



**2026
YOUTH BASEBALL GENERAL RULES**

I. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Kindergarten League 4K/K
First Grade League 1st Grade
Second Grade League 2nd Grade
Third & Fourth Grade League 3rd & 4th Grade
Fifth & Sixth Grade League 5th & 6th Grade
Seventh & Eighth Grade League 7th & 8th Grade
Ninth - Twelfth Grade League 9th thru 12th Grade
- B. Players must have registration stating current grade filled in with Youth Baseball.
- C. Players may play on one team only and only in one league.
- D. Any game in which an ineligible player is used shall be declared forfeited.
(i.e., wrong grade, non-registered or team jumper)

II. SELECTION OF PLAYERS

For the Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade leagues, an effort will be made to keep players from the same school on the same team. Registrations received after the deadline date will be accepted, if possible. A predetermined late fee can be applied to all late registrations. In all leagues, **late sign ups will be assigned to a team by the League's Directors, in a predetermined order not known by the coaches.**

- A. No more than 15 players shall be assigned to a roster. (Except in extreme circumstances)
- B. Kindergarten thru Second Grade League players will be assigned teams by their respective league directors. 3rd Grade League and higher players will be selected at a special meeting called by the league directors and coaches (this is what we call the draft).
- C. The Third Grade Leagues and up will use a selection procedure that will attempt to balance the talent level of each team (draft) to create as much parity as possible since we keep score and have playoffs.
- D. If the number of players in a league requires a reduction or increase in the number of teams, the Youth Baseball Board will discuss and implement the method that is "In the league's best interests".

III. RULES AND GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

- A. The rules and grievance committee shall be manned by several league directors, commissioners and executive board members. The President of Youth Baseball and the Head of the Umpires shall be permanent members of this committee.
- B. Protests are to be discouraged and questions pertaining to rule interpretations should be resolved between the coaches involved and the umpire. In the event a solution can not be attained, **protests must be made to the umpire and opposing coach at the time of the play in question.** If a protest is declared both coaches will note the exact point in the game in their score books along with the count, number of outs and the exact position of the base runners. **Once the next pitch is thrown, no protests on any previous play will be heard.** The game will be completed and a written protest covering all the particulars of the decision or rule violation in question must be filed with the league's directors within 24 hours of the field protest. The league director will then forward the protest to the Head of the Umpires, who will in turn present the protest to the grievance committee. Only the 'Grievance Committee' will have the authority to act on any protests and their judgment shall be final. No protests will be allowed in the Third-Grade Leagues and younger. All judgments should be rendered within one week.
- C. Third Grade Leagues and above shall be governed by official WIAA (NFHS) High Federation of High School baseball rules, **with exceptions printed and distributed to coaches.**

IV. COACHES

- A. Should games need to be canceled by the FDLSD Comm Ed & Rec Dept due to weather conditions, coaches will be notified by e-mail. After 4:30 p.m. you can call the Recreation Department Hotline, 906-6666 or go online at www.fdyouthbaseball.com to see game updates. **If there is any question as to whether the games are to be played, report to your diamonds as scheduled.**
Regarding the rescheduling Games due to bad weather. (See your General Rules Section X regarding Postponed and Suspended Games)
- B. The two (2) coaches and the umpire shall be the judge of the fitness of the playing field. **Weather delays due to lightning shall be a minimum of 30 minutes.** In extreme circumstances, the umpire shall have the authority to call the game. Safety of players and fans is the top priority.
- C. Team coaches, fans, and players shall refrain from harassing players, coaches, and umpires. The umpire shall report all ejections, warnings, and problems to the Head of the Umpires. The Head of the Umpires may request action be taken by the Executive Officers which may result in suspending the persons involved.
- D. The "HEAD" coach shall have full authority over the players assigned to his/her team. Interference by spectators or assistants, which tend to lessen the coach's control over his player's, will not be tolerated. Coaches should contact their League Directors with questions or problems.
- E. The Board of Directors of Youth Baseball shall have authority to suspend any

member coach whose conduct is considered as detrimental to the best interest of the league. No warning needs to be given to be suspended.

