



WPPA Recreational Youth Baseball Rules 2026

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Significant Rule Changes for 2026

All coaches should ensure that they are familiar with the rules of the division in which they are coaching. In particular, please note the following significant rule changes for 2026:

- For all divisions, rules regarding sliding into home plate have been clarified.
- For all divisions, suspended game rules have been revised.
- For all divisions, tie-breaker rules for team placement in the playoffs have been revised.
- Division commissioners have been provided discretion to impose consequences when ineligible players are utilized.
- For the Senior division, bat regulations have been revised.
- For the Major division, jaw guards (c-flaps) are now permitted.
- For the Minor division, base stealing rules have been revised.
- For the Junior division, the play will be considered dead on an infield hit after the batter has touched first base (i.e., no tag outs for turning the corner).
- For the Rookie division, changes to the rules of play for the 3rd and 4th innings have been made.

Governing Principles and Interpretive Authority

1. All previous unwritten rules, handshake or informal agreements, or understandings as practiced by veteran coaches and/or players are hereby null and void unless endorsed by their written inclusion in these "WPPA Recreational Youth Baseball Rules." These rules are intended to achieve the goals stipulated herein and are reviewed and modified on an annual basis to make the games in each league consistent with these goals and to provide a positive experience for all participants.
2. As set forth in this rulebook, the WPPA has adopted a modified version of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) baseball rules. To the extent any conflicts exist between the IHSA rules as printed in the current National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rules Book and these WPPA rules, the WPPA rules shall prevail. To the extent a scenario is not covered in these rules, the IHSA Rules, as printed in the current NFHS Baseball Rules Book, shall apply.
3. The WPPA youth baseball program emphasizes the highest standards of ethics and sportsmanship and expects that all players, parents, coaches, umpires and spectators will maintain and endorse these high standards. Strong ethics and sportsmanship of the players, coaches, officials, spectators and others associated with WPPA games is vital to the

sustainability of the WPPA. Everyone participating must conduct themselves in a way that is a testament to the league and community.

Objectives of the WPPA

1. To provide children in our community with a positive, meaningful and enjoyable athletic experience.
2. To teach teamwork and respect for teammates, opponents, coaches and umpires; and to emphasize good sportsmanship.
3. To teach the fundamentals and rules of baseball and to develop baseball skills.
4. To encourage healthy competition and the importance of fair play.

Formatting and notation clarification:

As stated herein, the designation "Rev" following an article number indicates a revision of the IHSA rule. If the revision applies only to certain leagues, those leagues to which it applies are indicated. Rookie, Junior, Minor, Major, Senior, and Liberty refer to the spring/summer season divisions. 7U, 9U, 11U and 13U refer to the fall season divisions. All other rules set forth herein are intended to supplant the indicated IHSA rule.

All coaches are responsible for knowing IHSA and WPPA rules.

The Rules of Welles Park Parents Association (WPPA) Recreational Youth Baseball

IHSA RULE 1 PLAYERS, FIELD AND EQUIPMENT

⚙️ WPPA Procedure:

The WPPA will furnish all game balls, bases, pitching rubber, catcher's equipment and tees during the regular and post season schedules. Each team will furnish its own player equipment, including bats, mitts and helmets. The WPPA has a limited number of helmets with face masks available upon request by a coach. Teams shall use WPPA-issued equipment or comparable equipment that is in good working condition and meets or exceeds standards established by the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE).

The head coaches are responsible for equipment and uniforms issued to their team and for seeing that equipment is properly maintained. Any person willfully abusing or damaging the equipment will be required to pay for the replacement of said equipment. Normal wear and tear is expected. Coaches and umpires are expected to turn in all equipment at the end of the season unless otherwise instructed.

Section 1 Positions of Players

Art. 1 Rev ... Minimum number of players to start a game:

- **Rookie:** six (6) players.
- **All other leagues:** eight (8) players.

Positions in WPPA leagues:

- **Rookie:**
 - Defense: The eleven (11) positions consist of Pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, Short-Center Fielder, Shortstop, 3rd base, Left Fielder, Left-Center Fielder, Center Fielder, Right-Center Fielder and Right Fielder
 - r. The Short-Center Fielder must start on the dirt directly behind 2nd base lined up straight behind the plate, pitcher's mound, and 2nd base. No shifts are

allowed. . All of the other outfielders must start each play in the outfield grass area.

- No player may play any position more than one inning per game.
- **Junior/7U:**
 - Defense: The twelve (12) positions consist of Catcher, Pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, Short-Center Fielder, Shortstop, 3rd base, Left Fielder, Left-Center Fielder, Center Fielder, Right-Center Fielder and Right Fielder. The Short-Center Fielder must start on the dirt directly behind 2nd base lined up straight behind the plate, pitcher's mound, and 2nd base. No shifts are allowed. . All of the other outfielders must start each play in the outfield grass area. No infielders (except the pitcher and catcher) may start a play more than one step in front of a base or the base path.
 - No player may play more than three (3) innings total at pitcher and/or first base positions each game during the regular season prior to the playoffs.
- **Minor/9U, Major/11U, Senior/13U, Liberty:** Games are played with the standard nine (9) baseball positions.

Section 2 The Field

Art. 1 Rev... Field dimensions

- **Senior/13U:** Bases-80'-0"; Pitching rubber-54'; Home to 2nd-113'-2"
- **Major/11U:** Bases-70'-0"; Pitching rubber-48'-6"; Home to 2nd-99'-0"
- **Minor/9U:** Bases-60'-0"; Pitching rubber-44'-6"; Home to 2nd-84'-10"
- **Junior/7U and Rookie:** Bases-60'-0"; Pitching rubber-42'-0"; Home to 2nd-84'-10"

Field setups by league:

- **Junior/7U and Rookie:** The field shall be marked with a 10' diameter pitching circle; halfway marks between 1st and 2nd base, 2nd and 3rd base, and 3rd and home plate; and a line between the 1st base line and the 3rd base line, 15' from the point of home plate.

Art. 9 Rev... Safety bases

- The league will use its best efforts to provide safety bases at first base at all levels (Rookie through Liberty).

Section 3 Equipment: bats, balls and gloves

Art. 1 Rev... Balls by league

The following balls shall be used for each division:

- Rookie will play with a soft core rubber safety ball (Rawlings Official T-Ball TVB or Champro Safe-T-Soft).
- Junior/7U will use Level 5 training baseballs (Rawlings ROTB5 or Champro CBB-65)
- Minor/9U, Major/11U and Senior (13U) will use an Official League baseball (Champro CBB-200 or Rawlings ROLB1).
- Liberty will use a high school and collegiate level baseball (Wilson A1010 or Rawlings R100).

⚙ WPPA Procedure:

The WPPA provides each coach with one dozen dedicated game balls at the beginning of the season. Each coach will make their best effort to bring at least one WPPA-supplied game ball to each regular season game for use during the game. Before each game begins, each coach will give one (1) game ball to the umpire for use during the game. If additional balls are required, the umpire will request one or more additional game balls from one or both coaches.

Art. 2 Rev... Bats by league

The following bats shall be permitted:

- **Rookie:** All tee ball bats with a maximum barrel size of two and one quarter ($2 \frac{5}{8}$) inches are allowed. Bats may be metal, and may be labeled Official Tee Ball or USA Baseball.
- **Junior/7U , Minor/9U and Major :** All bats with a “USA Baseball” stamp are legal, up to a $2 \frac{5}{8}$ inch barrel. All wood bats are legal.
- **Major/11U:** All one-piece wood bats are allowed. All non-wood bats must meet the USA Baseball bat standard and bear the “USA Baseball” stamp. All bats must have a

maximum barrel diameter of two and five eighths (2 5/8) inches and a maximum differential (drop weight) of -12.

- **Senior :** All one-piece wood bats are allowed. All USA bats, with a drop weight of - 8 or lower, are permitted.
- **Liberty:** All one-piece wood bats are allowed. All non-wood bats must meet the BBCOR bat standard and be labeled BBCOR Certified 0.50.

