

**WASHINGTON STATE AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL  
2026 RULES & STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**



**Legion Baseball – A Winning Tradition**

**[WWW.WASTATEALB.ORG](http://WWW.WASTATEALB.ORG)**

**National Rule Books for Senior & Junior Divisions**

**Visit [www.wastatealb.org/forms](http://www.wastatealb.org/forms)**



- e. The Deadline Date for you to register your team on the National Website.
- f. The Deadline Date for payment of all league fees.
- g. The Deadline for the completion of your teams background checks & Abuse Awareness.
- h. The Deadline for the entering of you league home games on the state scoring program (Game Change).

**THE WASHINGTON STATE AMERICAN LEGION PROGRAM IS CONTROLLED BY THE WASHINGTON STATE AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL COMMISSION. WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL PROGRAM AND THE FOLLOWING RULES APPLY TO ANY TEAM PLAYING AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON.**

- 1 The rules of **Major League Baseball**. (see National ALB Rule book for exceptions)
- 2 The current (2026) rule books published by the **National Headquarters of American Legion Baseball**. The National rule book will be online in early 2026 under forms on our State website.
- 3 The current **Standard Operating Procedures** (this document) published by the Washington State American Legion Baseball Commission and any addendums from your local Area.

The National Headquarters of the American Legion allows a state to be more restrictive in the establishment of state rules. For example a state could say 19 year old players can't play American Legion Baseball. The reverse logic also applies; a state can't say 20 year old players can play American Legion Baseball; that would be weakening a National Rule. The majority of state rule restrictions come from input of team managers and coaches throughout the state. The Washington State Baseball Commission takes pride in listening to team managers, coaches, players, parents, umpires and volunteers. We view our program as a partnership with our teams and local communities and for all who strive to make a positive impact in the lives of our youth in Washington State.

**Here are our Statewide Standard Operating Procedures for 2026.**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP's)  
(Your Area Addendums will be attached to this document  
or delivered to you as a separate document)**

- 1) **TEAMS COMMITTING AFTER YOUR AREAS DEADLINE DATE WILL BE CONSIDERED AN EXHIBITION TEAM AND WILL NOT QUALIFY FOR POST-SEASON PLAY UNLESS APPROVED BY THEIR SENIOR COMMISSIONER.**
- 2) **Teams that do not comply with registration and paperwork procedures will become exhibition teams should they decide to register.** Exhibition teams do not qualify for post-season tournaments.
- 3) **NEW TEAMS:** A "new team" is defined as:
  - \* A team that did not play as an American Legion Baseball team the previous season.
  - \* A team that played in American Legion Baseball the previous season but has a new coach and has no more than 3 returning players from the previous season's roster.
- 4) **PAPERWORK & STATE LEAGUE FEES:** Teams that have not submitted all "ERRORLESS" paperwork and team registration fees and purchase required insurance policies by applicable due dates, will not be eligible for league, or post-season play.
- 5) **NOTEBOOKS:** Team notebooks will be brought to all league and non-league games including a copy of these state SOP's to include all Area Addendums. Team Managers be aware that in your team notebooks are the forms for the consent for medical treatment of your players so therefore you should always have it with you for all practices and games.