- F. Scoring will be kept by each coach using a baseball scorebook. In the event that a disagreement arises as to the score, the umpires will call both coaches to home plate and compare scorebooks to resolve the matter. If only one team maintains a scorebook, that book shall be declared the official book for that game.
- G. Both coaches will report the scores to the league website.
- H. Coaches will report any accident or injury to their league directors immediately following the game. A completed accident report should be filed with the Recreation Department.
- I. The only personnel allowed on the field during a game are people directly associated with each team playing the game: umpires, groundskeepers, or members of the Board of Directors.
- J. Coaches that have an issue with an umpire(s) are directed to contact the League Directors and the Head of Umpires.
- K. Any player or minor that is warming up a pitcher, must be wearing a catcher's mask. This applies to games as well as practices.
- L. Any minor coaching a base is required to wear a batting helmet.
- M. Only the Head Coach of each team may address an umpire to question a call. If any assistant coach, player, or fan addresses the umpire, the Head Coach of the offending team will be called to the field and a warning will be issued to the team. A second offense will result in the offending person being ejected from the game.
See Rule V-F Unsportsmanlike conduct.
- N. During the game, coaches are NOT allowed to leave the bench area and stand behind the backstop to view pitches or coach players. Doing so will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct-warning. A second offense will result in offending coach being ejected.
- O. Coaches, your parents are encouraged to be "fans" and not "fanatics". Fans viewing the game from behind the backstop area are encouraged to cheer but are NOT allowed to coach players or attempt to influence the umpires. Doing so will result in an unsportsmanlike conduct-warning to the offending parent and team. A second offense will result in the offending parent being ejected.

V. UMPIRES

- A. The baseball Head of Umpires shall oversee all umpires.
- B. The umpire is in charge of their games.
- C. The umpire and coaches must discuss all ground rules before game time.

- D. **It is not within the power of the umpire or coaches to suspend any of the rules.**
- E. The umpire shall have the power to remove from the grounds, any player, coach, or fan that engages in any unsportsmanlike conduct. The coach of the team affected shall be responsible for the removal of the offending person from the grounds. **If he/she fails to do so in three (3) minutes, the umpire may charge that team with a forfeiture.**
- F. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes but is not limited to swearing, smoking, misuse of equipment, verbal confrontations ,or general rule violations on the field, bench and other areas reserved for the game. **Any player, coach, or fan removed from a game shall miss the remainder of that game along with their next played game.**
- G. The suspension of any player for all or a portion of the season shall lie solely within the jurisdiction of the Youth Baseball Board of Directors. Umpires shall have jurisdiction only in those games in which they officiate.
- H. Umpires are required to **immediately** notify the Head of Umpires when an ejection occurs.
- I. Umpires are required to notify the Head of Umpires when a Warning is issued. Notification can occur after the game is completed.
- J. All discussions with coaches on disagreements will be at second base between the umpires and the Head Coach from each team. Players must clear the area during such discussions.
- K. Umpires must wear the protective equipment.. Umpires are encouraged to wear a protective cup.
- L. Should **the minimum number of uniformed players (6)** fail to appear, the umpire shall declare a forfeit and has the option to umpire a practice game for those present. No exceptions--the game must be forfeited. **5 players is the minimum number for kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade leagues.**
- M. Umpires having issue with player(s) or coaches are directed to contact the Head of Umpires.
- N. All protests must be lodged prior to the next pitch. See General Rules (Page 2 Rule III-B).

