

Tournament Rules and Guidelines

Little League Softball® , 8- to 10-Year-Old Division Softball, 9- to 11-Year-Old Division Softball, Junior League Softball, and Senior League Softball *Points of Emphasis in Bold Italics*

Tournament play started in Little League in 1947. Conduct of tournament play by District Administrators began in 1956 following the first Little League International Congress. Today, responsibility for scheduling and supervising all District tournament games comes under jurisdiction of the District Administrator. Little League International has the right to appoint Tournament Directors at other levels of tournament play.

The Tournaments of Little League have grown year by year until today they have become the outstanding, in fact, the only exposure that the majority of the public sees. In many cases, they are the criterion by which Little League is judged. Proper conduct at tournament time imposes a large responsibility upon all concerned. Good judgment and exemplary disciplines are demanded if Little League tournaments of the future are to remain worthwhile in the public esteem.

The Little League Softball Tournament, 8- to 10-Year-Old Division Softball Tournament, 9- to 11-Year-Old Division Softball Tournament, Junior League Softball, and Senior League Softball Tournaments are authorized by the Little League International Board of Directors. Leagues which exercise the option to participate in Tournament Play must pledge they will do so with full knowledge of the rules and in agreement that the rules will be upheld.

RULES: Except where noted in these Tournament Rules and Guidelines, the Little League Softball Official Regulations and Playing Rules will be used in the conduct of the 8- to 10-Year-Old Division Tournament, the 9- to 11-Year-Old Division Tournament, the Little League Softball Tournament, the Junior League Softball Tournament, and Senior League Softball Tournament.

8- to 10-Year-Old Division and 9- to 11-Year-Old Division: The objective of the 8- to 10-Year-Old Division and 9- to 11-Year-Old Division Tournament is to provide nine, ten, and eleven-year-old players the opportunity to participate in a softball tournament at the District, Sectional, and State levels at the conclusion of the regular season. Leagues are strongly encouraged to place the maximum number of players (14) on the Tournament Affidavit, thereby giving more players the opportunity to participate.

Responsibility and Chain of Command

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It should be clearly understood by Tournament Directors and league presidents that operation of the annual tournaments in Little League come under a different authority and jurisdiction from that normally observed during the playing season. It is, in fact, a whole new ball game. Once the tournament season starts, authority is vested solely in the Tournament Committee at Williamsport.

There will be no waivers, resorting to local rules, or other variation unless granted explicitly from Williamsport. To administer the tournament properly and scale down thousands of teams to two finalists in the limited time afforded by the tournament season is an undertaking requiring considerable discipline. Once the tournament starts, it must proceed without interruption. If protests or disputes occur which cannot be settled by the umpires or Tournament Director through immediate and concise application of the rules, an appeal must be made through proper channels promptly to prevent a major blockage or loss of momentum.

Revocation of tournament privileges or forfeiture of a tournament game may be decided only by the Tournament Committee at Williamsport. Should a problem arise that cannot be resolved while a game is in progress, the game must be suspended by the Umpire-in-Chief and the problem referred immediately to the Tournament Director. If not resolved, it must be referred to the Regional Director. If still unresolved, it will be referred to the Tournament Committee in Williamsport. If the Tournament Committee deems any player to be ineligible, by league age, residency or school attendance, participation in other programs, or participation in less than eight (8) [Senior: six (6)] regular season games, it may result in forfeiture of tournament game(s), and/or suspension or removal of personnel from tournament play, and/or suspension or removal of personnel or teams from further Little League activities, and/or suspension or revocation of the local league's charter. These actions can only be taken by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport.

The Tournament Committee and the individual Regional Directors may appoint agents to act on their behalf, and any person so appointed shall have the authority to act as, and exercise the duties of, the Tournament Committee or the individual Regional Directors.

The Tournament Committee also reserves the right in its sole discretion to impose any penalties if, in its judgment, any player, manager, coach, umpire, or other volunteer conducts him/herself in any manner, on or off the field, that does not positively reflect the high standard Little League holds for sportsmanship, citizenship, and decorum. This includes displays of unsportsmanlike conduct, "making a travesty of the game," or violating any rules, regulations, or policies contained herein during the game, at the game site, at any other location or time related to the International Tournament. The Committee also reserves the right to

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impose any penalty the Committee deems appropriate if the Committee determines action is necessary to correct a situation brought to its attention, regardless of the source of that information. The decision of the Tournament Committee is final and binding.

Knowledge of the rules must be guaranteed before a Tournament Director is declared qualified. All Tournament Directors will undergo a thorough and instructive briefing session prior to taking on their duties, must signify that they understand the rules, and regardless of personal feelings, they are in full agreement and can interpret them properly. At the time of the District tournament meeting, it will be required that each league president or the representative in attendance signify that the league and tournament team managing personnel are knowledgeable of Tournament Rules and are in full agreement with these conditions.

Selection of Tournament Teams (Recommended Method)

Little League would gain immeasurably in esteem of the public if all tournament teams were selected by the players themselves. Players relish the challenge of competition, but their anxiety to excel is in balance with an intuitive respect and admiration for teammate and opponent alike who demonstrate superior ability and skill.

1. It is not required that players be selected for the position they occupy during the regular season. For example, a pitcher who is also a good outfielder or infielder may be placed on the roster and used in whatever position the manager deems to be of advantage.
2. Tournament team candidates should be selected upon their playing ability and eligibility. The roster should include sufficient pitching strength to meet tournament schedules.
3. The following plan was presented to the International Congress, Washington, D.C., 1965, as a guideline, taken from the experience of the International Advisory Council. The principle is to have all components of a league determine and participate in fair and democratic selection of the tournament team. This would eliminate many of the complaints, abuses, pressures, and charges of favoritism which are directed toward the league president. The following groups should each select its tournament team.
 1. Group 1 – Players
 2. Group 2 – League Officers

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3. Group 3 – Team Managers
4. Group 4 – Team Coaches
5. Group 5 – Volunteer Umpires

Every player on the eligible teams is entitled to vote. Each group submits its list of players at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the league. The names are to be read and counted from each of the groups, and the players in the order of total votes received will become eligible for the tournament team.

Where more than one player has an equal number of votes to qualify for the last position or positions, final selection should be made by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at the time of the meeting.

NOTE: Method of selection is to be determined by the local league Board of Directors.

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Teams

Each chartered league shall be eligible to enter a team. Alternates are not authorized.

NOTE: A league may enter more than one tournament team, provided the teams are deemed fair and balanced, with the District Administrator's approval.

Where two or more charters have combined to form a single program, a tournament team must be selected for each charter composed of players from within its own chartered area. Exceptions can only be made by the Charter Committee.

Tournament teams and Eligibility Affidavit shall consist of, and must be limited to, a maximum of fourteen (14) players, one (1) manager, and a maximum of two (2) coaches.

Senior League: Tournament teams may be selected from all league teams in a district or may be regular season unit team. Teams and Eligibility Affidavit shall consist of, and must be limited to, a maximum of sixteen (16) players, one (1) manager, and a maximum of two (2) coaches.

Managers and Coaches

The District Administrator or District Staff shall not serve as manager or coach. The league president and player agent may be eligible for selection by the local league Board of Directors to coach or manage with written approval from their respective District Administrator.

8- to 10-Year-Old Division & 9- to 11-Year-Old Division: The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Little League Softball (Major) Division or Minor League Division.

Little League: The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Little League Softball (Major) Division.

Junior League: The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Junior Division or Senior Division.

Senior League: The manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Junior Division or Senior Division.

Managers/Coaches in the Dugout – If a tournament team has twelve (12) or more eligible players in uniform at the game site at the start of a game, then the maximum

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of three (3) adults who are named on the affidavit (or authorized replacements as noted on the affidavit) will be permitted to act as manager/coaches for that game. However, if a tournament team has eleven (11) or fewer eligible players in uniform the game site at the start of a game, then a maximum of two (2) adults must be named at the start of the game as manager and coach. The two named adults must be listed on the affidavit, or must be authorized temporary replacements as noted on the affidavit. If there is a third adult listed on the affidavit, that adult is not permitted to be in the dugout or on the field during that game. **NOTE:** Base coaches may be adults and/or players provided at least one adult manager or coach remains in the dugout. See [4.05\(b\)](#).