- 6) **INSURANCE RULE:** Prior to the first practice or game, every American Legion Baseball team must purchase both liability and accident insurance policies “online” from the American Legion’s agent of record no later than May 15<sup>th</sup> via ALB’s national website. Consult your local Area Commissioner for any date changes to this rule for your area. There is a \$200 penalty assessed by National Headquarters for purchasing insurance between the dates of May 16<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup>. You cannot buy insurance after May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- 7) **BACKGROUND CHECKS AND ABUSE AWARENESS TRAINING:** All team managers and coaches are required to complete the background checks and abuse awareness training process established by the National Headquarters of American Legion Baseball. The application and training links are available on the National American Legion Baseball website [www.baseball.legion.org](http://www.baseball.legion.org) at the top of the page.
- 8) **SCHEDULES:** Team Managers are required to enter their teams “league home games” into our online scoring program prior to the season which tracks schedules, scoreboard and league standings. The deadline is established by your Area Senior Commissioner. Managers are also required to update chances to game schedules during the season for changes such as rainouts.
- 9) **LEAGUE SCHEDULE DEADLINE:** No league schedule changes may be made after June 15<sup>th</sup>, except for rain, umpire shortage, or severe emergencies, with approval of the Area Senior Commissioner. Therefore please do your best not to back-end your league games and summer tournament games.
- 10) **GAME CANCELLATION:** In case of rain, umpire shortage, or severe emergency, you need to notify the other team’s head coach at least 4 hours prior to game time. Coaches should be in contact with each other in case of bad weather, poor field conditions, postponements, etc. throughout the day.
- 11) **FORFEITURES:**
- a. Other than emergencies, umpire shortage, or rainouts, any league “dates” cancelled less than 24 hours of game time will be considered a forfeit by the canceling team.
  - b. **FAILURE TO APPEAR:** If a team fails to appear once the game (or games) has been confirmed (LT 24 hours notice), then a forfeit loss (1-0) will be given to the team that failed to appear for each applicable game. If a visiting team fails to appear that team may be responsible for umpire fees and compensation and will reimburse the home team for that expense.
  - c. **LEAGUE GAME FORFEITS:**
    - i. A team must complete their league schedule with less than 2 forfeits to be a contender for postseason play.
    - ii. If you have 2 forfeits in league play, you will be disqualified from any post-season play. Forfeiting a doubleheader will count as 1 forfeited games, and 2 losses in the league standings (if both are league games).
    - iii. Teams that do not finish their League or Postseason schedules will be suspended for the following season. Any appeal must be filed with the Area Senior Commissioner within 30 days following the end of the regular season. If the decision by the Area Senior Commissioner is to suspend the team for the following year, then an appeal can be made to the State Chairman, along with a \$50 fee. The State Chairman’s decision may only be appealed to the Washington State Baseball Commission during that season’s fall meeting of the full commission
- 12) **RESCHEDULED & TIED GAMES:** If a league “date” needs to be re-scheduled, the coach calling for the re-schedule is responsible to make arrangements for the make-up game with-in 24 hours of re-scheduling. Responsible coach must make the change on our online scoring system within 24 hours. Be sure to notify the umpire associations (or assigned person). Re-scheduled “dates” not made up prior to the last legal day of league competition will be considered a half game forfeit by both teams. All completed games ending in a tie must be played out prior to season’s end or a tie will be given to both teams.
- 13) **CANCELLED LEAGUE DATES/GAMES:** Games cancelled due to rain, umpires, or emergencies must be made up at the next available date. If rain/umpire shortage/emergency games cannot be re-scheduled prior to the Divisional Tournament then both teams will receive a half game forfeit.

**14) RAINOUT POLICY**

- If a game has reached the required number of innings played (either 4 ½ or 5), and is halted because of rain and not resumed, it will be declared a completed game.
- If it begins raining after 5 innings or more have been completed and the game is rained out, it would revert back to the last completed full inning.
- If a game is rained out before the required number of innings are played (either 4 ½ or 5), it will be considered a suspended contest. When play is resumed, an attempt will be made to play the game to completion (7 innings) or at least get past the completed game mark (either 4 ½ or 5 innings) if poor weather again that day.

**15) SUSPENDED CONTEST** - In ALB Season/Post Season Tournament play, any contest called by the umpire before it can be considered a regulation game (4 ½ or 5 innings) shall be a suspended contest and will be continued at a later time as follows:

- a. The contest shall continue from the point of suspension at a later time.
- b. The lineup, innings pitched and batting order of each team will remain exactly the same as when All ALB pitcher limitation rules apply.
- c. A suspended post season tournament game will be resumed at the same field of the originally scheduled game, on the next day prior to the scheduled games for that date.
- d. In case of suspended game, it will not constitute an additional appearance by the same pitcher(s) that pitched in the game, prior to being suspended

**16) MAKE-UP DATES:** League games must be made up on the first available date after the rainout. League games have priority over non-league games. Edit league game schedule on our online scoring system within 24 hours.

**17) TIEBREAKER CRITERIA:** If two or more teams are tied at the end of the regular season, teams will be seeded for post-season play according to (this is used for teams tied for the pigtail game too, but A and C will not be used due to teams not playing each other during the season):

- a. Head to head competition. (If it a 3 way tie as soon as one team as a team is declared a winner or is eliminated, the remaining teams begin the process from the beginning again to break the tie.)
- b. League game results versus team #1, #2, #3, #4 etc. Example – If tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> then you compare the records against the 1<sup>st</sup> place team in your league, if still tied then you compare against the 4<sup>th</sup> place team and so on.
- c. Runs allowed in league play between the tied teams.
- d. Runs allowed in league play versus team #1, #2, #3, #4, etc.
- e. If above criteria does not break a tie, then a play-in game will be played unless no team is eliminated then a coin flip will decide the seeding.
- f. The play-in game(s) will be held the day following the last day of league play.
- g. If at all possible the play-in game(s) will be played at a neutral site with a coin flip deciding the home team and the third base dugout.