VI. **BATTING**

- A. The roster of all players (last name and number) present shall be given to the opposing coach and the umpire, before the start of the game. **Failure to do so will result in forfeiture.**
- B. All teams “MUST” bat their entire lineup, even if a player is not playing defensively at the time. All players present at game time will bat in the order given to the opposing coach and umpire. (See WIAA handbook if a player bats out of order)

- C. If a player arrives after the game has **started**, his/her name shall be given to the opposing coach and umpire, and his/her name added to the bottom of the batting order.
- D. If a player must leave, for any reason there shall be no sanction against that team. The coach whose team member left the game is responsible for notifying the umpire and the opposing coach immediately. Players leaving a game for any reason will not be allowed to re-enter in the same game.
- E. If a player is injured and is unable to finish an at bat or run the bases, the player will be replaced by his teammate that made the last out. The injured player may re-enter the game, in his original position in the order, "only" if they have not missed all or part of their current or next at-bat.
- F. **A maximum of 5 runs may be scored per inning by the hitting team during regular season games. This rule is waived for the playoffs.**
- G. **If the batting team is up by 8 or more runs, no stealing will be allowed and no runners may advance on passed balls or wild pitches. This rule is waived for the playoffs.**

VII. PITCHING

- A. **NO curve balls shall be permitted until the 7th & 8th Grade League.** Coaches, it is your responsibility to forbid your pitchers from throwing curves. Curve balls shall be defined as any breaking pitch. (i.e. Slider, Slur, Curve, Split Finger, etc)
(This is a judgment call by the umpires)

Penalty for an illegal pitch:

The umpire, upon recognizing an illegal pitch, will give the delayed dead ball signal, (i.e., arm extended).

-If the batter doesn't swing, it is automatically declared a ball.

-If the batter swings and does or does not make contact, the coach of the batting team has the option of accepting the result of that play or taking the automatic ball.

(For example, if the player reaches first base, the coach may decide to accept that result, but he would take the ball, if, for example, the batter grounded out on the illegal pitch.)

- B. Pitches that are allowed below the 7th & 8th Grade League are Fastball and Changeup.
- C. Coaches will have one free trip to the mound per inning, per pitcher. On the second trip, the pitcher must be removed.
- D. Once a pitcher is removed from a game, he cannot return as a pitcher in that same game.

VIII. EQUIPMENT

- A. UNIFORMS: All players will be provided a hat and jersey. Jerseys/shirts- Players must wear issued jersey/shirt at all games. Hats- Players will be issued a team hat and this only hat that may be worn during games. No other hats may be worn during games including travel baseball hats, Brewer hats, etc.. If a player does not have a team hat, he/she shall play without a hat. Pants- Pants are NOT provided by Fondy Youth Baseball. Baseball pants are required for all players. **Pants MUST be gray in color.** Colored braids down the side of pants are allowed. A player that does not have gray pants is ineligible due to illegal uniform and will not be allowed to play. Gloves and bats are not provided by Fondy Youth Baseball. Gloves are required to play in a game at a defensive position.
- B. All players must wear approved batting helmets during their time at bat, base coaching, and while running the bases. This also applies to practice sessions. Batters and runners who refuse to wear protective headgear will not be permitted to play. All players will wear a batting helmet until reaching the bench/dugout. One warning per team will be issued. Additional violations will result in an automatic out being declared.
- C. Catchers are required to wear all catching equipment and wear a protective cup. Catching equipment and game balls will be furnished by Youth Baseball.
- E. Tennis shoes, turf shoes, or molded cleats may be worn for all leagues through 6th Grade. Players in the 7th & 8th Grade League and older may wear metal spikes.
- E. **BATS**

All bats for 8th grade and younger MUST have the "USA Baseball" stamp on the bat. Any bat with a "USSSA" stamp is ILLEGAL!

6th grade and younger

- 1. Any bat with a USA Baseball stamp is legal. All other bats are illegal.

