



2026 Minors Baseball League Rules



GRADE/AGE ELIGIBILITY

Minors Baseball – All players must be 9 or 10 years of age on May 1, 2026. Teams using ineligible players will forfeit all games they have played and will not be eligible for the post-season tournament.

TEAM ROSTER

1. Rosters are to be filed with the Byron Park District 48 hours BEFORE the season begins.
2. Any in season roster additions must be reported to the Byron Park District and the player may not play until written approval is given. *No players may be added after June 16th 2026.
3. Any team which plays a game with a player whose name is not on the roster submitted to the Byron Park District will forfeit all games in which that player participated in.

LEAGUE FEES BY DIVISION

Minors Baseball – \$250 per team, payable to Byron Park District, ATTN Baseball Team Fees, 500 N. Colfax St, Byron, IL 61010.

RULES OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS, FANS, & COACHES

1. Any player, fan, or coach who swears will get one warning by the umpire. If there is a second incident they will be asked to leave the ball diamond by the umpire (extreme vulgarity will result in an immediate expulsion). The game will not continue until that person leaves the ball diamond.
2. There shall be NO TOBACCO USE OR ALCOHOL USE during any games by any player, fan, or coach in the immediate area of the ball diamond. The game will not continue until that person leaves the area.
3. If a player, fan, or coach is asked to leave a ball diamond, the person asked to leave is also suspended for the next scheduled game. Multiple ejections may result in temporary or permanent expulsion.
4. Players, coaches, and fans may be suspended or expelled from the league by the Byron Park District for any uncooperative, hostile, or discourteous attitude, harassing or threatening behavior or conduct towards any player, coach, umpire, or fan. This applies to all practices, games, incidents at league facilities, and online/social media postings.
5. All parents and coaches shall read & sign a Code of Conduct prior to 1st game scheduled – signatures are to be kept on hand by the head coaches. (Attachment A)

INJURY/BLEEDING

Any player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual does not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is the umpires' judgment. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform it must be changed before that individual participates again.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. Teams can play with as few as 9 players, with no automatic outs. A team can put 8 players on the field and in the batting order, but if 9 players are available, they must all play. No automatic outs will be assessed until a team drops below 9 players. The 9th spot in the batting order will be assessed an automatic out.
2. If a team has less than 8 players the game must be forfeited.
 - a. The league does recommend playing the game and sharing players amongst the two teams, but the game will be considered a forfeit in the standings.
3. Teams will play with no more than 11 players on defense. All players must be in the batting order.

4. Defensive positions may change without umpire approval with the exception of the pitcher.
5. Extra fielders must play in the outfield **grass** area.

EQUIPMENT

1. The home team shall furnish 2 new balls per game.
2. Catchers must wear a hard helmet with face mask, throat guard, protective cup, chest protector, and shin guards (using a batting helmet while warming up the pitcher is not allowed).
3. ALL offensive players must wear a helmet while on deck, while batting, and while on base.
4. All players must wear uniform shirts with numbers on the back. Players without a uniform shall not be eligible to play in that game unless the head coach gains the approval of the opposing head coach.
5. Metal cleats are NOT allowed.
6. Approved Bats:
 - Wood bats
 - Bats following the USA Baseball Bat Standards (bats stamped with USA Baseball) will be approved for game use. <https://usabat.com>
7. Penalty for violating the bat rule is the player will be called out as long as it is found before a pitch to the next batter. *The umpire may require all illegal bats to be removed from the dugout.
8. No jewelry is allowed to be worn during the game by players.
9. If a pitcher is wearing long sleeves they must not be white in color
10. Each community involved within the league shall make sure that their fields are safe and ready for play. The Byron Park District assumes no responsibility for unsafe playing conditions in other towns.

UMPIRES

1. The home team will schedule umpires prior to each scheduled game. The home team is also responsible for payment of scheduled umpires.
2. Each game must have at least 2 umpires.
 - We recommend that the scheduled plate umpire be patched. 2nd Umpire can be 15 years of age or older and unpatched.

