

## **2018 Verona Little League Local Rules MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL**

**Emphasis:** The emphasis will be on learning to play and enjoy baseball. Players should be exposed to playing a wide variety of positions. Coaching should focus on improving fundamental skills and introducing players to the concept of teamwork while playing baseball.

**Rules:** The official rulebook will be Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules, copyright 2018 by Little League Baseball, Incorporated. The only exceptions allowed are those spelled out in this document.

**Please note these key safety rules:**

**Rule 1.08 Note 1 – No on deck batters are permitted**

**Rule 1.08 Note 2 – Only the first batter of each half-inning is allowed outside the dugout between half innings**

**Rule 3.17 - Players and substitutes shall sit on their team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game**

**Game Length:** Games will be six innings in length. **No new inning can begin after the game is one hour and thirty minutes old.** If there was no preceding game, the one hour and thirty minutes will be measured from the schedule starting time. If a preceding game on the field ran long, every attempt should be made to still start your game at the scheduled starting time. In this situation the one hour and thirty minute time will begin when the game begins. An inning is considered started after the third out of the home team is registered. Coaches are encouraged to hustle players on and off the field. A new pitcher will be allowed a maximum of 8 warm-up pitches or one minute between innings, whichever occurs earlier. A returning pitcher will be allowed a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches or one minute between innings, whichever occurs earlier. The plate umpire is the official timekeeper. Even when a game is tied, you are subject to the time limits.

For games that do not have a succeeding game scheduled the umpires and coaches must agree **prior to the start of the game** to go beyond the 1½-hour limit. However, in no case will games exceed 2 hours.

**Players/Substitution:** Nine players will be used on defense as long as there are a minimum of nine players present. If one team has fewer than nine players present, the other team can still use nine. Three players must be on the outfield grass (when using 9). All players in attendance will be included in the batting order and must play at least three innings in the field. There will be free substitution of all players. A player may play a specific fielding position for a maximum of three innings per game (except for a pitcher who is subject to pitch count and inning limitations). A player cannot sit on the bench twice until all roster players have sat on the bench at least once. Exceptions to the playing time rule include injury, players that arrive late or need to leave early, player safety and player discipline issues. Teams with seven or fewer players may gather up to two players from other teams to reach a total of nine players. These substitute players must play the outfield and bat last. Teams with six or fewer of their own players will forfeit their game. If a team cannot find sufficient substitutes from other teams, but can field at least seven of its own players, there is no forfeit.

**Special Pinch Runners:** Special pinch runners will not be allowed except for the following exceptions.

- A courtesy runner for the player who will be catcher in the next half inning is required when there are 2 outs. The player making the last out will be the runner.
- Prior to the game a coach may seek an exception from the opposing coach to accommodate a special situation

**No Infield fly rule:** The infield fly rule will not be enforced in Minor League games

**Intentional Walks:** Intentional walks will not be allowed.

**Dropped Third Strike:** The batter will not be able to run on a dropped third strike.

**Balks:** Balks will not be called in Minor League games.

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**No Leading Off:** Runners may not lead off base until the ball has reached the batter.

**Stealing:** Base runners may steal 2nd and 3rd base, but home is closed. Base runners may only leave the base after the ball completely crosses home plate. Base runners cannot delay steal or steal on a throwback from the catcher to the pitcher. The lead runner must remain at the stolen base, even on an overthrow. The base runner receives one base only, meaning the fielding team has the ability to attempt to throw the runner out, but an overthrown ball will not allow the runner to advance an extra base. No stealing of home is allowed on any play.

**Bunting:** Bunting will not be allowed in Minors.

**Base Coaches:** Both base coaches may be adults or players. Players must wear batting helmets.

**Runs Scored:** A maximum of seven (7) runs per inning. Rule 4.10(e) applies: If after four innings, three and one half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent.

**Sliding:** The runner has the primary responsibility to avoid a collision with a fielding player. Headfirst slides by an advancing runner are disallowed. An advancing runner who slides headfirst will be declared out and the ball will remain in play. This does not apply to a runner returning to a base from a run down or a pick-off situation [rule 7.08(a)(4)]

**Obstruction (Fielder Interference):** If a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner, obstruction shall be called on the fielding player who blocks off a base, base line or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball. Note that the catcher must not block any part of the plate from a runner attempting to score unless they are in possession of the ball.

**Runner Interference:** If a runner intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is declared out. If a runner, hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball that has not been fielded (whether such hindrance is intentional or unintentional), the runner is declared out. Aggressive attempts by the runner to dislodge the ball from a fielding player or to breakup double plays will result in the runner being declared out. If a fielding player is in possession of the ball, the runner is responsible for doing one of 4 things: slide, attempt to avoid the fielder while remaining in his base line, return to the previous base (if not forced) or give himself or herself up and be tagged out. If the runner does not slide and makes any contact other than incidental contact with the fielding player (often the catcher), the runner normally will be called for interference for failing to attempt to avoid the fielder with the ball and be declared out.

**Overthrows:** Runners will be awarded 1 additional base on any overthrows that go out-of-play. However, if the ball remains in play on an overthrow, runners may continue to advance.

