



Athens Little League Operations Manual



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Our Mission is: To implant firmly in the children of the community the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage, and respect for authority, so that they may be well adjusted, stronger, and happier children and will grow to be good, decent, healthy, and trustworthy citizens.

Our Values are:

Character
Confidence
Commitment

Our Goals are to:

- Help players develop confidence in their skills and a greater understanding of the game.
 - Instill a respect for the game and all who are involved.
- Teach the values of discipline, teamwork, and sportsmanship.
- Foster an environment of safe and healthy competition.

We honor the true definition of competition by seeking to inspire and enable our kids to achieve excellence in the sport of baseball/softball and in life - to improve each day, to encourage teammates and fellow competitors to do the same, and to enjoy the experience that comes from the pursuit of common goals and the achievement of athletic excellence.

Athens Little League is a 501c3 registered non-profit. Our Federal Tax ID # is 02381501.

This document has been prepared to assist you in your role within the Athens Little League.

General League Information

1:1 The guidelines set forth below are Athens Little Leagues (Athens LL) additions and modifications to the Little League Official Rules, which have been adopted by the Athens LL Board of Directors (the "Board") and approved by our Members. In some cases, Rules and Regulations have been repeated here for emphasis. Except for the limited special provisions outlined in these Guidelines, the contents of the Little League Official Rules will govern all play and conduct of players, coaches, and managers across all levels of Athens LL.

The Rules Committee may review and interpret these Rules and make recommended changes or points of discussion for the Board of Directors' consideration, which are reviewed annually.

Updated: _____, 2024

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2.1 Annual Schedule

Jan 1	Registration Opens
Jan 7	Board Meeting
Feb 4	Board Mtg – Coordinator Selection.
Feb 28	Registration Closes
March 3rd – Sunday Mtg	Manager Selection. Fundraiser planned
March 9	Tryouts
March 11-15	Draft
March 18 - 22	Team announcement
March 23	Coaches Meeting. Late Registration Ends
April 1	Practice begins. Clearances completed. Equipment Sign Out
April 7	Board Mtg
April 1 - 15	Scheduling and Umpire Training
April 20	Workbee
April 22	Games begin
April 28	Board Meeting
May 4th	Opening Day/Pictures
May 19	Board Mtg. All Star Committee Formed
June 2	Board Mtg. All Star Managers Chosen
June 5	All Star Rosters Confirmed and Uniforms ordered.
June 10	Affidavits completed
July 7	Board Mtg. Tournament Planning
August	NO Meeting
Sept. 1	Board Mtg. - Annual evaluation. Nominate officers
October 6	Board Mtg. - New officers elected.
November 5	Board Mtg – Handbook Review/Update
Dec 8	Board Mtg – Calendar established – Reserve gym
Jan 5	Board Mtg – Budget Planning

2:2 - Divisions of Play

There are currently 6 divisions offered in baseball and 3 in softball. Divisions are based upon the players “League Age” as determined by Little League’s Age Chart. The Board of Directors has the right to move players to current divisions based on skill level and consultation with the parents.

Divisions of Play	Ages	Type of Play
Rookies	4	Baseball
T-Ball	5-6	Baseball
Coach Pitch/Instructional	7-8	Baseball and Softball
Minors	9-10	Baseball and Softball
Majors	11-12	Baseball and Softball
Juniors	13-14	Baseball

Refer to the LL Age Chart for both Baseball and Softball on the LL international website

<https://www.littleleague.org/downloads/2024-baseball-age-chart/>

<https://www.littleleague.org/downloads/2024-softball-age-chart/>

2:3 Board Meetings

The general Board Meetings are open to the public and held monthly on the **1st Sunday of the month at 6:00.** Location is at the Athens High School Cafeteria (September thru March), LL Field (April thru Sept.). Meetings are to be promoted to the public One week in advance.

2:4 Registration

Registration will be open for all divisions on **January 1** of the current calendar year. Registration will be closed for all divisions on **Feb 15.**

- A late charge of **\$100** will be imposed upon anyone seeking to register their child after **Feb. 15.**
- No registrations will be accepted after **March 9.** (Except for Juniors and Seniors players)
- Registration fee for **2024 season is \$55.00 per child.** There will be a \$5.00 discount for each additional child.
- Special Exemption Waivers are available upon Board Approval.
- Any special, extenuating requests must be made known upon registration to the Player Agent

2:5 Player Release

A player may be dropped from a league roster under the following conditions:

1. Doctors medical determination
2. Moving from area
3. Written resignation
4. Non-registration
5. Repeated Non-attendance or discipline reasons, only after League has exhausted all efforts to resolve.

A player who finds it necessary to seek release from a roster, or a manager seeking the release of a player on his/her current roster, must ask for the release through the Player Agent and in accordance with the Little League, Inc. Regulation III (e). If the Player Agent is convinced the reason for the release is in the best interest of the player and the league, the Player Agent will present the appeal to the appropriate Board of Director Members. If approved before the regular season begins, registration fees will be refunded.

2:6 Special Age Considerations

Parents/Guardians of a player may request to have a player stay down in the lower divisions or have a player move up to an older division by requesting approval by the Board of Directors. If the player in question is a 12 yr-old requesting to play Minors, the District Administrator must then approve the request. **ALL REQUESTS MUST BE APPROVED PRIOR TO TRYOUTS.** Players must participate in tryouts in order to request to be reviewed by the Board of Directors. If a request is disapproved, the player must play in the division drafted.

2:7 Evaluation and Drafting of Players

All Team Managers will be required to participate in the evaluation of players in their division. **Tryouts will be held the 2nd weekend of March** for the following divisions of play: Majors, Minors (Baseball and Softball).

Division Coordinators will lead the organization of the tryout. Basic hitting, throwing and fielding drills will be performed as all managers evaluate players. A standardized tryout evaluation form will be provided and used by all managers.

2:8 Draft Rules

All managers (only) will **meet within 5 days after the tryout** to draft players. The order will be determined by a random draw with the following "snake" sequence used: 1,2,3,4,4,3,2,1. The league drafting process is intended to balance talent and lead to a more competitive league. Managers are to prioritize existing relationships and finding balance among the key positions of catcher and pitcher.

A Special board meeting will be held after the draft to determine # of players on each team.

Managers/Coaches Pairings: The pairing of a coach and a coach's child with a particular manager and manager's child shall only be accomplished in the competitive divisions through normal drafting procedures. There shall be no pre-draft assignment of coaches and players to teams in the competitive divisions other than the assignment of a manager's child to a manager. In the case of such an assignment, child shall count as a draft pick.

Trades: A player must play for the team to which he/she is drafted, for the duration of the season, unless that player is traded for another player within 3 days of draft night. Approval by all managers in that respective division is required.

Team Notification: Each manager shall notify the members of his/her team 1 WEEK after the draft. **At no time should managers discuss the draft order or any other information from the player draft meeting with anyone.** The only information to be shared is to inform a player/parent of which team he/she was drafted by and the other players on that team.

2:9 Scheduling

The Board shall elect a Division/Coaching Coordinator who shall be responsible for creating the schedule for their respective teams (excluding Juniors). The Coordinator must work in collaboration with the Concession Stand Manager (Auxiliary) and other Coordinators to create a cohesive schedule.

SCHEDULES ARE TO BE COMPLETED BY APRIL 8TH.

The schedule is not to be changed unless approved by all the Division Coordinators, Auxiliary Coord. and Field Manager.

Recommended Scheduling Format:

Division of Play	Practices per Week	Games per Season
Rookies	1	6
T-Ball	1	8
Instructional	2	10
Minors	3	12 (no more than 3/week)
Majors	3	12-14 (no more than 3/week)

2:10 Division/Coaching Coordinators – per the Bylaws

Athens LL will operate with the following Coordinators for the 2024 Season, elected as such by the Board of Directors:

Instructional – Rookies/TBALL/Coach Pitch	Softball
Minors – Baseball	Juniors/Seniors
Majors - Baseball	

Responsibilities of the Coordinators:

- Assist the Player Agent with registration/eligibility if needed
- Liaison and representative between the coaches and Board
- Supervise Tryouts and Draft to ensure compliance and equity
- Recruit managers/coaches and present them to the President for appointment
- Promote and assist with training opportunities.
- Observe and report upon conduct of coaches. Assist with investigations when requested.
- Help navigate any issues between coaches, parents and kids.
- Schedule games for the teams in that division. Act as liaison between Athens LL and others leagues in the same division.

2:11 Practice Times - An online calendar will be established and shared with all the Managers. It will be followed by all Managers to determine which fields and times are available. To request a date or change your practice time, Managers will email the Calendar Site Manager.

