



**2021**

## **COACH PITCH BASEBALL**

# **LOCAL LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS**

**INCLEMENT WEATHER – (910) 424-4500**

The current issue of the Dixie Youth Rule Book will prevail other than the exceptions listed in this publication. The Parks and Recreation Department, as needed, may issue Addendums and Clarifications to these rules. No other local league rule exceptions will be allowed.

### **1:00 AGE REQUIREMENTS**

- 1:01 Minimum Age: 7 years old - players must be 7 years old prior May 1st of current playing year.  
Maximum Age: 8 years old - players cannot turn 9 years old prior to May 1st of the current playing year.
- 1:02 A player may play up 1 year into the next age group with a letter of request from the parent and the approval of the youth association, center staff, and receiving coach. A skills assessment must be held to determine the player's ability. This rule is for the exceptional player and is not intended as a rule of convenience. A request to play up because the child has an older sibling playing will be denied. Once a player is approved to play up, he/she will not be allowed to move back down.

### **2:00 TEAM BOUNDARIES**

- 2:01 Players must reside within the HMPR boundaries to play. Boundaries are now determined by the player's home address.
- 2:02 All returning players must play for the same team they played for the previous year and will remain with that team throughout their age eligibility.
- 2:03 All new players will be assigned to teams using the HMPR draft.
- 2:04 No player will be allowed to play on more than 1 team or league in any HMPR program. PENALTY: upon discovery the player will be removed and returned to the proper program

3:00

## ROSTERS AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

- 3:01 The minimum number of players on a roster will be 12.  
The maximum number of players on a roster will be 15.
- 3:02 No player will be allowed to participate in a game or practice without a signed registration form and one of the following documents submitted for review by the Recreation Department:  
1) birth certificate 2) military identification card 3) passport  
*A copy of the document will be kept at the recreation center.*
- 3:03 No player can be added to the team roster after the deadline.
- 3:04 If, during the season, a team becomes unable to field the required number of properly registered players to legally play a game or continue the season, that team will be allowed to add enough players to finish the season. These games will be played as official games; however, all games from that point will be considered forfeits. The opposing team must have enough players present to play the forfeited games or the game will be considered a double forfeit. If a team chooses this option, it will be enforced for the remainder of that season.

4:00

## EQUIPMENT

- 4:01 The head coach of each team will be issued equipment, if requested. This equipment will include the catcher's helmet with mask & throat guard, chest protector, leg guards, batting helmets, bats and balls. A hard, plastic protector manufactured for the purpose of protecting the throat shall be securely attached to the mask even if the mask has an extension at the bottom.
- 4:02 In order to be considered for future coaching positions, all HMPR issued equipment *must be returned within 14 days* of a team's last game.
- 4:03 **STEEL SPIKES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED.** Only rubber molded cleats or tennis shoes will be allowed.
- 4:04 **Only approved 2 ¼ and 2 5/8 bats are to be used. No 2 ¾ bats are allowed.**
- All bats must have the approved USA Baseball stamp to be legal.**
- 4:05 **Batters helmets are required to have a facemask / face guard.**

5:00

## COACHES

**ALL PROSPECTIVE COACHES MUST COMPLETE A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION / RELEASE OF INFORMATION AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECK FORM. COACHES MUST HAVE AN ACCEPTABLE BACKGROUND CHECK IN ORDER TO BE APPROVED.**

- 5:01 A maximum of 4 coaches (1 head coach and 3 assistants) will be allowed per team.  
Only these 4 coaches will be allowed in the dugout.

- 5:02 All coaches should understand and agree to carry out the duties, responsibilities, and policies as established by HMPR.
- 5:03 Coaches are expected to closely observe their players at all times to be certain that the players do not become overly fatigued.
- 5:04 Coaches must set good examples of sportsmanship.
- 5:05 Coaches will not use profane language or smoke on the field or in the dugout during practice or games. Staff will investigate accusations. If verified, coaches will be suspended accordingly.
- 5:06 No player/coach of teams on the field will be allowed behind the backstop unless to consult with the official scorekeeper.
- 5:07 *Coaches are expected to have a meeting with the parents to discuss team rules and the expectations that he/she expects the players and parents to follow.* These rules should cover items such as the practice schedule, attendance policy, disciplinary actions, providing refreshments, whom to call in case of rain, etc. These guidelines must meet the approval of, and a copy on file, with the recreation center before they will be considered valid. Coaches must use discretion and good judgment if they feel it is necessary to suspend a player for violation of team policy.
- 5:08 *As stated in the Official Baseball Rules Book and summarize below:  
An umpire's decision, which involves "judgment", is final and may not be objected.  
If there is reasonable doubt that an umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, ONLY the head coach may address the umpire for clarification or to request an appeal.*