※ **WPPA Exception:**

Fall season “A-tier” exception: In all A-tier divisions of fall ball (7U, 9U, 11U and 13U), players are permitted to use bats that meet the USSSA bat standard in addition to one-piece wood bats and bats that meet the USA bat standard.

☒ **WPPA Clarification:**

- A player will not be penalized for starting an at-bat with an illegal bat unless and until the pitcher delivers at least one pitch. If the batter starts an at-bat with an illegal bat and switches to a legal bat prior to the first pitch, there will be no penalty. The penalty for using an illegal bat is that the batter will be called out and any baserunners will remain at, or return to, the bases they occupied at the beginning of the at-bat. Baseball bats may be furnished by any player. Except for one-piece wood bats, every bat must bear the stamp of the bat standard required for that division (USA Baseball or BBCOR as indicated above). All bats must be in good condition. If a bat is judged by an umpire to be in an "unsafe" condition, it will be removed from play with no penalty to the batter.
- Only bats and items designed to remain part of the bat during warm-up swings – including weighted bats, batting donuts, and wind resistance swing trainers – are legal at any location. (Hit N Sticks or similar devices may not be used in warming up for a game and/or during a game at any location).

Section 4 Uniforms

Art. 1 Rev... Uniform requirements

Players must wear the WPPA regulation-issued jersey along with gray baseball pants (except

Liberty) and team hat to be eligible to play. Call-ups must wear their house team jersey, travel team jersey, or a loaned jersey from the team they were called up to play with.

Section 5 Player Equipment

Art. 1 Rev... Helmets and face protection

Batters and base runners are to wear protective helmets at all times — in scheduled games as well as team practices. Batters and base runners through Minor/9U must wear protective helmets with face guard. At any level, if a batter steps into the batter's box wearing an illegal helmet, the umpire shall inform the player and coach, and request that the player change their helmet to one that meets WPPA requirements. If the player refuses to change their helmet, they will be called out.

※ WPPA Exceptions:

- **Major/11U and Senior/13U:** Players may wear either protective helmets with face guards or helmets with c-flaps, with a permanently affixed NOCSAE stamp. C-flap helmets without this stamp are not permitted. NOTE: Altering a helmet in any way (drilling holes, removing padding, etc.) may cause a manufacturer to void the NOCSAE certification of that helmet, making it illegal to use.
- **Liberty:** players must wear helmets, but face guards and c-flaps are optional.

Art. 3 Rev... Catcher's gear

- **Liberty, Senior/13U, Major/11U, and Minor/9U:** The catcher must wear a catcher's helmet (batter's helmet is not permitted), protective cup (males only), shin guards, helmet, chest and throat protector at all times when catching.
- **Junior/7U (coach pitch innings):** The catcher must wear a catcher's helmet (batter's helmets are not permitted), shin guards, throat guard (if provided) and chest protector with extension flap extended.

Art. 13. Protective cups

It is recommended that all male players wear protective cups. These must be furnished by each player.

Art. 14.

No metal spikes are allowed in any league except Liberty.

IHSA RULE 3 SUBSTITUTING – COACHING – BENCH AND FIELD CONDUCT – CHARGED CONFERENCES

Section 1 Substituting

Art. 2 Rev... Pitcher and catcher

A pitcher must pitch consecutive innings (except Liberty). Once a pitcher is removed from the pitching position for any reason, they may not pitch again during that game (except Liberty).

☒ WPPA Clarifications:

Catcher and Pitcher Eligibility Restrictions - Junior/7U, Minor/9U, Major/11U & Senior/13U divisions:

a. Catcher to Pitcher Restriction.

Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game shall not be eligible to pitch on that calendar day. (For travel baseball players, this rule applies to both travel and house baseball games on any given day).

b. Pitcher to Catcher Restriction.

A player who has played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or fewer in a game (including zero innings), and who subsequently pitches and delivers twenty-one (21) or more pitches on that same calendar day [thirty-one (31) or more pitches for 15- and 16-year-olds], shall not be eligible to return to the catcher position on that calendar day.

c. Pitch-Limit Completion Exception.

If a pitcher reaches the applicable pitch threshold described in subsection (b) while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue pitching and retain eligibility to return to the catcher position until the first of the following occurs:

- The batter reaches base;
- The batter is retired;
- The third out is recorded to complete the half-inning or the game; or
- The pitcher is removed from the pitching position before the batter's plate appearance is completed.

d. Definition of an Inning Played at Catcher.

For purposes of this rule, a player shall be considered to have played the position of catcher for an inning if the player appears as catcher at any time during that inning, regardless of the number of pitches caught or whether the inning was started or is completed by another catcher. Catching during a pitcher's warm-up does not constitute playing an inning.

Art. 2 Rev... General defensive position substitutions

Prior to the defense taking the field in any inning, a coach may substitute any player for any other player as long as it does not violate any pitching regulations or minimum defensive inning rules.

Art 7. Sit Out Limits.

If a player sits out for any portion of a defensive inning, the player is considered to have sat out for the entire inning for purposes of calculating the maximum number of sits.

☒ WPPA Clarifications:

- **Liberty division:** No players may sit out more than four defensive innings in a regulation game.
- **Senior/13U, Major/11U, Minor/9U:** No players may sit out more than three defensive innings in a regulation game during the regular season. In the playoffs, no player may sit more than 4 defensive innings (Senior/13U and Major/11U) or 3 defensive innings (Minor/9U, Junior/7U).
- **Junior/7U:** No player may sit out more than one defensive inning in a regulation game during either the regular season or the playoffs.
- **Rookie:** No players may sit out more than two defensive innings in a regulation game. Each player must play at least one (1) inning in the infield, at pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, shortstop, or short-center.

The aforementioned rules apply with exceptions for unanticipated player injuries which may require additional innings sitting out.

Art. 8. Once a defensive player begins an inning, they must complete the inning at the same position.

※ **WPPA Exceptions:**

- **Liberty only:** A defensive player may change positions within an inning.
- Any player may be removed from play in event of an injury, disciplinary action, or as a result of a pitching change. (Pitching change exception applies to Senior/13U, Major/11U, and Minor/9U, when the players are pitching). To accommodate these "exception" changes, defensive players may be moved to new positions or removed from the game.

Art. 12.

In case of any injury to a player, they may be replaced by a player from the bench. In case of any injury to a batter who cannot continue the plate appearance, the at-bat shall be vacated. An injured player may return to the game after a rest of at least the remaining half inning in which the injury occurred.

In the case of injury to a player, a coach should seek to apply immediate first aid and/or seek emergency medical care as necessary. If a parent or guardian is not present, they should be notified as soon as possible.

Art. 13. Each team will maintain the maximum number of permanent players required for each league by utilizing the "waiting list" of eligible players until the "waiting list" is exhausted.

Art. 14. The call-up system

Call-up players may only be used to ensure a team has the requisite number of players for the game. In the event a coach foresees that their team will not have enough players to cover each defensive position, they may add a player or players to the game day roster by utilizing the call-up system:

Call-up players are the next lowest age group of players and identified as follows:

Primary Team Division	Call-up Division
Liberty Division	Senior Division

Primary Team Division	Call-up Division
Senior Division	Major Division
Major Division	Minor Division
Minor Division	Junior Division
Junior Division	Rookie Division
Rookie Division	Any other Rookie team
13U	Any lower division
11U	Any lower division
9U	Any lower division
7U	Any other 7U team, subject to approval of the opposing coach.

A team found to have played a game with an ineligible player may be retroactively assessed a forfeit at the discretion of the commissioner. Situations that may call for a forfeit include but are not limited to:

- A call-up player who is from the same division.
- A call-up player from an outside league not registered for the WPPA season.
- A call-up player who has already played for the designated team during the playoffs.

Section 2 Coaching

Art. 3 Rev...

Rookie: Two (2) coaches may be in the outfield area at a time to verbally assist defensive players. They may not cause any interference or make physical contact with any player. A ball put in play by a batter which hits a coach shall be considered a dead ball and will be replayed as if it had never occurred.

