



LETHBRIDGE LITTLE LEAGUE UMPIRE ABUSE POLICY

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY OF UMPIRE ABUSE

"Zero Tolerance Policy" should read: "Ensuring a fair, safe, healthy, and fun game environment is our top priority." Lethbridge Little League has adopted a zero-tolerance policy for arguing judgment calls, umpire abuse, or call-related displays of poor sportsmanship. The Zero Tolerance Policy of Umpire Abuse highlights the special circumstances for youth players as umpires. One of the founding principles of Lethbridge Little League is positive coaching, this includes umpires that work on all fields. Youth/adult umpires should only be talked to positively and constructively. Coaches will not challenge judgment calls made by the umpires. **It is acceptable to question the interpretation of a rule, but only in a courteous non-confrontational manner after the inning.**

Umpire Abuse as Defined in this Policy - umpire abuse at its simplest is defined as any deliberate action that makes an umpire feel physically threatened, verbally intimidated, or emotionally humiliated. Disrespectfully objecting to calls, yelling at, publicly calling, and constantly disagreeing with an umpire by action or verbally can be deemed umpire abuse. Coaches should always show decorum, and respect and observe all game rules whenever questioning an umpire about a call.

Judgment Calls - a judgment call is a decision made by an official in a competition using their own opinion of what they have seen. An umpire's judgment call is final. Most calls are based on the judgment of the umpire ie. You may see it one way and the umpire may see it differently. Missed calls are going to happen in every game, that's baseball. Judgment calls include; balls & strikes, safe/out calls on bases (force and tag), catch/no-catch calls, fair/foul, etc. For reference only - non-judgment calls include; interference, base runners hit by batted balls, etc.

Guidelines for disciplinary action range from an oral and/or written reprimand for verbal abuse to expulsion from Lethbridge Little League for flagrant or repeat offenders. The details are outlined in the policy below.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy has been implemented to eliminate umpire abuse, both physical and verbal, and to discourage public dissent against an umpire on all fields. Even though public dissent may not be considered abuse, it is not in keeping with the Lethbridge Little League principles of positive coaching and good sportsmanship and therefore will not be tolerated.

It is never acceptable to verbally abuse an umpire in any situation. There are appropriate avenues for coaches and spectators to share concerns about the quality of officiating. Lethbridge Little League's Umpire-in-Chief is welcome to hear any constructive comments on umpires. Any criticism or critique relating to the performance of a youth umpire should be communicated to the youth umpire only by the Umpire-in-Chief.

Youth umpires are an integral part of the Lethbridge Little League program. This includes the development of all youth umpires. All Lethbridge Little League guidelines and policies on providing a Safe, Fair, and Fun environment for players also apply to our umpires. Only Positive, Instructive, and Encouraging comments are allowed to be directed at both players and umpires. Verbal abuse of umpires is as unacceptable as verbal abuse of youth players. The purpose of this policy is to make clear that abuse (as defined in this policy) of any umpire is unacceptable and to adopt basic standard sanctions for improper conduct based on a "three-strikes-you're-out" framework.

This policy is not intended to imply that the umpire is always right and the adult spectator/coach is always wrong. We must simply remember that just as youth players will make mistakes during play, adult/youth umpires will also make mistakes in officiating, particularly in the younger divisions where they are learning how to umpire. Please remember, that young umpires receive minimal instruction before being sent out to officiate. Also, please keep in mind that they do not attend practices nor do they have a coach on the field to guide them from game to game. Given that the rules of baseball are numerous and in any given game many difficult scenarios could unfold, it is in all of our best interests to judge officials fairly and with reasonable expectations. After all, we cannot play this game without these courageous individuals.

Disciplinary Guidelines

The penalties for any confirmed case of umpire abuse by coach/adult team member and/or parent/spectator on all fields will be;

- 1st Incident - Disciplinary Committee reprimand orally and/or in writing. As well each offending person will be required to attend an umpire clinic and umpire 1 Lethbridge Little league game to re-attend any LLLBA games.
- 2nd Incident - Season-ending ban for any offending person. (Includes attendance at remaining games on all fields)

Ejected coaches are not permitted to remain on the surrounding field areas, including grandstands, and must vacate all field areas promptly.

In addition, if a coach confronts an umpire after a game to continue verbally abusing an official, the penalties will include a 6-game suspension for the 1st incident and season ending ban for the 2nd. Any incident that involves physical abuse by bodily threatening, shoving, bumping or harming a youth/umpire will result in an immediate indefinite suspension and notification of proper authorities. A manager or coach wishing to be reinstated must appear before the Lethbridge Little League Disciplinary Committee for a hearing.

The Lethbridge Little League Executive Board will enforce all disciplinary action. The Lethbridge Little League Disciplinary Committee will consist of the residing League President along with a minimum of two (2) additional members of the current Executive. The Lethbridge Little League Umpire-in-Chief will follow up to ensure the offending spectator or coach is not in attendance of any of the games during his/her suspension.

All Lethbridge Little League members are bound to report any incident of abuse of umpires to the Lethbridge Little League Board within 24 hours of the incident occurring (if possible).

The Lethbridge Little League Disciplinary Committee, upon investigating the incident and after hearing from all parties, shall implement any appropriate penalties before the next game (if possible). The offending persons, board members, and the Umpire-in-Chief shall be notified of any disciplinary action.