2:12 Practice Areas- All green space on the Athens Area School Property. Athens LL Main Field, Borough Park (Valley Playland). Ulster Field as scheduled, East Athens Park, except for Tues and Thursday.

3:1 Manager/Coaches Selection Process

Applicant Managers must be an adult (18 years old). Anyone that is not an adult but interested in coaching can be considered for an assistant coaching position. Age exceptions will be considered in the lower division levels.

Each applicant must provide the following information to be considered to Manage a team:

- Completed Athens LL Coaches Interest Form
- Copy of valid Driver's License
- Diamond Leadership Program

Managers will be selected based upon:

- Their ability to develop the skills of the players and build competitive teams.
- Past and current support of Athens Little League
- Conduct history - Have there been negative parent comments or other discipline issues?
- Does their personal life allow time to commit to the team (both practices and games)?

***Division Coordinators will present the candidates to the President for review. Upon Review, the President will appoint and the Board shall approve the appointment.**

3:2 Manager Agreements

ALL MANAGERS MUST SIGN AN AFFIDAVIT THAT STATES THEY HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE CURRENT OPERATING RULES OF ATHENS LITTLE LEAGUE. THESE AGREEMENTS WILL BE REVIEWED AND COMPLETED AT THE ANNUAL COACHES MEETING.

3:3 Manager Responsibilities

The primary objective of Athens Little League is to instill in the youth of our community the ideals of good sportsmanship, honesty, loyalty, courage and respect for authority. These ideals support the goal of developing well-adjusted, stronger and happier children who will grow to be decent, healthy and trustworthy adults.

Managers and coaches at all levels of play are expected to:

1. Reflect an understanding of the age group they supervise
2. Be aware that they are an example to those with whom they work
3. Demonstrate that they have an appreciation of the philosophy of Little League® Baseball, and cooperate with others in making the program of mutual benefit to all youngsters

4. Show, by example, that they respect the judgment and the position of authority of the umpire and promote in their players a respect for the authority of adult leaders in the league
5. Exercise their leadership role adequately but leave the ball game in the hands of the players
6. Within the regulations of their own league and of Little League® Baseball and Softball, provide an opportunity for each player to participate
7. Encourage their players at every opportunity, familiarizing themselves with the home background of the players and their families
8. Inspire a desire to win and improve, striving to impart as much baseball knowledge as possible to each player
9. Encourage good health habits, good grooming and proper care of uniforms and equipment; refrain from drinking alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco during games, practices and all other Little League® related events where children are present
10. Know the [Little League Official Rules and Operating Policies of Little League® Baseball](#) and Athens Little League Local Rules and be able to interpret them correctly, playing by these rules and adhering to their intent, demonstrating to the players an honest respect for the rules as well as the spirit of the game
11. Be well acquainted with the player selection system used in their respective league, and select players for the team according to their abilities.
12. Be cautious and use sound, reasonable judgment in protest situations
13. Participate in training programs concerning their responsibilities before being assigned to their position
14. Have knowledge of first aid and safety

3:4 Manager/Coaches Preseason Meeting Agenda

Board shall advertise 2 weeks in advance. Attendance is mandatory for all Managers and Coaches. If unable to attend, he/she must make every effort to meet with the President, Safety Director, and Division Coordinator to review items discussed and obtain requirements needed for coaching. Agenda of the meeting will include:

Officer introduction
 Coaches expectations and training
 Message to Parents
 Scheduling
 Umpire training/sign up/guidelines
 Clearances update
 Rules review – Hand our Pertinent Handbook info
 Health/Safety review/First Aid
 Facilities
 Home Team responsibilities
 Equipment Review
 Q&A

Baseball Division Formats & Ground Rules

4:1 Rookies/Teeball Division:

Age Requirement: Rookies – 4 and 5 year-olds. TBALL – 5 and 6-year-olds. *No 7-year-olds. (Unless approved by Board of Directors)

Description: Regular T-Ball/Baseball fundamentals are learned. The main focus of this level is the enjoyment of the game and the fun in being part of a team. No scores are kept. Teeball is the first formal introduction to baseball. **Make it an enjoyable experience for the kids.** Get your team parents involved to work together and enjoy this time as well. The friendships you and your child make in one season of Teeball may continue throughout the following baseball years at Athens Little League.

Game Format:

- Stage 1: Games 1-4 - All players will use the tee for each at bat.
- Stage 2: Games 5-8 – TBALL ONLY - **Coach pitch begins with players adjusting to standard positions in BOTH the infield and outfield.** Coaches will be allowed to throw 5 pitches MAX. If after 5 pitches, the batter does not put a ball in play, the tee will be used. The tee shall be used for this player for the rest of that at-bat.

****Rookies will use the Tee for the whole season.**

Season Ground Rules:

1. Rookies/TBall will use a soft Tball
2. All players on the roster shall play defensively every inning.
3. Coaches are permitted on the field (both infield and outfield) to allow on-the-spot coaching. Please limit the amount to 4 on the field at one time, if possible.
4. There should be at least one adult in the dugout area with the players at all times.
5. All players will bat in an inning. Last batter will run all the way around the bases.
6. **Games will be 3 innings or 1-hour whichever comes first.**
7. There will be no standings. No score will be kept.
8. One Coach will be positioned at home plate to assist batters.
9. No extra bases are taken at any time.
10. Sportsmanship is a more important lesson at the Teeball level.
11. There will be no strikeouts, walks, bunting, or stealing of bases.
12. Batters/runners must wear a helmet at all times.
13. No catcher will be utilized at any time.
14. Keep control of your dugout. Reduce risk of injury. Never allow players to climb the fences, run outside the dugout, jump on the bench, create messes, or play with water during games.
15. Players shall not possess a bat until it is their turn to hit.

4:2 Instructional Division:

Age Requirement: 7 and 8-year-olds. (6-year-olds and 9 year olds, only upon Board approval after evaluations.)

Description:

The Instructional Division will help players learn the basic fundamentals of baseball. It will consist of coach pitch, proper base running, defensive positions and implementation of outs. The main focus of this level is to introduce the next stage of fundamentals while still providing enjoyment of the game and the fun in being part of a team.

Game Format:

- **Stage 1: Games 1-5** – Pitching Machine used at 40 feet. Use of tee after **3rd** machine pitch is missed. Teams bat the entire roster each inning.
- **Stage 2: Games 6-10** – Pitching Machine only, tee option is removed. Played like a real game - 3 outs per inning. 5 runs per inning maximum. Kids can strike out, no walks.
- **Games 9 and 10** - Coaches can agree before the game to have a kid pitch. Pitching machine still set up. In case of a walk by the pitcher, coach shall use the pitching machine to complete the at bat.

Pitching rules - See LL rules on pitch count/mandatory rest for 7-8 year olds

1. **Games are four (4) innings or one hour and thirty minutes (1:30)**, whichever comes first.
2. All games will be played using the Local League provided **Safety 5 ball**.
3. Game scores are not kept.
4. No team standings or player statistics shall be maintained.

Season Ground Rules:

Offensive Play/Batting:

1. The Offensive team shall supply first and third adult base coaches who will assist the runners on base and shall call all plays on the bases.
2. The Offensive team shall supply a coach pitcher that will pitch to his/her batters and will protect the defensive pitcher from injury. This coach will make all calls occurring at home plate.
3. The Offensive team shall have a coach, or approved volunteer, in the dugout at all times when the players are present. No player is allowed to hold a bat while in the dugout unless they are moving onto the field of play or returning from the field of play.
4. There will be no base on balls or bases awarded as a result of a player being hit by a pitched ball.
5. Any batter who throws the bat will be warned that if he/she throws the bat a second time in the game he/she will be called out. The batter shall be called out the first time the bat is thrown if it hits anyone.
6. Bunting is not allowed.
7. Leading off and stealing bases is not allowed.
8. Runners shall not advance to the next base on any passed or overthrown balls.
9. A runner may only slide feet first. No head first sliding is permitted. Anyone who slides head first shall be called out.
10. When a player hits a ball into the field of play that player may only advance to 1st base if the ball does not travel past where the defensive infielders are playing. When a player hits a ball into the field of play and the ball travels into the outfield past where the defensive infielders were playing that batter may advance as far as second (2nd) base, but will do so at the risk of being tagged out at 2nd base.
11. **STAGE 1:** The final batter in each half inning shall run from the batter's box around all bases (Home Run) once they put the ball into play and is not subject to being thrown or tagged out at any base. The defensive team may attempt a play, but the runner will not be out if they are successful.
12. Keep control of your dugout. Reduce risk of injury. Never allow players to climb the fences, run outside the dugout, jump on the bench, create messes, or play with water during games.

