

Lehigh Valley MSBL

2017 Manager's Rulebook



Table of Contents

1. Uniforms
2. Helmets
3. Bats
4. Baseballs
5. Shoes
6. Alcohol Rule
7. Code of Conduct
8. Field Maintenance
9. Season Start and Ending
10. Legal Teams and Rosters, Adding players
11. Team Fees
12. League Eligibility
13. Double Rostered Players
14. Changing Teams
15. Pre-Game Workouts
16. Length of Games
17. Umpires
18. Cancellations, Rescheduling and Partial Game Rainouts
19. Forfeits
20. Lineups
21. Courtesy Runners
22. Decoys
23. Collisions
24. Intentional Walks
25. Mercy Rule
26. Protests
27. Stats
28. Standings
29. Playoff Eligibility
30. Playoff Rules
31. All-Star Games
32. Televised Games
33. Team Awards
34. Miscellaneous Rules
35. Competitive Activity
36. Pace-of-Play Rules

1. Uniforms
 - i. All players, managers, and coaches of league teams must have complete baseball uniforms no later than the 3rd week of the season. After the 3rd week, anyone not uniformed will not be permitted to play.
 - ii. Uniforms must consist of: metal/molded baseball cleats, baseball socks, baseball pants, and baseball shirt and baseball hat consistent with the rest of the team. Players must wear a numbered Jersey that properly identifies the player listed on the roster.
 - iii. Jersey: The team jersey must be an athletic jersey similar to any Major or Minor League jersey.
 - iv. Pitchers: No white or gray pitching sleeves, batting gloves or wrist bands will be permitted for pitchers on the field.
 - v. Players who are invited to participate in league events (All Star Games, Tournaments, etc.) are required to wear full team uniforms.
 - vi. Uniforms must be returned to rightful owner. Uniforms not returned to a team will result in suspension of play until the Jersey is returned or paid. This applies to any league in our region.
2. Helmets
 - i. All batters and runners must wear batting helmets.
 - ii. Earflaps: Helmets with two earflaps are recommended. All batters must wear a helmet with an earflap facing the pitcher.
 - iii. Catchers: Catchers are required to wear a protective helmet under their catcher's mask.
 - iv. Base Coaches: It is recommended that a batting helmet be worn while coaching 1st and/or 3rd.
3. Bats
 - i. Ash, Metal-Wood, Bamboo, Maple, Composite wood bats and wood bats are allowed in Lehigh Valley MSBL games, league tournaments and playoffs
4. Baseballs
 - i. Teams are required to use the official sanctioned baseball of the Lehigh Valley MSBL.
 - ii. The current sanctioned baseballs are the raised seam Rawlings R-MSBL or MSBL-BB-Pro.
 - iii. The HOME TEAM will supply 3 new baseballs at the start of the game. Like new baseballs are permitted during the game as approved by the umpires. The Home Team is responsible to supply baseballs for the game.
5. Shoes
 - i. Sneakers and turf shoes are unsafe for use in a baseball game and are not permitted.
 - ii. All players must wear metal or molded baseball cleats to participate.
6. Alcohol Rule
 - i. No player will be permitted to play at any time while under the influence of alcohol. Players are not permitted to drink alcoholic beverages before or during league games.
7. Code of Conduct
 - i. Managers, players, and team's fans shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. Respect is to be given to opponents, fans, umpires, attendees, league officials, teammates, and the community. Only Team Managers are permitted to argue or discuss an umpire call or decision.
 - ii. League Officials, including, but not limited to, President, Vice President, Treasurer/Accountant, and Division Directors, who attend league events are to be treated with respect at all times.
 - iii. A league official has the authority to discipline any player or manager who acts inappropriately toward the league, an official, opponent, etc. at any time, up to and including, ejection from a game or league event.
 - iv. **Ejection/Disqualification Rule:** If an Umpire, Manager, or League Official deems necessary, a player will either be disqualified or ejected from a game or league event.

Ejection Types (Umpires will determine at the time of the infraction the type of ejection and report the single game disqualification or ejection plus one additional game to the league):

- **Disqualification-** Player is ejected and disqualified for the current game only. This type of ejection is at the sole discretion of the Umpires or League Officials at the game. Single Game Ejections require a completed Player Incident Report from both game managers and umpires. Game disqualifications are reported to the league and must be submitted within 24 hours of game completion. **If the disqualified player is registered for multiple teams, he will be permitted to play the next scheduled game for either team.**
- **Ejections:** Player is ejected and disqualified for the current game plus automatically ineligible to play in the next scheduled game. The amount of ineligible games may be increased based on the details submitted with the Player Incident Report from both game managers and umpires. Game Ejections are reported to the league and must be submitted within 24 hours of game completion. **If the ejected player is registered for multiple teams, he will not be permitted to play the next scheduled game for either team.**

Example: Misconduct during or after an ejection, history of previous incidents or a request from the Umpires, Manager, Division Director or League Officials may increase the amount of ineligible games.

