



# 2021 LITTLE LEAGUE INTERLOCK SUPPLEMENTARY PROTOCOLS

## Return to Sport Covid-19 Guidelines

- ❖ Interlock baseball rules documents for Little League, All Girls League and GOBL can be found at <http://d2llontario.ca/>
- ❖ Greater Ottawa Baseball League (19U) also follows the protocols in this document

Source: Baseball Ontario - Return to Sport – Covid 19 Guidelines approved June 11, 2020, updated March 18, 2021

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## INTRODUCTION

This document is an addendum to our regular rules documents which are:

*The Official Little League Rules* apply as usual. A copy of the rule book may be available from league Presidents, or it can be downloaded to your mobile device for a nominal charge.

*The interlock rules* found at <http://d2llontario.ca> also continue to apply, **except for the adjustments set out in this supplementary document.**

All teams must follow regulations set out by the Province of Ontario, and the City of Ottawa who may at any time mandate changes to protocols which could require provisions in this document to be modified. Failure to abide by these conditions will result in suspension from interlock.

The list of protocols below set out the minimum standards for the organization of baseball events. While these guidelines will help mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infections - they cannot eliminate it completely. Persons, who do not feel safe in returning to baseball activities, are encouraged to refrain from doing so.

## ADJUSTMENTS TO INTERLOCK RULES

**Time limit:** No new inning will commence 2 hours after the scheduled start time.

**Back to back games:** There must be a 30-minute break in between back to back games so that players and spectators do not cross paths while vacating and arriving to the park. This means that the first game will have no new inning 1 hour 45 mins after the scheduled start time, and a hard stop at 2 hours, reverting to the last complete inning if necessary. Prompt departure from the field is required after sanitizing is completed. Players and spectators attending the subsequent game may not leave their cars until people from the first game have departed. Should the field be fully vacated prior to the second start time, the game may commence early subject to umpire availability.

**Playoffs** – playoffs will be scheduled for mid August; scores and standings will be kept on D2 site

## GENERAL

### NUMBERS

**Each league or team will keep an attendance tracker** (written or electronic scorecard may be used) for all baseball activities including all players and coaches. On request, information must be available for review. This document may be provided to Ottawa Public Health for contact tracing if required.

## SCREENING/DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19/RETURN FROM COVID-19

**Self-screening** through <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/> or through a link provided by respective leagues is required by all participants and volunteers prior to attending any game, practice, meeting or other in-person team activity and any individual shall not attend if they fail the screening protocol.

A person, who is identified as part of an at-risk group, but otherwise passes the screening questions is discouraged from participating in in-person baseball activities, but they are not considered to have failed the screening protocol.

Any participant, volunteer or spectator diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been in contact with any person having COVID-19 in the previous 14 days **MUST** not attend any game, practice, meeting or other in-person team activity and **MUST** notify their local public health authority.

Any participant, volunteer or spectator diagnosed with COVID-19 must be cleared by appropriate medical authorities prior to attending any in-person baseball activity. Evidence of the clearance needs to be provided to the applicable league President and/or a LL District Administrator.

## CLEANING/SANITIZATION

Teams are to have soap and water or 70% (or higher) alcohol hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes (or acceptable option) readily available at all times, and especially in any medical treatment areas. A list of recommended disinfectants is available on the Health Canada website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid19/list.html>

General cleaning shall be done with microfiber cloths and appropriate cleaning products from the previous bullet.

General cleaning shall take place several times a day using different cleaning cloths for each type of object/surface (i.e. doors, tables, chairs, control panels such as those for scoreboards, remote controls, etc.)

All cleaning personnel (not including those individuals who work for the municipality or facility owner, who shall follow whatever guidelines are established by their employer) shall be protected appropriately with face mask and protective gloves at a minimum. This applies to the cleaning of facilities and/or equipment in accordance with the requirements of this document.

Only adults shall perform cleaning/sanitization functions

Those not involved in the cleaning/sanitization shall stay a minimum of 3 metres away from the cleaning/sanitization activities.

Cleaning/sanitization products will not be used by or stored within access of young children.

Where this document requires the use of protective gloves, this shall mean PPE gloves and not batting gloves or baseball mitts.

### **USE OF FACE MASKS / FACE COVERINGS**

Players and coaches are required to wear non-medical face masks or face coverings while off the field of play including while on the bench during the game.

Players are encouraged to wear non-medical face masks or face coverings during play.

Coaches in the field of play must wear non-medical face masks or face coverings when they approach a player, other coach or umpire. Coaches are encouraged to wear non-medical face masks or face coverings in other situations.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFE PHYSICAL DISTANCE**

Maintain minimum of 3 metres distancing during physical activity, including warm-ups, pre-game and post-game activities, wherever possible.

Use of dugouts should be avoided where safe physical distance cannot be maintained

Use as much space as required outside the dugout (but in safe areas outside of the field of play) to maintain adequate physical distance.

Avoid congestion at points of entry to the diamond (i.e. gates, dugout doors, etc.) to allow maintenance of 3 metres distancing among participants

All spectators must follow the physical distancing rules as required/recommended by Ottawa Regional Public Health and ensure they observe areas required for players.

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF HYGIENE STANDARDS**

Clean hands at least every inning for games or every 30 minutes or after handling shared equipment at practices

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with your hands

Sneeze and/or cough in a tissue or the internal crease of the elbow. Avoid contact of hands with personal respiratory points

All potentially infected waste (i.e. disposable tissues, masks, protective gloves, etc.), hygiene material, rubbish, debris, etc., in all shared spaces (diamonds, dugouts, washrooms, change rooms, etc.) shall be disposed of safely at the end of the in-person baseball activity.