Defensive Play:

1. Up to three (3) adult defensive coaches are permissible on the field to assist defensive players.
2. **When playing defense, all team members are on the field.** Infielders (Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Base, 2nd Base, Short Stop, and 3rd Base) shall play normal positions. The remaining players will fill the outfield.
3. Outfield positions must be played in the outfield. Outfield players shall not be permitted to crowd into the infield and shall not be permitted to run into the infield to field a ball that would normally be handled by an infielder.
4. Any player fielding the position of Catcher must wear all the proper protective equipment (Helmet, Mask, Throat Guard, Chest Protector, and Leg Protection) and shall play the proper position behind home plate. An Offensive or Defensive coach is recommended to aid the catcher in returning the balls to the coach pitcher.
5. **Each Player, in every game, must play at least two (2) defensive innings as an infielder.** Infield positions include Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Base, 2ndBase, Short Stop, and 3rd Base. There will be no exceptions unless a player is injured and leaves the game; or the Manager makes alternative arrangements with the consent of the Division Coordinator.

4:3 Minor Division:

Age Requirement: 9 and 10 years old. (8 and 11 year olds per Board Approval)

Description: Minor division is competitive play. The purpose of the Minor League is to build the player's skill level, understanding of rules and regulations, teach teamwork, good sportsmanship, build character, and self-esteem. This is a full season of competitive baseball. Season scores are kept and determine placement for the year-end single elimination tournament. Managers are encouraged to develop players, so they are ready for the Major division.

Game Format:

Games will consist of 6 innings, but **no new inning may start after 1:45 minutes**. Playoff games will be for a full six (6) innings unless a Ten Run Rule (Mercy Rule) is in effect. If a new inning starts just prior to the 1:45 cutoff, that inning must be completed regardless of time.

- **"Continuous Batting Order" will apply. Every player will be in the batting order whether or not he/she is in the game defensively. All Players are required to play a minimum of 6 defensive outs.** (Does not apply to shortened games)

A player arriving late and misses his/her first regular "at bat" must be inserted at the bottom of the batting lineup. The Manager is to notify the Scorekeeper and the opposing Manager.

Season Ground Rules:

1. ~~10 players are allowed in the field (4 outfielders).~~
2. There will be no protests in the Minor Division.
3. Minor League Division regular season games that end in a tie will remain a tie.
4. There is no dropped 3rd strike rule at the Minor League level.
5. Offensive Team is permitted to score **only 5 runs per inning**. Exception applies if the home team is down by more than 5 runs in the 6th inning.
6. Infield Fly Rule **does not apply**.
7. 11 yr. olds can only throw 75 pitches per game
8. No stealing a base immediately after a walk.
9. **Stealing is only allowed after a passed ball.** Passed ball being defined as a pitch that requires the catcher to turn his back to the field of play.
10. No stealing home at any time.

4:4 Major Division:

Age Requirement: All 11- and 12-year-olds. (10 yr olds upon Board Approval)

Description: This is a full season of competitive baseball, with a playoff tournament determining the champion.

Game Format:

Games will consist of 6 innings, but **no new inning may start after 1:45 minutes**. Playoff games will be for a full six (6) innings unless a Ten Run Rule (Mercy Rule) is in effect. If a new inning starts just prior to the 1:45 cutoff, that inning must be completed regardless of time. If for some reason the inning cannot be completed, the game score will revert back to the last completed inning to determine a winner. If the 4th inning (official) cannot be completed, the game will be concluded at a rescheduled date and time. Major division teams continue all tie games played out according to LL International rules.

- **Batting will be Continuous Batting Order with free substitution. All Players are required to play a minimum of 6 defensive outs.** (Does not apply to shortened games) . A player arriving late and misses his/her first regular “at bat” must be inserted at the bottom of the batting lineup. The Manager is to notify the Scorekeeper and the opposing Manager.

Season Ground Rules:

1. The minimum roster for a Major Division team is 10.
2. Only 9 fielders are allowed on defense.
3. There is **no 5-Run Rule for any innings**.
4. If a game is to be protested, the following must be observed: Major Managers must give written details of the protest to the Majors Division Coordinator within 24-hours of the incident or protested game. A meeting with the protesting Manager, Division Coordinator, and the Board of Directors will be scheduled as soon as possible.
5. **Dropped third strike rule is in effect.**
6. Infield Fly Rule **does apply**.
7. All stealing allowed.

4:5 Additional Minor and Major Rules

1. **TEN RUN RULE (Mercy Rule):** If after 4 innings, (3 and one half innings if the home team is ahead) and one team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the Manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. NOTE: If the visiting team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
2. It is required to adhere to all pitching rules and regulations. Please refer to the Little League Pitching Rules section at the back of this book. It is your responsibility as Manager to understand and abide by these pitching rules. Also, please see current years Official Little League Rule Book. Violations of the pitching rules may subject Managers and/ or Coaches to games suspensions.
3. All games on the competitive level may not be started with less than nine (9) players on each team. If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to place 9 players on the field before the game begins, A qualified 9th player from the other team may play for an opposing team, if mutually agreed upon. He/She may NOT pitch as a fill in.

If a team is still not able to field 9 players, they can still play the game but must take an out for each missing player upon their turn to bat.

4. If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to: (a) place nine players on the field before the game begins, and/or, (b) place at least one adult in the dugout as manager or acting manager, this shall not be grounds for automatic forfeiture, but shall be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision as to forfeiture or reschedule. An unofficial game may be played with the players present but will not be counted as an official game.
5. No pregame infield practice is done for regular season games unless mutually agreed upon by coaches and grounds crew.
6. Rainout decisions will be made by the division coordinator and the grounds crew chief.
7. NO BATTER WARM-UP: Little League rules prohibit any batter to warm up prior to batting (on deck area). No player should ever have a bat in their possession while in the dugout. Batters may not take warm-up swings until reaching the area around the batter box.
8. Only the Manager or acting Manager is allowed to approach an umpire from the dugout to dispute a call. Coaches are not allowed to approach the umpire at any time unless a Manager is absent and they are filling in as acting Manager. Permission to leave the dugout to approach the umpire must be granted by the umpire before leaving the dugout.
9. No "butcher" fake bunt plays allowed. Violations will be an automatic out.
10. With two (2) outs in an inning only and if the catcher from the previous inning is a base runner and will be the catcher of record for the next inning, a Manager may elect to replace the catcher on the base paths with the last recorded, batted out. This will allow the catcher to gear up for the next inning in an attempt to expedite the flow of the game.
11. Adult coaches may be used as base coaches at both 1st and 3rd base at the same time during an inning. The third Coach or Manager must be in the dugout. Base coaches and dugout coaches count as three coaches per dugout per game. You may still use a player in substitute for an adult base coach.
12. No headfirst sliding except back to a base.
13. No metal spikes.
14. 11 year old pitchers shall abide by the same pitching rules as 10 year olds in minors.

4:6 Playoffs for Minors and Majors

- Every team will qualify for a **Single elimination tournament** at the end of the regular season
- **Preliminary Playoff Format - Only Athens vs Athens games will count toward Playoff Standings.**
- **Playoff seeding will be determined by: Highest winning percentage**
- **Tie-Breaker Rules** for all competitive divisions (play-off standings only).

Two (2) teams tied with identical records:

1. Head-to-Head games. Team with the best record for the season wins the tiebreaker.
2. Least runs allowed in games played against each other for the season. If still tied, go to 3.
3. Coin toss.

Three (3) or more teams tied with identical records:

- Best record in games played against the teams involved in three-way tie for the current season wins tiebreaker.

If two of the three teams have identical records, refer to tiebreaker for two (2) teams described above.

If all three (3) teams have identical records:

1. Least runs allowed in games played against each other.
2. Most runs scored in games played against each other.

- The higher seed team is the Home team.
- Playoff games will be for a full six (6) innings unless a Ten Run Rule is in effect.
- **Final standings for the season are those after the tournament – not the regular season games. The top team in the tournament will receive the 1st place trophy, 2nd respectively.**

4:7 Pitching Rules - BASEBALL

Managers MUST meet prior to the start of every game to discuss the pitchers that are ineligible to pitch in that game. Please refer to the Official Scorebooks from each team's prior game to determine whether a particular pitcher is eligible to pitch.

IMPORTANT NOTE - The number of pitches a player is allowed to throw is based upon their league age AND NOT their actual age.

A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age Number of Pitches per Day

11 -12 = 85 pitches per day

9-10 = 75 pitches per day

7-8 = 50 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:

1. That batter reaches base;
2. That batter is put out;
3. The third out is made to complete the half inning.

Note 1: Pitch count will be held at maximum for days rest when completing the final batter.