6:00

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

### **PLEASE REFER TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR DETAILS.**

- 6:01 No alcoholic beverages are allowed on school or recreation property. This includes athletic fields. This is a **STATE LAW**. If necessary, proper legal action will be taken to observe this rule. **NO TOBACCO PRODUCTS ARE ALLOWED ON THE PLAYING FIELD, IN DUGOUTS, OR IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PLAYERS AT ANY TIME.**
- 6:02 A coach, player, or spectator with the presence of alcohol on their breath will be asked to leave the school or recreation area.
- 6:03 Any coach or player ejected from a game will be suspended for at least **10 days**. The suspension could be longer depending upon the severity of the infraction.
- A coach who is ejected from a game must leave the recreation property immediately. Failure to comply will result in a longer suspension. Ejected players will be allowed to remain in the dugout if their parent is not in attendance. Suspended coaches will not be allowed on recreation premises until the suspension is completed.*

6:04 Fighting and/or unsportsmanlike conduct **WILL NOT** be tolerated before, during, or after the game. If a player or coach pushes, shoves, or strikes a member of the other team or any recreation personnel, *he/she shall be suspended from play immediately and subject to Code of Conduct penalties.*

6:05 Members of one team shall not ride, kid, heckle, poke fun at or in any other manner do anything that in the opinion of the umpire distracts the opposing team. The penalty for violation of this rule shall be the removal of the guilty player, players, and/or coach from the game and from the dugout. As a point of clarification, players will not be allowed to chant, "hey batter, batter".

6:06 *Spectators must display good sportsmanship. Unruly spectators will be asked to leave the recreation premises.*

- Please do not argue with the officials.
- Please do not communicate threats to the officials.
- Please do not use profanity towards the officials.
- Please do not display unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Please do not enter the playing area in a hostile manner.
- Please do not consume alcoholic beverages at recreation sites.
- Please do not bring any weapons to recreation sites.
- Please do not create a hostile environment.
- Please do not generate ill will amongst the spectators.
- Please do not forget this is an amateur program.
- Officials will make mistakes as they learn and grow.
- Officials are not expected to and will not make every call correctly.
- Officials are an extension of HMPR staff and are the only impartial participant in a game.
- Only head coaches may address the officials.

**7:00**

**POSTPONED GAMES/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

7:01 In case of inclement weather, coaches and parents should call the following number for a decision as to whether or not the game will be played:

**(910) 424-4500**

If no decision is made before 5:00 p.m., teams should report to the field and wait for the umpires or field supervisors' decision.

7:02 Prior to the start of the game, the field supervisor or HMPR staff on duty will have sole authority to postpone or play the game. After the game begins, the umpire-in-chief will have the sole authority to postpone or play.

7:03 Make-up games will be scheduled by *HMPR*. Suspended games, *if rescheduled*, will be resumed from the point of interruption.

8:00

**PRACTICE POLICY**

- 8:01 Practices *should not exceed* 3 hours per week. Practice must be over by 9:00 p.m.
- 8:02 Due to a request by school principals, players must not arrive to practice earlier than 10 minutes prior to scheduled practice time and must leave school grounds promptly after practice.
- 8:03 There are to be no games or practices scheduled the night before End of Grade testing under any circumstances.

9:00

**PROTESTS/FORFEITS/COMPLAINTS**

- 9:01 Protests on the possible misapplication of a playing rule must be submitted in writing to the *Athletic Supervisor* within 24 hours after the starting time of the game being protested. Protest forms can be obtained from the field supervisor or Athletic Office and must be accompanied with a \$25.00 check. If the protest is found valid, the check will be returned.  
**NOTE:** Protests will only be accepted when submitted by the head coach. The scorekeeper or protesting coach must denote in the official Recreation Department scorebook at which point the game is being protested. Failure to do so, before the next pitch, will nullify and void any protest.
- 9:02 Requests for determining the eligibility of a player (proper age, registered and on the roster) can be made, *in writing*, at any point during the season by *head* coaches.  
When requesting the inquiry, coaches must give the player's known name, jersey number, and team for which he/she participated. Teams will forfeit all games in which an ineligible player (improper age, not registered on the roster) participates.
- 9:03 **District boundaries:**  
No protests based on district boundaries will be accepted after rosters are submitted to and approved by the Recreation Department. If, during the roster verification process, a player is found to be out-of-district, then they will immediately be removed from that team's roster but permitted to register on a team in their proper district, if an opening exists. There will be no team penalties.
- 9:04 Complaints concerning officials, supervisors, and other aspects of the program can be made in **writing** at anytime after a game has been played.