Umpires

The Tournament Director shall have full responsibility for providing volunteer Little League umpires for tournament play. Umpires from leagues involved in the game should not be assigned. The District Administrator shall not umpire.

There should be at least two umpires in each game. More are recommended when available.

The designated Umpire-in-Chief for each game must be an adult.

Tournament Eligibility Affidavit

It shall be the league president's responsibility to review and certify the birth records (league age) by viewing the original birth record and residence or school attendance (as defined by Little League Baseball, Incorporated) of all players. When the league finally decides on the makeup of the team, names must be entered on the league's Eligibility Affidavit. Once the District Administrator certifies the Eligibility Affidavit, the tournament team will be required to have in its possession:

1. the Eligibility Affidavit;
2. a map, signed and dated by the league president and District Administrator, showing the actual boundaries of the league, with locations noted for the residences of the parent or legal guardian (court-appointed) or location of the school for every participant named on the affidavit;
3. a tournament verification form for each player; **NOTE: Players who established "residence" or "school attendance" for regular season and/or tournament in a prior season using the Tournament Player Verification form, and can produce the form with proper proofs and signatures, will NOT need to complete a new Tournament Player Verification form.**

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4. three or more documents to determine residency of the parent(s) or legal guardian (court-appointed) or a document to support school attendance/enrollment for each player named on the tournament affidavit;
5. **waivers [i.e. II(d), IV(h), Charter Committee, etc.]**

IMPORTANT: Alternates are not authorized. They shall not accompany the team and shall not be listed on the Eligibility Affidavit.

Eligibility Affidavit must be certified by the District Administrator or his or her designated appointee and presented by the team manager to the Tournament Director before every game. Each Tournament team must have twelve (12) eligible players for the District Administrator to certify. **EXCEPTION:** A District Administrator may certify the Eligibility Affidavit for those teams that provide a justifiable reason for not having twelve (12) players. **NOTE:** The Eligibility Affidavit becomes official once the team plays its first tournament game.

Player Participation in Other Programs

Any violation of Regulation I(g) by the local Little League may result in revocation of the league's charter and/or suspension of tournament privileges for the league or individuals associated with such team. An individual, or a group of such individuals, that participates in a non-Little League program, club, tournament, event, or game, are subject to the provisions of Regulation I(g) and Regulation IV(a) Note 2.

Release of Names

The release of names of players selected for the tournament team shall not be made before **May 15**, and not until the availability and eligibility of all prospective team members have been established. (The AIG group accident insurance program for Little League tournament team try-out and practice will not go into effect until **May 15**.)

Violation of this rule may be cause for revocation of tournament privilege by the Tournament Committee.

League Eligibility

In order for a Little League program to be eligible to enter a team or teams into the International Tournament (including 8- to 10-Year-Old Division and 9- to 11-Year-Old Division) the following must be accomplished as indicated:

1. The league must be chartered in an age appropriate division(s) for which it wishes to enter a tournament team(s), no later than **June 1, 2021**.

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2. The league must have scheduled and played, at a minimum, a 12-game [**Senior League:** Ten (10)-game] (per team) regular season, exclusive of playoffs and tournament games, for each division, or age appropriate division, entering tournament prior to the first game in their respective tournament. See [Reg. VII](#). **NOTE 1:** Forfeited games shall not count towards the 12-game [**Senior League:** Ten (10)-game] regular season. **NOTE 2:** For Junior Tournament eligibility, Senior League players league age 12, 13 and 14 must have played in a minimum of eight (8) Regular Season games.
3. All waiver requests (for the league, team, player, manager, and/or coach) of any kind must be submitted and approved not later than **June 1, 2021**.
4. Team number revisions and fees incurred by the league must be paid in full by **June 1, 2021**.
5. All combined team and interleague play requests that may involve tournament play must be submitted and approved not later than **June 1, 2021**.

Failure to meet any of the listed requirements could result in a team or teams being declared ineligible by the Tournament Committee at Little League International.

Player Eligibility

Players are eligible for Tournament Play, provided they meet the criteria established by the Little League “Residency and School Attendance Player Eligibility Requirement,” “Player Participation In Other Programs,” and the following:

8- to 10-Year-Old Division – Any player League Age 8, 9 or 10, with amateur status, who has participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in **eight (8)** regular season games (**Special Games may be counted toward this requirement**) by the start of Tournament Play in their respective District, with the exception of the school softball season.

9- to 11-Year-Old Division – Any player League Age 9, 10, or 11, with amateur status, who has participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in **eight (8)** regular season games (**Special Games may be counted toward this requirement**) by the start of Tournament Play in their respective District, with the exception of the school softball season.

Little League (Major Division) – Any player League Age 10, 11, or 12, with amateur status, who has participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in **eight (8)** regular season games (**Special Games may be counted toward this requirement**) by

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the start of Tournament Play in their respective District, with the exception of the school softball season.

Junior League – Any player League Age 12, 13, or 14, with amateur status, who has participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in **eight (8)** regular season games (Special Games may be counted toward this requirement) by the start of Tournament Play in their respective District, with the exception of the middle school, junior high school, or high school softball season.

Senior League – Any player League Age **12**, 13, 14, 15, or 16, with amateur status, who has participated as required by Mandatory Play as an eligible player in **six (6)** regular season games (Special Games may be counted toward this requirement) by the start of Tournament Play in their respective District, with the exception of the middle school, junior high school, or high school softball season.

Exception: The local league Board of Directors may permit a player to be eligible for selection, who does not meet the **minimum game** requirement, if they provide a physician's note documenting an injury or illness prior to or during the current season prohibiting his/her participation and such note releases the player for the balance of the Regular Season and/or Tournament Play.

NOTE 1: Forfeited games shall not count towards a team's 12-game [**Senior League:** Ten (10)-game] regular season nor towards any player's **minimum game** participation requirement.

NOTE 2: Consistent with a manager's ability to conduct the affairs of his or her team, a manager may disqualify a player from the team for the current season, subject to Board of Directors approval, if the player repeatedly misses practice or games.

NOTE 3: Tournaments are divided by age, without regard to the regular season division in which a player participates, as noted above.

CONDITION 1: Participation must be within the chartered league/district named on the Eligibility Affidavit unless written approval is granted by the respective Regional Director and Charter Committee.

CONDITION 2: player who is not able to participate in a number of local league regular season games because of participation in a school softball program will receive an adjustment on the minimum participating in games required under this rule. In order to receive the adjustment, players must register with the league (**Senior League:** or District) prior to the start of regular season games within that division and participate in **sixty (60) percent** of the games available to them.

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EXAMPLE: If, for any given division, Team A played 10 regular season games before June 15, and a player missed five (5) games because of participation in a school softball program, that player is required to have participated in only three (3) regular season games to be eligible for the Tournament Team.

CONDITION 3: A player may be named to the roster of, and practice with, only ONE Little League International Tournament Team at a time. Once the affidavit is signed by the local league president, player agent, and District Administrator (or their representatives), the players listed on the affidavit shall not be eligible to participate on any other Little League International Tournament Team until the team is eliminated from the Tournament. Once the team is eliminated from the Little League International Tournament, players from that team may be added to the affidavit of a second team so long as: 1) The player meets all eligibility requirements as outlined in Tournament Player Eligibility; 2) There is space on the team affidavit for an additional player; 3) The player is not replacing another eligible and available player currently named on the affidavit; 4) The player is named to a team within an older division of play; and 5) The player must be assessed capable to play within the older division of play. The addition must be certified by the District Administrator or his/her appointee prior to playing with the second team.

Softball players league age 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 may be eligible for selection to multiple tournament teams. These players may only be selected to one tournament team at a time. Under no circumstances may these players be chosen for; practice with, or participate with more than one tournament team at a time. Only under the circumstances listed in Condition 3 may a player be selected to a second tournament team.

Violation of this rule may be cause for revocation of tournament privilege by the Tournament Committee.