Note 2: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

Additionally, if you have a catcher that catches any part of 4 innings (it does not have to be 4 full innings, it could be a batter in 1 inning and 3 complete innings thereafter), that catcher is no longer available to pitch.

Pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required. o Under NO Circumstances shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

Pitching and Catching –

If a player has caught earlier in the game for three (3) innings (catching any part of the third such inning constitutes three (3) full innings) and later comes in to pitch, he is limited to 40 pitches. If a player has pitched earlier in the game and was limited to 40 pitches, he is eligible to catch for three (3) innings. Any player who has played the position of catcher in more than three innings in a game is not eligible to pitch. Any player who has pitched more than 40 pitches in a game is not eligible to catch. A player who played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or less, moves to the pitcher position, and delivers 21 pitches or more in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day.

****Pitch counts are recorded by the home team and reported to the Division Coordinator after the game.**

4:8 Junior League

For league age 13 and 14 year olds. This division features a high school sized field (90' bases, 60' pitching)

The Juniors team(s) participate in interleague play with other District 15 teams. Interleague rules will apply. Juniors teams play a schedule very similar to Majors teams running from June to July with games across the district. 8 regular season games are required to be eligible for All Star play.

Softball Division Formats and Ground Rules

5:1 INSTRUCTIONAL Division: The Softball Instructional division of Athens LL is generally for players league age 7 and 8 who have met all player evaluation eligibility requirements. All playing rules described in the Little League Official Softball Rules apply to the Minor's Softball Division unless otherwise amended by these Bylaws.

Game Format:

- **Stage 1: Games 1-5** - Coach pitch, use of tee after 3rd coach pitch is missed. Teams bat the entire roster each inning.
- **Stage 2: Games 6-10** - Coach pitch only, tee option is removed. 3 outs per inning. Kids can strike out. 5 runs per inning max. Catcher can be used per coaches discretion.

Ground Rules:

Games are **four (4) innings or one hour and thirty minutes**, whichever comes first.

Game scores are not kept.

No team standings or player statistics shall be maintained.

10" ball -- soft flex used

Offensive Play/Batting:

1. The Offensive team shall supply first and third adult base coaches who will assist the runners on base and shall call all plays on the bases.
2. The Offensive team shall supply a coach pitcher that will pitch to his/her batters and will protect the defensive pitcher from injury. This coach will make all calls occurring at home plate.
3. The Offensive team shall have a coach, or approved volunteer, in the dugout at all times when the players are present. No player is allowed to hold a bat while in the dugout unless they are moving onto the field of play or returning from the field of play.
4. There will be no base on balls or bases awarded as a result of a player being hit by a pitched ball.
5. Any batter who throws the bat will be warned that if he/she throws the bat a second time in the game he/she will be called out. The batter shall be called out the first time the bat is thrown if it hits anyone.
6. Bunting is not allowed.
7. Leading off and stealing bases is not allowed.
8. Runners shall not advance to the next base on any passed or overthrown balls.
9. A runner may only slide feet first. No head first sliding is permitted. Anyone who slides head first shall be called out.
10. When a player hits a ball into the field of play that player may only advance to 1st base if the ball does not travel past where the defensive infielders are playing. When a player hits a ball into the field of play and the ball travels into the outfield past where the defensive infielders were playing that batter may advance as far as second (2nd) base, but will do so at the risk of being tagged out at 2nd base.
11. **STAGE 1: The final batter in each half inning shall run from the batter's box around all bases (Home Run) once they put the ball into play and is not subject to being thrown or tagged out at any base. The defensive team may attempt a play, but the runner will not be out if they are successful.**

Defensive Play:

1. Up to three (3) adult defensive coaches are permissible on the field to assist defensive players.
2. When playing defense, all team members are on the field. Infielders (Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Base, 2nd Base, Short Stop, and 3rd Base) shall play normal positions. The remaining players will fill the outfield.
3. Outfield positions must be played in the outfield. Outfield players shall not be permitted to crowd into the infield and shall not be permitted to run into the infield to field a ball that would normally be handled by an infielder.

4. Any player fielding the position of Catcher must wear all the proper protective equipment (Helmet, Mask, Throat Guard, Chest Protector, and Leg Protection) and shall play the proper position behind home plate. An Offensive or Defensive coach is recommended to aid the catcher in returning the balls to the coach pitcher.
5. Each Player, in every game, must play at least two (2) defensive innings as an infielder. Infield positions include Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Base, 2ndBase, Short Stop, and 3rd Base. There will be no exceptions unless a player is injured and leaves the game; or the Manager makes alternative arrangements with the consent of Vice President of Player Agents and/or Player Agent of Farm division.
6. The infield fly rule does not apply.

Pitching:

1. **STAGE 1: Each batter will receive 3 “good” pitches from a coach pitcher.** If the batter does not hit the ball into fair play after the batter receives the 3rd “good” pitch, then the player shall hit off the tee. If the batter fouls the 3rd pitch thrown by the coach, he/she will continue to receive pitches until the batter swings and misses at a pitch or puts the ball in fair play, whichever comes first.
2. **STAGE 2: Tee option is removed, player shall be out after 3 missed pitches.**
3. The Offensive coach that is pitching shall call pitches and all plays at home plate.
4. **The coach shall only pitch underhand. Distance shall be between and 20 – 30’** based on coaches accuracy and hitters skill.
5. Coaches that violate the 3 pitch rule shall be addressed. The rule ensures that the defensive team can maintain focus long enough to adequately protect themselves from a hard-hit ball.

5:2 MINORS Division: The Softball Minors division of Athens LL is generally for players league age 9 and 10 who have met all player evaluation eligibility requirements. All playing rules described in the Little League Official Softball Rules apply to the Minor’s Softball Division unless otherwise amended by these Bylaws.

1. **SOFTBALL BALL, FIELD:** 11” regular ball, 60’ bases, 35” pitching distance, 8’ diam. Circle
2. **COMPLETE GAME:** Games will consist of 6 innings, but **no new inning may start after 1:45 minutes**. Tie games are permitted during regular season play.
3. **Runs per inning:** An inning is three (3) outs, or five (5) runs, whichever happens first. Exception applies if the home team is down by more than 5 runs in the 6th inning.
4. In the event of a dominant pitcher, teams may agree to “trade” a player at the pitcher position to pitch against their own team to promote competitive balance, while allowing the player to continue pitching in the game.
5. **MANDATORY PLAY:**
 - Defense** - Must have 9 players to start the game. **No player to sit out more than 2 consecutive innings while their team is on defense.** If the opposing coach is okay with playing more than 9 on defense, it is permitted. Additional players shall play in the outfield.
 - Offense/Continuous Batting Order** - All players must bat throughout the game (continuous batting order required).
6. **Adults on the Field** - For the first 2 intrasquad games, two coaches are permitted to be on the field and actively coaching between plays. The goal is to take advantage of teachable moments early in the season, while keeping the game moving.
7. **Bunting :** Bunting is allowed and players may bunt off of a player/pitcher or a coach/pitcher.
8. **Sliding:** A runner will be considered out if they slide head-first to advance a base. Head first sliding is only allowed going back to a base.
9. **“Dropped” third strike**
In the Minor’s Softball Division, a third strike, whether dropped or not, is an out; however, the ball remains live for runners already on base.
10. **Pitching Limits:** Max of 10 innings per week. 6 innings max per game.
11. **Infield Fly Rule** - There is no Infield Fly rule in Minor’s Softball

12. Coach Pitch

After 4 total walks in an inning (walks do not need be consecutive), a coach of the team at bat will enter the game as pitcher and pitch to his/her own team from the pitching rubber for the duration of the inning. The batter can not draw a walk, but can strike out swinging or looking (the umpire will continue to call strikes, but not balls). At this point, all stealing is prohibited and runners may not advance home on a passed ball. The coach will also position the displaced pitcher behind him on one side or the other (based on a right handed or left handed batter). The coach MAY NOT field and MAY NOT provide instruction to his/her runners on base at any time.

13. Hit Batsmen - If three (3) batters are hit by pitch then the pitcher is removed for that inning. That pitcher may return to pitch later in the game, but will be removed from the game, as a pitcher, if they hit another batter.

14. Stealing and Base Running

- A. Runners can only lead off after the ball crosses the plate.
- B. Runners MAY NOT STEAL unless there is a passed ball where the catcher must turn her back to retrieve the pitch.
- C. Runners may never steal home, even if there is a passed ball.
- D. Runners may advance one (1) base on an overthrow.
- E. Once the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, runners must return to the base last occupied. There is no taunting or delaying going back to the base once the pitcher is in the circle.

