

**HLL Minors Division
2017 Local Rules
Updated: February 8, 2017**

**HLL MINORS DIVISION LOCAL RULES & RESPONSIBILITIES
2017 SEASON**

Philosophy of Minors Division Play

Minors Division is a competitive Minor League comprised of 9 - 11 year olds not drafted into Little League Majors and 12 year olds that have elected not to play in the Majors Division. All players bat in a continuous order but not all players play defense the entire game. Little League rules, as delineated in the *2017 Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules*, are adhered to in Hillsborough Little League (HLL), enhanced by the following Local Rules.

PLAYER SELECTION

1. Managers and Coaches

Each team is permitted a Manager and one Coach named prior to the draft. All other coaches are selected upon completion of the draft. Before participation is allowed, all managers and coaches must complete and submit the Volunteer Form to the appropriate member of the Board, and be cleared to participate. Not more than one manager and two coaches are allowed in the dugout at any game.

2. Drafting Brothers/Siblings

If there are sibling pairs available in the Minors Draft, and the parents require their kids to be drafted onto the same team (Player Agent to obtain parental desires prior to Draft Night), HLL requires that the children play on the same team. HLL will provide a list of such players prior to the draft.

3. Player Trades

Trades in HLL must be completed on draft night. Upon completion of the Draft, the Player Agent will permit trades. A time limit will be set. If a deal is made, it will be announced that night. No trades are permitted once the Draft meeting has ended.

LOCAL PLAYING RULES

4. Game Play

Games are 6 innings in length, but no full inning can start after 1 hour and 59 minutes from when the game began. Managers must confirm the start time of each game with the head umpire, and log it into the scorebook. Ties are permitted during regular season. An inning starting after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the beginning of the game will be considered the last inning.

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5. 8-Player Games

No play with fewer than 9 players is permitted. If during the course of game, the team with only 9 players loses a player for any reason, the game is forfeited.

Little League **Rule 4.16**: “A game may not be started with less than 9 players.” It is not an automatic forfeit, as the Board can decide that the game can be played at a later time, but the Board cannot decide that a game can be played with less than 9.

Little League “**Rule 4.17**: If a player becomes injured during the game and cannot play, and the team cannot field 9, then they forfeit.”

6. Player Leaves Game

If a Player leaves the game, it is allowed without penalty; however, the Manager of the affected team must notify the Umpire and opposing Manager prior to the player’s departure.

7. Mandatory Play – 9 Defensive Outs

HLL has adopted a 9 defensive outs mandatory play rule, which enhances Little League’s requirement. Little League consequences, **Regulation IV(i)**, apply to those cases in which a player does not receive minimum play in a game.

First violation is a warning; second is the suspension of the Manager for one game; third is suspension of the Manager for the season. Players who do not get all three defensive innings are required to be started the very next game, and played at least three consecutive innings (e.g. a player on the visitors team who only plays the 4th and 5th innings because the game ended after the top of the sixth inning with the home team ahead).

The ONLY exception is a disciplinary problem. A Manager, after discussing the issue with the Player Agent and receiving concurrence, may reduce a player to 2 innings of play if there are consistent attitude, attendance, and/or unsportsmanlike conduct issues. In this situation, the Player Agent and the Manager must inform the opposing Manager and home plate umpire before the game begins.

8. Batting Order

As provided by **Rule 4.04**, HLL adopts a policy of a continuous batting order. All players (1 to 12) will bat, whether they are playing in the field or not.

9. One Foot in Batter’s Box Rule

HLL adopts rule 6.02(c) which requires the batter to keep one foot in the batter’s box throughout the at bat. The batter will receive a warning for the first offense. A strike will be recorded against the batter (and a pitch added to the pitch total)

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for each additional offense. There are 8 exceptions to this rule: See Rule 6.02(c) in the Little League Rule book.

10. Banning of stealing of signs

HLL adopts rule 9.01(d) which prohibits the sealing of pitch signs and location and relaying them to the batter. The consequence is ejection.

11. 5-Run Rule

There is a 5-run rule in effect for the Minors Division. After a 5th run scores during an inning, the inning is over regardless of how many outs or how many players score on the play except for the last inning, when there is no limit on runs obtained before three outs. There is NO Mercy Rule in effect in the Minors Division.

Pursuant to **Rule 5.07**, HLL waives the 5-run rule for the both teams in the last inning.