Junior/7U: (first three full innings whether tee-ball hitting or coach-pitch): Prior to Memorial Day, two (2) coaches may be in the outfield area at a time to verbally assist defensive players. They may not cause any interference or make physical contact with any player. A ball put in play by a batter which hits a coach shall be considered a dead ball and will be replayed.

⚙️ **WPPA Procedures:**

The coach seeking a call-up player to play with their team must obtain the permission of the player's parents. No player is ever required to agree to play as a call-up.

Call-up players must be identified as such to the opposing coach and the umpire before the start of the game. Call-up players should wear the jersey of either the team that called them up one of their rostered teams (house or travel).

All call-ups will play subject to the following limitations:

- **All leagues:** All call-up players must be registered in the same season with a WPPA team from the next division down in age. That is, players must be registered with the WPPA for the season they are being called up to play in. To illustrate, a team in the spring/season may not call up a player who played the previous fall season but is not registered to play in the current season. Teams may not call up the same player more than once during the playoffs.
- **All leagues other than Liberty:** Call-up players must occupy the last spot(s) in the batting order.
- **Senior/13U:** Call-up players may not pitch or play infield positions unless there are not enough primary team players to field the six (6) infield positions. When there are less than six (6) available primary team players, call-up players may play any position except pitcher or catcher. Call-up players may not play pitcher or catcher under any circumstances.
- **Junior/7U, Minor/9U, Major/11U:** Call-up players may not pitch or play infield positions.

Art. 5.

Junior/7U (Tee-Ball at bats): There may be only one practice swing taken with a coach assisting the batter when the batter is at the plate. No ball can be placed on the tee for this purpose. When the ball is placed on the tee, the coach must stand behind the backstop or in line with the grandstand fence (out of the play area). Any physical assistance given the batter by a coach when the ball is on the tee will result in a strike assigned to the batter.

Art. 6.

Junior (Tee-Ball at bats): The coach or a designated person from the team on offense shall be present behind the backstop to remove the tee for safety reasons after the ball has been hit and put into play. There must be a regular home plate under the base of the tee. If the tee is not removed, no runner may advance past third base. If a runner does attempt to advance past third with a tee still standing on home plate, the play is dead and the runner must return to third base. If the bases are loaded and the tee is not removed from home plate, the lead runner will be out and all other base runners will advance one (1) base. Art. 7.

Unless approved in advance by the commissioner of the respective league, at least one coach on a team must be a parent of a child on the team.

Section 3 Bench and Field Conduct

Art. 5.

Only team members and their respective recognized coaches (including a designated scorekeeper or pitch counter) are allowed on a team bench or in the team's dugout area during a game. Spectators are not allowed on a team bench for any reason. All players are to remain on the bench except for the player at bat, the "on deck" player, and the pitcher and/or catcher warming up. Coaches not coaching a base, supervising a warming-up batter or pitcher, or coaching defense (Rookie and Junior/7U) must remain in the dugout/bench-area while the game is being played. Coaches are not allowed in the well area (Minor/9U and Major/11U) or along the base line. Teams are permitted to allow one coach to stand near the on-deck batter to maintain a safe environment.

Art. 6.

A coach shall not use, or be under the influence of drugs (including, but not limited to marijuana and THC or CBD-based products) or alcohol at any game or practice. Violation will mean immediate and permanent dismissal from coaching in the WPPA. IHSA rules prohibit use of tobacco and tobacco-like products (including vapes) near the field.

All coaches, parents, and spectators are reminded that alcohol is not permitted on Chicago Park District property. This rule is enforced by Chicago Ordinance and subject to the City's enforcement policy.

Art. 7.

A coach or player ejected for any reason will be suspended for the next game. If the same coach or player is ejected from a second game, in the same or any other WPPA league, within the same season, they will be suspended indefinitely and will be required to appear before a disciplinary committee made up of Board members before reinstatement.

Art. 8.

At the end of a game, each team must clean up its dugout area and leave the dugout area before the next team enters the dugout area. Coaches are also responsible for cleaning up any litter left by spectators watching their game.

Art. 9.

Players are not permitted to chant, yell or scream (i) any derogatory or negative comments as to any player, coach, umpire or fan or (ii) for the purpose of distracting a member of the opposing team. If an umpire believes that this rule has been violated, they may first issue a warning to both teams. For subsequent violations within the same game, the offense will result in an out being charged to the offending team during their next at bat or, if the team is at bat, at the time of the offense. The out shall be charged to the team, and not impact the batting order of the team to whom the out was charged. For example, if the team at bat has 1 out when an additional out is charged, the team now has 2 outs, but the player at bat may continue their at bat.

Art. 10.

The use of “hit sticks” or similar devices is prohibited during the game. The use of these items is allowed during pregame warmups only under the supervision of an adult coach.

Section 4 Charged Conferences

Art 1 Rev...

Each team, when on defense, may be granted not more than one charged conference per pitcher per inning. A charged conference is any conference including a non-playing team member (coach, assistant coach, etc.). Time granted for an obviously incapacitated player shall not constitute a charged conference. This total is not cumulative – that is, in the event a pitcher pitches without any charged conferences, subsequent pitchers cannot have more than one charged conference without penalty. After each pitcher change or inning change, the number of charged conferences resets and one is allowed before a change must be made.

PENALTY: After the one allowed charged conference, a further conference must result in the removal of the current pitcher (as pitcher) and a replacement player at the pitcher position.

IHSA RULE 4 STARTING AND ENDING GAME

Section 1 Starting a Game

Art. 1 Rev...

- At least thirty minutes prior to the first game of the day, the league commissioner in consultation with the Board, will determine if the grounds and other conditions are suitable for starting the game. If the league commissioner is not available to make the decision, another disinterested board member must make the decision. If a game is canceled before or after it begins as a result of darkness, inclement weather, or for any other reason, the field upon which the game was to be played may not be used for practices or for any other purpose by WPPA teams.
- The home team is responsible for setting up all bases and always occupies the 3rd base side of the field.

Art. 2 Rev... Unusual field conditions

If there are unusual field conditions, refer to the following Welles Park local ground rules:

- **Home run fences:** For all leagues, in any situation where a temporary or permanent home run fence is in place, a ball traveling over the fence (even if it hits/touches the fence or a player) without first hitting the ground is a home run; a ball bouncing on the ground before reaching the fence, and then traveling over the fence is a ground rule double; a ball rolling under the fence is a ground rule double.
- **Welles Park Field 6:**
 - If a ball on the fly hits the foliage of a tree in fair territory, it is a dead ball.
 - If a ball hits or crosses the access road on a fly ball, the batter will be awarded a home run. If the ball rolls or bounces onto the access road, the runner will be awarded a triple.
- **Welles Park Field 3:**
 - If the field does not have a home run fence, any ball is playable off of the wall.

- If the field does not have a home run fence, and a ball travels into the stairwell untouched, it is a double.
- If the ball has been touched, it is a triple.
- If a ball hits a tree on the fly, it is a dead ball.
- If a ball is hit onto the top of the building, it is a home run.
- If a ball hits on or directly above the smaller building, it is a home run.
- If the field does not have a home run fence, and a ball hits or goes under the bleachers, seating or behind the goalposts in centerfield on the fly the batter is awarded a home run. If the ball rolls under one of those obstacles, the batter is awarded their current base plus two bases.
- **Legion Park and Winnemac Corner:**
 - If a ball is hit on a fly over the bike path, it is a homerun; if a ball lands before the bike path but carries past the bike path, the batter shall be awarded the base they are running to plus one base.
- **Winnemac 4 and 5:**
 - If a ball hits or crosses the bike path on a fly ball the batter will be awarded a home run. If the ball rolls or bounces on to the bike path, the runner will be awarded a triple.

Art. 3 Rev... Pregame protocols

Before each game, the head coach from each team must identify themselves to the umpire. Before game time, each head coach must provide the opposing head coach with their lineup, including the names of all players in attendance and their status, as follows:

- Able and eligible to play.
- Injured and unable to play.
- Being disciplined and ineligible to play.
- Call-up player.

