. The visiting team is responsible for postgame cleanup – dragging, putting the bases and other gear in the shed, and watering (if the last game of the day). The Home Team is responsible for keeping the official score and operating the scoreboard.

b. **2 Lineup Cards.**

Managers shall provide 2 copies of their lineup card to the opposing manager prior to the start of the game (one for scorekeeper).

c. **Warmups in Outfield Only.**

Each team shall stay off the infield dirt during warmups and occupy their respective outfield area to get ready for the game.

d. **Keep Your Own Pitch Counts.**

Each manager is responsible for their own players pitch counts. In the event of a dispute, the home team official scorekeeper will make the call on the official count. Pitch count violations subject the violating team to a forfeit at the discretion of the LBLL Board.

e. **9 Players Required.**

Teams must have at least 9 players to begin a game and 8 players to continue a game. If a team falls below 8 players they must forfeit. Managers are encouraged to “call up” advanced rookie players to field a 10-player team. Call up players must bat at the end of the lineup.

**3. General Game Play Rules**

a. **4 Coach Max.**

A team may have one manager, two on-field coaches, and one dugout coach while their team is batting (4 coaches total). When on defense, two coaches may be on the field and the remaining two coaches must be in the dugout. The coaching staff shall remain in the dugout during play. If a non-coach parent is needed in the dugout due to the absence of one of the team’s assigned coaches, that parent will 1) notify the umpire and opposing coaching staff immediately, and 2) immediately vacate the dugout upon the arrival of the team’s regular coach.

b. **Manager Only Communicates with Umpire.**

Only the manager shall communicate with the umpire and/or the opposing team, and even then, only minimally. Please refer to the Official Little League Rules as it pertains to interaction with umpires. Inappropriate interaction with the umpires by the coaching staffs or team parents will result in an immediate ejection and possible

additional suspension. There shall be NO communication between managers, coaches, parents and Youth Umpires. All communication must be with the Head Umpire. This is a zero-tolerance issue.

c. **No Complaints or Heckling Umpires.**

Parents, spectators, and/or coaches who are complaining about balls and strikes or other umpire calls during the game will be ejected. Repeated violations will lead to a forfeit of the game subject to the umpire's discretion.

d. **5-Run Max.**

All innings will have a maximum 5 runs allowed, except in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning (or 'final inning' as determined by both Managers where time or daylight is running out) where there is no run limit. A natural play shall not end immediately upon the scoring of a 5<sup>th</sup> run. The play shall conclude, however 5 runs is the maximum number of runs that will be scored.

e. **Game Time Rules**

**2-Hour Game Limit.**

At the beginning of the game, the managers and umpire will note the exact start time for purposes of implementing this rule. The maximum game time is two hours. If the game is not complete when the maximum game time is reached, the score rolls back to the last fully completed inning. The sole exception to an incomplete game rolling back to the previous inning is in the case of a home team having taken the lead in the bottom of the last inning (a walk-off). Should the home team gain the lead in the bottom of the inning but prior to reaching 2 hours, the game shall be deemed official at that point, even if the inning has not finished.

**No New Inning after 1:45.**

No inning shall start past 1 hour 45 minutes from the official start time. The final inning of game, regardless of start time, will not have a run cap. Final inning will be determined prior to the start of the final inning by either the umpire or both managers in mutual agreement.

**Darkness.**

Ending a game because of darkness is at the discretion of the umpire. Games called for darkness or due to time restrictions, or due to any other unsafe conditions by the umpire shall revert back to the

last completed inning for the final score. However, if the home team is batting and is either winning or the score is tied and the game is called, the score at that time will be the final score.

**Sportsmanship Regarding Game Timing.**

Any coach deemed by the umpire to be intentionally manipulating the pace of play to ensure a victory based on timing rules shall be subject to penalty including but not limited to a player being called out, time being extended, or even forfeit. Post-game penalties may also be imposed at the discretion of the minors player agent in consultation with the LBL board.

**f. Score and Pitch Count Reports**

Winning manager shall report the score of the game to the Minors Player Agent via the Minors managers group text or email. The Player Agent will update the information on Team Sideline. Each manager shall report pitch counts to the Minors Player agent via the group text.