- v. **Post Ejection Protocol:** A player is to exit the field silently, quickly, and without further incident. The umpires and manager should notify the Division Director immediately after the game. Umpires and Managers at the game must submit a completed "Player Incident Report" available to logged in Managers and Team Administrators to the President of the League, Umpire Assignor, and appropriate Division Director within 24 hours of the event. After review of the incident report, the President, Division Director, or team manager of player, has the right to additionally suspend, expel, fine or place a player or manager/coach on probation for the infraction. If it is shown that a manager failed to control a player, the League will educate the manager on how to appropriately deal with the situation. If it is a repetitive issue or an offense the League deems highly objectionable, the manager may also be disciplined.
- vi. **Team Infractions:** If a player(s) or anyone associated with the team disrespects an umpire, League Officer, opponent, teammate or fan, and it cannot be determined who committed the infraction, the entire team, and more severely, the manager, will be held responsible and disciplined. The manager and players in the vicinity may face discipline including suspensions if the player that committed the infraction does not take responsibility. It is the Manager's responsibility to police his team and seek the proactive assistance of the Division Director if the behavior is uncontrollable or feels unsolvable.
- vii. Disrespectful comments when an umpire is leaving the field will not be tolerated. Umpires are to be treated with respect at all times, on and off the field. At no point in the course of a league game, while walking to or from their vehicle or commute home are teams permitted to act disrespectfully. No warning needs be issued for an ejection/discipline. The rulebook serves as said warning.
- viii. Ejections are not required for individual or team disciplined to be administered.
- ix. **Ineligible Player:** A player that is not approved by the league to play in a game. A player who has not been placed on a team's roster or has been suspended due to misconduct. Said player cannot bat, pitch, run, or play defensively.
- x. **Infractions:** Player/Manager infraction/ejections will be tracked and carried over from previous seasons. Players who commit multiple infractions or are ejected more than once during their playing career could be subject to additional discipline.
- xi. The best way to prevent any disciplinary action is to adhere to the rules and be respectful at all times. Every player and manager should know the contents of this rulebook.
- xii. Division Directors, along with the President and Vice President, has the authority and responsibility to determine the discipline for each case.
- xiii. **Grievances:** An individual player or team manager may file a grievance provided that it is formally submitted, in writing, to the Division Director. The Division Director shall adjudicate all such grievances.

- xiv. **Appeal:** If the decision of a grievance is not satisfactory, a further appeal can be made to the League President, with a non-refundable \$50 grievance filing fee. The President's decision is final and not subject to any further appeals.
- xv. **Infraction Matrix:** The Matrix is an example ONLY and is generally used as a guideline to determine discipline. Extraneous considerations such as previous history of infractions or discipline, will be taken into consideration when determining discipline. Each case is unique and will be adjudicated accordingly.

Infraction Matrix Example

Violation	Examples	Discipline
Level 1	Throwing equipment, taunting opponent or fans or umpires. Vulgar language, vulgar gestures.	Most likely 1 Game Suspension
Level 2	Flagrant disrespect toward an Umpire, Manager, Fan. Unsportsmanlike conduct that is considered very offensive such as spitting on a player, attempting to intentionally hurt a player.	Most likely 2 game suspension
Level 3	Threatening an opponent, umpire, fans or team mates, either verbal or physical. Refusing to leave after ejection. Failure to abide by an umpires or manager's decision. Flagrant disregard for League Rules. Repeated Level 1 or 2 Infractions.	Most likely 3 game suspension and probation for remainder of season and/or following season.
Level 4	Violent and/or threatening behavior that is considered harassing to any league player, umpire, fan or official. Threatening of a league official in any way. Any combination of Level 1, 2 or 3 infractions.	Most likely multiple game suspension and/or Expulsion from the league. Fine imposed and/or charity work as a tradeoff.

- xvi. The Lehigh Valley MSBL does not permit player or coach participation while facing pending felony charges. Each player situation will be evaluated and determined on a case-by-case basis.
8. Field Maintenance
- i. Teams must comply with the field owner's and League's rules.
 - ii. Teams must have a valid field permit and proper league insurance to play any game during the Lehigh Valley MSBL season.
 - iii. Teams who play on fields without permission will fined and/or suspended by the League.
 - iv. Teams who play on county fields with permits are not to trade permits or keys without county and League approval.
 - v. Teams utilizing League-controlled fields may be charged per use or per season as per League discretion.
 - vi. **Field Responsibility: Teams must clean, repair, rake, lockup, and leave the field in proper playing condition when finished with a game.**
 - vii. **Dugouts:** The dugouts and any areas surrounding the fields, including parking lots, must be cleared of all debris before leaving.
 - viii. **Visiting Teams** are encouraged to assist with cleaning and repairing the field in an act of good sportsmanship. Visiting Teams ARE responsible for cleaning their dugouts and will be disciplined for failure to do so.
9. Season Start and Ending
- i. Each season will have a start date and end date determined by the President or League Scheduler. The dates will be communicated to the managers as soon as they are available each season.
 - ii. In General:

- Any games not completed by the season end date will be considered no plays. A no play is zero points awarded and no player eligibility credit for the game(s).
- Teams who do not make every effort to complete scheduled games can be excluded from the playoffs at the discretion of the Division Director or League Officers.
- In the event of rain on the final weekend of the season, the remaining games can be played on either Monday or Tuesday evening if both managers agree to play.
 - If agreed- No games can be played beyond that Tuesday.
 - If not agreed- The Division Director will make the final determination of the playability of the game.
- All un-played games will be considered no play unless the Division Director determines that a game was not attempted to be played by one of the managers.