Section 2 Ending a Game

Art. 1 Rev... Regulation game

A regulation game consists of:

- **Liberty, Senior/13U, Major/11U:** seven (7) innings or two (2) and a half (½) hours, whichever is shorter.

- **Minor/9U and Junior/7U:** Six (6) innings or two (2) and a half (½) hours, whichever is shorter.
- **Rookie:** Four (4) innings or sixty (60) minutes, whichever is shorter.

Note that actual game lengths may be dictated by the next scheduled game which is further discussed in Art 4... *Maximum Time Limits and Stopping Games*

Art 2 Rev...Slaughter Rules

- **Liberty:** If any team is ahead by 15 or more runs after four innings, the game is concluded after the trailing team takes its at-bat in the fourth inning. If any team is ahead by 10 runs or more after five innings, the game is concluded
- **Senior/13U:** The game is concluded if a team has a fifteen (15) run or more lead after four complete (4) innings, a twelve (12) run lead or more after five complete (5) innings, or a ten (10) run lead or more after six complete (6) innings. If the home team has a sufficient lead there is no need to play the bottom half of the inning, or any remaining part of the bottom half of the inning.
- **Major/11U:** The game is concluded if a team has a fifteen (15) or more run lead after six (6) complete innings, or if the home team has a fifteen (15) or more run lead after five and one half (5 ½) innings.
- **Minor/9U:** The game is concluded if a team has a fifteen (15) or more run lead after five (5) complete innings, or if the home team has a fifteen (15) or more run lead after four and one half (4 ½) innings.
- **Junior/7U and Rookie:** No slaughter rule.

Art. 3 Rev...

- A game is official after three and one-half (3 1/2) complete innings if the home team is ahead, or four (4) complete innings if the visitors are ahead or if the game is tied. If the game must be suspended because of darkness, inclement weather, or time limit before it is considered official, it will be restarted at a later date, beginning from the specific point at which the game left off. All pitch count rules remain in effect whether the game is official or not.

⚙️ **WPPA Procedure:**

The head coaches of the suspended game must submit the requisite game suspension information (inning, outs, count, batting order, etc.) to the division commissioner in writing so it is memorialized when the game restarts. Teams should do their best to complete the current batter before suspending.

All players available for the resumption of the suspended game shall be eligible to participate, even if they did not play in the initial incomplete game. Conversely, players eligible for the suspended game are not required to be eligible for the resumed game.

If the game must be suspended in the middle of a batter, and that batter is not available for the resumed game, the resumed game will advance to the next batter in the order without penalty.

- If a game is called because of darkness, inclement weather or time limit after it is an official game, but when the teams have not had an equal number of completed turns at bat, the score shall be the same as it was at the end of the last completed inning; unless the home team, in its half of the incomplete inning, scores a run (or runs) which equals or exceeds the opponent's score, in which case, the final score shall be as recorded when the game is called.
- Except in Liberty, any game still being played at the scheduled starting time of the next game will end immediately and revert back to the score at the end of the previous inning, unless the home team is ahead, or unless the home team, having been behind at the end of the previous inning, has tied the game.
- A game that is tied at the end of the last inning will be continued until a winner is determined, unless time limits, darkness or inclement weather intercedes. If an official regular season game is tied and cannot be continued because of time limits, weather or darkness, the game will remain a tie. For league standings, a tie game counts as one half (1/2) of a win and one half (1/2) of a loss.

Art. 4 Rev.... Maximum Time Limits and Stopping Games

- **Junior/7U, Minor/9U, Major/11U, Senior/13U, and Liberty:** two and one half (2 ½) hour time limit for all regular season games.
- Except in Liberty, no inning is allowed to start once two hours have elapsed since the game's scheduled start time. A hard stop occurs ten (10) minutes before the scheduled starting time of the next game. For the last game of the day only, no new inning may be

started after 2 hours, but they are allowed to complete the inning being played, i.e., there is no hard stop at 2 hours and 30 minutes.

- **Liberty:** the inning being played when the time limit has been reached will be completed. A new inning cannot start once the 2 ½ hour time limit has been reached.
- In the event a coach thinks that a game should be called, or should be permitted to continue, and the umpire doesn't agree, the coach can stop play (at a dead ball situation) and appeal the umpire's ruling with a WPPA Board member. The Board member must not have a stake in the game and must be present at the game.

Section 4 Forfeited Game

Art. 1 Rev...

If a team cannot field the minimum number of players within fifteen (15) minutes following the scheduled starting time of the game, they must forfeit.

Art. 1 Rev... Omit 1-f and 1-g.

- **Rookie:** If there is a forfeit because not enough players showed up for a game, the two teams should divide the total number of players equally and play a scrimmage game.

Section 5 Protested Game

Art. 1.

During the regular season, there will be NO protests allowed, except in the case of an ineligible player. The umpire, (head umpire, if there are two umpires) will be the final arbitrator of the rules. (For protest rules during playoffs, see D. Procedures, Section 5, Art 10).

Section 6 Suspension for Severe Weather

Art 1.

The WPPA adheres to the IHSA Severe Weather Safety Guidelines.

Art 2.

When thunder is heard or lightning seen, play must be suspended for at least 30 minutes.

Art. 3.

Once play has been suspended, teams should wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is

heard or lightning witnesses prior to resuming play. Any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count will reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.

Art. 4.

The 30-minute count is to be maintained by the umpire, including whether to reset the clock based on subsequent thunder or lightning.

IHSA RULE 5 DEAD BALL-SUSPENSION OF PLAY

Section 1 Dead Ball

Art 1 Rev...

- Ball becomes dead immediately when:
 - m. Omit.
 - o. **Junior/7U and Rookie:** ...the ball is: (a) in the possession of the pitcher with both feet in the pitcher's circle, or (b) on the batting tee.
 - Additionally, the following rules apply for NON-infield hits: When in the umpire's opinion, an infielder controls the ball, the umpire must call time to stop the play. The player with the ball should demonstrate some control of the situation. For example, if the player with the ball has their back to the play, the ump should NOT call time out. If the umpire deems that a runner is NOT substantially closer to the next base than the prior base (e.g., $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way) when the dead ball is called, the runner must return to the prior base. If the umpire deems that a runner is substantially closer to the next base than the prior base when the infielder controls the ball, then the runner may advance to such next base. This rule applies to both batted balls and balls hit from the tee. There is no overthrow penalty if the defensive player who is an infielder in possession of the ball attempts to make an out and the ball ends up out of play.
 - p. **Junior/7U and Rookie:** ...there are fewer than three bases occupied at the time that the ball is put into play, and a fielder receives the active ball and stands on home plate. If there are fewer than two outs, and a base runner has

reached the half way mark between 3rd base and home, the base runner can score safely. If the fielder does not stand on home plate, but attempts to tag the base runner coming from 3rd base, the play and all base runners remain active until the ball is otherwise ruled dead by the umpire.

- q. **Junior/7U:** on an infield hit where there is a play at first base, after the batter touches/runs through first base (i.e., no tag outs on a turn or perceived turn toward second base).
- r. **Major/11U and Minor/9U:** When in the umpire's opinion, an infielder controls the ball and the runners have stopped advancing, the umpire can and should call time to stop the play. The player with the ball should demonstrate some control of the situation. For example, if the player with the ball has their back to play, the umpire should NOT call time out.
- s. **Junior/7U (coach-pitch innings):** After the ball is dead, it must be returned to the pitcher on the mound. t. **Junior/7U(tee-ball innings) and Rookie:** The umpire will call for the ball, which must go to the catcher for placing on the tee.

IHSA RULE 6 PITCHING

Section 1 Pitching

Art. 1 Rev...

Major/11U and Minor: Omit article.

Art. 2 Rev...

Liberty, Senior/13U, Major/11U and Minor/9U: The pitcher shall start their pitching motion with at least one foot in contact with the pitching rubber. One foot must remain in contact with the pitching rubber at all times until the ball is released.

Art. 3 Rev...

Minor/9U: Omit article.

Section 2 Infractions by Pitcher

Art. 1 Rev... Major/11U and Minor/9U:

Umpires shall enforce these infractions only in extreme cases.

