



**Central Florida Amateur Baseball League – Eastern Conference**  
*Spring 2024 17+ Recreational Division - Rules and Regulations*

**In conjunction with the authority of the Central Florida Amateur Baseball League, all rules, regulations, and Recreational-specific variations have been voted and agreed upon by the CFABL-East Recreation Divisional Board of Directors as of February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024. By signing below, the manager of each team agrees to submit to the rules contained herein:**

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Geoff Gonzalez, Minutemen

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Zach Klauber, Cobras

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## Disclaimers

All rules listed below will overrule any MSBL/MABL National Website Rules unless otherwise stated. The Eastern Conference of the Central Florida Amateur Baseball League will use the MLB standard rules as its foundation and will include additions as listed below. All items marked in **red** are new specific rules, variations, or clarifications which have been separately voted on and approved by the CFABL-East Recreational Division Board of Directors for the upcoming season.

## 1. Uniforms, Helmets, Baseballs and Other Equipment

### a. Uniforms

All teams must be garbed in full baseball attire consisting of caps, numbered baseball jerseys, and baseball pants. Each player's jersey must be of at least the same primary color as their teammates' and include a player number. If the player does not have an exact matching cap or pants, an alternative of the team's official primary color may be worn.

### b. Helmets

All batters and runners must wear helmets with at least one ear guard facing the pitcher. There is no option or exception to this rule. Full double-ear flap helmets are encouraged. In the event a base runner purposely removes and proceeds to play with the helmet removed, they are to be immediately called out. Catchers with traditional masks must wear a hard helmet underneath their mask.

### c. Game Balls

All teams must use **new game balls of any quality. Any baseballs deemed unusable by the home plate umpire shall be discarded immediately.** Home teams will provide 4 baseballs to the home plate umpire prior to game time. The home team shall be responsible for replenishing the umpire's stock throughout the game. Failure to provide baseballs of a playable quality at any time (at the umpire's sole discretion) shall result in an automatic **FORFEIT** for the home team, regardless of the status of the game. It is recommended that the game balls include the home team's name or initials written on the balls so that the umpire can properly return the balls to the home team after the game.

### d. Bats

All forms of wood bats including composite and metal-wood bats are permissible. Upon protest, the penalty for using an illegal bat will be an out for the violating player. **Players aged 65 and older may, upon agreement by the opposing team's manager, be allowed to use a metal bat within MLB size regulations (2 5/8-inch barrel, 30-42 inches in length).**

### e. Cleats

Metal cleats are permitted for play unless the host venue deems otherwise (such as in the case of artificial turf fields). All players on the field must wear some form of molded or metal cleats. If a player wears any other kind of footwear, such as boots or tennis shoes, they will **NOT BE PERMITTED** onto the field.

## 2. Game Start Time, Length, Mercy Rules, and Rainouts

### a. Game Start Time

All games must start no later than 15 min after the official scheduled start time, unless delay is caused by late umpires, dangerous weather, field/lights malfunction, or unexpected extension from prior game; games that start after the official scheduled start time for these reasons shall NOT count against the game's allotted time limit. For example, if a game is delayed for 30 minutes due to lightning or heavy rain, the game clock WILL NOT start until those 30 minutes have passed. Umpires shall be ultimately responsible for the management of official timekeeping.

### b. Game Length

All games shall be 7 innings or 2.5 hours long, whichever comes first. No new inning shall start after the 2:15 mark. Games tied after the end of 7 innings or time cut-off will be deemed complete and recorded as a tie. Games are deemed official after the completion of the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead.

### c. Mercy Rules

In a 7-inning game, there is a 15-run rule after the completion of the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead. There is also a 10-run rule after the completion of the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead.

### d. Rainouts, Cancellations, Reschedules, & Official Game Rules

Any games rained out will be rescheduled if the game was stopped prior to the completion of the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead. Games stopped for any reason prior to the completion of the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead will continue where the game left off at the teams' next scheduled meeting. Games past the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead will be deemed complete and official. All games MUST be played to completion by League standards. In the event of a tied game at the end of regulation, a Texas Tie-Breaker will be implemented until a winner has been declared (last batted out placed at second base, both away and home teams MUST have a chance to hit).

#### i. Playoff Addendum

Postseason games rained out prior to the completion of the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning with the home team in the lead will be suspended at the current state of game and both managers must keep a record of status. Original lineups must be preserved as much as possible in the resumed game and may only be modified to accommodate for players unable to attend the resumed game, in which case any registered roster player may/must fill their place in the lineup. Teams will be issued a **FORFEIT** if the League Office and/or Board of Directors determine that not enough effort was taken to preserve original lineups.