Little League **Rule 4.17**: “If a player becomes injured during the game and cannot play, and the team cannot field 9, then they forfeit.”

12. Infield Fly Rule

The infield fly rule is not enforced in the Minors Division. All fly balls in the infield are considered live balls.

13. Pitchers

Pitchers are required to wear Head Savers. A pitcher who hits 3 batters in a game is to be removed from the pitcher's mound for the remainder of the game.

(See Addendum A for more pitching rules).

14. Fastball and Changeup only Rule

Managers will communicate to players and coaches that HLL Minors Division allows only fastballs and changeups.

1st illegal pitch - the umpire will call a NO PITCH. However, the pitch will count against the pitcher's pitch count total

2nd illegal pitch - the umpire will call a NO PITCH. However, the pitch will count against the pitcher's pitch count total. **Note:** the umpire will issue a FINAL warning to the pitcher & the Manager

3rd illegal pitch - the umpire will call a NO PITCH. However, the pitch will count against the pitcher's pitch count total. **Note:** after the third offense the

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pitcher will be removed from the game, the Manager will be suspended for one game after the completion of the current game, and the pitcher will be required 4 calendar days rest regardless of pitches thrown. Reminder, any Manager suspended for any reason is automatically ineligible to manage or coach any HLL tournament teams.

15. Visiting the Mound

A pitcher must be removed after the 2nd visit by the manager in the same inning. The pitcher will also need to be removed from the game after the 3rd total visit to the same pitcher in a game. The catcher and other players may join the Manager/Coach on the mound. Reminder: any visit to the mound even when teams are changing sides will be counted as an official trip.

16. Double 1st Base and Break-Away Bases

A double 1st base will be used in Minors. On close plays at 1st base, the base runner is expected to cross on the orange base to avoid collisions. The white base is the formal base that the fielder uses to make the play.

Break-away bases will be used for safety in Minors games.

17. Stealing

Stealing is permitted in Minors, including home plate. However, the runner cannot leave his base until the pitch crosses the plate.

If a batter walks, he can steal second base on a passed ball four as long as play has not been called dead. Play will be called dead after the pitcher has the ball on the pitching rubber and the catcher is positioned behind home plate.

18. Interference and Obstruction.

A fielder cannot block the plate or the base without the ball. If he/she does, the runner is called safe and the obstruction rules will apply. If the fielder has the ball, the runner must slide or go around the fielder, but cannot crash into a fielder in an effort to try to dislodge the ball. If they do, the runner will be automatically called out. On close plays, runners are expected to slide.

19. Ties.

Ties are permitted in the regular season. Minors teams are not permitted to continue playing beyond inning 6 in order to break the tie. Ties count toward the standings (see point system below). All games during the post-season tournament must be completed and may not end in a tie. Therefore, in the event of a tie at the end of a regulation 6-inning tournament game, teams will play extra full innings in order to determine a winner.

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20. Weather/Daylight

If a regular season game is stopped due to weather or lack of daylight prior to the conclusion of the fourth inning, the game will be continued the next time the two teams are scheduled to play each other, one-hour prior to the regularly scheduled game, or as determined by the Scheduling Director.

Pre-season games called for darkness or rain will not be completed.

21. Make-Up Games

Regular Season Games will only be made up if it is determined that the game will impact the division standings. The Division Director, working with the Scheduling Director, will determine the date of the make-up and arrange with the Director of Umpires to schedule umpires. *Pre-season games will not be made-up.*

22. Standings

Teams will play pre-season and regular season games, but only regular season games count toward the standings. Standings will be kept and it will be based on total games played within the Division. Teams are seeded to the post-season tournament according to their regular season record. Because of ties, standings will be based on a point system, with 2 points awarded for a win and 1 point for a tie. At the conclusion of the regular season, the team with the best record overall will be considered the regular season Champion.

23. Post-Season Tournament

A post-season double-elimination tournament will be held with teams seeded as outlined below. The winners will meet on Championship Saturday and will play an additional game the next day, if required. Championship game #1, home team is from the winner's bracket. Home team for championship game #2, if needed, is the winner of game #1.