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

IHSA rules will apply to all play except for the following:

1. Pitching distance shall be 46 ft. measured from the back of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
2. It is recommended that each site have a permanent or temporary pitching mound with a height of 6" with a gradual slope to field level.
3. **Pitching**

- Pitches allowed per day and corresponding rest time:

League	Pitch Count Limit Per Game	Mandatory Rest (Time off between games pitched) when pitch count reached.			
Rock River Baseball		Zero	1 Day	2 Day	3 Days
Minors (8yrs-10yrs)	75	1 - 20	21 - 35	36 - 50	51 - 75
Leon Gasmund (11yrs-12yrs)	85	1 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 60	61 - 85
Sandy Koufax (13yrs-14yrs)	95	1 - 25	26 - 45	46 - 65	66 - 95

- Home Team will be the official pitch count.
- Both teams should verify the pitches per inning at the end of each half-inning.
- Ignorance of the count is no excuse for breaking the rule.
- Foul balls are pitches.
- Intentional walks are legal and count as 4 pitches. (Notify umpire and batter will be automatically put on base)

- Balls hit into play are counted as pitches
- Pitchers have the ability to finish a batter upon reaching their limit without violating the limit.
- Pitchers may finish the batter for all limits. Example if a pitcher in the minors (8-10 year old) throws his 20th pitch to a new batter and the count is 1-0, the pitcher may finish the batter and still be eligible to pitch the following day.
- A Pitcher who violates the pitch count rules is an ineligible player. (The game is an automatic loss.)
- Pitch-counters need to use the official pitch count form or the scorebook.
- When the pitcher has the ball within 10ft of the pitching rubber it becomes a “dead ball” and no runner may continue to advance past the base they are advancing to.
- Once a pitcher is removed, he/she may not pitch again in the same game.

4. **Stealing:**

- There are NO leadoffs
 - Base runners can attempt to steal 2nd or 3rd base on a passed ball ONLY. A passed ball is defined as a pitch that gets away from the catcher and gets outside of either batter’s box or the catchers box (umpire’s judgment).
 - Players can steal 1 base only. They cannot continue to advance, even if the ball is thrown into the outfield.
 - The second team offense by a runner leaving early will be an automatic out.
 - There is no stealing home in Minors Baseball. The only way a runner may go to home after being stopped at third base is:
 - A. If the bases are loaded and the batter is walked/hit by a pitch.
 - B. The batter hits the ball.
 - In a live ball situation - example: a runner on 1st base is stealing 2nd base, the defensive team tries to make a play on the runner stealing 2nd base, the runner on 3rd base cannot advance home.
 - A runner at 3rd base may not advance/steal home when there is a passed ball by the catcher or when the ball is thrown back to the pitcher and the pitcher misses it.
5. If a batted ball hits the plate and goes fair it is a fair ball.
 6. Each runner, including the batter, is awarded two bases if a fielder loses possession of the ball and the ball enters dead ball (out of bounds) area. If a fielder loses possession of the ball **as the result of an overthrow** and the ball remains in live ball territory, a runner including the batter, can advance to any base **including home plate until the pitcher has the ball in their glove within 10 feet of the mound. Players are not limited to how many bases they can take in this situation.**
 7. The batter cannot run on a dropped third strike. Batter is out.
 8. Innings per game will be 6.
 9. If a game is suspended due to inclement weather or darkness before 4 complete innings have been played (3 ½ if the home team is winning), the game will be rescheduled if possible and will resume at the exact spot that the suspension took place. All players must resume in the same fielding position and batting order as when the game was suspended. If an original player is unable to attend the makeup game the sub must be announced to the umpire and opposing team before play resumes.
 10. Rainout cancellations prior to game time will attempt to be called at least 90 minutes before the first pitch.
 11. Rainout cancellations within 90 minutes of game time will be called by the plate umpire.
 12. 5 runs in an inning will end that inning for the batting team. The 10 run rule is in effect after 4 ½ innings, 15 run rule after 3 ½ innings. This rule does not apply to the final inning in which three outs must be recorded to end the inning.
 13. Courtesy runners may be used for the pitcher and catcher by using the last player who batted out.
 14. The runner is out when the runner does not legally slide and causes illegal contact or illegally alters the actions of the fielder in the immediate act of making a play on him.
 15. A new inning will **not** start after 1 hour and 45 minutes of play.