#### ii. Game Stoppage due to Rain or Other Conditions

Games may be called due to darkness, rain, field conditions, and/or lightning at EITHER the umpires' discretion OR facility restrictions. Umpires MUST pause the official game clock in cases of lightning or other temporary conditions. For example, if the game is paused for 30 minutes due to lightning or dangerous rain conditions, the game clock MUST be paused for the duration of those 30 minutes. Under NO

CIRCUMSTANCES may a temporary game stoppage due to weather conditions be deducted from the total time limit.

**iii. Lightning-Distance Rule Restrictions**

In the event of lightning during a League game, teams and umpires **MUST** abide by a 6-mile lightning rule, in which any lightning strike within 6 miles of the venue **MUST** trigger a 30-minute lightning delay. If the lightning has not abated to the umpires' satisfaction, the game will be called due to weather.

**iv. Reschedule of Forfeited Games in Event of Rain or Other Conditions**

In the event that a scheduled game is forfeited prior to the scheduled game start time AND the game is or would have been canceled due to rain, lightning, or other conditions that would prevent its completion, the game will be eligible to be rescheduled without penalty to the originally forfeiting team. In practice, this means a team will be allowed to retract a declared forfeit, regardless of the reason or time of the advance notice, in the event that weather conditions would have prevented the game from being played.

### **3. Teams, Players, and Lineups**

**a. Age Limit**

In the Recreational Division, all rostered players must be at the age of 17 or older to participate. If a player is under the age of 18, their manager and the League must keep a copy of a signed parental consent letter. **Players under 17 years of age will also be allowed to play with a signed parental consent letter and explicit written consent from the League Office.**

**b. Free Agent Players**

The League shall make all new players who have contacted the League in response to League-based advertising, website registration, or who have been referred to the League by any external means available to all managers in the League, with free agent lists updated and distributed on a weekly basis during each season. A player who has not played in any League game in either the current or previous year shall be regarded as a new player. A new player acquired by a team through that team's own recruiting efforts shall be subject to the control of the team and not the League.

**i. Annual Spring Tryouts and Draft**

Prior to the beginning of each Spring Season, any rostered League player may choose to leave their team from a prior season and enter a Divisional Tryout & Draft as a free agent with all unclaimed free agent players. Following the Tryouts, each of the League's Divisions will hold a Draft in which free agents will be selected to play on teams. Expansion teams for the Spring will be given the top draft picks, followed by the existing teams in reverse standings order (i.e., teams with the lowest records pick highest, ties broken by run differential). Draft will continue in order until all desired players are drafted. Undrafted players will return to the free agent pool, which will be distributed on a weekly basis to all managers in the League. **Teams are NOT permitted to attempt to circumvent the Tryout & Draft procedure by recruiting pool players surreptitiously before they can be drafted; free agents belong to the League until they are fairly made**

**available to the teams.** Teams found guilty of doing so will lose both the improperly acquired players AND all drafted players.

### **c. Online Roster & In-Game Roster Violations**

All players participating in a game must be listed on a team's online roster AND the official game lineup sheet prior to the first pitch of that week's game. If a participating player in that week's game is not listed on the team's online roster OR lineup sheet by first pitch, that player will be deemed an illegal player. The opposing manager **MUST** inform the umpires and the illegal player's manager immediately to halt the game so that the illegal player may be removed from the game. If the illegal player is removed prior to the completion of 5 innings, the offending team will receive 1 out per inning played by the illegal player at the beginning of each of that team's batting half-inning thereafter. If the illegal player has been removed after 5 completed innings, there will be no additional punishments against the offending team besides the player's removal. After the illegal player has been removed, the offending team must replace this player with a substitution to prevent receiving an out for that player's batting slot. After game completion, the offending team's manager must add the illegal player to their online roster. **If the opposing manager does not identify the illegal player before or during the game, they will not be allowed to protest the player's participation retroactively. Illegal players will not earn games played/innings pitched playoff eligibility until they are listed on the online roster. Stats generated by illegal players will not be counted as official and must be entered as "Unattributed" in the online stat sheet.**

