# 2023 LITTLE LEAGUE® RULEBOOK SIGNIFICANT UPDATES

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

**Baseball, Softball, and Challenger – Regulation I(b) – The League:** This permits a league's Board of Directors to be comprised of no more than 75% of current team manager(s)/coach(es).

- The president, with approval of the Board of Directors, shall appoint managers, coaches, and umpires annually. ~~Manager/coach representation on the Board shall not exceed a minority.~~ A quarter (25%) of the Board shall be comprised of members that are not current Manager(s)/coach(es).

**Baseball and Softball – Regulation IV(c, Note 1) – The Players:** Permits a player to participate in more than one affiliated Little League program, granted their home league does not offer an affiliated Little League Softball program.

- **NOTE 1:** At the time of registration, a player must designate whether he or she will tryout for baseball, softball, or both, if program option permits. A player may be on two rosters in a local Little League program; however, a player shall not register and participate in more than one local Little League program, unless registering in a second program to participate in softball because their home league does not offer an affiliated Little League Softball program.

**Baseball and Softball – Regulation IV(f) – The Players:** This change require players to attend one player evaluation event instead of 50% of the total number of events scheduled by the league.

- (f) **Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Baseball Division/Junior/Senior League:** Any candidate failing to attend at least ~~50 percent~~ one of the spring tryout sessions, shall forfeit league eligibility unless an excuse is presented which is accepted by a majority of the Board of Directors.
- All other parts of this regulation remain unchanged for the Tee Ball and Minor Leagues and the Note.

**Baseball and Softball (Senior Division) – Regulation VII(a) – Schedules; Tournament Organization – League Eligibility:** Removes the mandatory minimum for number of regular season games for the Senior League Division of Baseball and Softball only.

- (a) The schedule of games for the regular season shall be prepared by the Board of Directors of the league and must provide for not less than twelve (12) games [**Senior Division**: No minimum regular season games required] per team per regular season against other Little League teams within their respective division, exclusive of playoff and tournament games. Tee Ball: It is recommended that no more than twelve (12) games be scheduled per team per season.

**Baseball and Softball – Rule 1.11(a)(3) – Arm Bands:** Outlines the use of arm bands for on-the-field play.

- **(a)(3)** Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color. The pitcher's undershirt sleeves, if exposed, shall not be white or gray. Neoprene sleeves, if worn by a pitcher, must be covered by an undershirt. The use of play calling bands by defensive players is permitted under the following conditions:
    - The equipment must be worn as the manufacturer intended (i.e. on either the wrist or forearm)
    - The play calling band may not be attached to the belt or any other location on the player's person.
    - Baseball and Softball pitchers are permitted to wear a play calling band on their non-pitching (glove) arm, provided it is a solid color and not white, gray, or optic yellow. If the umpire considers it distracting to the batter, he/she may have it removed.

- **NOTE:** A pitcher shall not wear any items on his/her hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the batter, e.g. sweat bands.

**Baseball and Softball – Rule 1.11(j) – Jewelry:** Clarifies that hard items used to control hair are permitted for on-the-field play.

- Players must not wear jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, nor any hard cosmetic/decorative items. This rule applies regardless of the composition of such jewelry, hard cosmetic item, or hard decorative item. Hard items to control the hair, such as beads, are permitted.

  **EXCEPTION:** Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.

**Baseball and Softball (Regular Season) – Rule 3.09:** This would aid in efforts to improve the pace of play by allowing adult coaches to warm up pitchers for regular season only.

- Managers or coaches ~~must not~~ are permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time including in-game warm-up, pre-game warm-up, and in other instances. They may also stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.

**Baseball and Softball (Regular Season) – Rule 4.10(e):** This would revise the run rule for all divisions of play during the regular season, adding an additional condition in which, if after five (5) innings [Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League: six innings], four and one-half innings [Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League: five and one-half innings], 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.