7th/8th grade

- 1. Bats may have the USA Baseball stamp and have a drop of no more than -5, or players can use a -3 BBCOR bat that is allowed in high school.
- 2. Wooden bats with no more than -5 drop are allowed

9th grade and older (high school and Babe Ruth)

- 1. All bats MUST be BBCOR (-3 drop) to be legal- This is a WIAA high school rule.
- 2. Wooden bats with no more than -3 drop are allowed.

Reminder that these rules are only for our leagues. We have no control over what other communities will do for tournaments so please discuss with your tournament coach prior to purchasing.

- G. Coaches and/or players throwing batting helmets, catcher's mitts, masks, bats, or shin guards shall be warned one (1) time by the umpire--the next offense will be an

automatic out for their team when they are at bat. (See Umpires-Unsportsmanlike Conduct). Should the umpire feel an offense severe enough, a warning may not be issued and the player or coach can be immediately ejected.

- H. Coaches allowing the use of illegal equipment will be reported to the Disciplinary Committee and will be subject to possible suspension and forfeiture of the game in question.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS GAME RULES

- A. On Twilight diamonds - when adult games are scheduled after a Youth Baseball game, adult teams shall not interfere with the Youth Baseball game.
- B. There shall be free defensive substitution on the field with full roster batting.
 - 2. A pitcher cannot return as a pitcher. This does not apply to K-2 leagues.
 - 3. **Once a player takes a defensive position in an inning, they should not be removed from the field or moved to another position until the completion of that half inning, except if needed due to injury or for the pitcher – the pitcher can be removed.**
- C. A regulation game will be six (6) innings or if the trailing team has at least completed their half of the 4th inning when called due to rain or darkness.

Time limit is 1 hour & 30 minutes for 7th & 8th Grade League.

Time limit is 1 hour & 15 minutes for 3rd & 4th Grade and 5th & 6th Grade Leagues.

Start time is determined by the time of the first pitch unless otherwise notified. End of the inning is determined by the time of the last out of the inning. No new inning will be started once the time limit is reached..

Drop Dead Time Limit of 1 hour will be enforced for **4K/K, 1st, and 2nd grades.**

Drop Dead means that no matter what the situation is as soon as the clock hits 1 hour the game is over.

A game will be called if one team is twelve (12) runs ahead at the end of four (4) innings, or ten (10) runs ahead at the end of five (5) innings. If at any time after the first inning a team accumulates a 15-run lead and time limit has been reached, a “sudden” end to the game will be called. (note: The 15-run rule voids the rule regarding the length of a regulation game.)

- D. In cases where teams play back to back games as a double header, each team will be given 10 minutes from the completion of game #1 to use the restrooms, eat or regroup. The umpires will begin game #2 promptly. Teams delaying in taking the field will be warned and given one (1) minute to take the field and be ready to play.

If teams still delay after being warned, the umpires will declare a delay of game and the offending team will be given an out. This will continue every minute until the offending team is ready to play ball.

Games can begin early if both coaches and the umpires agree.

- E. Awards will be given as determined by the FYB Board.
- F. **K thru 6th grade leagues “All runners must slide feet first when any “Play” or “Attempted Play” is being made on them at a base or home plate. Failure to slide will result in “Dead Ball” being called and the runner that did not slide being called out.” (Umpires Discretion)**

The only exceptions to this rule are:

-If a throw at home plate is so far up the line that the runner is unable to slide and still reach home plate. (Umpires Discretion)

-If a throw to a base or home plate is so far off line that the defensive player has no chance to field the ball and make a play on the runner. (Umpires Discretion)

-A runner going from home plate to first base.

X. RESCHEDULED GAMES

Baseball schedules are made far in advance so that teams know when they will be playing. **Teams are required to play if they have 6 players able to make the game.** However, there may be circumstances when games need to be rescheduled. **Games can only be rescheduled with the approval of both head coaches involved and the Head of Umpires.** IF a coach knows they will be short multiple players they should reach out to league director.

(Teams rescheduling games without the Head of Umpires approval will each be given a loss and the games will not be rescheduled.)