### **d. League & Uniform Dues Deadline**

League and uniform fees (if obtaining uniforms/hats through the League Office) must be received in full two weeks prior to Opening Day. **If a team is using League-provided fields and/or umpires, failure to provide League dues will result in a FORFEIT for every game until dues are collected in full. Teams that do not provide dues or arrange a hardship payment dispensation by the indicated deadline will be expelled from the League with NO MONEY refunded.**

### **e. Player Waivers & Background Checks**

All League participants must have a completed online waiver form and background check on file with the League prior to participating in the League including team practices, workouts, and other baseball activities. Positive results from the background check will trigger an administrative review and judgment by the League Office and brought to that player's manager's attention. Decisions regarding background check results may be officially appealed and reviewed by the Board of Directors **(positive results DO NOT automatically disqualify a player from participation, managers MUST communicate this to their rostered players).** Failure to complete either the online waiver or background check will result in a suspension until the online waiver or background check is completed. Failure of teams to administer either the online waiver or background check to a player will result in team suspension until 100% waiver/background check compliance is achieved (all scheduled games within suspension will be forfeit).

## **f. Batting Order**

A manager may bat as many players as they desire but must bat at least 9 to avoid penalization. Batters cannot be deleted or skipped over once added, regardless of their batting position or when they were added during the game (except in case of injury, see Rule 3.i below). If a team bats 12 players and their 11th spot batter is removed or ejected from the game, this open spot will result in an **out** for the remainder of the game unless it can be filled by an official substitute player. In addition, if a team starts a game with only 8 players and therefore only bats 8, the open 9th spot will result in an out every time until an officially added 9th batter can fill the spot.

### **i. Offensive vs. Defensive Lineups (Free Defensive Substitutions)**

Each team has an offensive and a defensive lineup that are independent of each other. Players may play any position in the field regardless of their offensive lineup status. Players who have been removed offensively or have not yet been inserted offensively may play any position in the field. Players may enter and exit the defensive field at any time without affecting their offensive status. Pitchers may also play in the field before and after their pitching innings.

## **g. Adding Batters to the Batting Order**

A manager may add batters to the bottom of the lineup at any time during a game, but if a batter is pinch-hit or pinch-run for (except under courtesy runner allowance, see Rule 5), they may not re-enter the game as a batter but may remain in the game as a fielder or pitcher.

## **h. A/B Batter Slots**

A team may declare, at the time that lineups are exchanged prior to the start of the game, that any batting order position can be occupied by two (2) players in each such batting position. That is, 9A/9B, 10, 11A/11B, 12, etc. For example, the first time that position 9 gets an at bat, the 9A player would hit and the next time the slot hits, 9B would be up. Then 9A hits the third time this spot in the order comes up, and so on, alternating between these two players throughout the game. Once a team declares the use of this A/B system, it must continue using it for the remainder of the game. Hitters in the A/B position may be pinch hit for, just as any other player. If a player in an A/B slot is removed from the lineup for any reason, the other batter will continue in their place without a penalty assessed to the team. If **BOTH** players in an A/B slot are removed from the lineup, the regular penalties/allowances shall be enforced.

## **i. Offensive Substitutions**

All teams must announce all **offensive** additions, substitutions, and changes to both the home plate umpire AND opposing team manager and/or scorekeeper. Only after this announcement will the player be deemed a legal substitute. If a team fails to announce an offensive addition/change, the player will be called **out** as soon as they occupy the batter's box, and the lineup will revert to the lineup in effect prior to the player entering the game. The unannounced player will not have officially entered the offensive lineup and is therefore still available to be added offensively even though an out has been assessed. **Opposing teams are responsible for raising the issue of an illegal substitution or other lineup violation.**

Example: Team A is batting 12 players and wishes to add a player to the bottom of the lineup (Player 13). Player 13 walks to the plate and is not announced to either the opposing team or home plate umpire. Once this player occupies their position in the batter's box, Team B brings the lineup violation to the umpire's attention, who will immediately call them out for an illegal



substitution. The lineup will then continue to the number 1 position in the lineup. Player 13 is still available to be added to the lineup legally.

#### **j. Injury Exception for Batting Order Removal**

If a player is forced to leave a game due to injury, the injured player's spot will be skipped with no penalty for the remainder of the game.