### **VENUES (FIELDS)**

For games, both the home team and the visiting team are responsible for cleaning/sanitizing their dugout before and after games. It is recommended that change rooms/clubhouses not be used.

Washrooms are to be open and accessible only at the discretion and direction of the municipality or facility owner where the venue is located.

Under no circumstances will local acceptable usage limits established by facility owners (i.e. accessing off limits areas of parks or other facilities etc.) be violated.

Thorough disinfection of common spaces before/after use including:

- Frequently touched areas of dugouts including aluminum benches, bat and helmet racks
- Maintenance equipment
- Door handles, fence/gate latches
- Any other spaces that come into frequent touch
- Provide disinfectant wipes and advise event staff and volunteers to disinfect door handles, fence or gate latches, and any other spaces that come into frequent touch in all areas several times per day. Where the municipality or facility owner does not provide maintenance staff to complete these duties several times per day, it is the responsibility of the team to do so

### **SPECTATORS (PARENTS)**

If/when spectators are allowed, make sure to follow local authorities' guidelines strictly

Ensure physical distance from participants and between spectators

Spectators are encouraged to bring their own chairs for personal use or bring disinfectant wipes to clean the area where they sit. Municipalities and/or facility owners may or may not be cleaning bleachers on a regular basis.

Spectators are encouraged not to wander to other areas of the park in which the diamond is located

### **EQUIPMENT**

Sharing of equipment such as batting helmets, catchers' masks, or other equipment likely to have been exposed to respiratory droplets should be avoided. Each player should have his/her own bat, helmet, baseball mitt(s), batting gloves, rosin bags, etc. and store these items inside their personal bag when not in use.

Equipment that must be shared must be cleaned/sanitized between players' use

Avoid personal clothing, equipment or electronics etc. being left in common places. Store inside personal bag always.

Face coverings worn in the field of play at the discretion of the participant are recommended not to be white or grey.

Rules of acceptable behaviour cannot be contravened.

General equipment (eg. L-screens, field maintenance equipment, bases) must be wiped down between groups if it must be shared

### **PARTICIPANTS**

No spitting

No sunflower seeds or chewing gum

No sharing of water bottles or food

No shared coolers

No handshakes, fist or chest bumps, high fives, hugs, kisses, etc

## GAME PLAY

### PRE - GAME

The two teams may share the field for pre-game warm up. Teams are permitted to complete an infield practice before the game.

Minimum physical distance of 3 metres at Home Plate meeting

Involvement is limited to 1 coach from each team. One or both umpires may be involved.

All will wear a face covering.

Line up cards must be prepared but will not be physically shared - photos may be taken by scorekeepers etc. and the lineup card must be made available to show the umpire when requested.

### DUGOUT/BENCH

Dugouts may be used if physical distancing can be accomplished

Players should come to the game with a lawn chair. When use of dugouts is not possible each player will be given a designated area outside of the field of play for them to sit at when not in the game. All player equipment including their bat should be kept at this location. Players must be supervised in this area.

### BATS

- No bat boys/girls shall be allowed

### OTHER EQUIPMENT

No sharing of catcher's masks in pitcher pre-game warm-up, between innings or in the bullpen. If one of the designated catchers is not available, warm up pitches may be thrown to a player or coach who is standing, but not squatting.

If a face covering is worn by the pitcher it will be assessed as per existing rules regarding distracting colours. It is recommended that it not be white or grey.

A safety base may be used at first base. It is not mandatory.

### UMPIRES

Ball/Strike umpire:

May work from behind the catcher as long as he/she is wearing a PPE mask or face covering

Must work 3 metres behind the pitcher if not wearing a PPE mask or face covering

The use of hand sanitizer every half inning is required

Umpires in the field may wear PPE masks at their discretion

## IN - GAME CHANGES

Players shall not lick their fingers, blow on their hands or otherwise go to their mouth. When a pitcher violates this rule the umpire will stop the game, the pitcher will be required to sanitize his/her hands and the game ball will be replaced.

- In junior and above, lead offs are permitted however the defensive players holding runners on base at 1B must wear a PPE mask
- Tag plays are allowed, but the defensive player should vacate the area as soon as reasonably practicable following the tag.  
Mound visits by coach are allowed –the coach must wear a mask if physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Tagging is allowed however it should be done with the glove hand to minimize contact.

## POST-GAME

No hand shaking after the game. It is encouraged to acknowledge the opposing team by hat tipping or other similar gestures.

Post game discussions with the players and coaching staff must be done only with proper physical distancing measures in place. Coaches are encouraged to wear masks when speaking with players.

## COACHES

Team meetings, including pitching visits, shall maintain physical distance of minimum 3 metres.

A maximum of 1 person (coach or player) and the pitcher may be included in a pitching visit. All coaches must have access to a face covering and be prepared to wear if physical distance rules can not be maintained.

Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (visor or mask, gloves) must be used by trainers (or persons performing trainer function) when assessing an injury

If a coach must approach an umpire, physical distancing of at least 3 metres must be maintained. Failure to do so may result in ejection.

While on offence, base coaches must always stay within their box, except to avoid a play being made in the coach's box. Any discussions between coaches and players (e.g. batter visiting 3<sup>rd</sup> base coach; coach talking to runners, etc.) must maintain physical distancing of at least 3 metres.

Pitchers, catchers, spotters, and coaches must always maintain a physical distance of 3 metres while pitchers are warming up in the bullpen.