

JCLL Co-op Minor League Baseball Rules for 2025

Conduct

ZERO TOLERANCE RULE IN EFFECT: Coaches are expected to lead by example and to behave in a proper manner. Bad behavior will result in a two-week suspension and possibly removal for the rest of the season. Bad behavior by the fans will result in having them asked to leave the field area. Failure to do so will result in police being called and having them removed. Coaches, leave the umpires alone and keep your fans in check. Everyone benefits from good sportsmanship.

Equipment, uniforms, and safety

1. No metal cleats or spikes are allowed
2. No on-deck batters are allowed -- on or off the field. This is a safety issue. Even between innings, keep batters on bench until inning is ready to start.
3. Catchers must wear required gear before they assume the position. All individuals warming up the pitcher under the age of 18 must wear a legal face mask/helmet combination.
4. All batters and base runners must wear legal batting helmets. Anyone coaching bases under the age of 18 must wear a legal batting helmet.
5. Malicious contact by defense or offense will result in player ejection. Offensive or defensive players cannot run through their opponent.
6. Bats must meet USA Bat standards and have a USA Baseball stamp on them. USSSA and BBCOR bats are not allowed. Bats can't be longer than 33". Non-wood bats must be labeled with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less. Wooden bats must have a handle of at least 15/16" in diameter if more than 30" in length and of 7/8" in diameter if 30" or less in length.

The Game

General

Jackson County Little League is associated with the larger Little League organization. The rules below are important callouts and/or modifications of the full ruleset. The full ruleset can be found at:

<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/rules-regulations-policies/> or by downloading the official "Little League Rulebook" app on your mobile device.

1. No infield fly rule.
2. On a dropped 3rd strike whether called or swung at, the batter is out.
3. Teams will play with 10 players defensively. 4 infielders and 4 outfielders. No 5 person infield allowed. Teams can play with 7 players and not have to forfeit the game. However, when the 8th and 9th player positions come up to bat, an out will be recorded. All players present will be put into the batting line-up. Players that arrive late will be added to the end of the line-up. Once line-up is established it stays that way for the whole game. This allows teams free substitution during the game. "All players must play at least 6 defensive outs." The Board of Directors recommend that players do not sit 2 consecutive innings.
4. "One base on an overthrow" rule (not out of play): One base is allowed to be taken on an overthrow, per live ball situation – a second overthrow on the same "play" does not warrant another base to be attempted. An overthrow should be defined as a fielded ball that is thrown of the vicinity of the infield – i.e. a ball coming in from RF to 2B that sails over their head and lands in the infield should NOT be ruled an overthrow. Things that constitute an overthrow would be throws to 1B or 3B that go to the fence, or a ball that is thrown into the outfield, such as a throw from 3B to 2B that launches into right. The reason it's not just "foul territory" or the "outfield" is because there is grey area; some balls that just get into foul territory or to the edge of the grass can still be "in the vicinity" and very much playable. Coaches should use common sense and come

together to help if need be. If it is a borderline area, the ruling is at the umpire's discretion and their call is final.

5. Coaches, teach your player how to play defense without being in the baseline. This will help in avoiding obstruction by the players not fielding the ball. Base runners should not have to go around defensive players that do not have the ball. Likewise, base runners can't run and make contact with the defensive player this would result in interference being called. Defense has a clear path in trying to make a play on the ball. Interference can be verbal or physical action by the defense. Defensive players can not block any base if they do not have the ball. This would be obstruction and it would allow the runner to be called safe if contact is made.
6. Coaches should use a scorebook to keep track of batting rotations, runs scored and innings pitched for both teams. This should avoid confusion and keep everyone on the same page.

Time

1. **When there is a single game scheduled:**

Games shall be 1 hour 30 minutes in length or 6 innings; whichever comes first. No new inning will start after 1 hour 30 minutes. When an inning begins within listed timeframes, it may be finished.

- When there are back-to-back games scheduled:**

Games shall be 1 hour 30 minutes in length or 6 innings; whichever comes first. No new inning will start after 1 hour 30 minutes. There will be a hard-stop after 1 hour 45 minutes. (~7:45 and 9:45) If an inning was incomplete at the hard stop, the results of that partial inning are nullified, and the score from the previous inning is final. It is imperative that games begin on time, and that teams get on and off the field as efficiently as possible. This hard stop was put into place to prevent the second game from getting too late and conflicting with city ordinances.