10:00

**PLAYING RULES:**

10:01 All games will be 6 innings unless legally shortened. A game can be legally shortened if the time limit expires or if 4 innings have been played and rain, darkness, or other acts of nature prevent further play, or if the 15 run rule is met.

10:02 Games will last for 1 hour and 15 minutes. No new inning will start after 1 hour and 15 minutes. The first pitch will determine the start of a game. The last out of an inning will determine the start of the next inning.

10:03 Games will be considered completed if any of the following occur:

(1) 6 innings have been completed; extra innings will not be played.

(2) time expires and both teams have batted an equal number of times.

(3) a team is ahead by 15 runs after both teams have batted 4 times.

The losing team must have batted at least 4 times.

**NOTE:** The visiting team will be declared the winner of a game under the 15 run rule only if the home team has had an equal number of times at bat.

(4) if a game is shortened by rain, darkness, or other acts of nature before the time limit has expired, the losing team must have had at least 4 at bats; if the losing team has not completed their 4th at bat, the game will be declared a suspended game and will be resumed from the point of interruption and played until time limit expires and both teams have batted equal number of times, or all innings have been completed.

(5) if a game is shortened by rain, darkness, or other acts of nature during the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6th inning and the home team has equaled or scored more runs than the visitor, the runs are all counted and the score is either tied or the home team wins, regardless of the time limit; if the home team does not score as many or more runs to either tie the score or take the lead, the game score reverts to the last inning that was fully completed, regardless of the time limit.

10:04 A. All players present for the game must play **3 consecutive outs** on defense. All players in good standing will play the minimum time required for their league. **A VERIFIED VIOLATION WILL RESULT IN A 10 DAY SUSPENSION FOR THE HEAD COACH. A SECOND OFFENSE WILL RESULT IN THE REMOVAL OF THE COACH FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SEASON.**

- B. Coaches are not obligated to play an individual the minimum time under the following conditions:
1. Player late for start of game or a no-show.
  2. The game is legally shortened due to time limit, run rule, weather, etc.
  3. Player with unexcused absence from practice in the week before the game.
  4. Player who has been discipline problem.
  5. Injured player who could have played the minimum time if uninjured.

- C. A coach who suspends a player according to this rule must notify the opposing manager, field supervisor, and scorekeeper prior to the start of the game (exception - player injured or ejected during the game.)
- D. Coaches who use the exceptions to the all play rule to gain an unfair advantage over another team will be removed from the coaching staff *for the remainder of the season.*
- 10:05 10 players will be in the defensive lineup. The defense must use 4 outfielders that are to play at equal depths (no short-fielder allowed). A team may begin or continue a game with no fewer than 9 players. If 10 players are available, the additional player must be positioned in the outfield.
- 10:06 The player-pitcher must be in the pitchers circle behind and to the side of the coach pitcher and must remain in the circle until the pitched ball reaches home plate. The player-pitcher is required to wear a protective mask or a batting helmet with face guard.

10:07 **THE BATTER**

**\*Only approved USA Baseball stamped 2 ¼ and 2 5/8 bats are to be used. No 2 ¾ bats are allowed in this program.\***

**Batting Order** shall be 1 - 15 (or maximum number present).

- All players will bat in this order throughout the game.
- Teams will follow standard three (3) outs per inning.
- Batter #1 will not bat again until Batter #15 (or the maximum number present) completes his/her turn at bat.
- Teams may play any 10 of the 15 batters in the field.
- All players will be placed on a line-up card in the order they will bat.
- Late players will be added to the bottom of the line-up.
- Players that become unable to play will be skipped in the line-up with no penalty. If players are able to continue later in the game then they will assume their position in the line-up.
- Players who are injured while at bat and cannot continue will be replaced by the next batter in the lineup who will assume the count of the injured batter.
- Players that become injured or cannot continue after reaching base will be replaced by the last player to make an out.

10:08 Each batter will be allowed 3 strikes or 5 pitches before being called out. (The batter will either **hit the ball** or **strike out swinging – the umpire does not call “BALLS & STRIKES”**)

- If a batter hits a foul ball on the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, he/she will not be called out unless it is caught by a defender before it hits the ground
- There will be no walks.
- There will be no bunts. PENALTY-if the ball is hit, the batter is out and ball is dead; if the ball is not hit, a strike shall be called
- The catcher does not have to catch the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.