**Mound Visits:** Mound visits by a manager are allowed. Any number of players fielded by the defense at the time of the visit can participate. Note Rule 8.06(b): A third trip to the pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal. Note also 8.06(c): The manager or coach is prohibited from making a third visit while the same batter is at bat.

**Thrown Bats:** The first batter of any team who, after swinging at a pitch, intentionally or unintentionally throws the bat shall result in a warning to the entire team. Subsequent infractions by any team member shall result in the batter who threw the bat being called out. It shall be the umpire's judgment whether or not the bat was thrown.

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**Severe Weather:** At the sound of a severe weather siren, other official warning, or at first sight of lighting, the game in progress shall be stopped immediately. In the case of rain or wet fields, the coaches are responsible for assessing the playing conditions and making the appropriate decision. In all instances, it is the responsibility of the coaches to properly interpret and enforce the intent of this rule. Rule 4.10 applies as to whether the game is postponed or declared official.

**Bats:** Coaches (not umpires) are responsible for ensuring that their players are not using any illegal bats before use. All bats must meet the new bat standards and must have the new USA Baseball logo/sticker. There are several options out there, including 2 1/4" and 2 5/8" barrels, -11, -10, -8, -5 drops, aluminum, composite, etc. ANY of the official USA Baseball bats will be allowed in VLL. This will be a matter of preference for your individual player. If you have questions, please refer to the Little League international website or the USA Baseball approved bat list for additional information.

Solid, single piece wood bats will still be allowed. 2-piece wood bats will need to meet the USA Baseball regulations. In Summary, if the bat does not have a USA Baseball logo/sticker on it (other than solid wood), it will not be allowed in Verona Little League games.

Any disputes concerning composite bats used in games should be referred to the Verona Little League President and the VLL Executive Board.

**Protests:** Protests of games will be disallowed.

**Pitch Count and Inning Limits:** - 2 innings maximum per pitcher and pitch count will be enforced. One pitch in an inning constitutes 1 inning pitched. The manager must remove a pitcher when the pitcher has pitched 2 innings or reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age 7 - 8:	50 pitches per day
League Age 9 – 10:	75 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit while facing a batter the pitcher may continue to pitch during that inning until that batter reaches base or is put out.

League age is determined by Little League International using the 2018 baseball age chart: [http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms\\_pubs/2018/age-chart-baseball.pdf](http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms_pubs/2018/age-chart-baseball.pdf)

All pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:

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

Once a pitcher has been removed from the game, they cannot re-enter as a pitcher later in the game. A pitcher can only pitch once in a day. League age is determined by Little League International using the 2018 baseball age chart: [http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms\\_pubs/media/PitchingRegulationChanges\\_BB\\_11-13-09.pdf](http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms_pubs/media/PitchingRegulationChanges_BB_11-13-09.pdf)

**Completion of pitching to batter:** If a pitcher reaches the pitch-count limit for their age, or day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter reaches base, the batter is retired, or the third out is made to complete the half-inning. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

Note Rule 8.03 - no more than eight warm-up pitches shall be allowed at the beginning of each inning. Such preparatory

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pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If an emergency requires that a new pitcher be brought in who has had no opportunity to warm-up, more than eight preparatory throws are allowed.

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### **Pitcher to Catcher and Catcher to Pitcher**

A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. A player who has played as a catcher in 3 or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch for the remainder of that day. Note that catching one pitch in an inning counts as having played catcher for an inning.

### **Tracking Pitch Counts**

Each team is responsible for counting pitches for both teams. A pitch counter will be supplied to each team. It is the responsibility of the coaching staff to report the pitch counts within 24 hours of the completion of the game. You may have a coach or parent in the stands track pitches for your team.

### **Reconciling Pitch Counts**

At the end of each inning, a coach from each team will meet near the home plate area and share their pitch counts for the previous two half innings. If there is a difference in the counts, an average of the two counts will be used. Each team is required to provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, a manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. If a parent is tracking pitches, the coach should ask the parent to inform the coach when the pitch count maximum is reached. However, the coach is responsible for removing the player before the maximum pitch count is exceeded even if the parent forgets to inform the coach.

### **Eligible Pitchers**

Prior to the game, during the pre-game home plate meeting, each manager must provide the names of which players are ineligible to pitch that evening.

**Pace of Play:** In an attempt to increase the amount of baseball that is played, the one minute maximum between innings will be emphasized. Coaches should warmup pitchers, if necessary, to be sure that they get warmup pitches.

**Umpires:** \*\*\* Under no circumstances and under penalty of coaching privilege suspension or forfeiture, will coaches argue, verbally accost, intimidate, touch, or otherwise cause emotional distress to umpires. Talking calmly with an umpire about a play, call, or rules is permitted. League representatives will be monitoring and can be called to the field to enforce the rule. The league representative will have full authority to remove a coach from the game. **THIS WILL BE A MAJOR POINT OF EMPHASIS FOR THE LEAGUE THIS YEAR.** The VLL Executive Committee will have the final and binding decision on coaching privilege suspension or forfeiture.