#### **k. Minimum Player Requirements for Game Start**

A team must have 8 players to start an official game. If the team's 9th player arrives after the start of the game, they may enter immediately, provided they are listed on the official lineup given to the opposing team prior to first pitch. If a team has only 7 players and is awaiting their 8th player, they will have a maximum of 15 minutes after the official scheduled start time for that player to show up to start an official game. A team with 7 players may ask to borrow a player from the opposing team with that manager's consent. This is only allowed in regular season games and not during playoffs for ANY reason. If the opposing team manager allows the borrowing of one of their players, both teams must agree on whether the game will be considered official or a forfeit/scrimmage. If the game is agreed to be considered official, no protests of the game regarding this scenario will be allowed, regardless of the in-game results. If the opposing team does not consent to the borrowing of their players, a no-show of the 8th player within the 15-min timeframe will result in an immediate **FORFEIT**.

#### **l. Re-Entering Starting Pitchers**

If a starting pitcher is removed from a game, they may re-enter to pitch only one time during the game, but not in the same inning. A removed starting pitcher may play any other position after being removed, or no position at all. The re-entering of a starting pitcher can only be done once per game.

#### **m. Player Service Restrictions, Trades, and Free Agency**

At no time may a rostered player on any team play with another team in the Division during an official season except for the scenario of Rule 3.j. Any game played with an illegal player rostered with another team will result in a **FORFEIT** by that team, regardless of the in-game results. The illegal player and that player's original manager will receive an official League warning that this action is prohibited and will not persist. If the illegal player continues playing or attempting to play in another team's official game after the official warning, that illegal player will receive a League expulsion and the offending team who allowed the player to illegally play in their game will receive a forfeit for their next game. **However, players are not "owned" by their team and may freely transfer to another team at any time during the regular season, but they will forfeit any team/uniform dues paid to their original team AND be responsible for any team/uniform dues charged on their new team. Players may also be traded at any time during the regular season between teams with approval from both managers.** In the event a team disbands during the season or at a season's conclusion, all players of that team will become free agents and will be permitted to play for any team immediately or enter the free agent pool. **Competitive Division teams that have an OFFICIAL, pre-arranged affiliation with a Recreational League team may allow their Competitive players to play in their Recreational affiliate's games, and vice versa, so long as the online active roster is updated to reflect the arrangement. Competitive Division teams affiliated with a Recreational Division team enjoy the exclusive right to freely move players between the Comp and Rec teams. No other Competitive**

Division teams may recruit or otherwise acquire players on a Comp-affiliated Rec team without notifying the Competitive Division team's manager. No Recreational players may play for a Comp AND Rec team simultaneously UNLESS the Comp and Rec teams are affiliated.

**n. Restrictions on New Team Creation by Existing Players**

In the event a player wishes to leave their existing team and form a new team, they must wait until the following season to do so.

**o. Roster Limits**

Due to the League's insurance policies, team online rosters may not have more than 20 active players and no less than 9 active players at ANY time. Any inactive players must be marked as inactive on the online roster to avoid counting against the limit of 20 active players. Teams may activate/inactivate players as often as they wish, provided their online active player count never exceeds 20.

**p. Player Identification**

Players' last names MUST be used in the scorebook, lineup cards, and online roster to allow for player identification for follow up inquiries that relate to playoff and national tournament participation requiring minimum playing requirements.

**q. Professional Experience Restrictions & Limitations ("Limit of One")**

All teams in the 17+ Recreational Division of the League are limited to one (1) player who has prior experience at a NCAA DI level or greater competition within the last ten (10) years (referred to as the Limit of One by the League Office). If the player in question is a pitcher, they will be limited to 2 innings of pitching per game, and these innings cannot be the last two innings of a game (they may play any other position and bat unrestricted after their 2 innings are complete). Players who have played at a NCAA DI level or greater competition beyond the ten (10) year mark will not a) count against the team's Limit of One or b) have any pitching restrictions placed upon them. All players who trigger this restriction MUST be announced to the League Office AND the League's Divisional Board of Directors immediately upon roster addition. Unannounced/uncleared players who trigger the Limit of One rule will be considered illegal players and any games they participate in will result in an official **FORFEIT**, regardless of in-game results. Any team found to be carrying more than one (1) player who triggers the Limit of One rule will be referred to the League's Divisional Board of Directors for penalization. Each team's manager is ultimately responsible for investigating their players' past collegiate/professional history; ignorance of this rule or a player's history is an explicitly inadmissible defense. The League's Divisional Board of Directors retains the sole right to determine if a player's previous experience meets the experience and competition threshold by a simple majority vote.

