



## 2026 House Rules Minors American West League

**All rules as per 2026 Little League Rules except as amended herein.**

Start Time: 6:00 pm

End Time: 8:00 pm

1. Chinstraps or Face Guards on helmets are recommended but not mandatory. If a chin strap is worn it must be done up. Athletic cups are mandatory. Catchers must also wear long model chest protectors, shin guards, full helmets and throat protectors.
2. NOCSAE Certified Helmets must be worn by all batters and base runners.
3. Coaches are also required to wear a face mask and glove during all warm-up pitches, both on the field and in the bullpen.
4. Five (5) run maximum per inning or three outs, whichever comes first.
5. No open innings during the Regular Season.
6. During Playoffs the 5 run maximum still applies for each inning except the open inning which must start no later than 8:00PM.
7. There is NO advancing on pass balls. Base runners must stay on the base they are on and can only advance bases on a hit or overthrow.
8. A coach may stand behind the umpire to assist the catcher with retrieving and returning passed balls. The coach must wear a protective face mask and a glove while in this position.
9. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike rule & the Infield fly rule will NOT be in effect for the regular season or the playoffs.
10. Only the Manager can call for time to speak with the Umpire.
11. FCLL has received a waiver allowing Junior Umpires to work games for Minors, Majors (without an adult umpire) and there will be a zero-tolerance policy in place for any verbal abuse of these umpires by parents, managers, and players. We will hold the Manager responsible for any spectators and/or players who do not adhere to this policy.

12. Sunflower seeds (aka Spitz) and/or gum are not allowed in the dugout or on the field. They are a distraction to the players and a safety issue.

### **Pitching**

1. Warm up pitches to begin the 1<sup>st</sup> inning of each game are limited to 7 per pitcher (for both the visitor and home team).
2. Warm up pitches between innings are limited to 5 per pitcher.

### **Pitch Count:**

Below are the maximum numbers for pitches in a game for a single player:

Month of April/May: 35 max per game

Month of June: 50 max per game

### **Days of Rest:**

Below are the days of rest which must be given to a player after they have pitched in a game:

1-20 Pitches = 0 Days Rest

21-35 Pitches = 1 Day Rest

36-50 Pitches = 2 Days Rest

### **Pitching Distance:**

The pitching rubber shall be placed 44 feet from the back tip of home plate (instead of the regulation 46 feet 6 inches). This adjustment is intended to improve pitching accuracy and confidence and to promote better game flow for both offense and defense. Upon agreement at the diamond by both Managers pitchers who need the extra distance to get it to the plate can move up to 42 feet to pitch.

### **Coach Assisted Pitching:**

All games shall begin with players pitching. If at any point during the game, one or both teams are struggling with player pitching, the Managers of each team can confer and mutually agree to implement coach pitching for the remainder of the game or designated portion thereof. This is intended to support player confidence and promote a smoother game flow for both defense and offense. This format will remain in place throughout the regular season with a goal that by the playoffs, all innings will be played exclusively with players pitching.

To encourage kids to swing the bat and provide more fielding opportunities FCLL adopted and continues to follow the below rules:

- If a batter is walked (4 balls) then the coach will enter the game and pitch to the batter to induce game play.
- Coach pitches must be delivered overhand. Underhand pitching or lobbing the ball is not permitted. The coach may pitch from a kneeling position.
  - If a batter has a 4-1 or 4-2 count they will be given 2 coach pitches (both strikes). If the batter fails to hit they are out.
  - If the batter has a 4-0 count they will receive 3 pitches (all strikes). If the batter fails to hit they are out.
  - If that batter fouls off their final coach pitch they will receive another pitch until they either hit or strike out.
- There are NO walks off coach thrown pitches (even if batter is hit by pitch)

### **Time Limits & Scoring**

1. No new innings shall begin after 8:00pm.
2. For the playoffs only one inning can start after 8:00pm. Once that inning is finished then the game is considered complete. Teams must complete 4 innings for game to be official or 3.5innings if the home team leading. If not complete, the Director is to be contacted to arrange a time for game completion.
3. The Umpire will determine which watch/clock is the official time. This to be confirmed by the Umpire at the plate meeting.
4. The mercy rule is in effect; i.e. the game is over after 4 innings if one team is leading by 10 or more runs (3.5 innings if it's the home team leading by 10). The mercy rule trumps open inning in playoffs
5. The Visiting Team for each game is the official Pitch Counter and is responsible for inputting the pitching names and respective pitch counts utilized by both teams into the official Pitch Count Google doc provided by the League Director.
6. The Home Team is the official Score Keeper and must email the score to the League Director and copy the opposing Manager.
7. Tie games are permitted during the regular season but not in the playoffs. If a playoff game is tied at the end of an inning under the time limits above, play may continue until 8:30pm or until a winner is determined, whichever comes first. If the game remains tied at 8:30pm, the umpire and managers may agree to play one additional inning. If still tied after that inning, the game will be suspended and rescheduled by the Director to determine a winner.
8. Playoffs are TBD.