- 10:09      **“7 runs equals 3 outs”**  
Each team will be limited to 7 runs per inning. After scoring 7 runs in an inning, that team's at-bat is concluded, regardless of the number of outs. If a team commits 3 outs before scoring 7 runs, the at-bat is concluded. In other words, "7 runs or 3 outs, whichever comes first". There is no limit on the number of runs a team can score in the 6th inning.
- 10:10      A coach will pitch to his own team. The coach may pitch from any spot in a direct line between the pitcher's plate (46') and home plate, but no closer than 35 feet from the batter. (A pitching plate will be placed 35 feet from the back point of home plate). Pitches must be delivered over hand.
- 10:11      When the coach-pitcher delivers the pitch and it is hit, the coach-pitcher is to exit the playing field to minimize being a distraction to the players. The coach-pitcher will be allowed to talk the batter, however cannot communicate with any other offensive players or other coaches and must not do any coaching while on the field other than the batter.
- 10:12      Interference by the coach pitcher: The coach-pitcher must not touch a batted or thrown ball until the ball is declared dead. Interference will be declared at the Umpire's discretion.  
**Penalty:**  
**Intentional:** the batter is called out and ball is dead and all base runners shall return to the base they occupied at the time the batter took position in the batters box. No runs allowed.  
**Unintentional:** the ball is dead and the pitch is replayed and all base runners shall return to the base they occupied at the time the batter took position in the batters box. No runs allowed.
- 10:13      **THE RUNNER**
- There will be no stealing.
  - Runner may not leave base until the bat has touched the ball. **Penalty** - base runner is out.
  - A 3 foot chalk line perpendicular to the base path will be drawn halfway between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases, and halfway between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. When the ball is declared dead, runners will be allowed the next base if they are past the halfway point and that base is unoccupied.
  - If a runner fails to touch a base, the manager of the defensive team must make the appeal to the umpire. If the umpire saw the runner miss the base, then the runner shall be called out. The appeal must be done before the next pitch has been thrown, but the appeal may be made while time is out.

10:14 Time shall be called and the ball shall be declared dead immediately by the umpire when the lead runner is stopped or abandons any effort to advance further, if the ball is within the infield area. The umpire will look at the other runners to determine if they are to advance to the next base or return to the last base touched. If any subsequent runner has not passed the half way mark, the runner must return to the previous base. A play on any other runner will release the lead runner if the ball has not been declared dead. Players will not be allowed to call time just to stop a play. Players may call time out while the coach-pitcher has possession of the ball.

**SUGGESTION TO COACHES:** In order to stop the play, have infielder with the ball cut off the path of the lead runner. This will force the runner back to his base and time may be requested.

10:15 Batters, base runners, and player base coaches must wear a batting helmet **with attached facemask.**

10:16 Catchers are required to wear all protective equipment. (The helmet, mask with Throat guard, chest protector, and shin guards are department issued; the protective Cup or padding is to be supplied by the individual.

10:17 Speed up rules will be enforced:

- runner for catcher with 2 outs;
- ball thrown to pitcher after each play
- no infield after the start of the game.

10:18 The infield Fly Rule does not apply in this league.

10:19 **THROWN BAT;** the penalty for a thrown bat will be as follows:

1) Incidental:

- first offense - team warning.
- following offenses - dead ball, batter out, runners may not advance.

2) Flagrant (intentional):

- dead ball, batter out, batter ejected, runners may not advance, no warning

NOTE: It will be up to the official to determine if a player intentionally throws a bat.

10:20 The head coach shall be entitled to request time, ON DEFENSE, to talk to his/her players twice in the same inning without penalty. A 3<sup>rd</sup> time out will not be granted.

10:21 One time-out shall be allowed on offense to talk to a batter during the same time at-bat. A 2<sup>nd</sup> time out to talk to the batter during the same at-bat will not be granted.

## Fun Facts About Kids and Sports

- ☺ Sports can build character in kids **if** their social environment encourages moral and ethical behavior.
- ☺ The most common reasons kids play sports are to have fun and hang out with friends.
- NCAA fact: 3-5% of high school athletes will play college sports (3-5 per 100).
- NCAA fact: .02%-.09% of college athletes will be drafted by a professional team (2-9 per 1000).
- 70% of kids drop out of sports by the age of 13.
- 15-20% of youth sporting events involve some kind of behavior that requires a written notice (National Alliance of Youth Sports).
- The least favorite aspect of the game for kids is the ride home with parents.
- ☺ A child's behavior is a reflection of what they have seen an adult do before. Please be a positive example to your children and players.