**i. List of Prior Experience Triggers for "Limit of One" Rule**

To date, the League has explicitly determined that participation in the following Organizations SHALL trigger the Limit of One rule:

- Major League Baseball (MLB)
- Minor League Baseball (MiLB) – All Levels
- NCAA Division I
- Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB) – All Levels
- Korean Baseball Organization (KBO) – All Levels

- Chinese Professional Baseball League (CPBL) – All Levels
- Australian Baseball League (ABL) – All Levels
- All other Leagues deemed by the League’s Divisional Board of Directors to trigger the Limit of One rule on a case-by-case basis

To date, the League has explicitly determined that participation in the following Organizations SHALL NOT trigger the Limit of One rule:

- Dominican Winter League (DWL)
- Cuban National League Second Division and below
- NCAA Division II and below
- NAIA Conferences
- NJCAA Conferences
- All Independent-Level Leagues

*President’s Note: The trigger status of any of these leagues may be changed by future Joint Boards of Directors by a simple majority vote. However, any players added to a team under trigger judgments by previous Boards shall be “grandfathered in” and may not be retroactively removed or restricted to limited innings according to Rule 3.p. This grandfather status will be lost if the player in question leaves their team, or their team is disbanded.*

## **4. Player's Behavior and Team Responsibility**

### **a. Prohibition of Illegal Drugs, Alcohol, and Smoking**

There will be no illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, or smoking/vaping permitted before, during, or after an official League game by any League participant or guest. This rule is enforced for both the general playing area and ancillary areas such as parking lots or shelters. If an umpiring official, League official, OR facility representative sees any illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages during a game, they are to immediately stop (or inform the umpiring official to stop) the game from continuing and issue a warning to both teams. If, for a second time, an official or other players/coaches/facility representatives believe drinking, drug use, or smoking/vaping has continued by the offending team, the game will be immediately completed with the suspected team receiving a **FORFEIT** and **INDEFINITE SUSPENSION FROM THE LEAGUE** until the situation is fully reviewed by the League’s Divisional Board of Directors.

### **b. Right of League to Restrict/Expel Conduct Offenders**

The League has the sole right to suspend or expel any League participant or guest who abuses League Rules or who does not exhibit a sense of sportsmanship or who plays without regard to the safety of the umpires or other players. League participants who bring guests/spectators to League events are responsible for their guests’ conduct and behavior. Violations of League rules by either the League participant or their guest shall result in penalties for both parties, including but not limited to ejection, suspension, expulsion, and lifetime bans from the League.

### **c. Right of Umpires to Govern Official League Games & Eject Offending Participants**

Official umpires are directly hired by the League Office to officiate League games and have been granted sole authority and discretion to expel any player, manager, spectator, or coach from any official League game. Only team managers or their designated representatives are permitted to appeal umpiring decisions and communicate with the umpire(s) before, during, and after League games. League officials cannot and will not overrule any umpire’s decision or call on the

field during play, except when such a ruling violates a League-specific rule variation outlined in the Rules & Regulations, which umpires will be given beforehand and expected to understand and follow. Any League participant or guest who instigates and continues a verbal or physical altercation with an umpire over ANY call will be subject to ejection, suspension, and other penalties if reported to the League Office in an official umpire game report. Ejected players/managers will receive no suspension for their first ejection, but a second ejection will result in a mandatory two (2) game suspension with no appeal. Continual reported occurrences of this behavior by any League participant or guest may result in team or individual expulsion from the league.

#### **d. Fighting & Acts of Physical Aggression**

Fighting among players or aggressive physical contact with an umpire WILL NOT be tolerated and players expelled from the game for either violation will be suspended indefinitely until further review by umpires, other team managers, and the Board of Directors. A final decision may result in expulsion from the league.

#### **e. Collisions & Aggression During Play**

##### **i. Collision between Runner & Fielder in Possession of the Baseball**

When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:

1. Whether the collision by the runner was avoidable (could the runner have reached the base without colliding) or unavoidable (the runner's path to the base was blocked) or
2. Whether the runner was attempting to reach the base (plate) or attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder.

**PENALTY**—If the runner, a) could have avoided the collision and reached the base, or b) attempted to dislodge the ball, the runner shall be declared out even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

3. If the fielder blocks the path of the base runner to the base (plate), the runner may make contact or slide into, a fielder if the runner is making a legitimate attempt to reach the base or plate.
4. If the collision by the runner was flagrant, the runner shall be declared out and ejected from the contest. The ball shall be declared dead.

##### **ii. Collision between Runner & Fielder not in Possession of the Baseball**

If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called. The runner is safe, and an immediate dead ball shall be called.