Win/Loss standings will determine the post-season tournament seeding. If there is a tie, the tie-breaker will be as follows:

- 1) Aggregate head to head win/loss record among tied teams
- 2) Fewest runs allowed against all teams in Minors Division
- 3) Flip of a coin

RESPONSIBILITIES

24. Batting Cage Practice

Minors Teams select field practice and batting cage times on Draft Night. Majors teams have priority over use of the batting cage one and a half hours prior to the start of a Majors game, including all originally-scheduled games as well as make-ups and tournament games. Each team is responsible for picking up the batting cage so it is ready for use by the next team.

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25. Field Responsibilities

The home team uses the designated bench on the 3rd base side and the visiting team uses the guest bench on the 1st base side. The home team removes bases from the equipment box and installs the bases on the field of play. In addition, the home team is responsible for raking (or dragging) and watering down the infield immediately prior to the commencement of the game (10 minutes prior to the official start). The home team provides game balls to the umpires. The home team is also responsible for dragging the infield at the conclusion of the game.

During the week and after the last game on weekends, the home team is responsible for replacing the base plugs on the infield and returning the bases to the equipment box after the conclusion of the game. The home team also should cover the mound and home plate with a tarp. Each of the home team and the visiting team is responsible for clearing all trash in and around the dugouts and the playing field.

26. Scorekeeping/Pitch Count

The home team is the official scorekeeper. It is suggested that both sides keep a scorebook and track the Pitch Count, and compare and resolve inconsistencies every inning. The home team will report the game score, pitch count (both official and actual, homeruns, and umpire rating in the HLL website. Manager should make every effort to report the data on the same calendar date as the game occurred.

27. Pre-Game Warm-Up

Each team has 10 minutes to warm up on the field prior to the start of the game. The home team take field warm-up 30 minutes prior to the start of the game. The visiting team takes field warm-up 20 minutes prior to the start of the game. Failure to take the warm-up on time will cause that team to forfeit the warm-up so the game can begin on time.

28. Challenges to Umpire Calls

Judgment Calls – cannot be argued or challenged under any circumstances.

Rule Interpretations – A Manager may express disagreement with an Umpire's rule interpretation. To do that, the Manager must follow the following steps:

- a. Must ask permission to approach and speak with the Umpire;
- b. Must discuss their views citing the specific rule in a current edition of the Little League rule book;
- c. Must present the page and paragraph in a rule book;
- d. Must be timely in the challenge. Once play has resumed no further challenges may take place on that specific call/play.
- e. No extended delays in the play of the game will be permitted, particularly if the rule book cannot be immediately produced.

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29. Good Sportsmanship

Managers, Coaches, players, and spectators are to show good sportsmanship and proper conduct at all times. No one except a Manager is allowed to speak with the Umpires during a game. *Arguing strikes and balls or any judgment call is specifically prohibited.*

30. Player Responsibilities

No players are allowed in the stands during a game. They are limited to the players' bench behind the respective home and visitor fences. *There is no "on-deck" circle and players are not permitted to take practice swings until they are up at the plate.* No adults (except team Manager and two Coaches) or siblings are allowed on the bench or around the players' bench during the game.

31. Field Etiquette

Players are not permitted to swear, throw hats, bats, or helmets, otherwise they are subject to a one-game suspension and, if continued and after consultation with Player Agent, may be ejected from HLL for the balance of the season. The same is true for Managers and Coaches. By National Little League rules, *anyone ejected from a game is also suspended for the next game.*

32. Heckling, Taunting, and Teasing

Players, coaches, and parents are not permitted to heckle, taunt, or tease players on the opposing team. They may not yell or heckle the pitcher and catcher, nor talk to the batters during the pitch. Umpires may remove a player, Coach, or Manager from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. Umpires may stop the game and enlist the support of the Managers and Coaches if a parent needs to be requested to cease heckling or taunting, or to be requested to leave the field. *Cheer for your players, not against the other team's players.*

33. Backstop Clear

No one is permitted to watch the game from behind the backstop or within 10 feet on either side.

34. Uniforms.

All players must be in full and proper uniform in order to play in a game. This consists of team uniform jersey, pants, hat and cleats (and soft cup for boys).

35. Medical Forms

Managers are required to have medical release forms at all practices and games. Cold Packs must also be on hand. Any injury to a player or umpire must be reported to the league immediately.

36. Little League Approved Bats:

The Managers and Coaches will verify the "approved" bat from the latest issued list of Little League of America, as per their website, www.littleleague.org.