- If after (3) innings **[Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League:** four innings], two and one-half innings **[Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League:** three and one-half innings] if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after four (4) innings **[Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League:** five innings], three and one-half innings **[Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League:** four and one-half innings], if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after five (5) innings **[Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League:** six innings], four and one-half innings **[Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League:** five and one-half innings], 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: (1)** If the visiting team has a lead of fifteen (15), ten (10), or eight (8) runs or more respectively, the home team must bat in its half of the inning. (2) The local league may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule. A game determined by the 15-run rule, 10-run rule, or 8-run rule shall be considered a regulation game.

**Baseball (Regular Season and Tournament Play) – Rule 6.08(a)(2):** Expands the intentional walk from the Little League (Major) and Minor League Divisions into the Intermediate (50-70) /Junior League/Senior League Divisions.

- The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided said runner advances to and touches first base) when –
    - (a)(2) **ALL DIVISIONS:** the defense elects to "Intentionally Walk" the batter by announcing such decision to the plate umpire. The request may be made prior to or during the at-bat.
    - **NOTE 1:** Such notification must be made by the defensive manager. The manager must request and be granted "time" by the umpire and then inform the umpire of the defense's intent to walk the batter.
    - **NOTE 2:** The ball is dead, and no other runners may advance unless forced by the batter's award. The appropriate number of "balls" needed based on the count on the batter at the time of the manager's request to complete the Intentional Walk will be added to the pitch count.

**Baseball and Softball (Regular Season and Tournament Play) – Rule 6.08(a)(2):** This revises the intentional walk rule so that a player may only be intentionally walked by announcing such decision to the plate umpire one time during the course of the game. This would not restrict a team from throwing four balls outside of the strike zone to this batter at another time during the game.

- The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided said runner advances to and touches first base) when –
    - (a)(2) **ALL DIVISIONS:** the defense elects to "Intentionally Walk" the batter by announcing such decision to the plate umpire. The request may be made prior to or during the at-bat. A player may only be intentionally walked by announcing such decision to the home plate umpire one time during the course of the game. This would not restrict a team from throwing four balls outside of the strike zone to this batter at another time during the game.
    - **NOTE 1:** Such notification must be made by the defensive manager. The manager must request and be granted "time" by the umpire and then inform the umpire of the defense's intent to walk the batter.
    - **NOTE 2:** The ball is dead, and no other runners may advance unless forced by the batter's award. The appropriate number of "balls" needed based on the count on the batter at the time of the manager's request to complete the Intentional Walk will be added to the pitch count.

# TOURNAMENT

**Baseball and Softball (Tournament Play) – Managers and Coaches in the Dugout:** This would allow teams to have up to three eligible coaches permitted in the dugout regardless of tournament team roster size.

- **Tournament Organization, Managers/Coaches in the Dugout**
    - ~~If a tournament team has twelve (12) or more eligible players in uniform at the game site at the start of a game, then the~~ A maximum of three (3) adults who are named on the affidavit (or authorized replacements as noted on the affidavit) will be permitted to act as manager/coaches for that game. ~~However, if a tournament team has eleven (11) or fewer eligible players in uniform at the game site at the start of the game, then a maximum of two (2) adults must be named at the start of the game as manager and coach.~~ The ~~two~~ named adults must be listed on the affidavit or must be authorized temporary replacements as noted on the affidavit. If there is a third adult listed on the affidavit, that adult is ~~no~~t permitted to be in the dugout or on the field during that game.
    - **NOTE:** Base coaches may be adults and/or players provided at least one adult manager or coach remains in the dugout. See 4.05(b).

**Baseball and Softball (Tournament Play) – Managers and Coaches:** Requires all tournament managers and coaches to complete the Little League Diamond Leader Training Program (LittleLeague.org/DiamondLeader).

- As a condition of eligibility for selection as a tournament team manager/coach, the regular season manager/coach must have also completed the Little League Diamond Leader Training Program (LittleLeague.org/DiamondLeader). This program must be completed prior to the individual being named a tournament team manager/coach and before participating in any practices or games. Tournament Team managers/coaches who have completed the program should be prepared to produce the Little League Diamond Leader completion certificate if requested by the District Administrator/Tournament Director.

**Baseball and Softball (Senior Division) – TOURNAMENT ORGANIZATION – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:** Provides flexibility to local leagues for the Senior Divisions of tournament play to place a player on a tournament team roster regardless of regular season participation.