1. If the base runner collides flagrantly, the runner shall be declared safe on the obstruction, but will be ejected from the contest. The ball is dead.

##### **iii. Decoy Rule**

Any fielder may use a decoy only if it serves a strategic purpose. For example, if a fielder, who sees a man attempting to steal second base during a hit and run, looks upward into the sky and says that he's got the pop-up when in fact the ball has been hit on ground is a legal decoy as it may cause the runner to retreat to first base and prevent them from advancing. However, if a fielder fakes a tag, forcing a player to slide, when there is no strategic purpose or apparent play, the runner will be ruled safe, and all runners will

advance one base. This is entirely an umpire judgment decision and not a rule that may be protested.

#### **iv. Force Play Slide Rule**

The intent of the force-play-slide rule is to ensure the safety of the defensive player. This is a safety as well as an interference rule. Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs.

1. On any force play, the runner must slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases.  
Exception—A runner need not slide directly into a base if the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder.
  - a. "On the ground" means either a head-first slide or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground.
  - b. "Directly into a base" means the runner's entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.
  - c. If a runner goes into a base standing up and does not make contact or alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.
2. Contact with a fielder is legal and interference shall not be called if the runner:
  - a. Makes a legal slide directly to the base
  - b. Is on the ground at the time of contact and the fielder moves directly down the line between the two bases to attempt a play.
  - c. Makes a legal slide and contacts a defensive player who is on or over, but not beyond, the base.
  - d. When the base runner slides beyond the base, but does not (a) contact, or (b) alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.
3. Actions by a runner are illegal and interference shall be called if:
  - a. The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder
  - b. The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide and either contacts or alters the play of a fielder
  - c. The runner's raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder's knee when in a standing position
  - d. The runner goes beyond the base and either contacts or alters the play of the fielder
    - i. "Beyond the base" means any part of the offensive player's body contacts or alters the play of the fielder beyond the base.
  - e. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg.
  - f. The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

#### **PENALTY:**

- (1) With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.
- (2) With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.
- (3) If the runner's slide or collision is flagrant, the runner shall be ejected from the contest.

(4) If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double-play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.

#### **f. Right of League to Determine Player Code of Conduct**

Each League within the MSBL/MABL national organization must set its own standards of player/team sportsmanship but must encourage suspensions for infractions not in accordance with the image and policies of the MSBL/MABL. The Eastern Conference of the CFABL reserves the sole right to set codes of conduct and responsibilities for its members and their guests, as well as associated punishments and restrictions, as set forth each Season by the Joint Board of Directors. These rules and regulations are subject to change at ANY time throughout the League's operation.

### **5. Courtesy Runners**

#### **a. Courtesy Runner Limit**

Each team will be allowed an UNLIMITED number of courtesy runners during the game, so long as the other courtesy runner rules are properly observed. Players who have previously used courtesy runners in a game are not obliged to use them every time.

#### **b. Courtesy Runner Selection**

The individual who runs for designated player(s) needing a Courtesy Runner is not determined ahead of time. It is ALWAYS the last recorded out who must run for the designated player needing the Courtesy Runner.

#### **c. Courtesy Runner Time Limit**

The manager of the offensive team that is using a Courtesy Runner must do so within 30 seconds prior to the first pitch of the immediate next batter. The 30 second time limit will begin at the time the umpire calls for time to allow replacement for the runner. If a Courtesy Runner is not sent to the corresponding base within the 30 second time limit OR before the first pitch of the immediate next batter, the Courtesy Runner may not be used for that instance.

### **6. Pitchers**

#### **a. Pitcher Attire Limitations**

No pitcher may wear white or gray sleeves, a batting glove on either the throwing or glove hand, or wristband while pitching. All other colored arm sleeves are allowed. Any reflective jewelry or sunglasses that may distract the batter's vision at the umpire's discretion must be removed.

#### **b. Hit-By-Pitch Limitations**

If a pitcher hits 4 batters in any one game, the pitcher must be removed from the mound (pitcher is still eligible to play the field and bat and is NOT automatically ejected). The managers and/or scorekeepers of BOTH teams will be responsible for keeping track of pitchers' hit-by-pitch count. Failure to replace a pitcher who has reached the hit-by-pitch limitation before the next due batter will result in a FORFEIT for the offending team. However, the issue must be raised by the opposing team before the next pitch is thrown after the limit has been reached, otherwise the pitcher will be allowed to continue until the next hit batter.