10. Legal Teams and Rosters, Adding players

- i. A team will be considered legal if all of the following conditions are met:

A. The registered teams must have rosters containing a minimum of 12 primary players and a maximum of 25 players. Only the 45 Division has no minimum number of primary players.

B. All registered teams must have submitted, and have in the hands of the President, the following items prior to playing a game. The penalty is forfeiture of said games and any future games until compliance.

- Player Registration Form signed (paper form) or online player registration submitted by each player on roster.
- All registration fees paid, including any fines or penalties.
- Any player or team who submits an NSF check, will be suspended immediately and will not participate in any league activity until restitution is made (including bank charges) with payment to your Division Director, Treasurer, or league official. There is a \$35 charge for a bad check.
- Proof of age for any team player. No longer required to be submitted to the League, however if a player's age or eligibility status is questioned the team manager must provide the necessary information to satisfy and prove the eligibility of said player within 24 hours of the inquiry to your Division Director.
- **Each player must have a Jersey number and the jersey number must be entered online and update each season for all teams.**

- ii. **Teams may add players to their roster until June 15th. After that date all rosters will be closed for the remainder of that season.**

- iii. Any players added before this date must meet the same requirements as any league player for playoff eligibility, as listed in Playoff Eligibility Rules.

- iv. **The only exception to adding a player after rosters are closed is a verifiable injury to a player on the team, resulting in said injured player being removed from the roster.** This injury must be documented immediately to the Division Director and League President. A doctor's note is required in writing within 3 days of the injury by a doctor not associated with the League, and submitted to the League before a replacement player will be allowed. The injured player will be removed from all rosters and will not be permitted to play on any team in the League for the remainder of the season, including playoffs. The replacement player will receive the playoff eligibility criteria of the injured player that has been removed from the roster. In addition, the replacement player must make an appearance in half of the remaining games (rounded down if the number of games left is odd) in order to be eligible for the playoffs.

- v. Extenuating circumstances do arise and will be decided on, by the League Officers, on a case by case bases.

- vi. **Unregistered or Illegal Players are players who:**

1. Do not sign a registration/waiver or submit an online registration.
2. Provide false information to the league or their team.

- 3. Do not pay their league and/or team fees to the league or a team.
- 4. Do not meet the age requirements for their division.
- 5. Are ejected by an umpire or league official or who are consequently suspended/expelled due to misconduct.

- vii. Unregistered or Illegal players are not covered by the league insurance policy. The Manager/Coach and/or team that allows any illegal or unregistered player(s) to participate accepts full responsibility for the player.

The League, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Division Director or any executive of the Lehigh Valley Baseball Group, LLC known as the Lehigh Valley MSBL will not be held liable by the illegal player, manager, or any field owner or county in the event of an injury or unforeseen circumstance.

- viii. If an illegal player is discovered playing on a team, the Team's Manager/Coach, and the team, will be held responsible. The Manager/Coach and/or team will face a fine of no less than \$250 per infraction. This fine must be paid prior to the next scheduled/played game, but no later than 5 days from notice of the fine.
- ix. The manager is required to provide a signed waiver and player registration fee for the illegal player(s) to the League within 5 days of the offense.
- x. Any game in which an illegal player played will be forfeited by that player's team.
- xi. Managers, players, and teams that violate these terms can be expelled for even one offense.
- xii. Teams must pay all fees to be considered legal.

11. Team Fees

- i. The following fees are to be paid for a team to be eligible to participate in the Lehigh Valley MSBL each season:
 - Umpire Assignor Fee
 - Field Liability Insurance
 - Any open invoice due to the league
- ii. Player registration fees for each player.
- iii. Any field fees for using league fields such as Tuskes Park, Bethlehem Township, Cedar Brook, Schererville 1 or 5 and Moore Township. Typically; \$250 per season.
- iv. Teams typically charge player's fees to participate in addition to the League Registration Fee to cover field fees, umpires, equipment, baseballs and miscellaneous team expenses. Each team determines their budget for each season. The fee charged to a player by a team is not refundable by the Lehigh Valley MSBL.

12. League Eligibility

- i. A player will become eligible to play in the 18 division on the calendar day of his 18th birthday. **No player under the age of 18 is permitted in league play or practice at any time and is not covered by league insurance.**
- ii. A player will become eligible to play in the 25+ division in the calendar year in which his 25th birthday falls.
- iii. A player will become eligible to play in the 35+ division in the calendar year in which his 35th birthday falls.
- iv. A player will become eligible to play in the 45+ division in the calendar year in which his 45th birthday falls.
- v. A player exceeding the age requirement in any division can play in that division.
- vi. No age waivers or exemptions will be given for this rule.

13. Double Rostered Players

- i. A player, if so desiring, may play for up to three different teams in the LV MSBL, provided that he does not compete against a team within his own age bracket/division.
- ii. Double Rostered players must indicate their Primary, Secondary, and third teams on their registration/waiver.
- iii. Double Rostered players will be required to play for his primary team if a scheduling conflict arises, unless he receives permission from his primary manager.

