



Readington Tewksbury JR. Baseball League

COVID-19 Baseball Program Preparation and Prevention Plan 6/20/2020

RTJBL Families,

The NJ Governor's office issued Executive Order No. 149, on May 29, 2020, permitted sporting activities, including organized sports, to resume on June 22, 2020. The New Jersey Department of Health recently released a Guidance for Sports Activities. The NJDOH document puts baseball in a medium risk category allowing for practices to begin on June 22nd and competition to begin July 6th.

RTJBL will begin our baseball activities on June 22nd, 2020 with travel team practices. We will begin our rec season the week of July 6th, 2020. The rec season will consist of some clinics but mostly 'sandlot' style pickup games. More information below on the rec season.

The following guidelines have been created by the Readington Tewksbury Board of Directors using guidance set forth by the New Jersey Department of Health & the National Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken headquarters which we are governed by. All guidance should be adhered to during the remainder of 2020 specifically for our upcoming season set to begin on June 22nd, 2020. We may modify these guidelines as the season develops.

While we continue to navigate through a very fluid situation dealing with COVID-19 we are confident that we are set to offer an experience to our kids that will be safe and compliant with guidance from NJ DOH, we would like to ask for cooperation from all of our parents and athletes as we look to get the kids back on the field. We will do our best to keep the kids separated when possible but they are kids, so please also talk to them about some of these guidelines. There are still very real risks associated with returning to baseball, every family should make the decision whether to play or not seriously, and do not be pressured by what other families might be doing. At any time during our summer rec or travel season if you are not comfortable continuing to have your child play please let us know and we will arrange for a refund.

All families/players that are participating in rec or travel this summer needed to register accordingly with our original spring registration and most recent summer registration. If you received this document in an email you are on that summer list. Additionally all families will be required to electronically sign a waiver that will come from 'docu sign'. No players will be allowed on the field without completing the registrations and waiver. Travel deadline for waiver completion is before the first practice. Rec deadline will be Wednesday June 24th.

Section 1 – General Precautions

All players, coaches and spectators before attending a league event are required to do a self temperature assessment and participate in an online health questionnaire. If any family member, player or parent/guardian has a fever of over 100.4 degrees, no one from the family should attend the event. Additionally all should use the link below to do a covid self check for symptoms and all should stay home if you anyone has any symptoms or are not feeling well in any way. (link will also be sent out in league emails)

<https://self.covid19.nj.gov/>

It is extremely important that all families take this seriously, if anyone is not feeling well, or has any symptoms, regardless of the temperature, please make sure everyone stays home. Regardless of how close it is to the game, or if your team might be short a player. You risk the health of not only players and families on your team, but everyone that is at the field for that event. When in doubt. STAY HOME

- A. Individuals, including coaches, players, and families, should stay home if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms. If you do test positive we would ask for an email to the league president so we can determine if we have to do contact tracing if there was the potential for any exposure to any other league members. This information will be held in strict confidence.
- B. Individuals, including coaches, players, and families, who have recently had a close contact with a person with COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health.
- C. Immediately separate coaches, staff, officials, and athletes with COVID19 symptoms at any sports activity. Individuals who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms should be separated and sent home as well, and follow CDC guidance for community-related exposure.
- D. All athletes, coaches, and staff should bring their own water and drinks to practice activities. Use of team water coolers for sharing is prohibited.
- E. Players will be discouraged from sharing equipment as much as possible. We will have extra catchers helmets for players that do not have their own gear. If any sharing is necessary we have disinfecting wipes located at each field or travel coaches will have their own for when they are not at our fields.
- F. We have identified league members and volunteers to help remind coaches, players and spectators of social distancing. If anyone sees an issue during a game please text 908-591-9602 with the concern.
- G. All players must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian during the duration of their time at our baseball complex(s)
- H. Individuals shall remain 6 feet apart from one another whenever possible. This applies to athletes, coaching staff, parents/guardians, and other spectators.