Tournament Requirement for Non-Citizens

A participant who is not a citizen of the country in which he/she wishes to play, but meets residency or school attendance requirements as defined by Little League, may participate in that country if:

1. his/her visa allows that participant to remain in that country for a period of at least one year, or;
2. the prevailing laws allow that participant to remain in that country for at least one year, or;
3. the participant has an established bona fide residence in that country for at

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least two years prior to the start of the regular season.

Exceptions can only be made by action of the Charter Committee in Williamsport.

Insurance

Accident: A league or district Senior League team shall not be accepted for tournament play unless covered by accident insurance, which includes tournament play. It is strongly recommended that a medical release for each player on the Affidavit be carried by the team manager.

Liability: Liability Insurance must be carried by the league on whose field tournaments are played as well as all leagues who participate in the tournament. Minimum coverage of \$1,000,000 single limit, bodily injury, and property damage. The policy must include coverage for claims arising out of athletic participants.

If insurance is purchased locally, a copy of the policy must be on file at Little League International.

Replacement of Player, Manager, or Coach

Any player, manager, or coach listed on the Eligibility Affidavit who is unable to participate because of injury, illness, vacation, or other justifiable reason may be replaced by another eligible person. If a player, manager, or coach is replaced, that person may not be returned to the Tournament Affidavit. Permanent replacements must be from the league's regular season teams and shall be recorded and approved by the District Administrator or Tournament Director in the space provided on the back of the Eligibility Affidavit. **Exception: If a manager or coach is unable to attend a game for a justifiable reason, a Tournament Director could approve a temporary replacement as outlined in the Little League Tournament Team Eligibility Affidavit. Temporary replacement of a manager or coach must be entered on the Eligibility Affidavit. A manager or coach who is ejected from a game may not be replaced for the team's next physically played game. (See [Rule 4.07](#))**

Playing Equipment

The dimensions and other specifications of all playing equipment used must conform to those set forth in the Little League, Junior League, and Senior League Softball Playing Rules except for those noted below:

Every member of the team must wear a conventional uniform which includes shirt, pants

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or shorts, socks, and cap or visor. This may be a regular season uniform.

NOTE: The wearing of caps or visors is optional for each player while on defense.

Each team must provide at least six (6) [seven (7) for **Junior/Senior League**] NOCSAE approved safety helmets with warning labels. The batter, all base runners, (on-deck batters for **Junior/Senior League**), and player base coaches must wear approved helmets.

All male players must wear athletic supporters. Catchers (male) must wear the metal, fibre, or plastic type cup.

Catchers must wear a mask with (NOCSAE) approved catchers helmet (**skull cap type are not acceptable**) and “dangling” type throat guard during practice, infield/outfield, pitcher warm-up, and games. All catchers must wear chest protector and shin guards.

Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible. **Junior/Senior League Players:** Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are permitted.

Schedules

Each District Administrator must finalize tournament schedules two (2) weeks prior to the start of the tournament or by **June 20** (whichever is earliest). Schedules for each level (District, Section, Division, State, Regional) must utilize Little League International approved single elimination brackets, double elimination brackets, modified double elimination brackets, or pool play/elimination format with pool play tie breaker format as noted in this section. All other tournament formats must be approved by the Tournament Committee. **NOTE:** Schedules shall not be altered once a tournament starts without Tournament Committee approval.

A.R. – A District Administrator may utilize the modified double elimination format for Tournament Play. Modified double elimination must use an approved Little League double elimination bracket, eliminating the “if” game. No other modification are acceptable.

8- to 10-Year-Old, 9- to 11-Year-Old, and Little League Divisions: A team may play two (2) games in one day no more than twice in a seven (7) day period.

Junior/Senior League: Teams may participate in a maximum of three (3) games in a day.

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NOTE 1: Inclement weather may be justification to revert to single elimination in order to complete a tournament on schedule, with the approval of the Regional Director.

NOTE 2: The 8- to 10- and 9- to 11-Year-Old Divisions advances to State level only.

NOTE 3: Consult approved schedules for specific dates. Tournament dates may vary.

Tournament Team Practice

Try-outs and practices by tournament teams shall not be held before May 15. Tournament team practice may only take place against other Little League teams within the same or contiguous districts in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform. (The AIG group accident insurance program for Little League tournament team try-out and practice will not go into effect until May 15.)

Special Games by tournament teams shall not be held before June 1. (The AIG group accident insurance program for Little League tournament teams participating in Special Games will not go into effect until June 1.)

Violation of this rule may be cause for revocation of tournament privileges by the Tournament Committee.

Selection of Fields

Local leagues selected to host a District, Section, State, Division, Region, or World Series tournament must have an approved ASAP safety plan.

All games shall be played upon Little League fields approved by the Tournament Director. Exception to this rule can only be made with the consent of the Regional Director.

Fields must be enclosed with an outfield fence. The distance to the outfield fence should be 200 feet from home plate. The outfield fence must be a minimum of 180 feet and a maximum of 225 feet from home plate. Tournament Directors should not permit portable outfield fences to exceed 200 feet. The Tournament Director or assistant shall judge fitness of the playing field before the game starts.

8- to 10-Year-Old, 9- to 11-Year-Old, and Little League Divisions: The on-deck batter's position is not permitted.

NOTE: For additional information about field selection, see "Physical Conditions."

Games Under Lights

Games under lights may be scheduled at all levels of tournament play. The District

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Administrator having jurisdiction must determine that lighting installations meet minimum standards approved by Little League International.

Curfew

No inning shall start after midnight prevailing time (12:30 a.m. prevailing time for **Junior League**; 1:00 a.m. prevailing time for **Senior League**).

NOTE 1: An inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the previous inning.

NOTE 2: Neither Tournament Directors and officials nor tournament teams are permitted to circumvent the curfews established above by continuing, suspending, and restarting, or starting a game after curfew has been reached and play is required to be terminated. If the curfew noted above occurs during a game suspended in accordance with Tournament Rule 11, that game must not be continued after the curfew. It must either be resumed on a subsequent day, or declared ended, as determined by rule.

Starting Time of Games

A game shall not be started unless the Tournament Director or assistant judge there is adequate time to complete the game before darkness or curfew.

Admission Charge

There shall be no charge for admission to Little League, 8- to 10-Year-Old, or 9- to 11-Year-Old Division Tournament games.

Junior/Senior League: An admission charge is permitted.

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Protests

This rule replaces [Rule 4.19](#).

No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment. Equipment which does not meet specifications must be removed from the game.

Protest shall be considered only when based on:

A. The violation or interpretation of a playing rule;

When a manager claims that a decision is in violation of the playing rules, the following steps must be taken:

1. A formal (verbal) protest must be made to the Umpire-in-Chief at once by the manager or coach.
2. The Umpire-in-Chief must immediately call a conference of all umpires working the game.
3. If the problem cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the managers, the Umpire-in-Chief shall be required to consult with the Tournament Director or District Administrator.
4. If the managers do not accept the decision of the Tournament Director, either manager may elect, without penalty, to discontinue play until the matter is referred to the Regional Headquarters. Either the Umpire-in-Chief, Tournament Director or District Administrator will call the Regional Headquarters at this time.
5. If the managers do not accept the decision of the Regional Director (or his/her designated agent), either may insist that the matter be referred to the Tournament Committee in Williamsport. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding.

NOTE 1 - PROTESTS INVOLVING PLAYING RULES NOT RESOLVED BEFORE THE NEXT PITCH OR PLAY SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

NOTE 2 - UMPIRES, TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS, AND DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS DO NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO DECLARE A

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FORFEITURE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

B. The use of an ineligible pitcher.

Ineligibility under this rule applies to violations of [Tournament Playing Rule 4](#). If an ineligible pitcher delivers one or more pitches to a batter, that game is subject to protest and action by Tournament Committee in Williamsport. **NOTE: Junior/Senior League:** Does not apply. See [Tournament Rule 10\(f\)](#).