Art. 2 Rev... Major/11U and Minor/9U: Omit article.

Art. 3 Rev... Major/11U and Minor/9U: Omit article.

Art. 4 Rev...Balks

- **Senior/13U:** Each pitcher gets one balk warning.
- **Major/11U:** There will be a modified balk rule called by the umpires. This is designed to teach the pitcher how to properly pitch from the stretch. A pitcher may not stop their pitching motion to home plate after coming to a set position and lifting their lead foot. A pitcher may not throw to any base except home plate. In the event that a base runner is drawn off base by this kind of balk, the base runner is not ruled out and is not awarded a base. The base runner must proceed back to the original base and play will resume.
- **Minor/9U:** There are no balks or illegal pitches aside from breaking pitches (see Art. 7 below).

Art. 6.

If a pitcher hits three batters in the same game, they are to be removed from the pitcher's position in that game (except in Liberty).

Art. 7. Minor/9U and Major/11U:

- Pitchers are not allowed to throw breaking pitches. Curveball, knuckle curve, slurve, slider, and screwball are examples of breaking balls. Change-ups are not considered breaking pitches.
- The ball is dead immediately when an illegal pitch occurs. A ball is awarded to the batter. If the pitcher throws a second illegal pitch, the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

Section 3 Coach Pitch

Art. 1. Definition:

- **Junior/7U prior to Memorial Day/Labor Day:** For each team, commencing the second time through the batting order, and continuing for all subsequent at-bats;

- **Junior/7U after Memorial Day/Labor Day:** All at-bats will be coach pitch.
- **Minor/9U:** For the 1st and 2nd innings, modified kid-pitch will be used. See Section 4, Art. 2 for additional details.

Art. 2.

An offensive team coach (coach pitcher) will pitch to their own players. The coach pitcher will pitch overhand and from a standing position (i.e., not from their knees)

Art. 3. Junior/7U only:

The coach pitcher shall begin pitching after completing the batting order once (where all players on the team have batted off the tee) and all subsequent innings. Transition from tee to coach pitch may occur during the middle of an inning. If during coach pitch innings, a batter doesn't put one of the first four (4) pitched balls into play or strike out swinging, the coach will pitch a fifth pitch. The batter is out if they swing and miss or if the umpire calls the pitch a strike. If the umpire rules the pitch was not in the strike zone, the "fifth pitch" process is repeated. The strike will be called by the umpire from behind the plate in the appropriate position to observe the strike zone.

Art 4.

Once the coach pitcher pitches the ball, the coach pitcher cannot instruct, coach or comment in any manner so as to influence any base runner or the batter.

Art. 5.

The coach pitcher is not to interfere with the play or the ball during a game. This is a judgment call by the umpire. After the ball is put into play by the batter, the coach pitcher should leave the field of play as soon as possible. If a batted ball strikes the coach pitcher, the ball is considered dead, and the pitch does not count.

Art. 6.

If the coach pitcher is ruled to have interfered with a play, it is treated as interference with penalty given.

Art. 7.

The coach pitcher must keep one foot on the pitching rubber while they are pitching.

Art. 8.

The exchange of the ball from the coach-pitcher to the catcher is a dead ball exchange unless the batter makes contact with the ball. The return exchange of the ball from the catcher is a dead ball exchange.

Art. 9.

On defense, the defensive pitcher must be positioned within five feet of the pitcher's rubber.

Art. 10.

If the catcher catches a foul tip on what would be the third strike, the batter is out.

Section 4 Kid Pitch

Art. 1.

Definition: The innings in which a player from the defensive team pitches to the opposing batters. (In Minor/9U, these are the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and all extra innings. For details about resolving conflicts or disputes re: house and travel pitching conflicts, see Rule 6, Section 4 WPPA rules).

Art 2. Modified Kid Pitch:

- **Minor/9U:** During modified kid pitch (1st and 2nd innings), all plate appearances will start with kid pitch. If ball four is pitched by the kid pitcher, no base on balls will be awarded to the batter. Instead, the hitting team's coach will come in to pitch. The coach will "inherit" the existing strike count on the batter. The umpire will call balls and strikes during coach pitch. The coach shall throw up to three pitches — until the batter puts the ball in play, strikes out or runs out of pitches. Batters must swing at the third coach pitch and the failure to do so will result in the batter being out. If a batter fouls off the third coach pitch, the at bat continues, but the batter must swing at *all* subsequent coach pitches until they strike out, put the ball in play, or fail to make contact. All other WPPA rules governing coach pitchers will continue to be observed.
- The batter will be awarded 1st base if they are hit by a pitch during kid pitch. No base is awarded if they are hit during coach pitch.

Section 5 Pitching Limits

Art. 1. Pitch Counts:

This rule replaces all other pitching restrictions not listed herein:

- The pitch count limits and recovery days below are based on the player's age on opening day of the WPPA season. Even if a player has a birthday that would move them

into a different age group during the season, the player’s age at the start of the season controls for the duration of the season.

- Pitch count limits are cumulative across travel and house games, and are as follows:

Age	Max Pitches Per Day	Max Pitches Per Season
7-8	50	1000
9-10	75	1000
11-12	85	1000
13-14	95	1000
15-16	95	1300
17-18	105	1400
19+	120	1500

- If a pitcher reaches the pitching limit for their age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: a. The batter reaches base; b. The batter is put out; c. The third out is made to end the half-inning.
- If a pitcher exceeds any pitching limit, then the total number of pitches thrown, not the limit, is used for pitch count for all other purposes, including rest days.
- **Seniors/13U:** At the start of Senior/13U playoffs, the season pitch limit shall be extended by 200 pitches.
- A player may pitch in multiple games in a day, but they cannot throw more pitches in a single day than the aggregate max pitches per day limit for their age. Additionally, a pitcher who throws enough pitches to trigger at least one rest day may not pitch in another game on the same day. For example, a player who is 9 years-old who has three games in a single day across travel and house may pitch 10 pitches in game 1, 10 pitches in game 2, and still be available for up to 55 pitches in game 3. However, if that same player threw 21 pitches in their first game, or 10 pitches in game 1 and 11 pitches in game 2, that player would not be eligible to pitch in any other game that same day or the next day.
- If a player plays for a baseball team outside of Welles Park (e.g., a non-Welles affiliated travel or house program), the WPPA house coach is responsible for inquiring whether the player has pitched and how many pitches the player has thrown to ensure compliance with the WPPA pitching limits set forth above. The WPPA coach must also report the pitch count to the division commissioner. If the coach does not know or cannot find out the player’s pitch counts from their non-WPPA teams, that player is not eligible to pitch.

- Travel and house coaches shall communicate and work together regarding players' pitch counts and required rest days during weeks when a travel player is not specifically reserved for travel pitching.
- **Minor/9U:** During the regular season only, each pitcher must not pitch more than (a) nine (9) outs or (b) their daily pitch limit (allowing for overages permitted by these rules), whichever occurs first.
- **Major/11U:** During the regular season only, each pitcher must not pitch more than (a) twelve (12) outs or (b) their daily pitch limit (allowing for overages permitted by these rules), whichever occurs first.

Art 2. Recovery Days

Recovery days are based on the total number of pitches thrown by a player in a day, including all house and travel pitches.

For the rules below, one day rest means if you pitch on Monday, you cannot pitch on Tuesday.

Two days rest means if you pitch on Monday, you cannot pitch on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Three days' rest means if you pitch on Monday you cannot pitch on Tuesday, Wednesday or

Thursday. Four days rest means you cannot pitch on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday.

The number of hours between starts is not a factor.