**18) ONLINE GAME SCORES:** Scoring and standing of games will be updated automatically on Game Changer at the completion of the game.

**19) GAME BASEBALLS:** Do not mix the different brands and types of baseballs during league and tournament play. Consult your local Senior Commissioner or area addendum for any required baseballs for league and post season games.

**20) UMPIRES:** Teams must use a legally organized umpire's association for all league, district and state tournaments

**21) APPEALS AND PROTESTS:** Appeals/protest will have a \$50 applicable fee and evidence accompanying protest within 24 hours. Appeals/Protests must be written and submitted to the Area Senior Commissioner

within 24 hours of the initial protest. Further appeals are available at the state or national levels for certain appeals/protests.

**22) RUN MERCY RULE:** The ten run rule will apply to league, divisional, and state tournament games; 4 ½-5 innings in a seven inning game.

**23) PITCHER WARM-UP:** Pitchers may warm-up between innings, for all Divisions A, AA and AAA. Home plate & bullpen catchers/coaches must wear protective mask while warming-up pitchers in the squatted position.

**24) INNINGS PLAYED:**

- **Junior Legion:** All games are 7 innings. The “AA” State Championship game is 7 innings with no ten run rule used in the final Championship game. Review the final State playoff bracket for Post Season information.
- **Senior Legion:** Games can be 7 innings-during the season. Review the final State playoff bracket for Post Season information. All State, Regional and World Series games will be 7 innings.

**25) PITCHING RULES “A”, “AA” & “AAA” – for 2026**

Pitchers will have a daily maximum of 105 pitches per day

Required rest will be as follows:

- 1-30 pitches: 0 days
- 31-45 pitches: 1 day
- 46-60 pitches: 2 days
- 61-80 pitches: 3 days
- 81+ pitches: 4 days

Pitchers may only make two appearances in any three consecutive days. Players will be charged with two appearances if they leave the pitching position and return as a pitcher in the same game.

**26) DUAL PARTICIPATION:** During the regular season only players in the “A” Division and “AA” Division of American Legion Baseball may participate in other amateur baseball programs. The Team Manager and the player must obtain written approval from your Senior Commissioner prior to participating in the event and/or tournament. **May 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline.** There is a dual participation form on the state website on the forms tab.

**Clarification:** Dual participation shall in no way interfere with a player’s responsibility to his American Legion Baseball Team. Once post-season tournament play has begun your Senior Commissioner or the Department Baseball Chairman cannot grant permission to participate in non-Legion sanctioned tournaments, exhibition games, showcases, or combines. The American Legion believes team loyalty is a key ingredient for any team sport.

***Penalty:*** *Any American Legion Baseball player missing any American Legion league game without prior permission, because that player participated in another non-sanctioned baseball event such as exhibition game, tournament, showcase, combine, or other youth programs, shall be ineligible for post-season tournament play.*

**27) UNIFORMS:** Coaches must be in the same uniforms, pullovers, windbreakers of team colors with required patches, as players in all league and post-season games. ALB patches (left sleeve or left chest if sleeveless uniform) and American Flag (back of the uniform) must be sewn or silkscreened onto all uniforms. All Legion logos are protected by copyright laws. Companies that silk screen in your local area can fill out a

request form for the right to silk screen on the baseball patch to uniforms. Additional screen print information is available on-line on the national website. There are also companies listed on the National website that are preapproved to silk screen the American Legion Baseball patch on uniforms and jackets. Wilson Sports is one of the approved providers and you can find a local dealer at <http://www.wilson.com/en-us/forms/finddealers>