16. If the game is still tied after 6 innings an extra inning may only be played if the time limit has not been met. If the game is at the time limit, it will end in a tie, unless it's a tournament game. See tournament section for tournament rules.
17. Coaches should utilize equal playing time as much as possible. Players may be benched for discipline reasons only.
18. The infield fly rule is in effect
19. No bunting

REGULAR SEASON GAMES

1. The home team's scorekeeper is the official scorekeeper.
2. All league games will be played on the home field or may be played on another field with the consent of both managers involved, per schedule, with the exception of rained out or postponed games.
3. Each team shall play the full schedule of games. Games which are postponed for inclement weather must be rescheduled by the home team (within two weeks is preferable).
4. If the teams cannot agree on a makeup date for a weather related cancellation then the league administrator should be notified by the home team as soon as possible. The league coordinator will review the situation with both coaches. If the league administrator determines that the game is unable to be played, the league administrator will perform a coin flip to determine the winner, which will show up as forfeit in the standings.
5. In the event a team is unable to play a scheduled game for any other reason besides inclement weather (not enough players etc.) that game will be considered a forfeit by the team unable to play unless both teams can agree on a makeup date. Every effort should be made by both teams to make up all cancelled games.
6. If opposing coaches/coordinators agree, Saturday & Sunday afternoon games may be played.
7. The ground rules regarding home fields shall be respected. Coaches and officials for the game shall meet before the game and all ground rules shall be clearly and carefully explained.
8. Tournament seeding is determined by winning percentage then by head to head play.

TOURNAMENT

1. The home team's scorekeeper is the official scorekeeper.
2. Any game called before its completion (weather, darkness, mechanical failure, etc.) will be a suspended game regardless of the inning. When continued from the point of interruption, lineup and batting order will be the same. If there is a player not present when the game resumes, the missing player shall be treated as an injured player. No penalty and/or out will be applied, the players spot in the order is skipped.
3. Higher seed will be home team throughout tournament.
4. 5 runs in an inning will end that inning for the batting team. The 10 run rule is in effect after 4 ½ innings, 15 run rule after 3 ½ innings. This rule does not apply to the final inning in which three outs must be recorded to end the inning.
5. The time limit applies to all games except for Championship Game.
6. No ties in tournament play - An International Tie Breaker will be implemented for any Tournament Game ending in a tie at the end of time limit or regulation play. International Tie Breaker rules are as follows: At the beginning of each team's at-bat the last batter from the previous inning is placed on 2nd base with zero outs. It is not a sudden death. Each team has an opportunity to bat each inning. The game ends when one team is ahead at the end of an inning.

PROTESTS

1. Playing rules may not be protested. Misinterpretations of the rules shall be settled between coaches and the umpires. It is encouraged to have the rules with you at all times.
2. The umpire's decision is final.

3. Roster eligibility may be protested. Teams must submit a \$50 protest fee that will only be refunded if the protest is upheld. Make checks payable to Byron Park District and payment must be received before protest will be examined. Please allow up to 3 business days for a final ruling to be issued.

SCHEDULES AND REPORTING SCORES

4. Schedules can be found at www.rockriverposrts.org
5. Both coaches are required to report scores to acoffey@byronparks.org.

ATTACHMENT A

Parent's Code of Ethics/Conduct

Helping parents to be aware of their roles and responsibilities and offers ways they can make the youth sports experience more enjoyable and positive is a goal of the Rock River youth baseball and softball league.

Responsibilities and Expectations

For a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, staff, spectators and especially parents. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in any Rock River sponsored athletic program:

1. Parents have a responsibility to their children.

To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. This is essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, always showing proper sportsmanship and refraining from negativity of any kind.

2. Parents have a responsibility to the coaches.

Coaches volunteer their personal time to spend it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you don't agree with a coach, you are expected to tell that coach, but make certain it is done at the right time and place, in a non-argumentative manner and not in front of the children. Parents are also expected to drop off and pick up their children on time for games and practice, and it is highly encouraged for parents to stay and participate to maintain control of the group and to assist the coach as needed.

3. Parents have a responsibility to the league.

Staff cannot be at games and practices at all teams. Therefore, to maintain the positive nature of these programs, it is essential for parents/spectators to report any abusive behavior or any other situation that needs to be addressed to staff. This is the only way that these programs can achieve their intended goals.

4. Parents/Spectators have a responsibility to other parents.

Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from a child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent/spectator should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. Good plays should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.

I, _____, hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports programs by following the expectations identified above.

Child's Name _____ League _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____