



**2024**

Sunset Little League

# Parent Handbook



## UNDERSTANDING OUR REGISTRATION QUESTIONS:

Our league continues to work to provide an optimal experience for all of our players, and the information we request helps us ensure your player is in a situation to be successful. Here are some simple explanations on how to answer our questions accurately and appropriately. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to ask one of your board members on site.

- Sport Requested:** Simple and straight-forward, is your player interested in playing baseball, softball, or challenger?
- Division Requested:** Although your player's age may dictate the division, if you feel that they should be playing in a higher or lower division due to certain circumstances, we want to know to ensure they are successful.
- Property Player:** In our Major Division and above, the property player rule allows players to return to the team they played for during the previous Spring Season. If your player falls under this rule, we need to know what team they played for and if they are electing to return to that team, or if they would like to be inserted into the draft to be selected to a new team.
- Uniform/Hat Size:** We do our best to have uniform samples available at our in-person registration events. If you need to try on a sample, please let us know so we can ensure the sizing for your player is correct. Most often, the player hat size coincides with the shirt size; however, in some instances your player may need a youth size shirt but an adult hat. We want to get this information corrected.
- Pairing Request:** This request cannot always be guaranteed, but we do our best to accommodate to provide a more comfortable environment, especially for many first-time players coming in to join a friend or family member.
- Team/Coach Request:** When possible, we want our players to continue to build relationships with their coach or coaches, and although there is no guarantee, we will try to support your request to the best of our abilities.
- Coaching Exclusion:** We never want a player to give up the game because of a bad experience, and we provide an option for you to ensure your player does not play for a particular coach prior to the season ever starting. This option is available for all divisions but cannot exceed 50% of the available coaching options.





## ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION:

Sunset Little League is overseen and administered by a volunteer board of directors. The members of the league elect the board each September. League members are parents and volunteers who pay a membership fee and agree to support the league policies and goals. Any member, in good standing, may vote in the election or run for a position on the board. Directors serve from October 1<sup>st</sup> until September 30<sup>th</sup>. After the board election, directors meet to elect officers from among themselves.

The 2023 board of directors meet at least once each month. Meetings may be cancelled or rescheduled depending upon the availability of the board or other conflicts. The Board adopts procedures and policies for the league, authorizes the expenditure of money, and addresses problems or issues that arise throughout the year. Board meetings are open to members. Any person wishing to address the board at a meeting must notify a board member in advance to be placed on the agenda. Anyone who would like to become a board member or volunteer should contact Sunset Little League.

Sunset Little League is governed by various sets of rules, regulations, and guidelines, some of which are mandated by Little League International or the Regional Little League District Administer and others that are adopted locally.

The Various rules and regulations can be found in the following publications: Sunset Constitution; Little League International 2023 Operating Manual; the Official 2023 Little League Rulebook, local rules adopted for each division; other rules or policies and procedures adopted by Sunset Little League board of directors.

## WE ARE A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

The assistance of our dedicated volunteers is greatly appreciated and always needed to allow Sunset Little League to thrive in our community. As volunteers, we understand that life is busy and time is limited; however, getting involved is a worthwhile experience for even someone that only has a few hours to spare each week. Sunset Little League have several opportunities for volunteers to get involved, including the following areas of need:

- Umpiring (both plate and field) upcoming training available.
- Assisting in Concession Stand operations.

Little League International requires background checks for all volunteers over the age of 18. As a result, **ALL** volunteers for Sunset Little League must complete the background check either using a physical form or online through our website and be approved before being allowed to volunteer on the field during either practices or games and/or volunteering in concession.





## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President: BJ Gagne  
Director of Softball: Travis Mendoza  
Challenger Director: Heather Rinaldi  
Secretary/Social Media: Ashley Tabor  
Treasurer: Doug Taylor  
Concession Manager: Greg Shea  
Safety Officer: Jon Brickley  
Equipment Manager: Marc Dixon  
Facilities Director: Christopher Parsons  
Upper Division Administrator: Lisa Lethco

Vice President: Tyler Ortiz  
Softball Administrator: VACANT  
Challenger Administrator: Shawna Vizcaino  
PR / Coaches Coordinator: Kendall Sierra  
Information Officer: Isacc Deleon  
Concession Assistant: Jason Coyle  
Umpire In Chief: Stephen Castillo  
Purchasing: Chris Sierra  
Director of Baseball: Sean Desmond  
Lower Division Administrator: Nick Velasquez

## DUES AND COSTS FOR MEMBERS:

In addition to being called upon to donate time as a concession volunteer or Umpire, parents will incur a registration fee for their child to participate in our Little League programs.