5:3 MAJORS Division: The Softball Majors division of Athens LL is generally for players league age 11 and 12 who have met all player evaluation eligibility requirements. All playing rules described in the Little League Official Softball Rules apply to the Major's Softball Division unless otherwise amended by these Bylaws.

1. **SOFTBALL BALL, FIELD:** 12" regular ball, 60' bases, 40" pitching distance, 8' diam. Circle
2. **COMPLETE GAME:** Games will consist of 6 innings, but **no new inning may start after 1:45 minutes**. If a game is called by the umpire (e.g., for darkness, weather etc.), it shall count as a regulation game if four innings have been played. If a game is called by an umpire before four innings have been played, it shall resume exactly where it left off when it can be rescheduled.
3. **No tie games** - A tie game goes into extra innings until the tie is broken. Tie games called because of darkness, weather or other reasons are to be continued as soon as feasible and before playoffs begin, subject to approval from the Majors Commissioner and Vice President who handles re-scheduling.
4. **Suspensions** - As soon as the plate meeting concludes, the head umpire becomes the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field; as to whether and when play shall be resumed after such suspension; and as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension.
5. **MANDATORY PLAY:**
 - Defense - 9 Fielders.** Must have 9 players to start the game. No player to sit out more than 2 consecutive innings while their team is on defense.
 - Offense/Continuous Batting Order** - All players must bat throughout the game (continuous batting order required).
7. **Bunting** - Bunting is allowed and players may bunt off of a player/pitcher or a coach/pitcher.
8. **Sliding** - A runner will be considered out if they slide head-first to advance a base. Head first sliding is only allowed going back to a base.
9. **"Dropped" third strike** - In the Major's Softball Division, the ball remains live and runners can advance as long as first base is unoccupied with less than 2 outs or if there is 2 outs.
10. **Pitching Limits** - Max of 12 innings per week. 6 innings max per game.
11. **Stealing and Base Running**
 - A. Stealing may occur, after the ball leaves the pitchers hand. No leading off.

- C. Runners may steal home.
- D. Runners may advance (multiple bases) on an overthrow.
- E. Once the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, runners must return to the base last occupied. There is no taunting or delaying going back to the base once the pitcher is in the circle.

12. Infield Fly Rule - Rule is applied to major play

5:4 Additional Minor and Major Softball Rules

All games on the competitive level may not be started with less than nine (9) players on each team.

1. If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to place 9 players on the field before the game begins, A qualified 9th player from the other team may play for an opposing team, if mutually agreed upon. He/She may NOT pitch as a fill in.
 1. If a team is still not able to field 9 players, they can still play the game but must take an out for each missing player upon their turn to bat.
2. 4. Mercy Rule - is in effect meaning there will be a mercy rule that applies if one team is ahead by 8 runs after five innings, 10 runs after four innings or 15 runs after three innings. If rule is in effect, play can be extended up to six (6) complete innings at the sole discretion of the losing manager. Pitching rules remain in effect. Umpires shall remain on duty. The intention of this rule is to assure that Mandatory Play requirements are achieved for all players. New pitchers are encouraged during "extended play."
3. **Each player must play defensively for 6 outs.** A player not playing the minimum requirement will start the next game and play any previous requirement not met plus the minimum for the current game. This also applies to games called due to weather, darkness, or time limits. Violation of these rules will subject the violating Manager and/or coach to disciplinary action.
4. No pregame infield practice is done for regular season games unless mutually agreed upon by coaches and grounds crew.
5. Rainout decisions will be made by the division coordinator and the grounds crew chief.
6. NO BATTER WARM-UP: Little League rules prohibit any batter to warm up prior to batting (on deck area). No player should ever have a bat in their possession while in the dugout. Batters may not take warm-up swings until reaching the area around the batter box.
7. Any player at home plate during warm ups while a coach is hitting must have a catching helmet on during this time.
8. Only the Manager or acting Manager is allowed to approach an umpire from the dugout to dispute a call. Coaches are not allowed to approach the umpire at any time unless a Manager is absent and they are filling in as acting Manager. Permission to leave the dugout to approach the umpire must be granted by the umpire before leaving the dugout.
9. No "butcher" fake bunt plays allowed
10. With two (2) outs in an inning only and if the catcher from the previous inning is a base runner and will be the catcher of record for the next inning, a Manager may elect to replace the catcher on the base paths with the last recorded, batted out. This will allow the catcher to gear up for the next inning in an attempt to expedite the flow of the game.
11. No headfirst sliding except back to a base.
12. No metal spikes.
13. 11 year old pitchers shall abide by the same pitching rules as 10 year olds.

** At this time, no championship playoffs are scheduled for Softball.

6:1 *HOME Team Responsibilities*

BALLS

Minor and Major Division Managers will access the Concession Stand to get 2 New Game Balls for the game.

SCOREKEEPERS

Minor and Major Divisions must provide the official scorekeeper for each game. Scorekeepers must track pitch counts for the game. Pitch counts and score get reported to division coordinator after the game.

SCOREBOARD/PA System OPERATOR

If possible, Major and Minor teams must provide a responsible adult volunteer to operate the scoreboard. Any child in the Press box under 12 needs to have adult supervision. This volunteer can be the scorekeeper, if willing and able to do both.

The Scoreboard gets turned on in the Back Left of the Maintenance Shed – It will be marked . Flip the gray lever up. The PA system and Scoreboard control is located on the 2nd floor of the concession stand.

TRASH/SECURITY

Following the game, **both teams** are responsible for cleaning your dugout, pick-up trash under and around the stands on your side of the field. Lock and secure all gates, bathrooms, and scorekeepers booths if the last game of the day. Make sure the doors are closed upstairs near the PA system.

LIGHTS

Turn on and off lights. To do so, locate the electric panel in the 2nd floor of the concession stand. It is on the far wall with the light breakers each marked with yellow tape. Turn 1 breaker on/off at a time. Expect a delay when turning on. If you need a key, go to the concession stand.

DUGOUT

The Home Team will occupy the 1st base dugout, provide game balls and supply the umpires for the game. Go to the concession stand to find the balls.

All Star Information

7:1 All-Star Committee - Formed by the Board of Directors and shall include: The President, Player Agent, Secretary and 2 active Board of Directors.

1. A member of the All-Star Committee cannot serve as an All-Star Coach. If a Board member holding an All-Star Committee position wishes to be considered for an All-Star Coach, the Board of Directors shall approve a Board member replacement.
2. If a board member's spouse, parent, child or sibling is an all-star coach, they shall also concede the position of the all-star committee due to conflict of interest.
4. The **All-Star committee shall hold an initial meeting on May 17th annually to approve coaches.**

7:2 All-Star Coach and Assistant Coach Selection Process

Candidates must be in good standing with the League, have excellent knowledge of Little League rules, be able to meet extensive time commitments, and have coached or assisted coached a team within the division that season.

- All managers interested in managing an All-Star Team will be required to fill out the All-Star Manager Commitment Form and return it to the All-Star Committee by May 16.
- The All-Star Committee will review the completed forms, interview if deemed necessary and approve all eligible candidates.
- The All-Star Committee will evaluate each interested coach and selection will be made based on commitment through the season, record from previous years, knowledge of the sport and rules, and coaching ethic.
- Once a manager is selected, the manager will then select 2 Assistant Coaches and a Reserve Coach.
- **This selection process needs to be completed by JUNE 1.**
- The President will recommend the selected Managers and Coaches to the Board of Directors for approval. The Board can correct gross imbalances to pre-announced All-Star teams and remove any player or coach for improper behavior or conduct deemed not in the best interest of Athens Little League.

7:3 All-Star Player Candidacy

1. **ALL Junior, Intermediate, Major, and Minor players will be required to complete the Player Commitment Form.** All forms need to be signed and returned or the player will not be eligible.
2. Candidates must meet Little League age and residency (or school) eligibility requirements. Proof of eligibility will be required.
3. Poor sportsmanship, attitude and behavior will not be tolerated and is the reason to reject a candidate's nomination at the Board's discretion.
4. All candidates must be available to play in the majority of team practices and Tournament games. Players not meeting this commitment will be expected to miss playing time upon return.
5. Players must have competed in 50% of the regular season games.

7:4 All-Star Player Selection Process

1. The League will have one All-Star team for the following divisions. Junior, Majors – (Baseball & Softball), Minor - (Baseball & Softball), 9-11 (Baseball - #'s permitting).
2. The number of rostered players will be determined by an annual vote done by the All Star Committee.