- iv. A double rostered player will pay the initial player registration fee, and then subsequent fees for each team as per posted league fee schedule.
 - Registration Fee for Primary Team
 - Registration Fee for Secondary Team
 - Registration Fee for Tertiary Team

14. Changing Teams

- i. After a waiver has been signed, a player is bound to his team unless he is released by his manager during the season. After the end of the season, every player is a free agent and does not require his manager's permission to move to a different team.
- ii. A player leaving a team during the regular season will be credited for his playing time between both teams. However, the player's stats and games played will not count towards playoff eligibility for his new team.
- iii. Any player leaving a team during the regular season with a manager's release is not guaranteed participation with another team. Player fees are not refundable after playing 1 inning of 1 league game.
- iv. Should any player choose to play for a different team, that player must complete his monetary obligations, if any, and return all uniforms and/or equipment to his former team.

15. Pre-Game Workouts

- i. The home team must relinquish the field 40 minutes before the start time of the game to allow the visiting team to perform pre-game workout.
- ii. The lining of the field, setting of bases, and other field preparations are to be completed before the visiting team begins its pre-game activities.
- iii. The away team will have 30 minutes for pre-game workout.
- iv. 10 minutes before the official game time start is to be used for line-up exchange, ground rules with the umpires, and other pre-game activities.
- v. If there is a preceding game, the two teams will split the available time remaining before their scheduled game.
- vi. If the previous game lasts up to your game's start time, both teams may have the field for ten minutes and the game may start thirty minutes late.

16. Length of Games

Regular Season:

- i. All single scheduled games shall be 9 innings.
- ii. All regular season and playoff games doubleheaders shall be 7 innings, even if a team plays two different opponents.
- iii. Weeknight scheduled games shall be 7 innings.
- iv. A game called due to darkness, rain, or other unforeseen circumstances, shall be considered complete after 5 innings. The losing team must bat 5 times and both team must bat 5 times in case of a tie.
- v. **Time Limit: No inning in a 7 inning game may start more than 2 1/2 hours after the first pitch.** The inning during which the 2 1/2-hour time limit is met, will be completed. The time limit can result in a tie.

Playoff Games:

- vi. Playoff game 1 will be 9 innings. Games 2 and 3 will be 7 innings each. Under no circumstance will playoff games be three 9 inning games. Game 2 and 3 if necessary are 7 innings each even if split over two weekends.
- vii. A game called due to darkness, rain, or other unforeseen circumstances, shall be considered a suspended game, and therefore, incomplete. It will be played from the point where it was

stopped. Teams must pay the umpires 50% of the game fee. The second 50% of the game fee must be paid to the umpires at the start of the continued game.

viii. **There is no time limit for playoff games.**

17. Umpires

- i. The umpire fee for 2017 for a 7 inning game is \$65.00. 9 inning game is \$75.00. Fees are for 2017, 2018 and 2019
- ii. Umpires will be paid at the start of each game. Should a game be cancelled due to rain before it is a complete game, umpires shall keep 50% of game fees for that game.
- iii. If only 1 umpire shows up for a game, he will be paid \$50 from each team for a 9 inning or 7 inning game. If the second umpire shows up more than 45 minutes late, then the team managers will decide whether they want to continue with one umpire or two umpires. If they choose two umpires, then the plate umpire shall return the \$50 to each team, take a full game fee from the home team and the away team shall pay the late umpire \$35 for a 7 inning game or \$45 for a nine inning game.
- iv. If umpires do not show up for a game by the scheduled start time, the league by contract gives a 15-minute courtesy. After 15 minutes the teams may agree to play the game and umpire the game themselves from behind the pitcher's mound. The self-umpired game cannot be protested.
- v. If umpires are not notified and show for the game, they will be paid a travel fee of \$20 barring unique circumstances to be ruled on by the Division Director. The offending team will be charged \$20 by the league and the fee must be paid within 24 hours.
- vi. If the "late" umpire arrives more than 30 minutes after the start of the game, the team managers shall decide whether to continue the game with one umpire or two umpires. If the managers elect to continue the game with two umpires, the away team shall pay the "late" umpire \$50 for a nine inning game or \$40 for a seven inning game.

18. Cancellations, Rescheduling and Partial Game Rainouts

- i. If a Manager cancels a game, OTHER THAN a RAIN-OUT, he must notify the umpire assignor, opposing manager and Division Director no less than **72 hours** before the scheduled game.
- ii. If the game is canceled within 72 hours of the scheduled time, the team will be responsible to pay both umpires. That fee must be paid to the League by Tuesday after the canceled game. No scheduled games can be played until these fees are paid.
- iii. If a game is cancelled for any reason the makeup game must be reported to the Division Director via email with a carbon copy to the League President that day.