- I. We have posted signage throughout our complex reminding all participants of their obligations to wear face coverings in the appropriate circumstances and continually socially distance themselves
- J. Coaching staff and parents/guardians/spectators ***should*** wear cloth face coverings. There will be times where a coach is not talking or near players where the face coverings can be removed. Additionally when parents/guardians/spectators are not walking around and are watching the event while socially distancing their face coverings can be removed.
 - a. Should a situation occur involving a spectator or staff member regarding the clear negligence of our social distancing guidelines and cannot be resolved in a timely fashion, the staff member or parent will be asked to leave the complex. Should this not happen local authorities will immediately be notified.
- K. **Players:** Should not wear face-coverings when actively participating in vigorous activity during practice or competition. Players are encouraged to wear face-coverings when not engaging in vigorous activity or are in close-contact areas where distancing is not feasible (ie. in dugouts). Players are permitted to wear a face-covering any time if the player or their parent/guardian deem it necessary.
 - a. Should a player defy any of our social distancing guidelines their parent/guardian will be notified immediately and asked to leave the playing field.
- L. Hand sanitizer stations have been installed in dugouts, batting cages, soft toss and near bleachers around the Railroad complex. Additionally Oldwick, Cornhuskers, RMS and HBS also have sanitizers in areas that can be used by players, coaches and spectators. It is highly suggested that parents bring sanitizer and other supplies to help with keeping their children safe and practice good hygiene as secondary or backups.
- M. Bathrooms and Portable restrooms at Railroad field are being cleaned and sanitized professionally each day. Cornhusker Field restrooms are also cleaned daily except for Saturday/Sunday by Readington Township. There will be portable restrooms at Readington Middle School Field, Holland Brook School Field and Oldwick fields. A lot of these will be locked to limit the use to our families. Coaches will open them prior to events and lock them after.

RTJBL will further consult and implement, as appropriate, recommendations listed in the CDC guidance regarding assessing risk, promoting healthy behaviors, and maintaining a healthy environment during youth sports.

Section 2 – Rec Game Information

Starting the week of July 6th we will begin our rec season. Emails will be sent out each week no later than Sunday with player/team assignments for field and times. We hope to have uniforms ready and more information on this will be communicated.

There will be no rec team practices. Players will play 'sandlot' type games or as specified differently below. Players will be assigned a field and dugout and report to the manager for that dugout.

Players will meet twice each week through early to mid August depending on how things go and the interest. Families can certainly skip or miss games for vacations or other family events. All travel players are welcome to attend rec games as long as they do not have a travel event at the same time. Travel players priority in the summer will be their travel team. For this year only the board has waived the requirement for travel players to play 65% of their rec games. Please see the RTJBL Home page for League Bylaw Amendments for this season.

Rec coaches will not be assigned to a specific team, and players may not have the same rec coach each time they meet.

All youth sports should be fun for the kids, this doesn't always happen, adults tend to forget this at times. There will be zero tolerance for any coaches or spectators this summer that do not realize that what we are trying to do is very difficult and these games really are just for fun and to get the kids back on the field, being around their friends and enjoying themselves. Please put this in perspective before you decide to do anything other than cheer for the kids on both teams, and encourage players who need it. This summer we are all on the same team, that is the Readington Tewksbury Jr Baseball League.

Little Sluggers-

Monday or Wednesday Night, two sessions at 5:30pm and 6:45pm at Oldwick Fields
Saturdays at 9:00am and 10:15am

Players will be split up based on any carpool data we collected in the spring. The first few sessions will be clinics run by Top Corner Sports along with the help of our volunteer coaches. Please arrive no later than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.

Rookies Combined-

Tuesday Or Wednesday Night at Oldwick Fields at 6:00pm. Saturdays at 9am.

All Rookie 1 and Rookie 2 players will form a combined division. Depending on final numbers teams will most likely still be separated by division on separate fields. There will be an initial warmup period with some possible clinic work, and then into a game using a combination of Tee, Coach or machine pitch, Kid pitch. Please see the RTJBL home page for spring team assignments, so you are aware if referenced in field assignments.

Minors-

All players who were assigned to teams in the Minors division this past spring, along with all 4th graders who were assigned to teams in the Major 60 division this past spring.

Please see the RTJBL home page for spring team assignments, so you are aware if referenced in field assignments.

One weeknight game, one Saturday game. Games most likely at Railroad or Cornhusker Fields. Game time will be at 6:00pm please arrive at approximately 5:30pm to warm up and check in the coach assigned to that dugout. No organized batting practice. Parents/Guardians are welcome to go to the fields earlier to take batting practice on a first come basis while following social distancing guidelines.