**4. Pitching Rules**

**a. No Balks.**

The balk rule will not be enforced. If the pitchers balking motion disrupts the batter, the umpire can call a no-pitch.

**b. 3-inning (9 outs) / 50 pitch Max.**

Regardless of pitch counts, Minor Division pitchers cannot appear in more than (3) innings (9 consecutive outs) per game.

**c. 3 Hit Batters Max.**

A player who hits three batters by pitch in one game must be removed from the game as pitcher.

**d. Mound Meetings.**

A manager may have a total of 2 meetings with the active pitcher (crossing the foul line toward the pitcher) per inning. The second meeting will require removal of the pitcher. A coach shall not manipulate this rule by calling the pitcher to the foul line for visits. At the discretion of the umpire, timeouts and pitcher communication may be deemed an official visit.

**e. Modified Pitch Count Rules (est. 2025).**

In collaboration with other hill leagues, LBLL has adopted the following count rules. Any violation of these rules will lead to a forfeit. Similarly, if pitch counts are not recorded and reported, the violating team will be subject to a forfeit.

AGE	MAXIMUM PITCHES PER DAY	
	Before March 31	After March 31
11 – 12	65	75
9 – 10	55	65
7 – 8	35	40

Additionally, there are mandated rest days based on the number of pitches thrown, by age. The rest requirements are found here:

PITCHES	DAYS REST REQUIRED	
	Before March 31	After March 31
1 – 20	1 Day	0 Days
21 – 35	1 Day	1 Day
36 – 50	2 Days	2 Days
51 – 65	3 Days	3 Days
66 – 75	4 Days	4 Days

f. **Coach Pitch.**

After ball 4, a coach shall come out to pitch the remainder of the at bat from the base of the mound (one foot on mound dirt). The batter will keep his or her strike count. For example, if the count is full 3-2 and a kid pitches ball 4, the coach shall come out to finish the at bat, but the batter will still have two strikes. The at bat will continue until there is three strikes or the ball is put in play. The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes during coach pitch. If a batter watches a ball in the strike zone a strike will be called.

- g. **One coach-pitch pitcher.** Teams shall designate one coach to be a team’s pitcher. If necessary, that coach can change mid-game but the change shall not be strategic. A specific coach or parent shall not pitch to a specific child or player based on comfort or competitive advantage.

h. **Pitcher Position During Coach Pitch.**

The actual pitcher shall have one foot on the mound dirt during coach pitch to prevent a rover type player. The pitching coach shall have one foot on the mound dirt as well.

- i. **5 pitch max.** A coach gets a maximum of 5 pitches; however the final pitch cannot be a foul ball.

## 5. **Defensive Rules**

### a. **4 Outfielders.**

Each team shall be allowed 10 players on the field. If there are 10 players, there must be 4 outfielders (LF, LC, RC, RF). An outfielder cannot play as an outfield or infield "rover". Outfielders must be at least 20 feet from the infield dirt before every pitch, which may be denoted with cones/field markers. There are no shifts allowed.

### b. **All Players Sit.**

No player, regardless of the team's roster size, may sit for a second inning in the same game before all players on the team have sat at least one inning.

### c. **2 infield innings by 5th Inning.**

Every game all players must play at least two (2) complete innings in the infield by the completion of the fifth inning. This is a zero-tolerance rule. Failure to follow this rule will result in forfeiture of the game.

### d. **Position changes only for injury or pitcher change.**

Once players start an inning at a position, they must play the entire inning at that position unless there is a pitching change that affects their use (pitching change may necessitate a multi-player change); OR there is an injury and a player must leave the game. There is NO situational switching of positions in the middle of an inning. If a player is moved out of the infield during a pitching change, that inning shall not count as an "infield inning" for that player.

## 6. **Batting Rules**

### a. **USA Bats Required.**

Players shall use USA-approved bats only. The first unintentional violation by a team shall constitute a warning. An intentional violation is an automatic out. A batter will be deemed out for the second unintentional violation.

b. **Continuous Lineup.**

Every player present at the beginning of the game will be placed in the batting lineup to be used for the entire game. Late players will be placed at the end of the lineup (regardless of where in the batting order the team currently is). Players leaving before the conclusion of the game for injury or otherwise will be skipped in each subsequent at bat with no penalty to their team. A player removed who is skipped in one at bat, may not return to the game for any reason. Free substitutions will be allowed with the exception that a pitcher who is replaced in that position may not pitch again in the same game.

c. **Strike Zone.**

The strike zone shall be from the armpits to the bottom of the knees and the width of the plate, plus a ball off both corners. Umpires will be notified of this expanded strike zone, but Managers are encouraged to remind the umpires during the pre-game meeting.