3. From the Player Commitment Forms, the All-Star Committee will compile ballots with a list of all eligible candidates by division and team.
4. **ALL Managers and each team's two official Assistant Coaches will get a ballot to vote for up to 10 candidates for each All-Star team in their division.**
5. Instructions will be provided on the ballot and monitored and enforced by the All-Star Committee.
6. **The All-Star Committee will tally the votes from the coach ballots and the Top 10 vote getters will be selected. If there are any ties, the All Star Committee will confer with the selected ALL STAR manager to break the tie. The All Star Manager of the respected division will then select the remaining candidates to complete the roster as set by the All Star Committee.**
7. **For any divisions with minimal interleague play, the ALL STAR manager may choose to hold a tryout.** After the tryout, the manager and coaches will select the approved number of players. This method is also recommended for Juniors, Seniors, and any other division where another charter league is combining with Athens to form a team.
8. Playing Up: A 8-year-old choosing to play in Minors or a 10 year old desiring to play in Majors will need to petition the All Star Committee to gain approval. **A player can only play for ONE All-Star team.**
9. Final All-Star player rosters need to be approved by the Board of Directors.

7:5 All-Star Voting Guidelines

1. Coaches are not allowed to influence the player vote and will be subject to disciplinary action by the Board if caught.
2. Coaches and Assistant Coaches are allowed to vote for their own child.
3. All ballots will be reviewed for legitimate submission. No write-in candidates are allowed.
4. Coaches caught colluding will be disciplined with action up to or including removal and disqualification as a coach.
5. No official announcement of the final roster will be made, and no parent or child shall be informed of selection, until an official announcement is made by the Board of Directors. If any parent or child is informed Prior to official announcement, said child will not be guaranteed a position on the team.
6. Any coach who discusses players, or the selection process, outside of official all-star committee meetings, is subject to disciplinary action by the board. Any board member who discusses players, or the selection process, to any non-board member will be subject to immediate removal of their position on the board.

7:6 All Stars Policies

- Uniforms – ALL STAR Managers will collaborate with the Equipment/Uniform Manager to order uniforms. Uniform Design, sizes, and numbers will all be shared and decided upon in a timely manner so that delivery is not delayed. **The league will pay for all jerseys and hats. Up to 4 coaches hats will be paid for but any coaches custom shirts will not be.**
- Travel Stipend – If a team reaches the sectional/state tournament and is required to travel **more than 50 miles one way, a daily reimbursement stipend of \$30 per day will be provided for each child.**
- Equipment - All players are required to have legal bats and helmets. Catchers are required to have a throat guard. A new box of balls will be provided by the league to each team. Any additional needed will be upon request.
- **A team meeting is required for each division within 1 week after player selection so that all the required paperwork can be completed and parent/player expectations are reviewed.** The Player Agent and Manager will collaborate to set the meeting. Parents/guardians are required to attend and are to bring a copy of all necessary documentation.
- Practices can commence once the team has been selected and all regular season and playoff games have concluded. Practice may not start before May 15.
- Managers will coordinate with other team managers to schedule practices.
- Refer to the LL handbook for procedures on player and coach discipline.

UMPIRES

8:1 UMPIRE COMMITTEE - The Umpire Committee is responsible for recommending umpires to the President for appointment to the league umpire roster; recruiting and retaining umpires; establishing a league umpire training program consistent with Little League® guidelines; coordinating and assisting with conducting umpire clinics at league and district level; communicating rule changes to league umpires; scheduling league umpires for regular season games; evaluating league umpires using established guidelines to maintain program integrity; further continual improvement, and prepare league umpires for advancement to All Star tournament levels.

8:2 TRAINING: Each spring, the Umpire Committee will present a training slide deck that essentially acts as the manual for the rules and guide to the season program. Umpires should dive deeper into the Little League Office Rule which is available as an app: <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/>. New umpires and those with three (3) seasons or less of experience must attend at least one training session before the season starts. Although we encourage all umpires to attend as a refresh of their knowledge.

8:3 SAFETY EQUIPMENT FOR PLATE UMPIRES The plate umpire will need to wear an umpire's mask, chest protector, and shin/leg guards. The Equipment Manager will ensure that these are available in the concession stand.

8:4 THE STRIKE ZONE

Majors = any part of the ball over the plate from the knees to the armpits.

Minors = any part of the ball between the inside lines of each batter box and from the knees to the armpits.

Zones are generally more liberal in the regular season and tighten up in the postseason.

8:5 COMPENSATION OF YOUTH UMPIRES: Youth umpires only (Ages 15 – 22) who have completed the training will get paid \$20 for each game behind the plate and \$10 for base umpiring duty. Only 1 home umpire and 1 base umpire are permitted. There will be a spreadsheet in the concession stand to track games worked and monies paid. All Adult umpires are entitled to one free meal and drink from the concession stand after the game.

8:6 UMPIRE RESPECT:

Athens Little League has no tolerance for behavior that is disrespectful, aggressive, or may in any way be construed as intimidating towards its umpires. With this commonsense policy, we hope to maintain an environment that is respectful of officiating, Little League's rules, and teaches our players deference for those in positions of authority. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions including suspensions and potentially expulsion from the league.

Players, coaches, and fans should understand that hostile or aggressive behavior towards umpires (the kind that is common at professional sporting events and even some youth sports leagues) will not be tolerated.

Umpire crews are comprised of both adults and youth. Our youth umpires are an important part of our mission to provide the kids of our community with a positive environment to work, grow, and learn responsibility through sports. All of our umpires must feel they are protected at our games.

Essentially, we ask coaches and parents to treat the umpire(s) as just as much a part of the Athens community as our players, coaches, and families. One would never yell aggressively from the stands at a base coach who sent a

runner home too late or a young player who dropped a fly ball, missed a ground ball, or made a wayward throw. We expect the same level of respectful and tolerant behavior on a perceived "bad call."

8:7 COACH INTERACTION WITH UMPIRES:

Managers and coaches are leaders. You should recognize that your actions on the field are viewed by parents and players on both teams and therefore they should set a high standard of behavior. All communications with adult or youth umpires should be done in a respectful and deferential manner.

Coaches are expected to exercise control of their players & parents. Failure to be proactive in this regard will place coaches at disciplinary risk. We understand coaches can't guarantee parent and player behavior; however, coaches are expected to take responsibility for intervening early in situations that could put a player or parent at disciplinary risk. It is far more productive for a player, coach, or team to react to umpire calls that don't "go their way" by focusing on how to overcome those "bad breaks," rather than focusing on the umpire who is impartially doing the best that he/she can on the field. Coaches should encourage all players to be respectful of the ump's calls, whether it be a "tough" called strike three or a close tag play on the bases. Intentional throwing of equipment such as a helmet or bat after a disputed call (or any other circumstance) is potential grounds for ejection from the game.

Judgment calls by an umpire cannot be questioned.

Interpretations of a rule or a legitimate feeling that the umpire's view of the play may have been blocked can be questioned, but only in a quiet and respectful way by requesting to approach the umpire. For example, if a coach wanted to discuss the proper penalty for an interference call it would be appropriate since there are guidelines spelled out in the Rule Book and it is not up to umpire discretion. However, arguing the umpire's judgment to call interference is not acceptable. If something cannot be resolved on the field refer to the protest rules in the Rule Book and in Athens Local Rules.

Always speak directly to the umpire who made the call you are unclear of. Under Little League rules, **you may not demand that an umpire seek help from another umpire.** There is no "instant replay" from the other ump and umpires are not allowed to "overrule" each other on the field. They may, however, completely at their own discretion, consult with the other umpire(s) for help.

Shouting across the field at an umpire over a call is never an acceptable approach to an officiating discussion. Yelling can come across as hostile even when you don't intend for it to. Request "time" and approach the umpire and discuss the situation in a respectful and conversational manner. Do remember that an adult coach approaching a youth umpire can be intimidating in and of itself, so a coach acting in a professional manner will go a long way to mitigating that dynamic.

8:8 PARENT INTERACTION WITH UMPIRES:

Parents (and coaches) should enter every game with the understanding that at least one "bad" call will likely be made and that some of those calls could possibly influence the outcome of the game. Even in the professional umpire ranks, including the World Series, critical calls are missed, so they will more than likely be missed at the Little League level. Over the course of a season these calls tend to "even out."

There should be no vocal questioning or comments from spectator areas regarding umpire calls.

No direct questioning by parents of umpires during or after games – questions should be directed to the respective coach at a later time.

➤ **Any member of the League Board of Directors maintains the authority to diffuse any arguments/confrontations, stop harmful behavior, and ask any individuals involved in such to remove themselves from the facility.**

9:1 Sportsmanship - Managers, Coaches, Players and other League Members

The Executive Board of Directors monitors all League activities with respect to sportsmanship and enforce all regulations governing it.

The Division Coordinators may appoint a monitor for all fields to assist him/her in carrying out these duties. All matters of poor sportsmanship by any League member shall be reported to the Coordinator and Board of Directors.