- **7-14 year olds:**
 - 0-20 pitches – no rest days required
 - 21-35 – 1 day rest
 - 36-50 – 2 day rest [NOTE: maximum pitches per day for 7/8 year olds is 50]
 - 51-65 – 3 day rest
 - 66+ – 4 day rest
- **15-16 year olds:**
 - 0 – 30 pitches – no rest days required
 - 31 – 45 pitches – 1 day rest
 - 46 – 60 pitches – 2 days rest
 - 61-75 pitches – 3 days rest
 - 76 or more pitches – 4 days rest
- **17-18 year olds:**
 - 0 –30 pitches – no rest days required
 - 31 – 45 pitches – 1 day rest
 - 46 – 60 pitches – 2 days rest

- 61 – 75 pitches – 3 days rest
- 76 or more pitches – 4 days rest
- **19+ year olds:**
 - 0 –30 pitches – no rest days required
 - 31 – 45 pitches – 1 day rest
 - 46 – 60 pitches – 2 days rest
 - 61 – 80 pitches – 3 days rest
 - 81-105 – 4 days rest
 - 106 or more pitches – 5 days rest

Art. 3. Tracking and Recording Pitch Counts

- The head coach of each team in a given game must keep track of pitches for every pitcher on both teams used in the game. The job may be given to a parent volunteer, but it is the head coach’s responsibility to ensure it is tracked. The two pitch-count keepers should compare numbers at the end of each half inning or when a particular pitcher is removed from a game. If there is a discrepancy that cannot be rectified before the umpire is ready to start the next inning or resume the game after a pitching change, the official pitch count will be determined to be an average of the two numbers.
- Pitch counts must be recorded into the WPPA website by 11:59pm the day of each game. The head coach can have a proxy enter the pitch counts, however, the head coach is responsible for the recording of the pitch counts and entry into the website. Each League Commissioner shall monitor the timeliness of pitch count entries. After one warning, in the event a League Commissioner finds that a coach has failed to enter pitch counts according to the time stated in these rules and reports this to the WPPA Board, a one-game suspension of the coach is triggered and shall be served at the next possible game.

Section 6 Travel Pitching Reservations

Art. 1.

House and travel coaches are expected to work closely together to ensure travel players have the opportunity to pitch and develop in both house and travel games. Neither house teams nor travel teams have priority with respect to pitching, unless a player has been reserved for the week to pitch in travel games only.

Art. 2.

Travel coaches can “reserve” each travel player for pitching for two (2) total weeks per house season. To reserve a player, a travel coach must email the player’s house coach, league commissioner and the travel coordinator with notice of the reservation. This notice must be given no later than the Tuesday prior to the weekend of the game(s) for which the player would be reserved. Unless otherwise agreed, the reservation will be effective for the entire pitch count week (Wednesday through Tuesday).

Art. 3.

Unless exceptional circumstances exist, as determined by the Board President or the Executive Board, a house team may not have more than two (2) travel players reserved during any single week.

Art. 4.

House or travel pitching conflicts or disputes should be raised to the travel coordinator and the league commissioner as soon as they arise.

IHSA RULE 7 BATTING

Section 1 Position and Batting Order

All able and eligible players must be in the lineup and in the batting order for the entire game. There can be no substitute batters or pinch hitters. All able and eligible players, including call-up players, will constitute the "batting order" and all players will bat during the entire game in the order established by the lineup. The only exception to this rule exists if a player is temporarily or permanently removed from the game due to injury, illness, or disciplinary action or has to leave the game early for personal reasons.

There is no designated hitter in any league.

Any player arriving after the beginning of the game is added to the end of the batting order, except in Liberty where the player may be listed as a substitute, and the other team is notified accordingly.

Liberty and Senior/13U: If there are only eight players, no penalty out must be taken. If there are fewer than eight players, a penalty out must be taken for each player below eight.

Major/11U, Minor/9U and Junior/7U: Each team's lineup must have at least nine (9) batters. If a lineup has fewer than nine (9) batters, every number below nine (9) is an automatic out. During playoffs the minimum number of batters is also nine (9).

This rule may not be waived by the coaches or umpire unless each team has fewer than nine (9) batters and both teams have the same number of batters in the lineup. This rule also applies in the playoffs. Once the rule has been waived, it cannot be re-instated during that game. If a team starts the game with nine (9) batters and for some reason falls below that number, no penalty will be assessed.

Section 2 Strikes, Balls and Hits

Art 1.

A strike is charged to the batter when:

- **Junior/7U (tee-Ball at bats) and Rookie:** There is any contact with the ball by the bat after the ball is placed on the tee, which does not result in a fairly hit ball. There are no strikeouts in Junior/7U (tee-ball at bats) or Rookie.

Art. 4.

Junior/7U (tee-ball at bats) and Rookie: A ball is foul if it does not pass the diagonal line that is in front of home plate.

Section 4 Batter is Out:

Art. 1b. Rev....

- **Rookie and Junior/7U:** There is no infield fly rule.
- **Minor/9U and Junior/7U (coach pitch):** A third strike is called, whether or not the ball is caught by the catcher.
- **Senior/13U and Major/11U:** the IHSA third strike rule will apply. The rule reads: "The batter is out when a third strike is not caught, provided a runner occupies first base and there are fewer than two outs. A runner is deemed to occupy first base if they were on first base before the pitch was thrown, regardless of whether they attempted to advance to second base by stealing or otherwise."

- If there are two outs or if no runner occupies first base, the batter is not out, unless the third strike is caught. They are entitled to try to reach first base before being tagged out or thrown out.
- With fewer than two outs and first base unoccupied or with two outs: The runners can advance at their own risk. All base runners can advance on a dropped third strike, including base runners on 3rd base, who may attempt to advance home.
- In the event of a dropped third strike, the first baseman is permitted to position himself or herself in foul territory and receive a throw from the catcher while tagging the orange safety base. The runner, consequently, will not be penalized for running to the inner white base to avoid contact.

Art 1j. Junior/7U and Rookie: if they attempt to bunt the ball.

☒ WPPA Clarification:

- **Minor/9U, Major/11U, Senior/13U, Liberty:** bunting is allowed.

Art. 1k. All Leagues except Liberty: Fake bunting and then swinging is not permitted. The umpire will call a batter out if they show bunt, and then pull the bat back and swing.

Section 5 Rookie Batting Rules

Art. 1. Rookie: All Players Bat Rule:

- In all innings of the game, regardless of the number of outs made by the team on defense, each player on the offensive team will bat. If a player is called out on the basepath by an umpire, that player shall return to their bench.

⚙️ WPPA Procedure:

- Because Rookie game scores are not kept and the entire order is batted each inning, coaches should track outs made as a way to engage the older, more competitive players in the game.
- Following the end of play in each inning, the final batter, along with anyone on base at the time, shall be allowed to 'run the bases' through to reach home plate prior to the opposing team taking the field.

Section 6 Maximum Run Rule

Art. 1. Minor/9U: Seventh Run Rule

During every inning except the last as determined by the umpire, each team at bat will continue to bat until three (3) outs have been recorded, or until the seventh run of that half inning has been scored, whichever comes first. No subsequent runs may be scored after the seventh run. If the umpire is aware that the seventh run has scored, they will call time and end the inning. If not, when the umpire is notified that the seventh run has scored (while the ball is dead after a play) they will immediately end the inning.

Minor/9U only: The Seventh Run Rule shall not apply during the playoffs.

Art. 2. Junior/7U: Sixth Run Rule

During every inning except the last as determined by the umpire, each team at bat will continue to bat until three (3) outs have been recorded, or until the sixth run of that half inning has scored, whichever comes first. No subsequent runs may score after the sixth run has been scored. If the umpire is aware that the sixth run has scored, they will call time and end the inning. If not, when the umpire is notified that the sixth run has scored (while the ball is dead after the play) they will immediately end the inning.

IHSA RULE 8 BASERUNNING

Section 1 The Batter Becomes a Batter-Runner

Art. 1c Rev... A batter becomes a runner...

- **Major/11U and Minor/9U (kid pitch innings):** There will be no intentional walks, neither automatic as per IHSA rules or with four wide pitches. The pitcher must attempt to pitch to the batter. If the umpire feels this rule is being violated, they should warn the head coach of the defensive team, any further violation can result in the head coach being ejected.
- **Senior/13U:** Intentional walks are permitted. No player may be intentionally walked more than once per game. A pitcher does not have to throw any pitches for an intentional walk. At any point during an at bat, the coach requesting the intentional walk must notify the umpire during a dead ball or play stoppage situation, and then the walk will be awarded to the batter.
- **Minor/9U (modified kid pitch innings), Junior/7U, and Rookie:** There will be no walks.