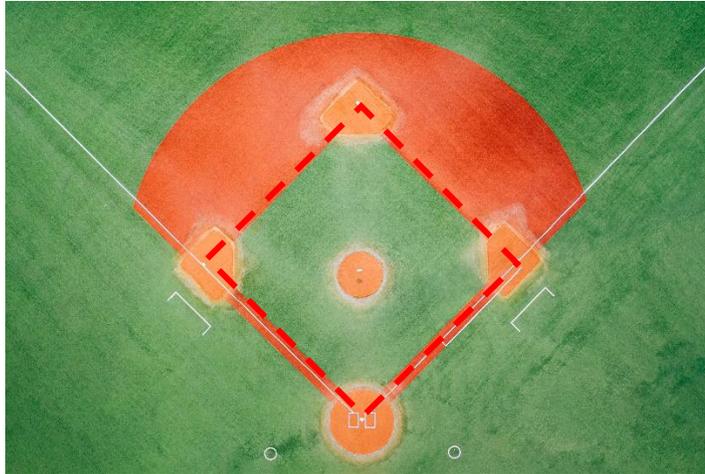
d. **Bat Throws – 1 warning per team.**

Bats thrown while in the process of swinging are prohibited. The first instance shall result in a team warning. Any further violation(s) will result in the ball called dead and the batter automatically called out. The only player who is allowed to have a bat in their hands is the current batter.

7. **Base Running**

a. **“Pitcher’s Hand” Dead Ball Rule.**

After a batter hits the ball, runners are allowed to advance until the pitcher secures the ball within the designated "baseline square" in the infield.



Once the pitcher has secured the ball, runners are not permitted to advance further. Any attempt to do so is at the runner's own risk, and any outs made during such attempts will be considered valid. The extra throw by the pitcher to make an out is "free" (similar to when catcher makes attempt to throw out a stealing runner).

If a runner reaches safety, they will be placed at the base they were closest to when the pitcher secured the ball. For example, if the runner was less than halfway to third base when the pitcher secured the ball, but continued running, and the pitcher throws the ball to third but the runner is safe, the play will be dead but the runner will be required to go back to second.

**b. Comebacker to Pitcher Exception.**

On a comebacker to the pitcher, runners are permitted to advance at least one additional base (meaning, the ball is not dead when batted directly to the pitcher). If the pitcher holds the ball and does not throw it, the runners cannot advance more than one base.

**c. Limited Stealing Permitted.**

During kid pitch only, a runner may advance to the next base on a passed ball that makes contact with the backstop. Advancing is limited to one base only, even on a throwdown. Home is closed and runners may not steal home. Additionally, there is no drop third stealing of first base. While a runner may take a secondary lead when the ball crosses home plate, the runner may not attempt to go to second base unless the ball makes contact with the backstop. If a runner leaves early, the umpire may require him to return to his original base.

d. **One Base On Overthrow (per play)**

With the exception of a throwback from the catcher to the pitcher after a pitch and throws made by a pitcher attempting to get a runner out after securing the "dead ball," overthrows are applicable to any ball thrown to a base with the intent to make an out or prevent the advancement of the runner to that base. This also includes throws to the pitcher in an effort to conclude a play.

Runners are permitted to advance a maximum of one additional base at their own risk, meaning they can be thrown out while attempting to take that extra base. The only exception to this is when the play is declared dead due to a second overthrow, and the runner is simply returning to the base. After a second overthrow, the play is immediately dead.

e. **No infield fly rule.**

The infield fly rule does not apply in Minors.

## 8. Playoffs

- a. All teams will make the playoffs. The top seed will receive a first round bye. 2 shall play 7, 3 shall play 6, and 4 shall play 5. The worst seed advancing will play the 1 seed and the other the 2 seed in a final 4 single elimination tournament.