The Costs are as follows:

### 2024 Spring Registration Fees and Dues **\$150 Per Player**

**A deposit of \$50 will be accepted to secure registration and all remaining dues will be paid based upon season planning and progression.**

Tee Ball Division uniforms consist of a shirt and a hat. Rookie Division and above uniforms consist of a shirt, hat, belt, and socks. **NO UNIFORM PANTS WILL BE PROVIDED.** In addition, the league will **NOT** provide player's gloves, protective cups, rubber, or hard plastic cleats. Metal cleats are not permitted for players registered in our Major Divisions and below.

Parents will be responsible for the purchase of these items in addition to any team party/awards costs associated with his/her child's team. The purchase of bats and/or batting helmets is optional since the league provides sharable options to each team. The league will also provide catchers equipment, practice balls (dependent on availability), batting tees, scorebooks, and lineup cards, as well as the use of pitching machines (**ROOKIE DIVISIONS**). The league will also pay for the use of practice fields for the 2024 spring season. Many of our volunteer coaches work to provide additional practice tools, such as nets and additional baseballs/softball, but team donations to support our coaches further are highly encouraged.





## RETURN CHECK/REFUND POLICY:

There is a return check policy at Sunset Little League. A fee of \$50 will be added for any check returned to Sunset Little League.

## SELECTION OF MANAGER AND COACHES:

The League President with the approval of the board of directors will appoint all managers and approve all coaches. Each interested manager or coach will be required to complete our volunteer application either online or in person and have an approved background check before being selected and approved as a coach. If for any reason you know of or become aware of a manager or coach engaged in the abuse of children, please notify the league immediately.

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION:

Sunset Little League has critical personnel in place to help our members, regardless of their needs. As a courtesy, please find important points of contact to assist you with your questions.

For general league information or concerns questions regarding our Baseball, Softball, and Challenger Programs please contact:

League President	BJ Gagne	<a href="mailto:bjgagne.sunset@gmail.com">bjgagne.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Vice President	Tyler Ortiz	<a href="mailto:tylero.sunset@gmail.com">tylero.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Director of Baseball	Sean Desmond	<a href="mailto:seand.sunset@gmail.com">seand.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Director of Softball	Travis Mendoza	<a href="mailto:travism.sunset@gmail.com">travism.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Challenger Director	Heather Rinaldi	<a href="mailto:heatherr.sunset@gmail.com">heatherr.sunset@gmail.com</a>

For player related issues pertaining to uniforms, team issues, or division placement, please contact one of the following members:

Director of Softball	Travis Mendoza	<a href="mailto:travism.sunset@gmail.com">travism.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Challenger Administrator	Shawna Vizcaino	<a href="mailto:shawnav.sunset@gmail.com">shawnav.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Upper Division Administrator	Lisa Lethco	<a href="mailto:lisa lethco.sunset@gmail.com">lisa lethco.sunset@gmail.com</a>
Lower Division Administrator	Nick Velasquez	<a href="mailto:nicholasv.sunset@gmail.com">nicholasv.sunset@gmail.com</a>

For sponsorship and fundraising information please contact:

Fundraising/Event Coordinator	Kendall Sierra	<a href="mailto:kendalls.sunset@gmail.com">kendalls.sunset@gmail.com</a>
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## AVAILABLE DIVISIONS:

### Tee Ball (league ages 4-6):

- This division is a non-competitive, developmental division for young players new to baseball. The experience is grounded in fun, fitness, and fundamentals while also being a key to growing a young child's love of the game. Tee Ball is played on a small field with 50' bases and uses training or safety baseballs.

### Tee Ball Softball (league ages 4-6):

- This division is a non-competitive, developmental division for young players new to baseball. The experience is grounded in fun, fitness, and fundamentals while also being a key to growing a young child's love of the game. Tee Ball is played on a small field with 50' bases and uses training or safety baseballs.

### Slugger Baseball (league ages 5-7):

- This division is coach pitch and is designed to expand on the fundamental skills while introducing the basic rules of baseball or softball. Players will learn fundamental skills involved in hitting, throwing, and catching. Many skill levels will be represented, and no prior experience is required. This division will strive to provide balanced playing time for all players and a continuous batting order will be used.