1. Managers shall notify the Division Coordinator of any persons being ejected from a ball game by an umpire.
2. Other displays of poor sportsmanship not resulting in immediate suspension from a game are also to be reported. Examples of such unsportsmanlike conduct include, but are not limited to:
 - Throwing of hats, helmets or any other visible gesture of temper.
 - Profanity or obscene gestures.
 - Under the influence of alcohol or drinking alcoholic beverages on League premises.
 - Tobacco use in the dugout or on the field of play.
 - Undue harassment of umpires, players, managers, or coaches.

The Coordinator, under advisement from the President shall determine, and enforce the action to be taken on cases reported to and investigated by him/her.

1. Incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct by a participating member may be cause for temporary suspension from playing, coaching or managing in future games.
2. The party or parties may appeal all actions taken by the Coordinator. Notification of such appeal must be made in writing to the Board of Directors within 48 hours of the action.

The appeal will then be reviewed by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may suspend managers or coaches for any of the following reasons:

1. Violation of the playing time rules;
2. Violation of the pitching rule;
3. Failure to field a team for a scheduled game;
4. Conduct which brings discredit upon himself/herself or his/her team;
5. Failure to comply with current operating rules for Athens LL

9:2 Manager Conduct

The Board of Directors cannot emphasize enough the importance of proper conduct of its Managers and Coaches. Because of this, the Managers and Coaches are new in the spotlight and may be scrutinized more now than ever before, regarding their behavior on and off the field. We are only human and the desire to win is great, but when it is taken a step further through outbursts of rage and anger, especially under the watchful and impressionable eyes of a young child, this simply cannot be tolerated.

Remember that, as a Manager or Coach, you are directly responsible for not only yourself, but of your players and parents. The Manager is the only person allowed to have contact with the umpires, unless previous arrangements have been made prior to the start of the game that designates that responsibility to an assistant Coach. Managers/Coaches are expected, above all, to set an example of good sportsmanship and self-control. The following is important information on what you can expect in the event your conduct or the conduct of your coaches, players or parents becomes an issue. The Board of Directors, along with District 15 Officials, will support the actions explained below to the full extent of the rules and ethics of Little League Baseball.

9:3 Manager Ejection

Any Managers and/or Coaches removed from a game by the umpire **WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE SUSPENDED FROM THE NEXT SCHEDULED GAME regardless of the reason.** Managers and/or Coaches who are removed from a game shall leave the premises immediately without incident and not allowed to stay in or around the Athens LL complex. Do not continue arguing with the umpire as this will only make the situation worse. If any Manager's Assistant Coach is ejected, the umpire has the right to also eject the Manager. Subsequent ejections will require that the Manager/Coach in question appear in person with all parties involved, before the Board of Directors at the next possible meeting. The Board of Directors will initiate the proper discipline, suspensions, etc. A District 15 Official may be brought in to assist in this area. Continual incidents of Manager/Coach misconduct will subject the Manager/Coach to potential loss of team and could revoke future affiliation with the League.

9:4 GAME ATMOSPHERE:

Athens LL encourages positive cheering and encouragement by players and coaches directed at their own team. Teams shall refrain from intentional chatter and artificial noise with the intent to distract a pitcher or batter from the time the pitcher is set through the delivery of the pitch. Chatter may only be in the form that encourages your team. No chatter may be directed at the opposing team. Chatter must stop once the pitcher toes the rubber.

1. A warning shall be issued to a manager that encourages such behavior.
2. After a second warning, the umpire may eject the manager, coach and/or player from the game.

9:5 Spectator and Parent Conduct

Spectator and/or parent conduct in the stands is another issue that becomes your responsibility as a Manager. If a spectator or parent in the stands on your side of the field is asked to leave by the umpire, it is your responsibility to see that the parent leaves the complex. Do not make an incident worse by immediately taking the side of the spectator. Remove or ask the problem spectator to leave and let the situation dissolve. Let the problem spectator know that you as well could be ejected from the game or the game could be forfeited if the situation gets worse. You may then discuss your differences with the Board of Directors who will then notify the Chief Umpire of the problem. Please talk about spectator conduct to your parents at your team meeting before the season begins.

Arguing calls will NOT be allowed. All play calls will stand as called. In case of an incorrect interpretation of a rule, the call will stand for the play in question. At the conclusion of the game, contact the Umpire in Chief, give him the information of the rule in question and the game umpire will be contacted and the correct interpretation of the rule discussed.

9:6 Progressive Penalty Schedule

The Athens Board of Directors reserves the right to discipline those involved in the League (Managers, Coaches, parents, players, spectators, etc) as it sees fit based upon the circumstances of the incident.

For infractions that are rule and/or behavior violation related (including but not limited to, pitch counts, pitcher to catcher rules, minimum play requirements, etc) OR infractions that are behavior related (including but not limited to, altercations with umpires, altercations with opposing Managers/Coaches, altercations with parents, behavior towards players, etc.) the following penalties shall be imposed at a minimum:

- First Infraction = 1 game suspension. Next played game (NO EXCEPTIONS).
 - Second Infraction = 2 game suspension. Next 2 played games (NO EXCEPTIONS).
 - Third Infraction = Loss of team and possible forfeiture of affiliation with league in the capacity of a Manager or Coach.
- Behavioral discipline, based upon the severity of the offense or the cumulative total of multiple previous offenses, could necessitate immediate removal from affiliation with Athens Little League. Such decisions shall be at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors.

- In the event a parent of a child on your team is ejected, the Managers will serve a suspension as well.
- The President may dismiss a manager/coach immediately for any of the following reasons until the board/committee makes final recommendations:
 - Physical or verbal abuse of the players
 - Fighting
 - Being under the influence of alcohol
 - Indecent exposure

9:7 Serving Suspensions

Managers, coaches, parents, or spectators who are serving suspensions are **NOT ALLOWED ANYWHERE ON THE ATHENS LL COMPLEX DURING THE GAME THEY ARE SUSPENDED FOR**. Athens Little League retains the right to call the local police if this rule is not fully complied with. Violation of this rule will be additional suspensions from subsequent games and/or forfeiture of Managerial or coaching duties and/or denial of any parent to watch games at the Athens LL complex.

10:1 Volunteer Obligation

Each family will be required to volunteer in the Concession Stand in order to assist Athens Little League with operations.

For the 2024 Season:

Each team will be assigned a week to work the concession stand. The Manager will appoint a Team Parent to coordinate the sign-ups. Sign-ups will be available both online and at the Concession Stand. If a parent cannot fulfill their obligation, they need to find someone to replace them and sign up during another available opening.

ANNUAL AWARDS

11:1 COACH OF THE YEAR

Each year Athens LL honors one coach selected from the Majors and Minors divisions (Baseball & Softball) with the Coach of the Year Award. The managers and coaches from these divisions are surveyed at the end of the season to nominate a coach for the award. Winners are presented a Plaque during Opening Day of the following year.

11:2 SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Each year Athens LL honors **one player from each team in Majors and Minors** (Baseball & Softball) with the Sportsmanship Award. Managers will nominate 1 player from their team. The winners will be finalized by June 1st and honored on Championship Saturday. Winners will be presented a Certificate.

11:3 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Each year Athens LL honors one volunteer who has gone above and beyond to support and represent the mission and values of the League. The Board shall vote on the deserving recipient. Winners are presented a Plaque during Opening Day of the following year.

12:1 Equipment Policy:

All league equipment is signed out before the season and signed back in upon return to the Equipment Manager.

Equipment

All players must have a baseball or softball glove. It is recommended but not required that all players have their own bat and helmet. Team bats and helmets will be provided. Bat specifications are as follows per the Little League guidelines:

BATS: Baseball/Softball

The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball/Softball Bat standard.

Teeball:

Under the USABat standard, certified Teeball bats (26" and shorter) will feature the USA Baseball mark and text which reads ONLY FOR USE WITH APPROVED TEEBALLS. All Teeball bats must feature the USA Baseball mark and accompanying text.

Minor/Major Divisions:

It shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths ($\frac{15}{16}$) inches in diameter ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed sixteen (16) inches from the small end.

NOTE 1: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

Junior/Senior League:

It shall not be more than 34" inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths ($\frac{15}{16}$) inches in diameter ($\frac{7}{8}$ inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end.

NOTE 1: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

NOTE 2: Also, permitted for the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League Division are bats meeting the BBCOR performance standard, and so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark.

Balls: Minor and Major Baseball Managers – Official LL (RS) Balls will be kept in the Concession Stand.