1. If the facts establishing or verifying an ineligible pitcher become known DURING a game, and the ineligible pitcher participates in the game, subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) A protest may be lodged by the manager or coach with the Umpire-in-Chief, who shall consult with the Tournament Director or District Administrator.
 - (b) The Tournament Director or District Administrator must contact the Regional Director (or his/her appointed agent), who shall contact the Tournament Committee for a decision. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding.
2. If the facts establishing or verifying an ineligible pitcher become known AFTER a game, and the ineligible pitcher participated in the game, subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) A protest may be lodged by the manager or coach with the Tournament Director or District Administrator. Such protest must be made before either team affected by the protest begins another game.
 - (b) The Tournament Director or District Administrator must contact the Regional Director (or his/her appointed agent), who shall contact the Tournament Committee for a decision. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding.

PENALTY for 8- to 10-, 9- to 11-, 10- to 12-Year-Old Divisions: See [Tournament Rule 4\(i\)](#).

C. The use of an ineligible player.

Ineligibility under this rule applies to league age, residence or school attendance (as defined by Little League Baseball, Incorporated), participation in other programs, or participation as an eligible player for **eight (8) [Senior: six (6)] games** during the regular season in the proper division.

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1. If the facts establishing or verifying the ineligibility of a player are known to the complainant, Tournament Official, or Tournament Director after the ineligible player participated in a game during the International Tournament, that team shall be disqualified and removed from the International Tournament, subject to any of the following conditions:
 - (a) A protest is lodged by the manager or coach with the Umpire-in-Chief, who shall consult with the Tournament Director or District Administrator. The Tournament Director or District Administrator must contact the Regional Director (or his/her appointed agent), who shall contact the Tournament Committee for a decision. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding.
 - (b) The Tournament Director, District Administrator, or Tournament Official become aware of the circumstances by any means, they must contact the Regional Director (or his/her appointed agent), who shall contact the Tournament Committee for a decision. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final and binding.

In addition to the penalties described above in A, B, and C, the Tournament Committee may disqualify a player, team, or entire league from tournament play. The Tournament Committee may take action as a result of a protest or on its own initiative. Disqualification of a team or player(s) and/or forfeiture of a game must be the decision of the Tournament Committee at Williamsport, and such decisions will be made prior to the continuation of the affected team(s) or player(s) in further tournament play.

NOTE 1: All officials, including all managers, coaches, scorekeepers, umpires, Tournament Directors, District Administrators, etc., should make every effort to prevent a situation that may result in the forfeiture of a game or suspension of tournament privileges. However, failure by any party to prevent such situations shall not affect the validity of a protest.

Must Play To Advance

A team shall not advance from one level of Tournament to a higher level of tournament play without first having competed against and defeated a scheduled opponent at the tournament level from which it is seeking to advance. Any team advancing without play must do so with the approval of the **District Administrator**, who must certify that the advancing team has participated in a Little League regular

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season schedule of games against other Little League teams and has met all other requirements to establish eligibility for tournament play.

Tournament Playing Rules

The Little League, Junior League, and Senior League Softball Playing Rules shall govern tournament play except as noted below:

- 1. SOFTBALLS:** Softballs meeting Little League specifications for a 12-inch softball shall be used in **9- to 11-Year-Old Division, Little League, Junior League, and Senior League** play. The 11-inch softball shall be used in the **8- to 10-Year Old Division**.

NOTE: Specific softball models for tournament play can be found at LittleLeague.org/TournamentBalls.

- 2. FIELDS:** All fields are considered neutral. The home team shall be determined by the toss of a coin, the winner having the choice. The official pitching distance shall be

(1) **8- to 10-Year-Old Division:** 35 feet;

(2) **9- to 11-Year-Old Division and Little League (Majors):** 40 feet; and

(3) **Junior/Senior League:** 43 feet.

- 3. PLAYING RULES:** A copy of the Little League Regulations and Playing Rules and the Tournament Rules and Guidelines must be available at each tournament site and at the time the game is to be played. This is the responsibility of the Tournament Director. Written ground rules established by the Tournament Director or assistant must be reviewed with both managers and the Umpire-in-Chief at least ten (10) minutes before the start of the game. It is suggested the same be available to news media if requested.

- (a) After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat.

EXCEPTIONS:

- i. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
- ii. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
- iii. When the batter attempts a "slap" or "slap bunt."
- iv. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
- v. When a play has been attempted.
- vi. When time has been called.
- vii. When the pitcher leaves the eight foot circle or the catcher leaves the catcher's

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box.

viii. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

PENALTY: If the batter leaves the batter's box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter. No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

NOTE: The batter may return their position in the batter's box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike.

- (b) In all Tournament levels and divisions, the penalty for use of an illegal bat [see [Rule 6.06\(d\)](#)], if discovered before the next player enters the batter's box following the turn at bat of the player who used an illegal bat, is:
- i. The batter is out. The ball is dead and runners must return if they advanced on the play (**NOTE:** The manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline this portion of the penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play), and;
 - ii. The manager of the team will be ejected from the game, the batter who violated the rule will be ejected from the game, and the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.
- c. **9- to 11-Year-Old Division:** The batter may advance on an uncaught third strike ([6.05/6.09](#)). This rule will not apply for the **8- to 10-Year-Old Division**.
- d. **9- to 11-Year-Old Division:** Base runner(s) must maintain contact with the base in which they are entitled until the ball has been released by the pitcher on delivery [[\(7.08\(a\)\(5\)\)](#)]. **8- to 10-Year-Old Division:** Base runner(s) must maintain contact with the base in which they are entitled until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter [[\(7.08\(a\)\(5\)\)](#)].
- e. Twice a game but not more than one time per inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch-runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the line-up, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-runner.

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- f. Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play. The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire this behavior is occurring, the team manager and those responsible including any player(s) and/or coach(es) shall be warned after the first offense. Those responsible including any player(s), coach(es), and/or manager shall be ejected from the game for a team's subsequent offense.

4. PITCHING RULES – LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL, 8- TO 10-YEAR-OLD SOFTBALL, AND 9- TO 11-YEAR-OLD DIVISION

These rules replace the regular season pitching regulations. *Violation of these pitching rules is subject to protest and action by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention.*

- a. Any player on a tournament team may pitch. (NOTE: There is no limit to the number of eligible pitchers a tournament team may use in a game.)
- b. A Tournament pitcher may not pitch in regular season or Special Games while the team is still participating in the Tournament.
- c. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- d. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed.
- e. One (1) calendar day of rest must be observed following regular season or Special Games play, and between levels of Tournament Play if a player pitches seven (7) or more innings in a calendar day.
- f. A player may not pitch in more than twelve (12) innings in a day.
- g. If a player pitches in less than seven (7) innings in a calendar day, no rest is required.
- h. If a player pitches in seven (7) or more innings in a calendar day, one day's rest is required. This also applies between regular season games following Tournament elimination or Special Games following the Tournament.

EXAMPLE 1: A player may pitch on Saturday in regular season play then, after

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one (1) calendar day's rest, pitch again in the next level of tournament play on Monday.

EXAMPLE 2: A player may pitch on Saturday in the final district game then, after one (1) calendar day's rest, pitch again in the next level of tournament play on Monday.

EXCEPTIONS:

- (1) A player may pitch on consecutive calendar days if less than seven (7) innings were pitched in the previous calendar day.
 - (2) In a game suspended by darkness, weather or other causes and resumed the following calendar day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of the remaining eligibility that pitcher would have had during the previous day. However, in no event shall any pitcher pitch more than twelve (12) innings in any game.
- i. Failure to remove a pitcher who has reached his/her maximum number of innings pitched or use of an ineligible pitcher is basis for protest. Violations protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention, shall result (by action of the Tournament Committee) in the suspension of the team's manager for the next two scheduled tournament games, even if those games are played at the next tournament level. Additional penalties (up to and including forfeiture of a game and/or disqualification of the team, managers, or coaches from further tournament participation) may be imposed if, in the opinion of the Tournament Committee:
1. a manager of coach takes any action that results in making a travesty of the game or;
 2. a team fails to meet the requirements of this rule more than once during the International Tournament, which begins with District play and ends at the World Series level (State level for 8- to 10- and 9- to 11-), or;
 3. a manager willfully and knowingly disregards the requirements of this rule. A manager or coach suspended for any reason is not permitted to be at the game site and must not take any part in the game, nor have any communications whatsoever with any persons at the game site.