### Rookie Baseball (league ages 6-8):

- This division is machine pitch and is designed to expand on the fundamental skills while introducing the basic rules of baseball or softball. Players will learn fundamental skills involved in hitting, throwing, and catching. Many skill levels will be represented, and no prior experience is required. League Age 9 may be considered with no prior baseball experience. This division will strive to provide balanced playing time for all players and a continuous batting order will be used.

### Rookie Softball (league ages 6-8):

- This division is coach pitch and is designed to expand on the fundamental skills while introducing the basic rules of softball. Players will learn fundamental skills involved in hitting, throwing, and catching. Many skill levels will be represented, and no prior experience is required. League Age 9 may be considered with no prior experience. This division will strive to provide balanced playing time for all players and a continuous batting order will be used. Softball players will play games with teams from other little leagues in our area.

### Minor Baseball (league ages 7-10):

- This division is designed to expand on the fundamental skills as players begin to pitch during the game. The basic rules of baseball and softball are enforced by umpires. The baseball diamond used is a 60-foot diamond and the pitching distance is 46 feet.







### Minor Softball (league ages 8-10):

- This division is designed to expand on the fundamental skills as players begin to pitch during the game. The basic rules of baseball and softball are enforced by umpires. The softball diamond used is a 60-foot diamond and the pitching distance is 35-feet and play against teams from other area Little Leagues.

### Mid-Major Baseball (league ages 9-11):

- This division is designed to expand on the advanced skills as players continue to pitch during the game. The basic rules of baseball and softball are enforced by umpires. The baseball diamond used is a 60-foot diamond and the pitching distance is 46 feet.

### Major Baseball (league ages 10-12):

- This is the division that ultimately competes to play in the Little League World Series. Many baseball games in this division will be played against other little leagues in our District. Minimum playing time rules exist for this division, but line-ups will begin to reflect the Managers' decisions as to skill levels of the players, a continuous batting order will be used. The baseball diamond used is a 60-foot diamond and the pitching distance is 46 feet.

### Major Softball (league ages 10-12):

- This is the division that ultimately competes to play in the Little League World Series. Many softball games in this division will be played against other little leagues in our District. Minimum playing time rules exist for this division, but line-ups will begin to reflect the Managers' decisions as to skill levels of the players, a continuous batting order will be used. The Softball field uses a 60-foot diamond and a 40-foot pitching distance.

### Intermediate (50/70) Baseball (ages 11-13):

- This division is player pitch, with rules that more closely resemble baseball as it is commonly played at higher levels (i.e. lead-offs, stealing at any time, balk rules, etc.). The diamond used for Intermediate Baseball is a 70-foot baseline and the pitching distance is 50 feet. This division most resembles "travel baseball" at the 12- and 13-year-old levels.

### Junior Baseball (league ages 12-14):

- This division is player pitch, with rules that more closely resemble baseball as it is commonly played at higher levels (i.e. lead-offs, stealing at any time, balk rules). The diamond used for Junior Baseball is a full-size 90-foot diamond.

### Junior Softball (league ages 12-14):

- Junior Division of Softball uses a 60-foot diamond, with 43-foot pitching distance. Games at this level are usually against teams from other Leagues in our area. The local league has an option to choose a Tournament Team (or "All Stars") from within this division, and the team may enter the International Tournament.





### Senior Baseball (league ages 13-16):

- This division is player pitch, with rules that more closely resemble baseball as it is commonly played at higher levels (i.e. lead-offs, stealing at any time, balk rules). The diamond used for Senior Baseball is a full-size 90-foot diamond.

### Senior Softball (league ages 13-16):

- Senior Division of Softball uses a 60-foot diamond, with 43-foot pitching distance. Games at this level are usually against teams from other Leagues in our area. The local league has an option to choose a Tournament Team (or "All Stars") from within this division, and the team may enter the International Tournament.

## PLAYER SHOWCASE / TRYOUTS:

Every Spring Season the players in our Minor Baseball and Softball Divisions and above participate in our Annual Player Showcase or what is commonly referred to as tryouts. This process is not designed to determine if a player makes a team. This opportunity is designed to allow players to demonstrate their skills and abilities on the field in front of our coaches prior to our divisional drafts.