12:2 Baseball teams will receive:

Rookies/TBall – First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, 1 Box of **TBALLS**, 1 helmet, 1 bat and 1 tee

Instructional – First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, Catching equipment, 1 bat, 1 helmet, 1 Batting Tee, a Pitching machine, and 1 box of **Safety 5** balls

Minors - First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, Catching equipment, 1 bat, 1 helmet

Majors - First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, Catching equipment, 1 bat, 1 helmet

12:3 Softball teams will receive:

Instructional – First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, Catching equipment, 1 bat, 1 helmet, 1 Batting Tee, and 1 box of 10" Soft Flex Softballs

Minors - First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, Catching equipment, 1 bat, 1 helmet, 1 Box of 11" Softballs

Majors - First Aid Kit, 2 Ice Packs, Catching equipment, 1 bat, 1 helmet, 1 Box of 12" Softballs

All players will receive a jersey and a hat. All coaches will receive a hat. Parents are required to supply pants and socks.

Plastic/molded Spikes are not required but are recommended. No metal spikes are permitted with the exception of the Junior division.

Managers are responsible for signing out and signing in all equipment. If additional equipment is needed, manager shall make requests to the Equipment Manager who will keep record of the request.

13:1 SAFETY

Athens Little League takes the safety of our players and volunteers very seriously. We update our League Safety Plan every year. We provide first aid, concussion awareness and sudden cardiac arrest training to our managers/coaches and regularly inspect our fields for unsafe conditions. Our Managers/Coaches, parents and players are all required to review Concussion awareness and sudden cardiac arrest information.

Under no circumstances are players in any division allowed outside the dugout in an “on-deck” position for batter warm-up swings. Warm-up swings may be taken only when batter has reached the area around home plate.

FOR SAFETY REASONS AND LEAGUE RULES, THE ONLY PEOPLE ALLOWED IN THE DUGOUTS DURING THE GAME ARE PLAYERS AND COACHES. THIS MEANS NO PARENTS, CHILDREN, SIBLINGS, OR PETS.

No more than 3 coaches/individuals, including Manager are allowed in the dugout at any one time during a game. For Teeball and Rookies only, additional volunteers are permitted.

13:2 CLEARANCES

All Team Managers, Coaches and any parent who has interaction with a player: (1) on the Athens LL playing fields, (2) during all games, including pre and post-game activities, (3) on the permitted or insured practice areas/fields, (4) at the batting cages, (5) at team workouts must have the required clearances, Diamond Leader Training, JDP, and background checks completed prior to participation in any practices with the players.

In addition, the President and Board of Directors shall complete all required certifications. It is the responsibility of the team Manager to monitor the adults at his/her team events and to report any suspicion/incident directly to the Athens LL Safety Coordinator.

13:3 CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

All Athens Little League volunteers in regular service to the League or with repetitive access to children, including all managers/coaches, are required to complete TWO criminal background checks. As required by Little League International, we use JDP which provides state and federal criminal history information and a search of the Department of Justice’s National Sex Offender Registry.

The Executive Board will review the results of all volunteer JDP’s and will not permit someone to serve based on results that would deem the individual unfit to work with minors.

Mandated Reporters:

As provided in the “Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Act of 2017”, **all Athens LL volunteers who interact with children are considered mandated reporters and MUST report suspected child abuse, (mental, physical, emotional, or sexual), within 24 hours to law enforcement.** Furthermore, all volunteers are to complete state-required Mandated Reporter Training. In the case of allegations of abuse, the Athens Little League board will suspend the volunteer while the investigation continues.

No Retaliation:

Athens LL and Little League International have a policy that prohibits retaliation against “good faith” reports of child abuse. Potential reporters should not be afraid to come forward in cases where they either have firsthand knowledge of or a good faith belief that abuse has occurred, even if there is a possibility that the report is wrong.

Limited One on One Contact:

Athens LL asks coaches and managers to schedule practices and games when more than one League approved volunteer can be present. Policy is to limit one-on-one contact with minors participants when the interaction is not in an observable and interruptible distance from another adult. Minor participants must always be supervised by appointed volunteers and/or hired workers who have completed the mandated background check process.

13:4 Air Quality Safety

We are asking our managers to check AQI via purpleair.com for the location closest to the practice/game that day. Our Managers are instructed to cancel games/practices if AQI is around 150 or higher. If the AQI is 100-150, practices/games will be optional for players. If the AQI is less than 100 consider the practice/game schedule as usual. Generally, we ask our managers to check the AQI at about 3 pm for weekday practices and 1-2 hours prior to weekend practices/games.

We realize that a lower AQI could quickly change into a much higher number while the players are at the field. Please know that if you would rather keep your child home and not take the risk, your coaches are fully supportive of your decision. The

AQI could also decrease significantly after our decision has been made, leaving you wondering why we cancelled. We have to inform both parents and coaches in advance to provide time for planning and driving.



14:1 Facility and Grounds

Our fields require a lot of care and are deserving of respect from parents, coaches, and players. Please help whenever possible and always keep an eye open for those that might destroy or cause damage to any part of our field. This is a special place for our players and should be treated as such. Managers and coaches are responsible for making sure the dugout and surrounding area are picked up after use and that their players are not damaging the field.

Prohibited : Alcohol, smoking, e-cigarettes/vaping, and chewing tobacco products are prohibited anywhere in the Athens LL/Athens Area Schools complex.

PRACTICE AREAS: All green space on the Athens Area School Property. Athens LL Main Field, Borough Park (Valley Playland). Ulster Field as scheduled, East Athens Park, except for Tues and Thursday.

GAME CANCELLATIONS: Will be a joint decision between the Division Coordinator, Managers, and Field Manager.

14:2 Facilities Manager

The Facilities Manager is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the condition of the Athens LL facility. In collaboration with the Safety Director and Field Manager, He/She shall conduct a safety audit of all fields prior to the start of a season and work to have such conditions fixed. Through the season, the Facilities Manager shall address any maintenance issues that arise, (ie: water, garbage, vandalism, structural..etc) They are also responsible for collecting bids for needed work. They are to be given keys to the buildings so access is available to perform duties.

14:3 Field Manager

The Field Manager is responsible for maintaining and preparing the playing fields for game use. This includes mowing, trimming, spraying, dragging, lining, and edging. They will also ensure all equipment is in working order, supplies are ordered, and the maintenance shed is kept in orderly fashion. The Field Manager shall submit an annual contract for services and a budget for the Board detailing the anticipated field maintenance and improvement costs. The Board will review and approve the contract. They are to be given keys to the maintenance shed so access is available to perform duties.

14:4 Security/Access

Keys needed for the Athens LL complex shall be given to the following league representatives:

President: Concession Stand, Press Box and Maintenance Shed

Vice President: Concession Stand, Press Box and Maintenance Shed

Auxiliary – Concession Stand, Press Box, Maintenance Shed

Field Manager – Maintenance Shed

Facilities Manager- Concession Stand, Press Box and Maintenance Shed

Equipment Manager- Press Box and Maintenance Shed

Additional KEY ROLES:

15:1 Special Events Coordinator

The Special Events Coordinator shall be responsible for assisting the league to plan, execute and recruit volunteers to assist with special events, fundraisers and post season tournaments hosted by Athens LL. He/She shall work with the Sponsorship & Fundraising Coordinator to the extent any event has a fundraising component. Some example special events include: baseball/softball related clinics, Opening Day festivities, postseason recognition events for coaches and players and team/player photo day. The Special Events Coordinator shall work with the Board to prepare a budget for anticipated costs associated with events held.

15:2 Equipment Manager/Purchasing Manager

- Selected annually by the board of directors
- Handle all procurement of league equipment.
- Work with the Safety Officer to ensure each team manager also has a first aid kit.
- Responsible for coordinating with the managers for the distribution of team equipment. The Equipment Manager will also inspect all league shared equipment prior to the start of each season for safety and operability; replacing any damaged equipment; and replenishing supplies in first aid kits as needed throughout the season.
- Responsible for working with the league's uniform supplier and All Star Managers to design, order and distribute all player uniforms, All Star tournament team uniforms, and fan gear.
- Provide the team managers with detailed instructions to deliver to their teams on how to order uniforms prior to the start of each season.
- Prepare a budget for the Board detailing the anticipated costs of equipment and uniform related expenses for the year.

15:3 Clearances Coordinator

Responsible for gathering, tracking and submitting all required clearance information to the Athens Little League President. Volunteers in regular service to the League or with repetitive access to children, including all managers/coaches, are required to complete TWO criminal background checks.

As required by Little League International, we use JDP which provides state and federal criminal history information and a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Registry.

The Executive Board and Clearances Coordinator will review the results of all volunteer JDP's and will not permit someone to serve based on results that would deem the individual unfit to work with minors.