2. Any time after 1 out has been recorded a courtesy runner may be used for the catcher. The courtesy runner will be the person that was the last recorded out. With 2 outs it is recommended that a courtesy runner be used for the catcher. Coaches, please assist in warming up the pitcher if the catcher isn't ready. This will help move the game along.
3. Get pitchers and catchers on the field ASAP... this will help with getting as many innings in as possible.
4. 5 run cap per half inning. There is no limit on runs in the last inning. In order to be considered the last inning (based on time limit), the umpire would need to clearly announce it to both coaches prior to the start of the inning. If it is not announced, the 5 run cap is in effect.
5. Run rule: 15 after 3 innings, 10 after 4, and 8 after 5.

Batting

1. Bunting is allowed during player pitch, but not coach pitch.
2. Hit by pitch will always be considered a walk and the batter will always take 1st base.

Base running

1. Players may not lead off until the pitched ball has been swung at, is hit, hits the dirt, or crosses home plate. 1st offense is a team warning. 2nd offense results in the runner being called out.
2. Stealing will not be allowed for the first 8 games. At Game 9 stealing will be allowed one base per base runner per batter. Stealing will not be allowed at the tournament. Stealing of home is not allowed.
3. Players must slide at HOME PLATE if a play is being made on them. The KEY WORDS here are "A play being made". If the ball is not on the infield and on its way to HOME PLATE, then a play is not being made on the runner. If a wild throw takes the catcher out of the batter's box area, a play is not being made and the runner does not have to slide. If players slide, they must go feet first on their way to a base. Once passed, a player may dive or slide headfirst back into a base. Failure to slide correctly will result in runner being called out.

Pitching

1. Pitching distance is 46 feet from back of home plate to front of the pitching rubber.
2. Coach pitch rules:
 - a. Games 1 through 4 will be "coach pitch".
 - i. Player pitch will be allowed prior to game #5 as long as BOTH coaches agree to it before game. From game #5 on, players will pitch.
 - ii. By mutual consent, coaches may revert to coach pitch game #5 or later. However, it must be discussed prior to the start of the game. If both coaches do not agree, it reverts to league rule. During coach pitch, batters can get any base they may reach on a batted ball.
 - b. During player pitch, batters will not take 1st base after 4 balls at any point of any inning/game. In lieu, a coach will come in to pitch after ball 4. Batters will keep pitch count from player pitch to coach pitch, except batter cannot walk by coach pitch. Coaches get a maximum of 5 pitches per batter, after which the batter will be called out. An at bat cannot end with a foul ball; if this occurs, an additional pitch(es) will be granted.
 - c. Communities will emphasize with their umpires that strikes can occur on coach pitch whether the player swings or not.
 - d. Coaches must pitch from the pitching rubber.
3. Pitchers will be allowed to pitch 3 innings per game and a total of 6 innings per week. Please respect the Pitch Count Rule of 75 pitches. (THRESHOLD RULE) If a pitcher throws 41 or more pitches, they can't go to the catcher position when replaced. If a catcher catches 4 innings, they can't go to the pitcher position if replaced. Throwing 1 pitch or catching 1 pitch in an inning counts as a full inning caught or pitching.
4. Pitchers warming up will get 8 pitches before the first inning and 5 pitches between innings. New pitchers, whether starting a new inning or in mid-inning relief, get 7 warmup pitches. Additionally, if a coach comes out to catch warmups while a catcher gets ready, those count toward that warmup count. If nobody comes to warm up the pitcher and everybody is just waiting around, the chief umpire reserves the right to reduce or waive warmup pitches, depending on the time spent waiting. Umpires will have a big emphasis on these items this year to try to keep games moving at a faster pace.
5. Pitchers have re-entry rights like all other players.
6. If pitcher is ambidextrous, they must commit to one side only to a batter until batter is out or reaches base.

Consequences for major equipment violations

If illegal equipment (metal spikes or illegal bat) is discovered after the player has taken one pitch or reached base, they are immediately OUT. The umpire then reserves the right to issue a warning to the player and bench, or to enact the penalty for a major illegal equipment violation. This penalty is automatic ejection of the offending player and the head coach for the remainder of the game. It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that all equipment that makes it onto the field is legal and safe. They are accountable and that is why they are also included in the ejection. If a warning is issued at any level and that team has a subsequent violation, ejections are automatic. No second warnings.