## 28) EJECTION RULE:

- a) Coaches/players ejected from any ALB league or post season game must be reported to the Area Senior Commissioner by the Umpire Association (preferably the ejecting umpire) and the team manager or coach of the ejected person the same night of the infraction or the next morning.
- b) Following an ejection of a coach/player, the Umpire Association and coach shall provide a written report to the Area Senior Commissioner within twenty-four (24) hours. Suspension may not be enforced until a review has been conducted by the Area Senior Commissioner. If this happens in the post-season then the commissioner in charge will handle the situation and could overturn the player/coach's 1 game suspension.
- c) The coach/player will be suspended for the team's next scheduled game.
- d) If a second ejection occurs, the coach/player would be suspended for the next three consecutive games unless reinstated by appeals process to the Area Senior Commissioner for league and district play and by the State Tournament Director (Commissioner-in-charge) at State Tournaments. If a fan is removed for a second time, then the local umpires and the field supervisor will remove the fan for the remainder of the year.
- e) Third ejection will dismiss that coach/player for the remainder of the season.
- f) Any player, coach, manager or fan ejected by an umpire must leave the ballpark and cell phones are not to be used for communication to the field of play. (No lingering in stands or down the lines). If a fan doesn't leave, local law enforcement will be called to remove the fan.
- g) Specified games will be forfeited if the coach fails to self-report the league/district ejection to the Area's Senior Commissioner or if the ejected coach/player fails to sit out the next game.
- h) **UMPIRES:** Will have the discretion of administering restraint when ejecting someone. Warnings and restricting coaches/players to the dugout, prior to ejecting someone, is encouraged. Area senior commissioner shall investigate all ejections during the American Legion Baseball season. Actions by coaches incurring multiple ejections may result in the removal of, or exclusion from being asked to return in subsequent seasons.

## APPEALING EJECTION:

- 1) League and District appeals to the Area's Senior Commissioner must be submitted within 24 hours of the initial ejection.
  - A. Conduct. The Area Commissioners may remove managers, coaches or players who, in the opinion of the Department Chairman or his representative, conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner that would discredit this program. The Department Baseball Committee's decision will be final.
  - B. Heckling. No player, coach, manager, or other party associated with an American Legion Baseball team shall abuse, heckle or make uncomplimentary remarks to opposing players, team officials or umpires. The umpire shall immediately warn and/or eject from the game any individuals violating this regulation.
  - C. Sportsmanship. Any player, coach, manager, or other party accompanying a team will be warned and/or ejected from the game from the time of the infraction, if they:
    1. Use profane language.

2. Throw bats or other equipment.
3. Make unnecessary or obscene gestures to umpires, fans or opposing players.
4. Commit unnecessary roughness on the playing field.

**29) ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/DRUGS:** The use of any form of drugs, alcohol or tobacco by a player, coach, manager, or umpire while on the playing field, benches, in the bullpen, or dugouts is prohibited. Any individual violating this rule will be ejected from the game.

**30) HELMET RULE:** All players are required to wear a double-flapped, ear-protective helmet while batting, running bases and on deck in all league and non-league games. This is safety and insurance policy requirement.

- a) Bat boys or girls must wear a double-flapped, ear-protective helmet while on the field.
- b) All batting helmets must have the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) seal of approval stamped on the helmet, and such seal must be visible on the outside of the helmet.
- c) **Base coaches are required to wear a standard batting helmet, with or without earflaps (safety rule: ejection for non-compliance after one warning. The type of helmet shall be a personal choice of the coach.**

MLB will not mandate the type of helmet nor shall The American Legion dictate the type of helmet a coach wishes to wear while in the coaching box. **Helmet Rule Violations:** Umpires are instructed not to put the ball into play and to warn the coach on wearing a protective helmet. If the coach refuses to wear a helmet he shall be ejected from the game.

### **31) BAT RULE: ALB PLAYING REGULATIONS RULE 1**

**Bat Rule.** Wood, metal, ceramic, composite, or graphite bats may be used. Wood bats comprised of laminate or composite wood may be used. The bat must not exceed 42 inches in length and 2 ¾ inches in diameter.”

1. Any non-wood bat must have the BBCOR certification code marked on the barrel of the bat.
2. Any bat in the opinion of the umpire that has been altered shall be removed from the game, the player shall be ejected and the team manager shall be ejected.

**32) FORCE-PLAY-SLIDE RULE:** The intent of the force-play-slide rule is to ensure the safety of all players. **This is a safety as well as an interference rule.** Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs. On any force play, the runner must slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases. It is permissible for the slider’s momentum to carry him through the base in the baseline extended.

**Exception** – A runner need not slide directly into a base as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder. Interference will not be called.

### **ALB - PLAYING RULES**

**33) Senior “AAA”** – All American Legion Baseball (ALB) Rules will be used for Senior “AAA.”

- a. ALB Rules will be used for all League Games, Divisional & State Tournaments. You may only DH for the pitcher.
- b. **New National Rules-** Courtesy runners and Re-entry - In regular season play only, departments may have the option to allow for courtesy runners and re-entry. Courtesy runners may be permitted for pitchers or catchers. Departments that allow for re-entry may permit players to be substituted and return to the game once, provided the player returns to the same slot in the batting order.