### **c. Foreign Substances & Doctoring the Baseball**

In accordance with MLB Rules 3.01 and 6.02, no pitcher shall intentionally discolor, damage, or deface the baseball with any foreign substance, including but not limited to soil, rosin, sandpaper, paraffin, sunscreen, implements (such as nail files or knives), excessive saliva, or any other foreign substance or mixture of foreign substances an umpire determines to be in violation of the rule. Furthermore, no pitcher may have any kind of foreign substance or implement attached to either hand, any finger, either wrist, inside their glove or hat, or anywhere on their person or in their possession, including but not limited to wrist braces, tape, Band-Aids, super-glue, and pine tar. Pitchers found to be in violation of this rule at the umpire's sole discretion will be EJECTED from the game and issued a one-game pitching suspension by the League.

## **7. General League Rules**

### **a. Forfeit Notification**

Forfeiting teams must notify the League Office at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game start time to allow for prompt notification to the other team/venue/umpires. Teams that fail to notify the League Office of a forfeit situation at least 48 hours prior to game time will be fined \$200 (to cover field and/or umpire costs) by the League Office, to be paid before that team's next game. If the issued fine is not received by the team's next game, that game, and all subsequent games following, shall be ruled **FORFEIT** until the fine is paid in full. Teams that are eligible for a rescheduled forfeit game under Rule 2.D.iii will not be assessed this penalty if weather conditions would have prevented the forfeited game from being played. **Three (3) forfeits by any team for ANY reason will result in disqualification from the season with NO MONEY refunded to the team. Forfeits will be applied against a team's final record when determining playoff spots, regardless of the reasons.**

#### **i. Using League-Provided Field Rentals/Umpires after Forfeit or Rain Out**

If a League-Provided game has been ruled officially as a forfeit or rain out, it is encouraged that both teams NOT proceed with any form of scrimmage or practice unless Rule 3.j applies, and the scrimmage is agreed to be counted as official. If either scheduled team proceeds to use the League-Provided field rental or umpire services after the official call of game, that team or teams will waive all reimbursement for any umpire/field costs incurred for that scheduled date, and that team or teams will be charged for the costs of a future makeup game.

### **b. Official Game Protests**

All protests should be reported to the League Office within 24 hours of completion of the game for which the protest is made. All protests shall be decided by a review of the rules by the League's Divisional Board of Directors. A team will NOT be allowed to protest a game if a scorebook is not kept by that team.

### **c. Statistics and Scorekeeping**

All stats for a game must be entered on the online game results page by the end of the following Saturday prior to the next game. Teams may borrow the opposing team's scorebook for any statistics they failed to record or ask them to update missing stats for them on the online

game result. **Players on teams that fail to upload sufficient statistics will be ineligible for All-Star selection and season award consideration. At a minimum, game results MUST be reported on the online website for accurate League standings.**

#### **d. MSBL/MABL Tournament Participation**

Only MSBL and MABL leagues are eligible for all MSBL and MABL sanctioned regional and national tournaments, unless waived by national tournament committee. Determination of eligibility to participate in MSBL regional and national tournament competition will be based solely on the decision of MSBL National Tournament Rules Committee. In general, no player will be allowed to participate in a regional or national tournament unless the player has participated in at least 50% of their regular season MSBL/MABL games. CFABL players must also meet other MSBL/MABL rules in regard to age restrictions (i.e., no players under 18 in an 18+ MSBL/MABL tournament).

#### **e. Player Eligibility for Postseason Participation**

For a player to qualify and participate in their team's playoffs, **they must have at least one plate appearance per team games played (ex., 18 PAs in an 18-game season) OR have played in a minimum of half of their team's regular season games.** Under special circumstances, if a player plays more than half of a game defensively **or pitches**, but never appears on the offensive lineup, they may receive credit for a game played toward their playoff eligibility. If such any player or pitcher fails to meet the eligibility requirements due to injury or other special circumstance, a letter should be submitted to the League's Divisional Board of Directors explaining the reason for waiver. In discretionary cases, the Board will determine, by a simple majority, who shall and shall not qualify for their Division's playoffs.

#### **f. League Game Rescheduling Policy**

For a team to have a game automatically rescheduled by the League, the requesting team must notify the League **NO LATER** than 11:59pm five days before the game to allow enough time for notification to the opposing team, umpires, and field venues. If a reschedule request is made **AFTER** five days but **NO LATER** than 11:59pm two days before, the League will not reschedule any games without explicit agreement from **BOTH** team managers. If the opposing manager denies the reschedule request, the game will remain actively scheduled, and if the requesting team cannot field a full team pursuant to Rule 3.j by the scheduled game's start time, an official result of **FORFEIT** will be issued. In the event of conditions listed under Rule 2.D.iii, which ensures that teams who forfeit at any time prior to scheduled game start time are granted a reschedule in the event that weather conditions would have prevented the completion of their game, teams are entitled to an automatic reschedule of their game by the League.