Rainouts-Umpires-Reporting Activity

- iv. If the HOME team determines that the game cannot be played, due to unplayable field conditions, he MUST call the umpire assigner and opposing Manager 2 hours before the scheduled start. The HOME team must also notify the Division Director of any rainout or cancellation unless the rain starts less than 2 hours before the game. If the rain starts less than 2 hours before game time, these instances will be handled on a case-by-case basis in terms of umpire fees paid. Please call the opposing manager and Umpires or Assignor FIRST before calling your team members in these instances.
- v. Cancellations, and/or rainouts need to be rescheduled **immediately** and reported to the Division Director who will notify the league and make the changes to the online schedule. Makeup games will be scheduled according to the following process:

1. Communication from either Manager to the Division Director with an agreed date, time and field for makeup game **within 24 hours of cancelled game.**

2. **After 24 hours** the league will automatically consider scheduling a double header the next time the teams are scheduled to play the same opponent.

3. If the teams are not scheduled to play another game during the remainder of the season,

the Division Director will pick three dates for the teams to consider that may **include a week night, Saturday or Sunday makeup date.**

4. Once the three dates are selected the teams will have **48 hours** to agree on the best date or propose another agreeable date. The agreeable proposed date will be the date and cannot be rescheduled by either team.

5. After 48 hours if a date cannot be agreed upon between the teams, the Division Director will schedule the game date, time and location considered the most reasonable. The league will schedule according to available fields and not necessarily either teams home field. That game date is considered final. In the event of a rainout for the makeup date the same process will be followed for the new game date.

- vi. Games that are rained out before being completed (5 complete innings) shall be continued from the stop point.
- vii. Although the league tries to allow much flexibility for make-ups, all teams are advised that the Division Director has the authority to schedule games which may or may not be convenient for some teams. Because teams may be required to play weekday evening games, it is important that teams make every effort possible to reschedule games on their own and as soon as possible.

19. Forfeits

- i. Forfeits are unacceptable and every attempt should be made to avoid any forfeit. Teams who forfeit a game(s) will be subject to fines and disciplinary action by the league. A forfeit compromises the integrity of the league. Only in extreme extenuating circumstances will a team be permitted to forfeit.
- ii. If a team forfeits and it's determined that the team needs to be disqualified for the season, there will be no league fees refunded to any player, manager or sponsor of that team.
- iii. If a team forfeits a game, the forfeiting team is responsible to pay the umpires the game fee for both teams. The umpires must be paid the day of the forfeit.
- iv. There will be no double header forfeits. If a doubleheader is scheduled against the same opponent and one team forfeits, the second game will be rescheduled. The team that forfeits is responsible to pay the umpires for the forfeited game.
- v. If a team does not have enough players to start a game (8 batters), there will be a fifteen-minute grace period, after which time a forfeit will be declared. A forfeited game will not be allowed to be rescheduled.
- vi. If a team forfeits for any reason and does not pay the umpires the day of the game, the league will pay the fees on behalf of the forfeiting team. The team must repay the league in full plus a \$50 fine before the next played game following the forfeit. If the team does not pay the forfeit money within three days following a forfeit, a league official can cancel all remaining games until the payment is received. The forfeiting team will not be permitted to play another game until all fees owed to the league are paid.

20. Lineups

- i. Teams must have 8 rostered players for an official game. When an offensive lineup consists of 8 players, the 9th position is NOT an automatic out when due up.
- ii. Batters may only hit in one lineup spot during the course of a game. An offensive player who is replaced by a pinch hitter, runner or become injured and removed from the lineup cannot hit during the rest of that game. Player may play on defense even if taken out of the lineup. If the starting pitcher is removed, he may re-enter once in the same game as a pitcher, provided at least one batter has either made an out or reached base. If any relief pitcher is removed, he cannot re-enter as a pitcher again.
- iii. A team may borrow a player from an opposing team with the opposing manager's consent.
- iv. If the team's 9th player arrives after the start; the borrowed player reverts back to his original team. An official lineup must consist of at least 8 batters. If 9 players are present 9 must bat. If 10 or more players are present only 9 are required to bat.

- v. If ten players are present, it is encouraged that all ten bat. However, it is mandatory that nine of them bat. If eleven or more players are present, then at least ten players must bat in the starting lineup in 10 lineup spots. **During Playoff or Championship Games Only, Teams may bat only 9 players if desired.**
- vi. If the manager wants to add players at the bottom of the lineup, he may do so at any time. The player added to the lineup cannot be a player who was previously in the lineup in that game.
- vii. If a player is replaced with a pinch-hitter or a pinch-runner (not a courtesy runner), the replaced player cannot re-enter the game as a hitter or runner, but may stay in the game defensively.
- viii. Batters cannot be deleted or skipped over, regardless of their batting position or when they were added during the game, except as described in rule 20.10.
- ix. If a player is forced to leave a game due to injury or an emergency, a reserve player, not previously entered into the game as a hitter or pinch-runner, must hit in the batter's place. If no reserve is present, that spot is skipped, and all batters move up accordingly, with no penalty to the affected team.
- x. Anyone who has a prior commitment must have it announced before the game starts. When that player has to leave the game, if no reserve is present, that spot is skipped, and all batters move up accordingly, with no penalty to the affected team.
- xi. All players may be substituted for defensively at any time (except for the pitcher) without affecting the player's offensive status in the line-up.
- xii. If a player is ejected from the game, and there are no substitutes available, that player's batting order spot is left vacant and an out is registered every time he is due up.
- xiii. Managers may optionally choose before each game to utilize the A/B Rule.