Section 2 Touching, Occupying and Returning to a Base

Art. 5 Rev... Major/11U, Minor/9U, Junior/7U, and Rookie:

The umpire, at the end of play, will call all observed infractions of this rule without appeal by a coach or player. Senior/13U and Liberty will observe the IHSA rule.

Minor/9U: The exchange of the ball from the catcher to the pitcher is a live ball exchange. However, a runner on third may not score in this situation and a runner from first or second must stop at third.

Art. 10. Major/11U and Minor/9U: Base stealing will be allowed within the following guidelines:

- **Major/11U:** A base runner may not leave a base before the pitcher, while in the act of pitching, releases the ball from their pitching hand.
- **Major/11U and Minor/9U:** A batter may not advance past first base on a walk.
- **Major/11U and Minor/9U, prior to Memorial Day (Spring) and Labor Day (Fall):** the first time a base runner leaves the base early, they will be warned. This will be a "team warning." The next time this base runner or any other base runner from that team leaves the base early, the offending runner will be called out. (The "team warning" is considered the first warning for all members of that team.) In Major/11U and Minor/9U,

on or after Memorial Day (Spring) and Labor Day (Fall), on or after the second weekend, the first time a runner leaves the base early, they will be called “out” without warning.

- **Minor/9U:** A base runner may leave the base when the ball crosses home plate.
- **Minor/9U:** Runners may not steal during the first two innings of the game, commensurate with the modified kid-pitch innings. Following the first two innings, regular stealing rules apply.
- **Minor/9U:** A base runner may not attempt to steal during the exchange between catcher and pitcher following a pitch unless the exchange is not completed (e.g., because of an overthrow), in which case it is a live ball and base runners may attempt to advance at their own risk.
- **Junior/7U and Rookie:** No base stealing. A base runner may not lead off, and can only leave the base once the ball has been hit.

Art. 11. Minor/9U:

A base runner may not steal home. Once on third base a runner must either be hit in, forced in via a bases loaded walk, or hit by pitch. The base runner cannot advance home from third base on a wild pitch, passed ball, or straight steal. The runner on third base can also advance home from third base if the ball goes out of play and a dead ball is called as the runner would be entitled to any base(s) resulting from the dead ball. Otherwise there is a “wall” on the runner on third base. For example, if the catcher plays on the runner trying to steal second and the ball is thrown away the runner must remain at third base since they were not played on. A base runner who attempts to steal home, even mistakenly, must attempt to return to third base without being tagged out, but if the base runner crosses home plate, they will be called out.

Art. 12.

- **Rookie:** A batter or baserunner may advance only one base on a hit that does not leave the infield on a fly. If the batted ball reaches the outfield grass on a fly, each runner and batter may attempt to advance up to two bases at his/her risk.
- **Junior/7U:** a baserunner may advance only one base on an infield hit. The determination of an “infield hit” will be left to the umpire’s discretion; provided, however, a batted ball that touches the outfield grass (other than on an overthrow) or is otherwise touched by an outfielder (with short center being considered an infielder) is NOT an “infield hit.”

Section 3 Baserunning Awards

Art. 1 Rev...a catcher should not intentionally obstruct home plate (e.g., stand on the plate with both feet) when a runner is attempting to score.

Art. 3 Rev... Each Runner is awarded:

Four bases (home) if a defensive player's mitt and/or a cap is thrown at a fair ball (except in Senior/13U and Liberty).

Art. 5 Rev...

Junior/7U and Rookie: On each batted ball where the first throw by an infielder results in the ball going out of play behind 1st base — award one base to batter and runners from base occupied at start of play, i.e. batter occupied home, gets 1st base.

Art. 7.

Junior/7U (Tee ball at bats) and Rookie: Next Base Rule: After the umpire calls a dead ball, if, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner is not substantially closer to the next base than to the prior base (e.g., $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way), the runner must return to the previous base.

Art. 8. Junior/7U and Rookie:

Intentional rolling or bouncing of the ball on the playing field between defensive players during active plays is not permitted. All ball exchanges among defensive players must be airborne (overhand, or underhand for a short throw). If intentional rolling of the ball is observed by the umpire, they shall give a warning to all players and coaches regardless of which team incurred the rule infraction. On subsequent infractions, the umpire may call a base runner safe at a base if they determine that a player intentionally rolled or bounced a ball on the playing field during active plays.

Art. 9. Junior/7U and Rookie:

The pitcher fielding the ball must make an attempt to complete an airborne exchange of the ball with another defensive player to make a force out at any base, including home plate. For example, if the pitcher chases the batter/runner down between home and 1st base instead of throwing the fielded ball to the first baseman, the runner will be ruled "safe" even if the tag is made by the pitcher. The rule applies to all bases.

Junior/7U:

The catcher must make defensive plays at home unless there is some extraordinary circumstance not related to the catcher's relative skill level, for example, the catcher is injured

and cannot/could not continue to play. Otherwise, if another defensive player makes a(n otherwise) successful defensive play at home, the would-be out is negated; if the runner would have safely reached home, the run counts.

Rookie:

The pitcher is required to complete an airborne exchange to secure an out at any base. If a pitcher fields a ground ball and runs to home plate or any base for a force out instead of making an airborne exchange, then the runner will be safe even if the force is made by the pitcher.

Section 4 Runner is Out

Art. 1 Rev...The Batter — Runner is out when:

- Their helmet is deliberately removed before time has been called by the umpire.

Art. 2 Rev...The Runner is out when

- A baserunner slides headfirst while advancing bases. A player may only slide headfirst when returning to a base previously occupied.

✘ **WPPA Exception:**

This rule does not apply in Liberty.

- All players attempting to score must do their best to avoid a collision with the catcher. A player failing to do so shall be called out at the discretion of the umpire.

IHSA RULE 10 UMPIRING

⚙ **WPPA Procedure:**

Umpires are selected, trained, scheduled and compensated by the WPPA. Eligibility is determined by the WPPA Board of Directors and managed by the Umpire Coordinator. No umpire outside of the WPPA organization is authorized to participate in the program unless

authorized by the Board. Any coach or parent who has a complaint about the manner in which any umpire conducts himself or herself in sanctioned games is to submit that complaint to the League Commissioner in writing.

Umpires will be provided for games as a matter of practice. However, if an umpire is not provided, each team may provide a coach volunteer to umpire. They may umpire in tandem throughout the game (plate/field) or umpire alone for two (2) innings each.

Section 1: Speed-up Rules: Courtesy Runners in Senior/13U, Major/11U, and Minor/9U:

Art. 1 Rev...

When there are two outs, a courtesy runner must be used for the catcher. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the last batted out.

Art. 2 through Art. 4... Omit.

Art. 5 Rev...

If a Rookie League player must temporarily leave the game after reaching the base, they will be replaced as a runner by the last out (e.g., the runner forced out at second).

Art. 1-3...

May be used at the umpire's discretion to speed up a game.

After Putouts Art. 1-3... Omit for all leagues.

WPPA League Operations and Governance

Section 1 WPPA Board

Art. 1.

The WPPA Board of Directors will meet monthly with the schedule published on the WPPA website.

Art. 2.

Board officers must attend the monthly Board meetings. If a Board member misses three meetings within a year, the board member may receive written notice from the board that they have been relieved from duty and their position will be filled by appointment.

Art. 3.

The WPPA October board meeting will be closed to the public – in part, to discuss any disciplinary action (demotion, temporary suspension, permanent suspension or reprimands) deemed necessary against coaches.

- a. Coaches may be informed in writing of any disciplinary action against them.
- b. If a coach wishes to protest the board's action, they may appear before the executive board at a mutually-agreed time.

Section 2 Preseason

Art. 1.