This includes pregame and postgame activities. Violation may result, by action of the Tournament Committee, in further suspension; forfeiture of a game; and/or disqualification of the team, managers, or coaches from further tournament

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participation.

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- a. Any player on a tournament team may pitch. (**NOTE:** There is no limit to the number of eligible pitchers a tournament team may use in a game.)
 - b. A Tournament pitcher may not pitch in regular season or Special Games while the team is still participating in the Tournament.
 - c. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed. A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate the substitution, visits per pitcher, or mandatory play rule(s). **Penalty:** See [Rule 10\(f\)](#).
 - d. No pitching restrictions apply.
5. **FORFEITS:** No game may be forfeited or a team disqualified without the authorization of the Tournament Committee. Violations which may result in forfeiture or disqualification must be reported immediately to the Regional Director before further play takes place which would involve a team or teams affected by such action.
6. **BENCH/DUGOUT:** No one except the players, manager, and coach(es) shall occupy the bench or dugout during a game. Base coaches may be players or adults. Two (2) adult base coaches are permitted at all levels subject to [playing rule 4.05\(b\)](#).
7. **VISITS:** A manager or coach may not leave a dugout for any reason during a game without receiving permission from an umpire. The manager or coach may be removed from the field for the remainder of the game for violation of this rule. When permission is granted the manager or coach will be permitted to go to the pitcher's circle to confer with the pitcher or any defensive player(s). A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.
- 9- to 11-Year-Old Division, Little League, Junior League, and Senior League:** A manager or coach may come out once in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the second time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. The manager or coach may come out twice in a game to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. The rule applies to each pitcher who enters a game.

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8- to 10-Year-Old Division: A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. The manager or coach may come out three times in a game to visit with the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. The rule applies to each pitcher who enters a game.

NOTE: Only one offensive time-out will be permitted each inning.

8. **INJURY/ILLNESS:** If a player is injured or becomes ill during a game, the decision of a doctor (if present) or medical personnel will be final as to whether or not the player may continue in the game.
9. **MANDATORY PLAY 8- to 10-Year Old Division, 9- to 11-Year-Old Division, Little League, and Junior League:** If a tournament team has thirteen (13) or more eligible players in uniform at a game, then every player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of one (1) at bat. If a tournament team has twelve (12) or fewer eligible players in uniform at a game, then every player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.
 - a. Prior to the start of play in the top of the fourth inning (**Junior League:** fifth inning), the umpire-in-chief or other individual designated by the game Tournament Director in consultation with the official scorekeeper, shall advise both team managers of their obligation to insert all players who have not completed their mandatory play requirement into the line-up as outlined below. A manager's failure/refusal to insert players into the line-up as outlined below shall result in immediate ejection of the manager and removal for the remainder of the International Tournament.
 1. If a team has 12 or fewer players in uniform at the start of a game, and is:
 - a. **Visiting Team:** Any player(s) who has yet to enter the game to meet the defensive requirement of mandatory play must be inserted prior to the first pitch or play in the bottom half of the fourth inning (**Junior League:** fifth inning) into one of the next six (6) positions in the line-up, that will ensure all requirements of mandatory play will be satisfied, absent a shortened game, including one at-bat.
 - b. **Home Team:** Any player(s) who has yet to enter the game to meet the defensive requirement of mandatory play must be inserted prior to the first pitch or play in the top half of the fifth inning (**Junior League:** sixth inning) into one of the next three (3) positions in the line-up, that

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will ensure all requirements of mandatory play will be satisfied, absent a shortened game, including one at-bat.

2. If a team has 13 or more players in uniform at the start of a game, players must be inserted into the line-up to bat offensively during the:
 - a. **Visiting Team:** fourth or fifth inning, or as one of the first three batters in the sixth inning (**Junior League:** fifth or sixth inning, or as one of the first three batters in the seventh inning), that will allow their one at-bat to be satisfied.
 - b. **Home Team:** fourth inning or as one of the first three batters in the fifth inning (**Junior League:** fifth inning or as one of the first three batters in sixth inning), that will allow their one at-bat to be satisfied.
- b. Managers are responsible for fulfilling the mandatory play requirements, even if notification is not made.
- c. There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason. **NOTE:** A game is not considered shortened if the home team does not complete the offensive half of the sixth or seventh inning (or any extra inning) due to winning the game.
- d. **Failure to meet the mandatory play requirements in this rule is a basis for protest. If one or more players on a roster do not meet this requirement, and if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention, it shall result (by action of the Tournament Committee) in the removal of the team's manager, without replacement, for the remainder of the International Tournament. EXCEPTION: A player removed prior to meeting the running portion of their Mandatory Play requirement will be treated as an improper substitute. Additional penalties (including but not limited to forfeiture of a game, additional mandatory play requirements for players who failed to meet mandatory play, and/or disqualification of the team or coaches from further tournament participation) may be imposed if, in the opinion of the Tournament Committee:**
 1. a manager or coach takes any action that results in making a travesty of the game, causing players to intentionally perform poorly for the purpose of extending or shortening a game, or;
 2. a team fails to meet the requirements of this rule more than once during the International Tournament, which begins with District play and ends

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at the World Series level (State level for 8- to 10- and 9- to 11-Year-Old Divisions), or;

3. a manager willfully and knowingly disregards the requirements of this rule.

A manager or coach suspended for any reason is not permitted to be at the game site and must not take any part in the game, nor have any communications whatsoever with any persons at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. Violation may result, by action of the Tournament Committee, in further suspension; forfeiture of a game; and/or disqualification of the team, managers, or coaches from further tournament participation.

- e. For the purposes of this rule, “six (6) consecutive defensive outs” is defined as: A player enters the field in one of the nine defensive positions when his/her team is on defense and occupies such position while six consecutive outs are made; “bat at least one (1) time” is defined as: A player enters the batter’s box with no count and completes that time at bat by being retired, retired as a batter-runner or runner, scores, or the inning or game ends.

10. SUBSTITUTIONS/RE-ENTRY: This tournament rule replaces regular season [Rule 3.03](#) (re-entry) for all levels of tournament play.

- a. If illness, injury, or the ejection of a player prevents a team from fielding nine (9) players, a player previously used in the lineup may be inserted, but only if there are no other eligible substitutes available. The opposing team manager shall select the player to re-enter the lineup. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry.
- b. Any player who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game in the **SAME** position in the batting order.
- c. A substitute entering the game for the first time may not be removed prior to completion of her/his mandatory play requirements.

NOTE 1: See definitions in [Rule 9\(d\)](#) above on complying with this rule defensively and offensively. [Tournament Rule 10\(c\)](#) does not apply to Senior League.

NOTE 2: A player who has met the mandatory play requirements, and is a pitcher at the time she/he is removed, may be removed for a substitute batter and re-enter the game as a pitcher once, provided the pitcher was not physically

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replaced on the pitcher's plate. **EXCEPTION:** Mandatory Play does not apply to the Senior Division.

If a team has thirteen (13) or more players in uniform at the start of a game and is the visiting team, they may substitute a batter for the starting pitcher listed in the line-up prior to the pitcher facing a batter without violating [Rule 3.03\(c\)](#) provided that the pitcher of record pitches to the first batter in the bottom of the first inning in accordance with [Rule 3.05](#). All other rules governing the pitcher are still in effect.

Example: Player A is a starter and not a pitcher, Player B substitutes into the game for player A. Both players have met mandatory play by completing one time at bat and/or 6 consecutive outs and both occupy the same spot in the batting order. In the fifth inning player A becomes a pitcher and is scheduled to bat in the sixth inning, but player B bats for player A. Both players have met mandatory play requirements and player A was not physically replaced on the pitcher's plate as a pitcher, therefore, player A can return to pitch the sixth inning.

Junior/Senior League: A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate either the substitution, visits per pitcher, or mandatory play rule(s) in their applicable division.