A/B Rule Definition:

A team MAY declare at the time that lineups are exchanged prior to the start of play 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. The first time that position 9 gets an at bat, 9A would hit and the next time this 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. **The A/B spot cannot be used unless you have 10 batting spots in your lineup.**

- xiv. A manager or his designee (i.e., the batter) must alert the umpire and opposing manager to any change in the batting order. If a pitch is thrown to an unannounced additional or substitute player, that player is an automatic out and the game status will revert to its status prior to that pitch. This includes pinch hitters as well as hitterâ€™s added mid-game to the end of the batting order.

21. Courtesy Runners

- i. Courtesy Runner OPTIONS as follows. No team HAS to use a Courtesy Runner. A courtesy runner is the last batted out. If no batted out exists, like the start of the game with no outs, then the last player in the hitting lineup is the courtesy runner until there is a batted out.

Courtesy Runner Rules by Division:

18, 25, Tri-County Black & Blue No Courtesy Runners except optionally rule 21.2 to speed up the game.

35 Division - 1 maximum per game. No additional CR for injuries or any other reason.

45 Division - 2 maximum per game. No additional CR for injuries or any other reason.

- ii. With two outs in an inning, all divisions except Tri-County has the option to use a Courtesy Runner for the catcher who played that position in the prior inning.
- iii. Rule 21.2 is meant to speed up the game. If an umpire or league official feels as though a team is not speeding up the game when using the CR for the catcher, they will lose that option for the remainder of the game.
- iv. A courtesy runner must be on the base within in 30 seconds from time being called.

- v. Repetitive complaints of abuse will be investigated by the Division Director and can result in a team losing its option to use a courtesy runner for the rest of the season.
- vi. A manager can utilize a courtesy runner for any player at any time, but cannot use more than the maximum allotment for their division.
- vii. If a player gets injured, and the team has used all of its courtesy runners, then they must use a pinch runner for that player.
- viii. A player replaced by a courtesy runner can remain in the offensive lineup.
- ix. A player replaced by a pinch runner cannot return to the offensive lineup, cannot run, but can continue to play defensively.
- x. If a team has used all of its courtesy runners, and a player becomes injured, and there are no available players to pinch run, the player must either run or concede to the out.

22. Decoys

- i. If an infielder decoys a throw, all runners will be entitled to advance one base. If the same fielder decoys a throw twice in a game, he will automatically be ejected from the game by the umpire.
- ii. The decoying referred to is where a player on base slides unnecessarily due to a fielder faking as if a throw is coming to the base.
- iii. No hidden ball tricks will be allowed.

23. Collisions

- i. Players shall not intentionally collide with any player.
- ii. In the case of a runner intentionally colliding with a fielder, the runner will be called out and may, at the umpire's™ discretion, be expelled from the game.
- iii. All base runners must either slide or give up their right to a base, (avoid a collision by stopping or leaving a base path) if the defensive player has possession of the ball.
- iv. If a defensive player is **not in possession of the ball, is not in the act of receiving the ball, or is not about to immediately receive the ball** so that he is able to record an out (apparent play at any base), he cannot block the base or be in the base path so as to impede or obstruct the base runner's right to that base. Under such circumstances, the defensive player shall be responsible to avoid any collision. If a collision does occur under these circumstances, the runner will always be considered safe, and the obstruction rule shall be enforced. The defensive player may be ejected from the game, at the discretion of the umpire, if the action is deemed intentional. A player must slide or give himself up at all bases.
- v. **A runner attempting to score** may not deviate from his direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate). If, in the judgment of the Umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the Umpire shall declare the runner out (even if the player covering home plate loses possession of the ball). Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as he is attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the Umpire, the catcher, without possession of the ball, blocks the pathway of the runner, the Umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Catchers must allow a player clear access to home plate anytime the catcher is not in the act of directly receiving the ball.

Rule 23.5 comment- The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with his hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of Rule 23.5. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, he shall not be adjudged to have violated Rule 23.5 A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a head first slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if his body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher.

24. Intentional Walks

- i. As in major league baseball, the pitches must be thrown, and the catcher must remain within the catcher's™ box until the ball is pitched, in accordance with the standard rules.

- ii. A team can intentionally walk an unlimited number of players.
25. Mercy Rule
- i. During any official league game the Mercy rule is in effect. The Mercy rule means a team is winning by 12 runs after 5 complete innings. The home team must bat 5 innings (record 15 outs on defense) for a game to be considered complete. There are No time limit requirements.
 - ii. Mercy rules apply for Playoff or Championship games. Concession is allowed after the game is considered official, which is 5 innings unless the losing team wants to keep playing (Playoff and Championship Games Only)

26. Protests

- i. All protests must be logged in writing by email to the Division Director within 24 hours of game completion. The protest form (online) must be completed and emailed to the League President within 24 hours of the game completion. The email or postmark (if mailed) will verify the validity of the protest.