- **Senior League** – Any player League age 12,13,14,15, or 16, with amateur status, who has/is registered with a local league in which they meet the residency or school enrollment requirements ~~participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in six (6) regular season games (Special Games may be counted toward this requirement)~~ by the start of Tournament Play. ~~in their respective District, with the exception of the middle school, junior high school or high school baseball season.~~

**Baseball and Softball (All Divisions except Senior Division) – TOURNAMENT RULE 9 – MANDATORY PLAY:** Replaces the previous tournament mandatory play rule with a continuous batting order requirement for all divisions of tournament play except for the Senior Division.

- **9. MANDATORY PLAY – CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER: 8- to 10-Year-Old, 9- to 11-Year-Old, Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division, and Junior League: All Tournament Teams must adopt a policy of a continuous batting order that will include all players on the team affidavit present at the start of the game, to appear in the batting order. Each player is required to bat in his/her respective spot in the batting order.**
  a. **Baseball:** A player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively in the game at any time. Tournament Rule 4 (c) provisions apply: 8-to10-Year Old Division, 9-to11-Year Old Division, Little League: Pitchers once removed from the mound, may not return as pitchers. Intermediate (50/70) and Junior Division: A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game. **Softball:** A player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively in the game at any time. Tournament Rule 4 provisions apply: 8-to10-Year Old Division, 9-to11-Year Old Division, Little League [Tournament Rule 4 (d)]: A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed. Junior League, Senior League [Tournament Rule 4 (c)]: A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed. A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate the substitution, visits per pitcher, or mandatory play rule(s). Penalty: See Rule 10(f) .
  b. If a player is injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over him/her when his/her time at bat comes up without penalty. If the injured, ill, or absent player returns, he/she is merely inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues. Also, if a player arrives later to a game site, if the manager chooses to enter him/her in the lineup (see Rule 4.01 NOTE 2), he/she would be added to the end of the current lineup.

*****Please note that while no Defensive Outs are required for Tournament play, D-11 Regular season play will require 6 Defensive outs as part of Minimum play requirement. These do not have to be consecutive.**

c. An improper batter will be considered as batting out of turn (see Rule 6.07).

d. If a player is unable to complete a plate appearance due to injury, illness or ejection, the next batter in the lineup shall take his/her place at the plate and assume the count of the original batter.

e. If a batter becomes a runner by reaching base safely and is unable to run the bases due to injury, illness, or ejection, he/she shall be replaced by the player who recorded the last out or with a Courtesy Runner if applicable (see Tournament Rule 3 (d) Courtesy Runner).

f. There is no exception to this rule. This rule does not apply to Senior Divisions of play.

**NOTE:** The rule replaces **Regulation IV (i)** and **Rule 3.03**

g. Managers are solely responsible for ensuring that all players fulfill the requirements of playing participation.

h. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to impose penalties (including, but not limited to removal of the manager, forfeiture of a game, and/or disqualification of the team or coaches from further tournament participation) may be imposed if, in the opinion of the Tournament Committee:

1. if a manager or coach takes any action that results in making a travesty of the game, causing players to intentionally perform poorly for the purpose of extending or shortening a game, or;
2. a team fails to meet the requirements of this rule more than once during the International Tournament, which begins with District play and ends at the World Series level (State level for 8-to-10- and 9-to-11-Year-Old Divisions), or;
3. a manager willfully and knowingly disregards this rule.

**Baseball and Softball (All Divisions) – TOURNAMENT RULE 3 (d, Baseball; e, Softball) – Special Pinch Runner/Courtesy Runner:** Updates the previous tournament special pinch runner rule to apply for Senior Division only, while providing a courtesy runner option for all other divisions of tournament play.

- d. **8- to 10-Year-Old, 9- to 11-Year-Old, Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division, and Junior League: COURTESY RUNNER:** A tournament team may permit a "courtesy runner" for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Utilizing continuous batting order, the courtesy runner may be in the team's batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.
- d. **Senior Division:** Twice a game but not more than one time per inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch-runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the line-up, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-runner.