A team is allowed one, non-practice team meeting after April 1 and before the official season start date. The official season start date will be announced by WPPA after consultation with the Chicago Park District. Teams are not allowed to gather prior to April 1. All team gatherings must be approved by the appropriate commissioner. Teams are not allowed to hold any type of voluntary or mandatory practice prior to the official season start date (defined as the first day practices are permitted).

Art. 2.

If a coach encounters serious family problems or illness that makes them unable to fulfill their coaching duties, the appropriate league commissioner should be notified. The board will do whatever it can to help the team during the coach's absence.

Art. 3.

The WPPA President will appoint commissioners subject to WPPA Board approval.

Art. 4.

Each commissioner may have an assistant.

Section 3 Practices

Art. 1.

Coaches shall inform all players of practice times and any changes to previously published practice and game times.

Art. 2. (Spring/Summer Season)

Number of practices during each week of the baseball season:

- While schools are in session: Minimum of one (1) per week, maximum of two per week.
- When schools are dismissed for the summer: minimum of one (1) per week, maximum of three (3) per week.

⚙ WPPA Procedure:

All practices must be made in collaboration and with the permission of the appropriate commissioner. No practice, on a park district field or elsewhere, may be held without the permission of the appropriate commissioner.

Art. 3.

A practice shall be defined as any gathering of two (2) or more players at the request or direction of a head coach or assistant coach either directly or indirectly for the purpose of practicing or coaching baseball. Practices include gatherings at batting cages or at a coach's house or coming to a game more than one hour before game time.

Art. 4.

Practices should be no more than two (2) hours in length.

Art. 5.

Any team may practice on any open and available field, but batting practices may only occur

on the team's assigned field or the next league up, if available.

⚙️ WPPA Procedure:

When practicing at Welles Park, Senior/13U league batting practice is limited to Diamond No.6. Chicago Park District regulations prohibit batting practice by Liberty teams at any Welles Park diamond.

Art. 7.

If a coach is unable to attend a scheduled practice or game for whatever reason, an assistant coach or a responsible adult should take over and conduct the practice or the game.

Section 4 Games: Participation and Scheduling

Art. 1.

Coaches are prohibited from discouraging a player's participation or encouraging a player not to show up for games or practices because the player is weak in baseball skills. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate and permanent removal of the coach from WPPA baseball.

Art. 2.

The WPPA will furnish to each player, coach, and umpire the "Official Schedule of Games" for their respective league indicating calendar dates, days, times and team match-ups for regular season games. The Official Schedule of Games will also indicate dates available for playoff games. Actual team match-ups during the playoffs will be posted once regular season rankings are determined. It is the obligation of all players, coaches, and umpires to make themselves available for these times throughout the season.

⚙️ WPPA Procedure:

No revision to the published schedule of games (other than changes caused by rain-outs) can occur unless authorized by the WPPA Board of Directors.

Art. 3.

Any game which cannot be played due to inclement weather will attempt to be re-scheduled by the league commissioner. In the event that a team's complete season games cannot be

played due to inability to reschedule or lack of field availability, the team's record will be based on the number of actual games played.

Art. 4.

The initial house schedule will not have house games scheduled on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings. Any conflicts between house and travel schedules will be resolved based on the following guidelines:

- a. Sunday morning and Wednesday evening travel games and practices have priority over house team games and practices. Travel coaches should schedule any Sunday morning games such that games conclude in time for players to arrive on time to Sunday afternoon house games.
- b. House practices have priority over travel practices at all times other than Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.
- c. Scheduled house games have priority over regular season travel games.
- d. Travel league playoff games have priority over regular season house games. Travel playoff games are defined as post-season league playoff games. They do not include games played to determine positioning for playoffs, “must-win” regular season games in advance of the playoffs, or any non-league tournament games.
- e. **Travel 8u, 9u, 10u, 11u and 12u...**House playoff games have priority over travel league playoff games.
- f. **Travel 13u and 14u...**Travel league playoff games have priority over house playoff games. To maintain the integrity of house league playoffs, the Senior Division Commissioner will use best efforts to structure and schedule house playoffs such that conflicts with 13u and 14u travel playoffs are minimized.
- g. Scheduled travel games that are recorded on a travel team’s schedule on the WPPA website have priority over house rescheduled games, makeup games, practice games, and consolation playoff games.
- h. Travel games not scheduled on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings have priority over house practices with the following caveat. A player may skip only three (3) primary house practices in order to participate in a travel game. A travel coach that would like a player to skip any house practices beyond the third must obtain the approval of the Board President or the Executive Committee.
- i. Travel coaches should not schedule participation in tournaments for the first week of house playoffs. Thereafter, travel coaches may schedule tournaments or games, but cannot pitch players that are still in the house playoffs unless the house coach agrees to it. Any conflict between travel tournament games and house games will be resolved based on the above guidelines.

Section 5 Playoffs: Scheduling and Standings

Art. 1. Liberty, Senior/13U, Major/11U, Minor/9U, and Junior/7U:

Each team makes the playoffs.

Art. 2

In consultation with the Board, the League Commissioner shall determine what trophies and end of season awards will be issued for their league.

Art. 3.

Until the League Championship, the team with the better regular season record is the "Home Team."

Art. 4.

There will be two (2) umpires for each playoff game, when available.

Art. 5.

Playoff games cannot end in a tie.

Art. 6.

In the event that a playoff game is rained out, called for darkness or reaches its time limit after it is an official game:

- a. and the home team is ahead, the game is over and that team wins. For example, if a playoff game is called during the bottom of the 6th inning and the home team is ahead 6-5, the game is over and that team wins.
- b. and the visiting team is ahead, and has the lead after the conclusion of the last complete inning played, the game will end and the visiting team will be deemed the winning team.
- c. for all scenarios other than 6.a and 6.b above, the game will be suspended at that point, and the remainder of the inning will be played at a new time and if necessary, new venue.
- d. After the resumption of a suspended game, the remainder of the interrupted inning shall proceed to its conclusion and, if one team is ahead, that team wins. After the resumption of a suspended game, the remainder of the interrupted inning shall proceed to its conclusion and, if the game is tied, the teams will continue play until a winner is determined.

In the event that a playoff game is rained out prior to becoming an official game, the game is replayed in its entirety.

Art. 7.

Regular-season pitching limitations remain in effect during the playoffs.

Art. 8.

The playoff format will be determined by the League Commissioner in consultation with the Board. The possible choices are single-elimination, double-elimination, or round-robin formats. The choices will be made by the Board – taking into consideration the advice of the commissioners of the according division.

Art. 9.

Consolation games can be part of the post-season schedule. Consolation games do not require two umpires but are otherwise considered regular playoff games. Consolation games are considered “real” games for purposes of these rules.

Art. 10. League Championship:

Prior to the start of the league championship, a coin-toss will determine the "home team." If any division uses a championship that includes a ‘best of’ series, the coin-toss will determine the home team for the first game, and the home team designation will alternate for the remaining games.

Art. 11.

The following tie-breakers will be used to determine team placement for playoff seeding – in the order in which they are listed:

1. Winning percentage.
2. Head-to-head results.
3. Runs against (lower is better).
4. Record versus common opponents.
5. If all of these criteria result in a tie, a coin toss will determine seeding in the playoffs.

Art. 12.

Protests over rule interpretations during the playoffs must be settled at the time of the incident by a committee (minimum of three people) of available Board members or their appointees. This means that the protesting head coach or acting head coach must ask for a protest from the umpire at the dead ball period immediately following or the dead ball period during the protested call. Once the protest is recognized, Board members must be found and consulted. In the event there are no Board members present, contact with a Board member must be obtained by phone and the Board member must preside over a resolution remotely. If the incident is not protested, the protest is waived.

Section 6 Special Events

Art. 1.

All head coaches and assistant coaches should help promote all WPPA activities and fundraisers.

Art. 2.

Photo day and the end of year celebration dates are known months in advance. There should be no reason, barring family illness, for coaches not to make these events.

Art. 3.

End of year celebration responsibilities:

All coaches are required to pass out their team's trophies, promote the event, and organize or delegate to a team parent the responsibility of organizing the food and nonalcoholic beverages for their team. Coaches should provide for their own seating and tables at the picnic.