Mail to:

Lehigh Valley MSBL
C/O Ron Cahill
2148 Amlisa Road
Nazareth, PA, 18064

- ii. A non-refundable \$50 fee must accompany the protest form.
- iii. All protests will be considered and resolved by the Division Director and/or Vice President/President.

27. Stats

- i. All teams are required to enter scores and stats on the league website within 24 hours of completed game. Teams not completing the stats on time will receive a fine of \$50 per game not completed on time.
- ii. Each team must keep an accurate line-up of the opposition. It is not necessary to keep detailed records of the opposition's play, but the list of players and participants in the game must be recorded.
- iii. Major League rules will apply in all instances not covered by the Lehigh Valley MSBL Rulebook or MSBL National Rulebook.
The rulebook priority is as follows:
 - 1. Lehigh Valley MSBL Rulebook has first priority
 - 2. National MSBL Rulebook has second priority
 - 3. Major League Rulebook has third priority
 - 4. In the event of a situation that no rulebook covers the Division Director and/or League President will determine the ruling.
- iv. The home team scorebook is the official score of the game. Away teams should check the score between innings of the game to verify runs scored and total game score. Teams are encouraged to ask the home plate umpire to check scores throughout the game.
- v. Teams are encouraged to post detailed game summaries online for each game during the season. Players and their families will enjoy the reading.
- vi. Stats are to be calculated and entered accurately based on the player's actual performance. At no time is it permissible to enter stats that are not accurate.

28. Standings

- i. Points Based System- Point Based is when a team is awarded a fixed amount of points for a win, a tie or a loss. The gap between the leading team and another team is calculated by these points:
 - Win:** 2 points
 - Loss:** 0 points
 - Tie:** 1 point per team.

* Teams who forfeit will lose 2 points.

Tie Breaker Method Head to Head THEN Point Differential

- ii. Your regular season League Standings will be automatically generated and updated as scores are entered for completed games.
29. Playoff Eligibility
- i. Managers are excluded from this rule. Only the team manager that is reported to the league as the manager can qualify for this rule. This rule does not apply to assistant managers.
 - ii. In order for a player to qualify for his team's playoff games, he must play in 1/2 (one half) of the scheduled games minus 1. The number will be rounded down as follows:

Schedule Games	Played Games	Games Required
16 Scheduled Games	8 games played minus 1	7 required
17 Scheduled Games	8.5 games played minus 1 = 7.5 rounded down	7 required
18 Scheduled Games	9 games played minus 1 = 8	8 required
19 Scheduled Games	9.5 games played minus 1 = 8.5 rounded down	8 required
20 Scheduled Games	10 games played minus 1 = 9	9 required
21 Scheduled Games	10.5 games played minus 1 = 9.5 rounded down	9 required
22 Scheduled Games	11 games played minus 1 = 10	10 required
23 Scheduled Games	11.5 games played minus 1 = 10.5 rounded down	10 required
24 Scheduled Games	12 games played minus 1 = 11	11 required

iii.

The player also must meet any **one** of the following criteria to qualify for the playoffs:

Note: Forfeits count as a game played for ALL of your rostered players if the opposing team forfeits to you. If your team forfeits, your players do NOT get credited for a game played.

Any player who qualifies based on these criteria can participate in any facet of the game; that is a member who has become eligible because of having enough plate appearances, innings pitched or defensive innings and played in one-half of the scheduled games (minus one) can participate in the playoffs.

A player who sustains an injury during the season can become playoff eligible by playing in 33% of all officially scheduled games. The League must be notified of an injured player before the end of year qualification report is delivered.

The League sends a playoff eligibility report to all managers at the end of regular season play. Players whose stats are not completed on a weekly basis and left to enter at the end of the year will be considered ineligible at the discretion of the Division Director or League President.

- Number of plate appearances equal to his team's games played
 - Number of innings pitched equal to his team's games played
 - Number of defensive innings equal to his team's games played
- iv. Only verifiable and immediately documented injuries and/or Military duty of legally rostered and paid LVMSBL players will be given credit for missed games. An official doctor's note from a licensed medical practitioner that does not participate with the LV MSBL is required within 21 days of the reported incident.
 - v. Scores and statistics must be submitted to the League website within 24 hours of game completion on a weekly basis for a team to be eligible for playoffs and post-season. Statistics must be submitted game-by-game (not cumulative).
 - vi. Any challenge to the eligibility of a player in the playoffs will be determined by the final statistics submitted by the player's team.

- vii. If a team has less than 8 players (official minimum number for a game) eligible for the playoffs, that team will be ineligible to play post season. All seeding will be adjusted accordingly.

