

Lake Zurich Baseball and Softball Association

P.O. Box 411 / Lake Zurich, IL 60047



The Opportunity

We are delighted by your interest in being a youth umpire for LZBSA. For over 25 years, being an LZBSA umpire has proven to be a great opportunity for youth in the Lake Zurich area, because it allows you to earn money while you are outside, on a baseball/softball field, officiating a game that you no doubt love, and for a league you remember from your own playing days. Although earning money is great, there is more to being an LZBSA umpire than the paycheck. There is also the opportunity to take on responsibility outside the classroom; to improve time management skills by balancing schoolwork, a social calendar and a three-four month job commitment; and to gain experience interacting with adults, both as an employee and as a decision-making game official. We know that many former LZBSA youth umpires have drawn on these themes in their college applications.

Umpire Pay Scale

The table below shows the pay rates for LZBSA youth umpires for the upcoming season. As you can see, your pay scale depends on when you start umpiring for LZBSA and your years of experience. If you are in 8th grade (14 years old) and it is your first year umpiring, you earn \$17-\$23 per game depending on position. Each year returning umpires get an increase in pay until they reach \$35. Clearly, it pays to start early as an umpire and stick with it: the high school Junior who has been umpiring since 8th grade makes up to \$35 per game.

	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
Yrs of Experience	Rookie	1	2	3
Alone	\$23	\$28	\$32	\$35
Plate	\$19	\$22	\$26	\$29
Base	\$17	\$19	\$22	\$25

NOTE: An umpire must work a minimum of 10 games during a calendar year to receive credit for 1-year experience pay increase.

LZBSA Umpire Field Time Card (also found online at www.lzbsa.org/umpireinfo)

Use this form to check in to your assigned field prior to game start (or as soon as reasonable). Each submission is date/time stamped for validation as a general guideline. All field inputs are required.

Umpire Expectations

Our goal in the LZBSA umpire program is three-fold: (i) deliver a positive job experience for our young umpires, (ii) deliver a quality umpire product each game to the coaches, players, and parents in our league, and iii) make the game fun for our young athletes. The recipe for being a successful LZBSA umpire really comes down to understanding what the league expects of our young umpires and deciding upfront that you can commit to meeting these expectations over the baseball/softball season. This is the responsibility piece of the equation: umpiring is a fun job and a great way to earn some money, but it is a job nonetheless and with the job and paycheck come responsibility.

First, we are looking for our umpires to have a strong commitment to showing up at the games that they have confirmed they will umpire. When an umpire no-shows for his / her scheduled game, the league is left with just one umpire for the game (or worse, no umpire) and that is not the quality product that has been promised to coaches, players, and parents. We understand that kids sometimes get sick or something really important school-wise comes up last minute, but these unforeseen situations should be the exception, not the rule. But they do happen. And whenever an umpire does have to cancel on short notice, we expect him / her to advise the Umpire Coordinator (Norm Lajewski) as soon as possible and diligently look to find a replacement umpire for the game. By the way, these actions should come naturally to the LZBSA umpire who understands how important it is for the league to deliver on its commitment to put umpires on the field every game.

Second, we are looking for our umpires to be on time for games, being properly equipped, dressed and ready to go. That means arriving on the field with gear 15 minutes before game time, conducting a field safety check, holding pre-game conference with coaches 10 minutes before, and then starting the game on time. In addition to the above, consider these expectations:

Rookie (0 Years Experience)

- Required gear: ball bag, plate brush, ball/strike/out indicator
- Generally new umpires with less than 10 games experience
- Complies with all provisions of the LZBSA Umpire Code of Conduct
- Enforces basic safety rules: removing bats, balls and other hazards from the playing

- field, keeps spectators at the appropriate distance, players and coaches in dugout
- Uses plate equipment properly: chest protector is held high to cover the neck and arms are tucked neatly behind (no exposed elbows), mask worn securely, shin guards do not come loose
- Wears appropriate uniform: LZBSA umpire shirt and hat with non-frayed, non-soiled khaki pants or shorts.
- Displays positive attitude, effort and willingness to learn and improve
- Clear knowledge of LZBSA Minor/Junior/Major/Intermediate-level and basic baseball/softball rules
- Projects calls loudly and clearly, communicates decisions effectively
- Hustle: into and out of position in-between innings and between hitters
- Pace: keeps game moving in expedient manner, especially in-between innings by not allowing excessive warm-up pitches; fast but fair pace

2nd Year (1 Year of Experience) to 3rd Year (2 Years of Experience)

- Stability of head and body positions: maintains locked position and does not flinch at swing, foul balls or pitches; uses “slot” position effectively
- Does not showboat calls or change mechanics during the course of a game
- Makes all calls with the right hand, holds indicator in left
- Strike zone: beginning ability to develop consistent zone throughout the game that is consistent for both teams, interprets zone to its written limits; does not call “unhittable” pitches strikes
- Two man crew: makes eye contact with partners between hitters, communicates well on issues like lost count and foul balls
- Decisions: does not anticipate plays, pauses clearly before reacting
- Knowledge of LZBSA Minor/Junior/Major/Intermediate-level and intermediate baseball/softball rules
- Focus: consistent concentration, does not miss important events or developing situations
- Demeanor: exhibits posture that reflects interest in the game
- Equipment: worn with more comfortability; brush, extra balls and other equipment are stored but easily accessible
- Consistent strike zone clearly identifiable to both teams

- Field mechanics: never folds arms or puts hands on hips, displays correct use of hands on knees set; adjusts properly to cover pick-off moves and steals
- Equipment: uses ball bag correctly
- Game management: beginning understanding of how to address potential problems proactively when dealing with players, coaches and spectators
- Knowledge of LZBSA-level rules and beginning understanding of advanced baseball/softball rules, including interference and obstruction
- Two man crew: uses signals to communicate infield fly

4th Year (3 +Years of Experience)

- Generally highly experienced umpires with significant experience – one of the “top” officials in the program
- Gives above and beyond effort at every contest, regardless of age and ability level
- Outstanding communication, positioning, two man crew work, and hustle
- Shows continued interest in improving officiating skills
- Advanced understanding of baseball/softball rules
- Demonstrates interest in assisting younger umpires and new officials when appropriate
- Equipment: uses under-shirt chest protector if desired
- Game management: addresses problems proactively on a consistent basis
- Two man crew: plate umpire covers third when appropriate, signaling to base umpire who echoes coverage; field umpire “goes out” on trouble outfield balls, plate umpire picks up coverage appropriately
- Judgment: distinguishes correctly between tag/no tag, bag/no bag, safe/out, and fair/foul the vast majority of calls; signaling when appropriate
- Intermediate understanding of advanced baseball/softball rules, including base awards and advanced balks (e.g. illegal softball pitches)
- Clear command of the game, yet avoids arrogance and showboating
- Game management: addresses most problems proactively, taking subtle yet effective actions to expedite game and minimize controversy