- d. Defensive substitutions must be made while the team is on defense. Offensive substitutions must be made at the time the offensive player has her/his turn at bat or is on base.
- e. A starter and her/his substitute must not be in the lineup at the same time, except as provided in [Rule 10\(a\)](#).
- f. Improper substitution is a basis for protest. Protests involving improper substitution not resolved before the next pitch or play shall not be considered. 8- to 10-, 9- to 11-, 10- to 12-, and Junior League: Mandatory Play improper substitutions [see Tournament Rule 9(d)], if discovered, shall be resolved regardless if a pitch or play has occurred. **Junior/Senior League:** Ineligible pitcher under 1) a Tournament player pitches during the regular season or special games concurrently; 2) a pitcher, starter or substitute, violates substitution or mandatory play rule(s); or 3) a pitcher moves to another defensive position twice and then returns as pitcher twice in the same inning, will be considered an improper substitution.
- g. [Tournament Rule 3\(e\)](#) will replace [Rule 7.14](#), as the Special Pinch Runner rule.

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- h. Senior League only:** Rule 3.03, Designated Hitter, WILL apply during the tournament.
- i. Senior League:** Any player in the starting lineup, including the designated hitter, who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game ONCE, provided such player occupies the same batting position as he or she did in the starting lineup. A substitute (non-starter) may not re-enter the game in any position once they are removed from the lineup.
- 11. SUSPENDED GAMES:** Any game in which a winner cannot be determined in accordance with the playing rules shall be resumed from the exact point at which it was suspended regardless of the number of innings played. Incomplete (not regulation) or tie games are considered suspended games.
- NOTE:** A contest decided by forfeit does not constitute a “game” for the purposes of this rule, unless one complete inning was physically played before the game was forfeited. (Forfeits are only by decree of the Tournament Committee in Williamsport.)
- 12. RUN RULE:** If at the end of three (3) innings (**Junior/Senior League:** four innings), two and one-half innings (**Junior/Senior League:** three and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If at the end of a regulation game one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. **NOTE 1:** If the visiting team has a lead of fifteen (15) or ten (10) or more runs respectively, the home team must bat in its half of the inning. **NOTE 2:** A game determined by the 15-run rule, shall be considered a regulation game.
- 13. REGULATION GAME:** Each tournament game must be played to the point of being an official game:
- Regulation games are of four or more innings (five or more innings in **Junior/Senior League**) in which one team has scored more runs than the other [three and one-half (3½) if the home team is ahead or four and one-half (4½) if the home team is ahead in **Junior/Senior League**].
 - Regulation games (when a winner can be determined) terminated because of weather, darkness, or curfew must be resumed if the visiting team ties the game or takes the lead in its half of the inning and the home team does not complete its at bat or take the lead in an incomplete inning. This does not apply to games suspended or delayed by weather that may still be resumed before darkness or

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curfew (as defined in Tournament Rules and Guidelines – Curfew) on the same day.

- c. If two games are scheduled for the same site, no “time limit” may be imposed on the first game.
- 14. TIE GAME:** When the completion of six innings (**Junior/Senior League:** seven innings) and the score is tied, the following tie-breaker will be played to determine a winning team:
- a. The seventh inning (**Junior/Senior League:** eighth inning) will be played as normal.
 - b. Starting in the top of the eighth inning (**Junior/Senior League:** ninth inning), and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base. **EXAMPLE:** If the number five batter is the lead-off batter, the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. An eligible substitute or special pinch runner may be inserted for the runner.
- 15. REPLAYING GAMES:** No tournament game may be replayed without specific approval from the Tournament Committee at Williamsport.
- 16. UNAUTHORIZED AGREEMENTS:** No agreements shall be made between managers, and/or Tournament Directors, and/or umpires contrary to Tournament Rules.
- 17. ALTERCATIONS:** A manager, coach, or player shall not leave their position in the field or bench area during a fight or physical confrontation; a manager or coach who attempts to prevent a fight or restore order, in the umpire’s judgment, is not in violation of this rule.
- Penalty:** The umpire shall eject the offender(s) from the game immediately. Failure to comply with the ejection may result in the umpire suspending the game. The Tournament Director shall refer all incidents to the Tournament Committee who may impose additional penalties and/or actions towards individuals and/or teams up to and including forfeiture of a game, further suspension and/or disqualification.
- 18. EJECTIONS:** Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game will be suspended for the next physically played game (See [Rule 4.07](#)). This includes pregame and postgame activities. Ejections shall be noted in the tournament team’s affidavit in the Record of Ejections on page 4. Entry should include member’s name and date ejected and signed by the Tournament Director or District Administrator.

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Scorers

The Tournament Director having jurisdiction shall appoint and provide an official scorer for each game. The official scorer shall, immediately following each game, enter on the reverse side of each team's Eligibility Affidavit:

1. Date of game.
2. Name of each player who pitched.
3. Number of pitches.
4. Name of opponent.
5. Score of game.
6. Signature of Tournament Director or assistant. This record shall be accepted as official.

Financial Responsibility

Unless officially notified to the contrary by Williamsport, each league shall assume full responsibility for expenses incurred in tournament competition. Participating teams which choose not to accept housing and/or meals provided by the host shall reside and eat elsewhere at their own expense, and shall be responsible for their own local transportation.

Compensation to defray travel expenses for teams traveling 150 miles or more per one round trip, to Section tournaments and beyond will be paid by Little League Baseball, Incorporated, to local leagues in the form of a credit toward the next year's fees (U.S. leagues only). All Tournament fees and adjustments to Tournament Teams enrolled must be submitted through the Little League Data Center (LittleLeague.org/DataCenter) by the local league to Little League International by September 15, 2021. **NOTE:** A maximum of one round trip will be compensated per tournament site at each level of play. Mileage forms must be completed and submitted through the Little League Data Center (LittleLeague.org/DataCenter) by the local league to Little League International by September 15, 2021, in order for reimbursement to be paid. **EXCEPTION:** The local league president may request, in writing, reimbursement by check. This request must accompany the mileage reimbursement form.

Mileage compensation is \$1 per mile. Little League International, Williamsport,

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Pennsylvania, will make all arrangements and reservations for transporting the Regional champions to and from the World Series.

Guidelines for Conduct of Tournament

The following standards for the conduct of tournament play are for the guidance and information of Tournament Directors and participating leagues. Experience of hundreds of field directors responsible for the conduct of the tournament at all levels over many years is reflected in these guidelines which should be studied carefully and applied totally to assure successful staging of the various levels of play.

District Administrators

District Administrators or their appointed assistants will direct the tournaments. This responsibility may not be delegated to a local league. The Tournament Director conducts or supervises play up to and including the final game of that level; collects or directs the collection of all funds belonging to the tournament; pays or directs payments from moneys so collected or received; and makes required reports to leagues involved and to the Regional Office.

The league or leagues hosting tournaments may not assume responsibility for, nor physically operate, the tournament. The league or leagues may not retain tournament income, may not make payments from nor obligate tournament funds for any purpose.

At the District tournament meeting the Tournament Rules should be reviewed in briefing league representatives, umpires, and others involved in the tournament. Before assigning tournament games, the District Administrators should inspect all prospective sites. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that providing the best possible playing conditions on regular fields is the obligation of the District Administrator.

Tournament Director

- A. District, Sectional, Divisional, State, or Regional Tournament Director may provide appropriate awards to participating teams and players.
- B. Each Tournament Director shall report as follows:
 1. Advise each participating league of schedule, time, and site of games.
 2. Forward completed schedule to the Regional Director showing winners at each level of play.
 3. Pay allowable expenses and distribute balance of tournament income to the District Fund and/or leagues on a per-game basis. Where one or more

Guidelines for Conduct of Tournament

teams travel greater distances than others, a mileage allowance may be paid before distributing the per-game shares.

4. Forward completed financial report to the Regional Director within ten (10) days following final game of each level of tournament.

NOTE: 8- to 10-Year-Old Division and 9- to 11-Year-Old Division advances to State level only.

Physical Conditions

It is essential that the best possible playing conditions be provided at every level of the tournament. The following conditions are recommended for tournament games:

1. Facilities:
 - a. Grass outfield (Regional, Divisional, State, and Sectional Tournaments).
 - b. Outfield fences should be 200 feet from home plate. The outfield fence must be a minimum of 180 feet and a maximum of 225 feet from home plate.
 - c. Outfield fences of safe-type construction, a minimum of 4 feet in height, maximum of 6 feet.
 - d. Batter's eye 24 feet wide minimum at center field.
 - e. Backstop not less than 20 feet from home plate.
 - f. Back drop of 6 to 8 feet of canvas in back of home plate if no press box is in that position.
 - g. Two foul poles at least 6 feet above the top of the fence.
 - h. A protective screen in front of dugouts.
 - i. Lights, if used, must meet minimum Little League standards.
 - j. Dirt pitching circles are recommended for tournament play.
 - k. Skinned infield recommended.
2. Groundskeeper's services:
 - a. Grass cut to proper height. No holes or other unsafe conditions.
 - b. Infield dragged and in playable condition.