30. Playoff Rules

- i. General Approach
- ii. The lowest seed is the home team for game 1 of 3 game series. The highest seed is home for games 2 and 3. For single games, the highest seed is the home team and the game is played at the home team's field when possible. If the home team cannot secure their field, a league field may be used; however, the highest seed is still the home team for the game.
- iii. Playoffs are intended to provide very competitive, tournament style baseball. Managers are encouraged to work with the league to schedule games to help alleviate field availability issues. Team Managers that can play on Friday or Saturday at night are encouraged to be proactive and schedule those games with the league when possible.
- iv. Playoffs will be scheduled by the league based on the following criteria:
 - a. Three game Series: Game 1 will be scheduled for Saturday at 3pm or later at the lower seeds home field. Games 2/3 will be scheduled for Sundays at 10am or later.
 - b. Single Game: Games will be scheduled on Sundays.
- v. For the playoffs, games can be scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays. As long as both managers agree to the game date/time, a weekday game can be scheduled occasionally during the week.
- vi. Teams qualifying for the playoffs will get home field priority. If league teams share a field, the league will schedule home games ahead of regular season games during the playoffs. Teams playing a regular season game on a shared field will be moved to another field to accommodate playoff or championship games. However, if the Township or governing body of the field will not allow the higher seed to play at their home field on a playoff weekend, then those games will be moved to a neutral field.

31. All-Star Games

- i. The Lehigh Valley MSBL/MABL conducts All-Star Games at Coca-Cola Park each season as permitted by the Iron Pigs organization. The event is a marquee event for our league and should be attended by every player in the league who can reasonably attend. There is no guarantee each season that the IronPigs will host our event. Players and Managers should understand the need to both promote and support the event.

Players and Managers who are invited or selected to play must adhere to the rules and regulations of both the IronPigs and the Lehigh Valley MSBL.

In general, the following rules apply specifically for the All-Star Games.

- Managers who are selected to the All-Star Games must have the team batting lineup prepared 30 minutes before the start of the game.
- Players are not permitted to wear cleats into or out of the stadium. Cleats must be worn on the field only.
- Every player who makes the All-Star Team Roster must play in the game by either pitching, playing offense or defense.
- Children are not permitted in the dugouts during the game without league approval. Bats boys/girls wearing a protective helmet who are pre-authorized by a league official only are excluded.
- Players must keep the dugouts, bullpen and hitting areas clean at all times.
- Players are not permitted to bring outside food or beverages to the game.
- Player warm ups on the field are not permitted, except throwing. You must be at least 20 Feet in from the left and right field lines to warm up.
- Players must be ready to be announced before the start of the game.

32. Televised Games

- i. The Lehigh Valley MSBL may conduct Televised Games each season. Teams will be selected by the League Officers.
 - ii. Team who are invited to play must adhere to the rules and regulations of the Field Owner, the Lehigh Valley MSBL and any special rules provided by the Broadcasting Company.
 - Team players must be in a complete baseball uniform with matching jerseys, hats, and pants.
 - Televised Games are played by MLB Rules
 - Televised Games are 7 innings
 - Children are not permitted in the dugouts during the game. Bats boys/girls wearing a protective helmet who are pre-authorized by a league official only are excluded.
 - Players must keep the dugouts, bullpen and hitting areas clean at all times.
33. Team Awards
- i. Team awards are only provided for Divisions with 4 or more teams in that division.
 - ii. Team awards. Teams who win will be contacted to choose the team awards available each season.
 - iii. Each year teams win the division (regular season) and/or the Division Championship. When a team wins the Championship a photo is placed on the league website with the name of the players for that season. Teams must submit a high quality photo and player names to the league in order to be published online
34. Miscellaneous Rules
- i. All rules and regulations are subject to review and interpretation by the League President.
 - ii. All rule changes are discussed and determined by executives of the League.
 - iii. Any Pitcher who hits 4 batters during the course of a game may be considered ineligible to pitch during the rest of that game. The opposing manager, at his discretion, has the authority to request the umpire remove the starting pitcher after the 4th hit batter of the game. At that time the umpire should be allowed to review our rule and should determine the pitcher ineligible.
35. Competitive Activity
- i. In consideration of Manager/Player receiving certain benefits from participation in the Lehigh Valley MSBL, including but not limited to team management, administration and sponsorship training and logistical support, manager/player agrees that he shall not, directly or indirectly, during the term of his Lehigh Valley MSBL participation and for a period of 24 months after its termination, within a 50 mile radius of MSBL's office located at 2148 Amlisa Road, Nazareth, PA engage in any Competitive Activity. For purposes of this provision, 'Competitive Activity' means playing, managing, forming, administering, or otherwise participating in an adult baseball league similar to or competitive with the Lehigh Valley MSBL.
36. Pace-of-Play Rules
- i. Pace-of-Play rules are designed to eliminate unnecessary time delays and improve the overall rhythm of the baseball game. The rules are not intended to "rush"• the game, but to provide a more modern version of the game that players and fans can really enjoy.
 - ii. With certain exceptions, hitters must keep one foot in the batter's box between pitches throughout their at-bat.
 - iii. Umpires will have between-inning timers to ensure the next half-inning starts promptly. The timers will be set at 2 minutes, 25 seconds. Pitchers and hitters will both be encouraged to be ready to go when the clock reaches :20.
 - iv. Pitchers must deliver a pitch within 12 seconds with no one on base.
 - v. **Time Out Rules**
Teams are limited to 3 time outs per game (including extra innings) for the following:
Note: Conferences during pitching changes and time outs due to injuries or other emergencies do not count towards the limit.
 - Players conferences with the pitcher, including catchers.
 - Manager and/or Coach conferences with the batter.