The drills emphasize the basis fundamental skills of baseball and softball and include mobility, technique, fielding, catching, throwing, and batting. Regardless of your players' experience level and performance, every player possesses skills that are appealing to individual coaches' strategy for their team. All players need to do is go out and give it their best effort and more importantly have fun with the process.







## **ALL-STAR INFORMATION:**

The Little League All-Star Tournament is an opportunity for players to represent their league and their community in a competitive double elimination tournament beginning with at the district level and may progress through the State, Regional, and World Series depending on the level of play. Tournaments are ongoing through the months of June and July.

Players are required to commit to All-Stars by completing the All-Star Commitment Form prior to the Team Selection Draft. Players will also have an opportunity to showcase their skills and growth through our All-Star Tryout/Showcase to refresh our coaches' memories of outstanding players throughout the league. Attendance is highly encouraged but not required for your player to be selected to an All-Star team.

Players and coaches serve as an intracule part of the selection process by submitting their votes that directly impact the players and coaches that are selected to represent Sunset Little League. This process is administered by the league and begins as we near the end of the regular season.

Additional paperwork is required once your player has been selected to an All-Star team, this includes residency documentation, at signed player affidavit, and physical birth certificate. The league will be providing additional guidance during the season to assist you and your players in preparation for the All-Star process.

## **AVAILABLE ALL-STAR TEAMS**

### **Minor Baseball Classic Team(s) (ages 8-10)**

- This is a locally hosted tournament and is often a player's first experience with tournament play. Teams representing their leagues from local Little League Districts (District 8, District 5, District 9) in the Albuquerque and surrounding areas are invited to compete for the All-Metro Tournament Championship.

### **Minor All-Star Baseball and Softball Teams (ages 8-10)**

- These tournaments begin with a locally hosted Tournament that competes for the District 8 Championship against the other leagues in our district. District Champions then move to the final stage of their tournament season at the State Tournament hosted by a designated district in the State and compete for the State Championship.

### **9-10-11 All-Star Baseball and Softball Teams (ages 9-11)**

- These tournaments begin with a locally hosted Tournament that competes for the District 8 Championship against the other leagues in our district. District Champions then move to the final stage of their tournament season at the State Tournament hosted by a designated district in the State and compete for the State Championship.





### Little League Baseball and Softball All-Star Teams (ages 10-12)

- These tournaments begin with a locally hosted Tournament that competes for the District 8 Championship against the other leagues in our district. District Champions then move to the State Tournament hosted by a designated district in the State and compete for the State Championship. State Champions move on to compete for the Southwest Regional Championship in Waco, TX. The pinnacle of this level is competing at the Little League World Series in Williamsport, PA (baseball) or Greenville, NC (softball).

### Intermediate (50/70) Baseball All-Star Team (ages 11-13)

- These tournaments begin with a locally hosted Tournament that competes for the District 8 Championship against the other leagues in our district. District Champions then move to the State Tournament hosted by a designated district in the State and compete for the State Championship. State Champions move on to compete for the Southwest Regional Championship in Waco, TX. The pinnacle of this level is completing at the Little League World Series in Livermore, CA.

### Junior Baseball and Softball All-Star Teams (ages 12-14)

- These tournaments begin with a locally hosted Tournament that competes for the District 8 Championship against the other leagues in our district. District Champions then move to the State Tournament hosted by a designated district in the State and compete for the State Championship. State Champions move on to compete for the Southwest Regional Championship in Waco, TX. The pinnacle of this level is completing at the Little League World Series in Taylor, MI (baseball) or Kirkland, WA (softball).

### Senior Baseball and Softball All-Star Teams (ages 13-16)

- These tournaments begin with a locally hosted Tournament that competes for the District 8 Championship against the other leagues in our district. District Champions then move to the State Tournament hosted by a designated district in the State and compete for the State Championship. State Champions move on to compete for the Southwest Regional Championship in Waco, TX. The pinnacle of this level is completing at the Little League World Series in Easley, SC (baseball) or Lower SusseX, DE (softball).





## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Can a player wear any jewelry on the field?

Players are not permitted to wear jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, and necklaces. The only exception is jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition. Sunglasses and items used to control the hair, such as beads, are permitted.

### Are pitchers allowed to wear arm sleeves?

A baseball pitcher can wear arm sleeves, but it must be fully covered by an undershirt and any part of the pitcher's undershirt that can be seen must be a solid color, and the sleeves cannot be white or gray. A softball pitcher may wear an arm sleeve but is not required to cover it. Also, a pitcher cannot wear any items on his/her hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the hitter. So, if your child plays baseball and wants to use an arm sleeve on the mound, keep a long-sleeved dark-color undershirt on hand. 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.