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- c. Markings according to regulations.
 - d. Bases must be regulation size and properly secured. A double first base is permitted.
3. Additional Facilities:
- a. Public address system and announcer.
 - b. Scoreboard and operator(s).
 - c. Adequate seating (Sectional – 500; Divisional/State – 1,000; Regional – 1,500 minimum).
 - d. Adequate parking.
 - e. Policing. Local police departments should be advised of the event and requested to cooperate with league personnel.
 - f. First aid, medical, and ambulance services available.
 - g. Rest rooms.
 - h. Softballs (if not otherwise provided by Tournament Director).
 - i. Adult volunteer insurance should be provided by each league involved.

NOTE 1: 8- to 10- & 9- to 11-Year-Old Division advances to State level only.

NOTE 2: Host leagues may retain concession income.

Assistants and Committees

To assure a successful tournament, it is desirable that the director (particularly at Sectional, Divisional, State, and Regional levels) appoint assistants and committee chairperson to undertake the various functions which are essential. The following are suggested:

1. **Finance:** To solicit donations, supervise collections at games, sale of advertising and programs, etc. Host leagues may not conduct fund raising projects unless approved by the Tournament Director.
2. **Housing:** Players, managers, coaches, and umpires may be provided hotel or motel accommodations and food allowance.
3. **Publicity:** Obtain and make available to all news media names of teams, players, time of games and sites, results of games, and other information essential to news

Guidelines for Conduct of Tournament

media in the interest of promoting the tournament. Addresses and/or telephone numbers of players must not be released to anyone for any purpose.

4. **Transportation:** Arrangements for meeting teams upon arrival and delivery to points of departure. Arrange for transportation of managers and coaches.
5. **Program:** When authorized by Tournament Director as a fund raising project, the Program Chairperson should work with the Finance Chairperson to assemble material, sell ads, etc. Programs should not be published unless self-supporting.
6. **Parking and Police:** If deemed necessary, arrange for traffic control, parking, and related functions.
7. **Medical:** Have names and phone numbers of doctors, nurses, ambulance, and hospital available and arrangements made for their services, if required. If possible, a doctor or nurse should be in attendance.
8. **Ceremonies:** Arrange for flag raising, welcome, introductions, etc. These should be brief and meaningful.
9. **Umpires:** Recommended minimum of two, a maximum of six. Services on a voluntary basis. Normal expenses may be provided.
10. **Official scorekeepers.**

Expenses

Tournament Directors are authorized to pay from tournament income the following costs:

1. Championship pennant.
2. Approved Little League pins for players, managers, coaches (all teams), and umpires.
3. Postage, telephone, and out-of-pocket expenses.
4. Housing and food allowance for players, managers, coaches, and umpires.

NOTE: Tournament Director should secure, at no cost to the tournament, softballs (if not provided by host league), umpires, scorekeepers, and housing for players.

Radio

Broadcasting of tournament games is permitted with authorization from the Tournament Director. Commercial sponsorship must be consistent with Little League

Guidelines for Conduct of Tournament

policy. Fees or donations paid for the broadcasting rights must accrue to the tournament fund at that level.

Television

Only Little League International may authorize the televising or streaming (live or recorded) of any tournament games during the International Tournament on a media entity's digital/app/web platforms. The District Administrator or Tournament Director may recommend approval, but may not make commitments or sign any agreement or contracts for the televising of games. Not later than two weeks prior to the start of the tournament at the level to be televised, the director having jurisdiction shall submit in writing complete details, including any commercial advertising or sponsorship, of the proposal to Little League International. Videotaping, or digital recording of games is permissible provided digital tapes are not sold or used for any commercial purposes. Brief, televised reports on tournament games and activities on news programs are permitted.

Livestreaming

With livestreaming becoming much easier to accomplish, local leagues may be interested in webcasting or livestreaming games through their owned and/or officially operated local league website, official social media account(s), subscription-based platforms, or other digital platform. Leagues are permitted to stream/webcast games, both regular season and International Tournament games through the State/Country level through these league-owned and managed platforms (for example: official league social media accounts, subscription-based livestream platform, website) granted they follow all Little League policies regarding commercialization and trademarks and have the appropriate releases from all participants and notices for attendees.

For any stream/webcast that is through any outlet that is not fully owned and/or operated by a local league, or for Little League International Tournament Regional level games, an agreement is required to outline the livestreaming/webcasting agreement. Agreements may be arranged with Little League International by contacting Media@LittleLeague.org.

For more information on livestreaming/webcasting of Little League International Tournament games, visit LittleLeague.org/TournamentStreaming. Guidance on regular season streaming/webcasting can be found in the FAQ section of the Rulebook and at LittleLeague.org/Livestreaming. (See [Regulation XV](#).)

Little League reserves the right to modify or change requirements around

Guidelines for Conduct of Tournament

broadcasting, livestreaming and/or the distribution of regular season and tournament games at any time with updated guidance available at [LittleLeague.org/Livestreaming](https://www.littleleague.org/livestreaming).

Programs

The District Administrator or Tournament Director may authorize the publication of a program or scorecard as a means of providing additional financing for the tournament at that level. However, they may not execute contracts or other commitments in the name of, or as agents for, Little League International. All funds (net) realized from advertising and/or sale of programs must be applied to the tournament fund at that level.

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section I – Guidelines

The Pool Play Format should only be used in divisions in which there is a reasonable expectation for all teams to play all games for which they are scheduled. In divisions in which teams traditionally drop out at the last moment, or partway through the tournament, the standard double-elimination or single-elimination formats should be used instead.

The following conditions must apply to all Pool Play Format tournaments, unless specified as optional:

- A.** In the event a team or teams drop out of a pool play format tournament before the first game of the tournament is played (by any team in the tournament), the pools must be redrawn. If a team or teams drop out or is/are removed by action of the Tournament Committee after the first game is played, the matter must be referred to the Tournament Committee for a decision.
- B.** A Pool Play Format tournament may have one or more pools.
- C.** The pool assignments (or “draw”) must either be a blind draw, or must be based on geographic considerations. Pool assignments must never be “seeded” based on the expected ability of the teams.
- D.** In all cases, the results of Pool Play have no bearing on the next segment of play, with the exception of rules and regulations regarding rest periods for pitchers, (i.e., losses do not “carry over”).
- E.** It is preferable for each team in a given pool to be scheduled to play all other teams in that pool once.
- F.** Each team within any one pool must be scheduled to play an equal number of games as the other teams in that pool.
- G.** In the case of a one-pool tournament, one team may advance to become the tournament champion, based solely on the results of pool play, at the discretion of the tournament director. More commonly in a one-pool tournament, however, two teams advance to play each other for the tournament championship.
- H.** If more than one pool is used, and the total number of teams in the largest and smallest of the pools combined is less than ten (10), the number of teams in largest pool must be no more than one team greater than the number of teams in the smallest

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section I – Guidelines

pool.

Example:

Acceptable	
Pool A	Pool B
4 teams	5 teams

Not Acceptable	
Pool A	Pool B
3 teams	6 teams

- I. If more than one pool is used, and the total number of teams in the largest and smallest of the pools is ten (10) or more, the number of teams in the largest pool must be no more than two teams greater than the number of teams in smallest pool.

Example:

Acceptable	
Pool A	Pool B
4 teams	6 teams

Not Acceptable	
Pool A	Pool B
3 teams	7 teams

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section I – Guidelines

J. In the case of tournaments involving more than one pool, one or more teams may advance out of each pool to the next segment. In most cases, when two teams advance, the schedule may be arranged so that teams will “cross over” for the purpose of seeding in the next round. For example, in a two-pool tournament:

1. The first-place team in Pool A plays the second-place team in Pool B.
2. The first-place team in Pool B plays the second-place team in Pool A.
3. The winners of those two games play each other for the championship.
4. A consolation game may be scheduled between the losing teams.