- 34) Junior “AA” – All American Legion Baseball (ALB) Rules will be used for Junior “AA.”
- ALB Rules will be used for all League Games, Divisional & State Tournaments
  - Courtesy runners for catchers and pitchers, CR, EH, DH for anyone, and re-entry rules are all allowed for AA league and post-season play. EH allowed during regular season only.
  - No graduated senior will play in league play unless the Areas Senior Commissioner approves the player based on the small school enrollment of 468 or below.
- 35) Junior “A” – All American Legion Baseball Rules used for Junior “A.”
- ALB Rules will be used for all League Games, Divisional & State Tournaments
  - Courtesy runners for catchers and pitchers, DH for anyone, and re-entry rules are all allowed for Junior A league and post-season play. EH allowed during regular season only.

## PLAYER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



### Senior & Junior American Legion Baseball 2026 Age Eligibility Chart

Jan.	Feb	Mar.	Apr	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Traditional grade in school	Birth Year
Age - 12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	Not Eligible	2014
Age - 13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2013
Age - 14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2012
Age - 15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	Freshman	2011
Age - 16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	Sophomore	2010
Age - 17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	Junior	2009
Age - 18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	Senior	2008
Age - 19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	College/HS	2007
Age - 20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	Not eligible	2006

**Players born in 2007 or 2008 must play in the Senior Legion Baseball program.**

**Players (age 12 and under) born in 2014 or after are not eligible to play American Legion Baseball.**

**Players born in 2006 or before are no longer eligible to play American Legion Baseball.**

All player eligibility issues that are in conflict with the above rules must be discussed and approved by the Area Senior Commissioner prior to the start of the season.

### 36) Players Age: Senior American Legion Baseball competition in 2026

#### “AAA” TEAM ELIGIBILITY AND PLAYER RECRUITING

- “AAA” teams may recruit from high schools whose combined enrollments do not exceed 7,500 students in grades 10-12.
- Players born in 2006 are NOT eligible to play American Legion Baseball.
- The roster cannot exceed 18 on any type of team.
- Maximum of 5 double rostered players may be added from the local “AA” program.
- Double rostered players may not play in “AA” and “AAA” Divisional and State tournaments simultaneously.

### 37) Players Age: Junior “AA” American Legion Baseball competition in 2026

#### “AA” TEAM ELIGIBILITY AND PLAYER RECRUITING

- a. A stand alone "AA" team may recruit from high schools whose combined school enrollments do not exceed 7,500 students in grades 10-12. Typically ages 17 and under. See exception c. below.
- b. Clarification: Current "High School" juniors, sophomores and freshmen are eligible.
- c. 18 year old players and are currently HS Juniors are eligible but the team will register as a SENIOR "AAA" TEAM + purchase senior insurance. (Note: AA level insurance does NOT cover any player older than 17)
- d. If team recruits from one high school and enrollment is below 468, current 1A High School Seniors are eligible to play. Senior Commissioner will be allowed flexibility with this rule.
- e. Maximum of 5 double rostered players between "AA" to "AAA" programs.
- f. Double rostered players may not play in "AA" and "AAA" Divisional and State tournaments simultaneously.

### **38) Players Age: Junior "A" American Legion Baseball competition in 2026**

#### **"A" TEAM ELIGIBILITY AND RECRUITING**

- a. Team may recruit from high schools whose combined enrollments do not exceed 7,500 students in grades 10-12.
- b. Current "High School" sophomores and freshmen and qualified 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders (players typically age 13-15) are eligible. Exceptions with Area Sr. Commission permission only.
- c. If enrollment is below 188, current 2B High School Juniors are eligible to play. Senior Commissioner & State Commissioner will be allowed flexibility with this rule.
- d. Maximum of 5 double rostered players between "A" to "AA" programs.
- e. Double rostered players may not play in "A" and "AA" Divisional and State tournaments simultaneously.

**The following information is available as separate documents or on our state website at [www.wastatealb.org](http://www.wastatealb.org)**

- Post Season District Tournament Information.
- Tournament Host Responsibilities
- State Tournament Information
- Forms
  - Drug & Alcohol
  - Concussion Form
  - Code of Conduct
  - Dual Participation (For A Division Only)
  - Form 76
  - Form 77
  - Form 2

#### **Other General Information**

- National Website: <http://www.legion.org/baseball>
- ALB Resources: <http://www.legion.org/baseball/resources>
- National Team Registration: <http://baseball.legion.org/>
- WA State ALB Hall of Fame: <http://www.waalbhof.org/>
- WA State ALB Foundation: <http://www.waalbfoundation.org/>

**THE WASHINGTON STATE AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL COMMISSION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO AMEND THESE RULES PRIOR TO OR DURING THE BASEBALL SEASON.**