### What exactly is the mandatory play rule?

During regular season play, every rostered player present at the start of a game will participate in each game for a minimum of six defensive outs (basically, two full innings in the field, however those six outs do not need to be consecutive) and bat at least one time for regular season games. Mandatory play (Tournament Rule 9) was adjusted for the 2024 Little League International Tournament. During tournament play, there are no mandatory play requirements for the Senior League Divisions. At all other levels, 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 player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively in the game at any time but is not required to play on defense.

### Can my player use a bat weight on the bat to prepare for an at-bat?

No. The traditional batting donut is not permissible, but a weighted bat sleeve is. In addition, the on-deck position is not permitted in the Little League (Major) Division and below.





### Why does Little League have pitch count regulations for baseball?

The answer is simple – to protect young arms. Player safety is paramount, and we're proud of the regulations we've put in place. The healthier Little Leaguers® are, the more games they'll play, which results in them having more fun with their friends. Pitch count rules differ for several divisions. What does an uncaught third strike mean?

### Mistakenly called a "Dropped Third Strike,"

This is when a batter becomes a runner after the third strike called by an umpire, or a pitch is swung on and missed by a batter and is not caught by the catcher. For the hitter to be eligible as a runner, however, first base must be unoccupied, or first base is occupied with two outs. To put the batter-runner out, the defense must tag the batter or first base before the batter touches first base. An uncaught third strike does not apply to play below the Little League (Major) Division.

### During a play at home plate, does a runner have to avoid the catcher, whether he or she is sliding or not?

A play at the plate is no different than a play at any other base. A player must slide or attempt to avoid the defensive player. There is no "must-slide rule" in Little League.

### Can players wear sunglasses on the top of their hat?

Yes.

### In softball, is a face guard necessary on a helmet?

A face guard on a helmet, whether worn at the plate or as a safety precaution in the field, is optional.

### Does the catcher need to wear a long-model chest protector?

In 2014, Little League International amended its regulations, allowing catchers to wear either a long or short-model chest protector.





## **IMPORTANT DATES:**

### **In-Person Registration:**

Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am to 1:00pm

Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> from 3:00pm to 5:00pm

Location: Sabana Grande Recreation Center

### **Minor Baseball Player Showcase:**

Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

Check In: 10:00am      Begins: 10:30am

Location: Rio Rancho South Sports Complex – Field 4

### **Mid-Major Baseball Player Showcase:**

Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

Check In: 10:00am      Begins: 10:30am

Location: Rio Rancho South Sports Complex – Field 5

### **Softball Player Showcase:**

Sunday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

Check In: 11:00am      Begins: 11:30am

Location: Rio Rancho South Sports Complex – Field 3

### **Major Baseball Player Showcase:**

Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

Check In: 1:00pm      Begins: 1:30pm

Location: Rio Rancho South Sports Complex – Field 4

### **Intermediate & Above Baseball Player Showcase:**

Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>

Check In: 1:00pm      Begins: 1:30pm

Location: Rio Rancho South Sports Complex – Field 7

### **Southwest Regional Umpire Clinic:**

Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>

Location: Eastdale Little League / CNM Classroom





**Team Meet and Greet:**

Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>  
Time and Location: TBA

**Practices Begin:**

Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>

**District 8 Local Umpire Clinic:**

Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Location: Alameda Little League

**District 8 Local Umpire Clinic:**

Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>  
Location: Petroglyph Little League

**Opening Day Ceremonies / Games Begin:**

Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am to 12:00pm  
Location: Rio Rancho South Sports Complex

**All-Star Announcements:**

May 15<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup>

**Minor Baseball Classic Tournament:**

Begins Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>  
Location: Eastdale Little League

**All-Star Softball & 50/70 Baseball Tournaments:**

Begins Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>  
Location: Eastdale Little League

**All-Star Baseball Tournaments:**

Begins Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>  
Location: Coronado Little League







**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

<http://tshq.bluesombrero.com/sunsetbaseball>

**OR CONTACT US**

**505-249-0838**

Email: [littleleagueinfo.sunset@gmail.com](mailto:littleleagueinfo.sunset@gmail.com)

or find us on Facebook @ Sunset Little League