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PLAYER CALL-UPS

37. Player Call-Ups

Minors teams may call-up players from AAA if they have lost one of their players for the season. Managers first notify the Player Agent of their desired selection. The Player Agent approves the selection as an eligible call-up 9, 10 or 11 year old who were eligible to be drafted into the Minors, and NOT a Manager or Coach's child, unless the AAA Manager or Coach agrees to complete the season without their son or daughter on the team.

The Player Agent notifies the AAA Division Director, who then notifies the AAA Manager and the family affected. ALL player call-ups must be completed by April 15.

Minors Teams are required to call up an eligible player from AAA if they have lost a player for the season by Opening Day, but have the option to call up an eligible player from AAA if they lose a player for the season after Opening Day. There are no call-ups after April 15.

Temporary Call-Up Program: In addition, in the case wherein a Minors team knows in advance that it will have less than the required nine (9) players in attendance for a game, the Board strongly encourages the team to arrange a call-up of a player from the AAA Division for that game. If a team is not able to field nine (9) players for a game, then the team forfeits the game. The Minors team may request as few or as many players required to reach the minimum of nine (9) to field a team or the maximum of eleven (11), the roster size. Temporary player call-ups can occur throughout the entire season and playoffs.

The purpose of the Call-Up Program is threefold:

- 1) To ensure that games can be played at their scheduled time and date
- 2) To eliminate forfeits due to not have the required 9 players
- 3) To give the opportunity of playing a game at a higher level to a broad base of players

The process shall function as follows:

When a manager needs to add one or more players to his roster for a single game due to absences of players from his formal roster, the manager (i) selects a replacement player from a "pool" of players from the AAA Division as determined by the Player Agent and the League President and (ii) contacts the family(ies) of replacement players to complete his single game day roster. Once the pool of players are identified, the AAA Division Director will populate a spreadsheet that can be accessed via a link on the HLL website.

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The spreadsheet will have each player's name and contact information as well as a field next to each player for noting "call ups".

The manager in need will access the spreadsheet and choose any player from the pool that has a blank field in the "call up" column. Once the manager confirms with the player's family that the player will play in a game, the manager will populate the field in the call up column with the date of the game and the name of the Minors Division team.

A player cannot be called up again during the regular season until all eligible pool players have been called up to play a game in the Minors Division or the Division Director elects, by notice to all managers, to make all pool players eligible for another call-up. All players in the pool will be eligible to be called up during the post-season tournament, subject to the foregoing procedures.

In the spirit of avoiding forfeits, the "parking lot call up" may be used in extreme circumstances. For example, if a team is at the field for a regularly scheduled game and does not have at least 9 players, and the manager has not been able to secure a 9th player using the call-up process described above, the team may suit up and play any HLL AAA Division player that is willing to play in the game and does not create a safety risk to such player.

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Addendum A: Selected Excerpts from Little League Rules

Regular Season Pitching Rules - Baseball

VI – PITCHERS

(a) Any player on a regular season team may pitch. (**NOTE:** There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.)

(b) A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

(c) The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age

11 -12	85 pitches per day
9-10	75 pitches per day
7-8	50 pitches per day

Exception: Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. that batter reaches base; 2. that batter is put out; 3. the third out is made to complete the half-inning.

Note 1: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. The LL Rule is 40 pitches/4 innings. After 40 pitches, there is no catching or after 4 innings of catching, even if only one batter in a fourth inning, there is no pitching. It is not based on 12 full outs, but catching in all or part of the 4th inning.

(d) Pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.

(e) Each league must designate the scorekeeper or another game official as the official pitch count recorder.

(f) The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.

(g) The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has

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delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted in Regulation VI (c). The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the pitcher must be removed in accordance with Regulation VI (c). However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.

(h) Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs. Protest shall be made in accordance with Playing Rule 4.19.

(j) A player who has attained the league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League. (See Regulation V – Selection of Players)

(k) A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day. **NOTES** : 1. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.

2. Pitches delivered in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against pitcher's eligibility. 3. In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

Example 1: A league age 11 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on the following Thursday. The pitcher is not eligible to pitch in the resumption of the game because he/she has not observed the required days of rest.

Example 2: A league age 11 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on Saturday. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game because he/she has observed the required days of rest. **Example**

3: A league age 11 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes two weeks later. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game, provided he/she is eligible based on his/her pitching record during the previous four days. **Note:** The use of this regulation negates the concept of the "calendar week" with regard to pitching eligibility.