

## Guidelines for Bylaws, Local Rules & Ground Rules

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Establishing the local bylaws, rules and ground rules is a very important task that should not be taken lightly. Too often conflicts pop up during the season because the Board did not perform this important task. Establishing and communicating these rules, early on, prevents headaches later on.

Each local Little League Board of Directors should adopt its own bylaws, local rules or ground rules. This document or documents expire annually at the end of the fiscal year and must be renewed annually. Because each local Little League board of directors should have authority to change these types of procedures, they require only board consent, without the general membership's approval. No part of the bylaws, local rules or ground rules can conflict with or supercede any Little League rule, regulation or policy. For example, the league cannot institute a mandatory slide rule, because it would conflict with Little League playing rule 7.08 (a)(3). Also, the local rules don't re-state any existing Little League Baseball Rule, Regulation or Policy, as this invites conflicting interpretations.

The bylaws, local rules or ground rules are to be distinguished from the local Little League's Constitution. The Constitution spells out the duties and responsibilities of the officers of the board, definition of membership, election procedures, meeting requirements such as quorum, etc. The local Little League board of directors must make a copy of the bylaws, local rules or ground rules available to any member of the local Little League for review and inspection if requested.

Some of the issues to consider when establishing the annual bylaws, local rules & ground rules:

- Any field conditions not already covered by Little League Rules and Regulations, such as a tree with branches extending into the playing field area.
- Background checks - more strenuous than required by Little League?
- Divisions - age Groups (Example: LL allows 9-12 year olds at Majors. League can restrict within that age group, such as only 10-12)
- How are the teen divisions aligned?
- How many players per team for each division?
- Draft method
- If expanding or contracting teams in a division, what method will be used?
- What to do with Minor Division players who refuse to move up to the Major Division?
- Minimum Play Rule (Can only make it more stringent than LL requirement)
- Make-up games
- Any specifically optional Rules or Regulations, such as the 10-run rule (4.10 (e)) and any of the several noted:
  - 7-year-olds at Tee Ball (General Information – Divisions of Play)
  - Pool Players (Regulation V(c))
  - Time Limit on Tee Ball & Minor games (only) (Regulation X(c))
  - Tee Ball – half inning is when all players have batted or after three outs
  - Require helmet on adult base coaches (Rule 1.16)
  - Continuous Batting Order for Majors & above (Rule 4.04)
  - Eliminate 10 and 15 run rule? (Rule 4.10e)
  - Determine time or inning length of Tee Ball game (Rule 4.10f)
  - Handling Minor League Protests (Rule 4.19g)
  - Suspend 5 run rule for last inning in Minors (Rule 5.07)
  - Batter must remain in batter's box (Rule 6.02c)
  - Stealing of signs deemed unsportsmanlike behavior or not (9.01d Note)
- Game time field prep responsibilities
- If coaches/managers are required to umpire, what is penalty if they don't show or supply replacement?
- Absenteeism for games - recourse - how long can a player be out of the lineup without being replaced?
- Non-competitive Minors: coach pitch, machine pitch, half and half?

- Will you allow Minor Leaguers to be called up to the Major Division in the last two weeks of the season?
- Who is on the protest committee - see 4.19(f)
- How TOC Tournament Team is determined (including tie-breakers)
- How All Star tournament team players, managers and coaches are selected
- Put everything in writing and communicate, communicate, communicate.

**Upon completion of the leagues** Bylaws, Local Rules & Ground Rules and prior to final approval by the Board of Directors of the local league, the rules should be submitted to the District for review by the District Administrator and the District umpire in chief to assure no local rules are in conflict with Little League Rules and Regulations.