1. Postponed and Suspended Game Ruling, Definition and Procedures
2. Suspended games referred to here are the kind of games halted due to rain or darkness, generally the game has been played the required number of innings but the game remains tied, and the tie must be broken by resumption at a later date. This must be completed in seven (7) days.
3. Procedure: The object for both teams shall be to finish the original part of the game from the point of suspension with both teams playing as close to the exact conditions as were being played when the game was suspended. The same rulings listed below shall apply to both teams when they alternate their turn from batting to fielding and vice versa.
4. Team at Bat: Resume the game from point of suspension by using as close to the exact batting order as at the moment of suspension. Example: The same player that was at bat must be at bat when the game is resumed. If the player is not present, his/her name is scratched and the roster must continue to follow the order as close to that as it was at the suspension of the game, and is made possible in relation to youth showing up for the game. Any player

arriving late for the game shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order as per Rule IV, E. If original game ended at that point of suspension where the last youth completed his/her turn at bat, then all substitutes present at the resumption of game time shall be placed at the bottom of the batting order and follow their turn at bat before the top of the batting order comes.

5. Team in Field: Resume the game by having the same pitcher as at the point of suspension initiates the pitching assignment if he/she is present. The same pitcher may pitch only the balance of remaining innings allowed as if in one single regular game. Example: If pitcher is allowed five innings in a regular game and he/she has pitched four innings in the original part of this suspended game, then he/she is allowed only one more inning to pitch, then a substitute must be named. **A pitcher once removed as a pitcher from the original part of this game, or the resumed part, may not return as a pitcher.**

1. **ALL POSTPONED and SUSPENDED GAMES** will be rescheduled between the two coaches communicating with FYB league directors. They must then apply to Youth Baseball for a diamond and umpire. If the coaches in question cannot agree upon a time, location and date that is available, Youth Baseball will assign a time, date and location for the game. It is the coach's responsibility to notify all of his/her players of their game, including date, time and diamond location. If a coach refuses, his/her team will forfeit the game.

2. Canceled games will be played within seven (7) days or teams refusing to play will receive an automatic loss.

3. End of Regular Season: In a case where the end of the regular season arrives and postponed or suspended regular season games have yet to be played, the following procedure will be used:
 - a) Games will not be made up if they have no bearing on the league's final standings.
 - b) Games that need to be played will be played on the Thursday or Friday immediately following the regular season. The time, date and location of each game will be determined by Youth Baseball.
 - c) If the Thursday or Friday following the season does not afford the Leagues enough time to get the games in, Youth Baseball reserves the right to assign a time and date to complete the games.
 - d) Every effort will be made to keep the playoffs on schedule. So please keep this in mind when scheduling the end of your summer.

PLAYOFFS:

Time limit is in effect for all playoff games.

Regular season rule limiting scoring to 5 runs per inning is voided- Teams are allowed to score as many runs as they can per inning,

Regular season rule prohibiting stealing when leading by 8 runs is voided.

LEAGUE AND PLAYOFF TIEBREAKERS FOR 3rd GRADE LEAGUE AND UP:

(Tie games shall be considered 1/2 win & 1/2 loss when determining winning percentage)

1. Two-way tie
 - a. Head to head competition
 - b. Runs allowed head to head
 - c. Runs allowed over entire regular season
 - d. Coin toss

2. Three-way tie or more
 - a. Head to head competition- Record against teams tied in standings-
 - b. Runs allowed in games against teams that remain tied
 - c. Runs allowed over entire regular season
 - d. Coin toss

Rescheduling Playoff Games:

1) If a playoff game is delayed, canceled or postponed, Youth Baseball reserves the right to revise the playoff schedule. Makeup playoff dates and locations will be determined by Youth Baseball. This may mean you will be playing on a day that you do not normally play on or on a date that was not originally on your schedule. Every effort will be made to complete the playoffs on schedule to not adversely affect families' schedules.