Games will be played following Minors league rules, as outlined in the [Managers Corner](#). Stealing of third base only, 5 runs per inning limit are just a few of the rules. Kids will pitch unless coaches feel at any time that the kids will have a better experience with a machine pitch game using the spring pitching machine. Players pitching for travel teams will not be allowed to pitch in rec games, unless the travel manager has given permission and the player has had the required number of days of rest as outlined in the league rules.

Majors-

All players who were assigned to teams in the M70 division this past spring, along with all 5th graders who were assigned to teams in the Major 60 division this past spring.

Please see the RTJBL home page for spring team assignments, so you are aware if referenced in field assignments.

One weeknight game, one Saturday game. Games most likely at Railroad or Cornhusker Fields. Game time will be at 6:00pm please arrive at approximately 5:30pm to warm up and check in the coach assigned to that dugout. No organized batting practice. Parents/Guardians are welcome to go to the fields earlier to take batting practice on a first come basis while following social distancing guidelines.

Games will be played following Major 70 league rules, as outlined in the [Managers Corner](#). 50/70 field with leading, stealing of all bases and 7 runs per inning limit added in for this summer. Players pitching for travel teams will not be allowed to pitch in rec games, unless the travel manager has given permission and the player has had the required number of days of rest as outlined in the league rules.

Section 3 – Rec and Travel Game Safety Guidelines

Players will arrive and check in with the manager for the dugout they are assigned for each game. At the field all players will be asked to go directly to any field/dugout assignments and to hang their equipment bag inside the dugout. Any players with their own catcher's gear should find a place near the dugout or in the corner of inside the dugout to put their bag as instructed by one of the coaches.

We are asking that all players have their own glove, bat and helmet and plenty of water. Summer baseball will be much hotter than spring ball. If you do need to purchase equipment consider helping a local business that we rely on throughout our season. Darrows Sporting Edge is located in Whitehouse Station and is a league sponsor and offers excellent service. If there is financial restraint in purchasing your own equipment please email the league president for a solution. Please label all equipment and check that you go home each day with them including water bottles. Refrain from bringing disposable bottles when possible.

Upon completion of a practice or a game, for the safety of the spectators and players in the spirit of social distancing we ask that everyone vacates the premise in a timely fashion and limits the amount of congregating between others.

In order to maintain social distancing there should be no more than 4 players in the dugout including the catcher who is coming off the field needing a place to sit to get gear off. When a team is in the field and comes in to hit, players should go to their equipment bag, and get a drink. If they are one of the 5 players due up to hit, they will occupy the dugout, on deck area and if leading off, out near the plate while the other team warms up. If they are not one of the next 5 players due up to hit, they should spread out in the following areas;

At RRA outside the dugout spread along behind the backstop, even if you have to be near the other team's dugout. Players should refrain from being directly behind home plate so as to not distract the pitcher. Players should just sit on the ground (or stand) and for safety stay off the retaining wall.

At RRB outside the dugout stay along the outside of the fence between the two dugouts behind home plate. Players should refrain from being directly behind home plate so as to not distract the pitcher.

No spectators will be allowed in this area that is just for players.

At the 90ft field, outside the dugout spread along behind the backstop, even if you have to be near the other team's dugout. Players should refrain from being directly behind home plate so as to not distract the pitcher.

After a player makes an out or scores a run and is returning to the dugout, that player goes to the designated non dugout area and a new player comes into the dugout.

There should only be one coach in the dugout, and the others can coach first and third base. Any additional coaches can help where needed including any help with the other team if needed.

The use of candy, chewing gum and/or sunflower seeds is not permitted by players, coaches, umpires or spectators.

No handshaking/celebrations: Players and coaches should refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc.

After the games, teams can go out onto the field and 'tip their cap' to the other team.

Umpires-

All Minors and Majors games will have one umpire who will call balls and strikes from behind the pitchers mound.

Pregame conference will be limited to one (1) Coach per team and one (1) Umpire. Social distancing of 6' is required.

Snack stand-

Currently we are in discussion about whether to open the snack stand this season, possibly to just sell drinks and snacks.

RTJBL Executive Board

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