# Code of Conduct

The Town of Hope Mills' recreational sports and activities are made available to youth and adults to enjoy fun and wholesome recreational programming that teaches character and sportsmanship. The Town of Hope Mills supports the belief that all recreational programming and experiences should be positive and safe with sportsmanship and enjoyment the primary goal. To achieve this goal, The Town of Hope Mills strives to provide a safe environment for participants of these programs and to protect them from harm to the best of our abilities. To that end, all participants and spectators must be held accountable for their behavior and zero tolerance given for intentional violation of this Code of Conduct.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

- Treat all parties involved with dignity and respect.
- Use appropriate language, tones and volume when communicating. When in doubt, remain silent.
- Become knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all established guidelines, rules, policies and procedures applicable to related programming.
- Recognize/acknowledge HMPR programming as a privilege that can be rescinded for the greater good.

Unfortunately, aggressive behavior is on the rise in recreational programming. Negative attitudes, verbal abuse of officials, poor sportsmanship, profanity, child predators and violence are casting a negative light in our arena. It is for that reason penalties have been assessed and will be enforced for acts perceived by HMPR as intentional violations.

## **PROCEDURES**

- When an incident occurs at a Town of Hope Mills activity/event, the Town officials have the authority to institute immediate suspensions. The Town of Hope Mills officials will offer to escort the offending individual(s) from the facility. If the offending individual(s) refuses to leave the premises, local authorities will be contacted immediately and asked to enforce the ruling.
- Individual(s) removed from the facility in this manner will be sent a registered letter stating the violation of policy and the penalty in effect. The individual(s) will then have forty-eight (48) hours from receipt of the letter to respond to the Town of Hope Mills Recreation Department with a written appeal.
- After the written appeal is received, an investigation will be conducted and the Town of Hope Mills Recreation Department will render a final decision within ten (10) working days from receipt of the appeal.
- A panel consisting of the facility supervisor, program supervisor, immediate supervisory staff and a department superintendent will conduct the investigation. During the investigation, the individual(s) will be suspended from all Town of Hope Mills activities/events/facilities. Individual(s) requesting the appeal may be asked to appear before an appeal review committee led by the Parks and Recreation Director. This decision will be final.
- Suspensions of less than ten (10) days cannot be appealed.

It is Parks and Recreation Department's sincere desire that situations never warrant the removal of an individual from any activity, event or facility. However, it is our obligation to maintain a controlled, safe and healthy atmosphere for everyone. Recreational activities are designed to foster qualities such as character building, social interaction, enjoyment and relaxation while educating the general public and promoting healthy lifestyles. These

activities are not designed to be overly competitive and the Town of Hope Mills Parks and Recreation Department does not promote this contention.

## **OFFENSE & PENALTY** (to include but not limited to:

### **Level 1 - Standard**

- Offense - Failure to follow departmental established guidelines, rules, policies and procedures as applicable to related programming; failure to comply with a Town of Hope Mills official's decision; taunting/mocking/harassment of players; disgruntled expressions such as rude gestures or comments, screaming and loudly disagreeing with others or obscene/profane/vulgar language; throwing/kicking/striking of bats, balls and other miscellaneous equipment; unnecessary roughness among participants.
- Penalty - Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection and removal from the premises and a minimum ten (10) day suspension.

### **Level 2 - Verbal**

- Offense - Malicious obscene/profane/vulgar verbal abuse directed towards another individual; verbal epithets related to race, color, religion, creed, gender or sexual orientation; verbal communication of threats, physical violence or acts of insulting another with intention to offend, defame or embarrass.
- Penalty - Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection and removal from the premises and a minimum thirty (30) day suspension.

### **Level 3 - Physical**

- Offense - Physical aggression towards another; pushing, shoving, striking or touching another individual with the perceived intent to incite, inflict or cause harm; invading another individual's personal space during a dispute.
- Penalty - Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection and removal from the premises and a minimum one hundred eighty day (180) day suspension.

### **Level 4 - Unlawful**

- Offense - Any violation of North Carolina law; possession of firearms, knives, explosive devices weapons or under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, controlled substances, chemical or drug paraphernalia; assault with or without a weapon.
- Penalty - Not necessarily preceded by a warning...immediate ejection and removal from the premises and a minimum one (1) year suspension.

**\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE: Suspensions will be tracked and monitored. Individuals who have been suspended will be immediately placed on probationary status for a period of one (1) year from the date of the offense. A second offense by the same individual within one (1) year, regardless of nature, will result in double the term of the penalty and an extension of probationary period from the date of the second offense. A third violation by the same individual within one (1) year, regardless of nature, will void all Town of Hope Mills Parks and Recreation Department's privileges indefinitely. Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in legal action. \*\*\***