#### **g. Team Refunds Policy**

If a team refund is requested during a season **AND** the disqualification clause of Rule 7.a is not applicable, the requesting team is eligible to receive pro-rated fees that would have covered their **League-provided** umpire and field costs **ONLY**. All other fees (MSBL, League Dues, etc.) will be considered forfeited.



## 8. Player Code of Conduct

### a. Prohibitions

League participants and their guests shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times before, during, and after League events. No League participant or their guests shall commit the following:

- i. **Lay a hand upon, shove or strike, or threaten an official.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be suspended indefinitely from further participation in the League and shall remain suspended until their conduct is reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors. League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be subject to suspension for the remainder of the season or expulsion from the League for life.
- ii. **Refuse to abide by an official's decision.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be immediately suspended indefinitely from further participation in the game and shall remain suspended until their conduct is reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors. League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be subject to probation or suspension for the remainder of the season.
- iii. **Be guilty of objectionable demonstrations of dissent at an official's decision.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be subject to indefinite suspension from further participation in the game until conduct has been reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors.
- iv. **Discuss with an official or officials the decision reached by such official or officials, except for the manager or their designee who is authorized to participate in such discussions.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be subject to indefinite suspension from further participation in the game until conduct has been reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors.
- v. **Use unnecessarily rough tactics in the play of the game against the body or person of an opposing player.** League participants guilty of such conduct shall be immediately suspended indefinitely from further participation in the game until conduct has been reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors and shall be subject to probation or suspension for the remainder of the season.
- vi. **Be guilty of physical attack as an aggressor upon any player, manager, official, or spectator, before, during, or after a game.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be immediately suspended indefinitely from further participation in the game and shall remain suspended until their conduct is reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors. Players guilty of such conduct shall be subject to suspension for the remainder of the season or expulsion from the League for life.
- vii. **Be guilty of verbal abusive attack upon any player, manager, official, or spectator, before, during, or after a game.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be immediately suspended indefinitely from further participation in the game and shall remain suspended until their conduct is reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors. Players guilty of such conduct shall be subject to suspension for the remainder of the season.
- viii. **Consume alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs during the game or be upon the field of play at any time in an intoxicated condition.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be immediately suspended indefinitely from further participation in the game until conduct has been reviewed by the League's Divisional

Board of Directors and shall be subject to probation or suspension for the remainder of the season.

ix. **Smoke or vape on the field of play, dugout, or anywhere else prohibited by law or facility rules.** League participants and their guests guilty of such conduct shall be immediately suspended indefinitely from further participation in the game until conduct has been reviewed by the League's Divisional Board of Directors.

#### **b. Penalties**

i. The League's Divisional Board of Directors may, by a simple majority vote, suspend any League participant and their guests for such a period and upon such terms as it may propose, for the conduct within its opinion is prejudicial to the welfare, interest, reputation, or charter of the league.

ii. Except as otherwise provided, the League President shall determine the appropriate action required for violations of the codes of conduct and shall report their decision to the League participant or their guests, their manager, and the League's Divisional Board of Directors.

iii. A League participant and their guests found in violation of any provision delineated in the codes of conduct, after being placed on probation for the remainder of the season shall be suspended for the remainder of the season.

iv. Any League participant and their guests found in violation of any provisions delineated in the codes of conduct, after being suspended from further participation in a game shall be suspended for the remainder of the season.

v. League participants who are suspended or expelled from the League shall not be entitled to any refunds or reimbursements.

#### **c. Grievances, Protests, and Appeals**

i. Grievances may be filed by an individual player or by the manager of a team, provided that a grievance is formally submitted to the League's Divisional Board of Directors.

ii. An appeal of any action or ruling, either regarding the Rules and Regulations contained in this document or otherwise, may be filed with the League's Divisional Board of Directors by an individual player or by the manager of a team provided that the appeal is formally submitted. However, all decisions by the League's Divisional Board of Directors are final and not subject to appeal.

iii. Any decisions, rulings, and judgments made by the League President may be appealed by any League participant to the League's Divisional Board of Directors.