The crossover method, however, is not required. At the discretion of the tournament director, the teams advancing from pool play could be re-drawn for placement in the next round via blind draw.

K. In the case of tournaments involving more than one team advancing out of pool play into a playoff, the playoff format may be single- or double-elimination, at the discretion of the tournament director.

L. However, if the published format calls for double-elimination, and the tournament director subsequently wishes for it to revert to single-elimination because of delays caused by weather, etc., this can only be approved by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport.

M. The tournament director may, at his/her discretion, use a format in which all teams that finish the pool play round with a specific won-lost record will advance. In the following examples, the format calls for advancing all teams (from a 10-team pool in which each team plays only seven games) that finish pool play with zero or one loss. **EXAMPLE 1:** Among the 10 teams in the pool, two finished with 7-0 records, while two others finished with 6-1 records. Result – These four teams advance and the other six teams are eliminated. **EXAMPLE 2:** Among the 10 teams in the pool, one finished with a 7-0 record, while two others finished with 6-1 records. Result – These three teams advance and the other seven teams are eliminated.

N. The tiebreaker methods published herein by Little League International are the only methods that will be used when a tiebreaker is required. If any question or controversy arises, it must be referred to the Regional Headquarters before advancing a team.

O. A manager is not permitted to purposely forfeit any game for the purpose of engineering the outcome of pool play, and may be removed from the tournament by

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section I – Guidelines

action of the Tournament Committee in Williamsport. Additionally, the Tournament Committee may remove such a team from further tournament play.

- P.** Only the Tournament Committee can forfeit a game in the International Tournament, and reserves the right to disregard the results of a forfeited game in computing a team's won-lost record and Runs-Allowed Ratio. ([Section IV](#))
- Q.** When a manager or coach instructs his/her players to play poorly for any reason, such as, but not limited to the following, such action may result in the manager's removal by the Umpire-in-Chief, and/or removal of the manager, coach(es) and/or team from further tournament play. **NOTE:** This policy is not intended to prevent a manager from using lesser-skilled players more frequently if he or she wishes, even if such action may result in losing a game:
1. losing a game to effect a particular outcome in a Pool Play Format tournament;
 2. so as to lose a game by the 10-run rule;
 3. to delay the game until the curfew;
 4. to allow an opponent to tie the score so that more innings may be played, etc.

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section II – Segments of a Pool Play Tournament

- A.** Under this format, there are two distinct segments to a pool play format tournament.
- 1.** In Segment 1 – The Pool Play Round, the teams are divided into a number of pools (usually two to four pools). Each team in each of the pools should play the other teams in that pool once. By decision of the tournament director, one or more teams with the best records(s) in the pool will advance to the next segment. **NOTE:** In a one-pool format, one or more teams may advance to become the tournament champion. If only one team advances, there is no second segment.
 - 2.** In Segment 2 – The Elimination Round, the teams advancing out of Segment 1 are matched up in either a standard single-elimination format, or a standard double-elimination format.
- B.** Once a segment is completed, games played previously have no bearing on the next segment, with the exception of:
- 1.** rules and regulations regarding the required rest periods for pitchers;
 - 2.** rules and regulations regarding players, managers and/or coaches that were ejected, and the prescribed penalties resulting from the ejection.

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section III – Tiebreaker Procedures

- A.** In all cases, the team(s) advancing past Segment 1 must be the team(s) with the best won-lost record(s) during pool play. The tournament director will decide the number of teams that will advance beyond pool play, and such determination must be made available to the leagues/teams involved before the tournament begins.
- B.** When records are tied, however, the following procedures must be applied in order, so that the tie can be broken. These procedures also apply to determining the seeding for Segment 2 (the playoff round), if seeding for Segment 2 is based on results of pool play.
- 1.** The first tiebreaker is the result of the head-to-head match-up(s) during pool play (Segment 1) of the teams that are involved in the tie.
 - (a)** If one of the teams involved in the tie has accomplished EVERY ONE of the following, then that team will advance:
 - i.** Defeated all of the other teams involved in the tie at least once; AND,
 - ii.** Defeated all of the other teams involved in the tie in every one of the pool play games it played against those teams; AND,
 - iii.** Played each of the teams involved in the tie an equal number of times.
- EXAMPLE:** Three teams are tied with identical records for first place at the end of pool play, and one team is to advance to Segment 2. Teams A, B and C played against each other once in pool play. Team A won all of its games against Team B and Team C during pool play. Result – Team A advances, while Team B and Team C are eliminated.
- 2.** If the results of the head-to-head match-up(s) during pool play of the teams that are involved in the tie cannot break the tie (because no team defeated each of the other teams in the tie each time they played, or because no team has defeated all of the other teams involved in the tie in every one of the pool play games played between those teams, or because the teams involved in the tie did not play one another an equal number of times during pool play), then the tie is broken using the Runs Allowed Ratio (see [Section IV](#)).
- C.** In all cases, if the tie-breaking principles herein are correctly applied and fail to break the tie, or if these guidelines are not applied correctly (in the judgment of the

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section III – Tiebreaker Procedures

Tournament Committee in Williamsport), then the matter will be referred to the Tournament Committee, which will be the final arbiter in deciding the issue. If a tie cannot be broken through the proper application of these guidelines (in the opinion of the Tournament Committee), then a playoff, blind draw or coin flip will determine which team(s) will advance. This is a decision of the Tournament Committee.

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section IV – Runs-Allowed Ratio

- A. For each team involved in a tie in which head-to-head results cannot be used (because no team defeated each of the other teams in the tie each time they played, or because no team has defeated all of the other teams involved in the tie in every one of the pool play games played between those teams, or because the teams involved in the tie did not play one another an equal number of times during pool play), the tournament director will calculate: The total number of runs given up in all pool play games played by that team, divided by 6 innings for **Little League and below** (7 innings for **Junior/Senior League**). This provides the Runs-Allowed Ratio.
1. **EXAMPLE:** The Hometown Little League (Major) team has given up eight (8) runs in all four (4) of its pool play games. 8 divided by 24 equals .3333.
 2. The Runs-Allowed Ratio for Hometown Little League (.3333 in the example above) is compared to the same calculation for each of the teams involved in the tie.
- B. The Runs-Allowed Ratio is used to advance ALL teams after it is determined that head-to-head cannot be used.
- C. If, after computing the Runs-Allowed Ratio using results of all pool play games played by the teams involved in the tie:
1. one team has the lowest Runs-Allowed Ratio, that team advances. After one team has advanced using the Runs-Allowed Ratio, each subsequent team needed to advance is determined by the Runs-Allowed Ratio until all teams are determined and seeded.
 2. two or more teams remain tied with the same Runs-Allowed Ratio, and the methods detailed in Section III – Tiebreaker Procedures cannot be used (because no team defeated each of the other teams in the tie each time they played, or because no team has defeated all of the other teams involved in the tie in everyone of the pool play games played between those teams, or because the teams involved in the tie did not play one another an equal number of times during pool play), then the Runs-Allowed Ratio must be recomputed using statistics only from the pool play games played between the teams involved in the tie. The results are used to advance ONE team, and any other ties must revert to the Runs-Allowed Ratio using all remaining teams.

International Tournament Pool Play Format: Section IV – Runs-Allowed Ratio

- D.** If a game is forfeited, in most cases the score of the game will be recorded as 6-0 (for **Little League Divisions and below**) or 7-0 (for **Junior League Divisions and above**). However, only the Tournament Committee in Williamsport can decree a forfeit, and the Tournament Committee reserves the right to disregard the results of the game, to assign the score as noted above, or to allow the score to stand (if any part of the game was played).
- E.** In the event a team (defined for this purpose as a minimum of nine players) fails to attend a scheduled game, and it is determined by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport that the failure to attend was designed to cause a forfeit or delay the tournament for any reason, the Tournament Committee reserves the right to remove the team from further play in the International Tournament and/or remove those adults it deems responsible from the team and/or local league.