**2016 Long Hill Baseball and Softball**

**Universal Rules for all Divisions**

**RULES OF BEHAVIOR**

“CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS. COACHES AND SPECTATORS" SHALL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.

1. Managers and coaches are responsible for their players' and parents' actions at practices and games.
2. All spectators are to remain behind the players' bench.
3. No one is permitted behind the backstop during play.
4. There will be no team heckling, harassing or intimidation between players, coaches or spectators.

FIRST VIOLATION - Umpire will give a warning to the coach of the offending team.

SECOND VIOLATION - If team at bat is guilty of the offense the umpire will award the team on defense an out. If the team in the field is guilty of the offense the umpire will award the batter first base and all base runners will advance one base.

1. In the event a player or coach is ejected from a game and fails to leave the field (complex), the game is automatically forfeited, and the offenders will be subject to suspension.
2. There will be no heckling, harassing or intimidation of umpires by coaches, players or spectators.

**SAFETY GUIDELINES**

SAFETY RULES APPLY TO ALL LEAGUES WITHIN Watchung Hills.

1. ALL COACHES SHALL HAVE COMPLETED THE RUTGERS S.A.F.E.T.Y. COURSE AND REQUIREMENTS as per each town Rec Dept.
2. Only players in uniform are allowed on the field as batters, fielders and base runners. Keep all non-team members away from the field, dugout, on deck area and warm up areas.
3. The team at bat is not permitted to allow the on deck batter, or other batters; to take practice swings outside of an approved batting cage. Only the batter and on deck batter may have bats in their hands. Two practice swings are permitted before entering the batters box. Keep all other team members away from the on deck area.
4. Batters, base runners and catchers must wear helmets. If a base runner loses his or her helmet running between bases, the runner must stop at the next base after losing their helmet or they can stop, pick it up, put it back on their head and continue to advance. (i.e. if a runner going from first to second base loses their helmet they can a) stop at second base until time out is called and retrieve the helmet or b) they can retrieve the helmet while the ball is still alive and proceed to continue running the bases).
5. If a player is injured play will stop immediately until the nature of the injury is determined.  Follow procedures outlined in the safety-training course. Do not move an injured player until it is determined that no further injury will occur. The coach must prepare a written accident report and notify a league official immediately.
6. Defensive coaches must remain outside the fence boundaries or in the dugout at all times.  (Exceptions: Pigtails, Tee-ball, Rookie, AA Minors).
7. Offensive base coaches must remain in the area designated as the coaching box and may not touch base-runners while the ball is in play. A base-runner touched by a coach while the ball is in play will be called out. A player in a coaching box must wear a batting helmet.
8. Sneakers, rubber soled shoes or baseball shoes with rubber or plastic cleats only must be worn at all practices and games. Metal spikes are not allowed, except in Senior League.
9. Interference and obstruction rules will be strictly enforced.
10. Interference – is an act by the team at bat, which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. The fielder, in the act of fielding a hit or thrown ball, has the right of way. The runner will be called *out* for interference, and other runners shall return to the last base that was legally touched at the time of the interference.
11. Obstruction: is the act of a fielder, while not in possession of the bail or not in the Act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner.
12. Interference and obstruction are umpire judgment calls.
13. A base-runner must avoid contact with the fielder making the play at a base. Barreling over is an Umpire judgment call. The runner will be called out, the ball is dead and no runners can advance. If intentional, the umpire must notify the league commissioner of the incident and may result in a suspension for a period of time.

**UNIFORM GUIDELINES**

1. BASEBALL- All players must wear team shirts, baseball caps and baseball pants to play.  Shirts shall be tucked-in and caps worn straight.

**COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Provide a positive atmosphere for all players.
2. Be a role model. Teach players good sportsmanship and good conduct, including respect toward teammates, opponents and officials.
3. Teach players safe basic baseball or softball skills.
4. Cooperate with and assist umpires. Teach cooperation and respect towards umpires. Umpires decisions are final (especially, but not limited to judgment calls).
5. Prohibit use of offensive language or harassment by players, coaches, parents and spectators.
6. Establish effective relationships with parents to promote a positive playing and learning environment for the children, and to promote good sportsmanship and good conduct of the parents.
7. Attend and manage all practices and games. Provide qualified coverage if you cannot attend. Designated replacements shall be approved by the league commissioner and shall have taken the Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. course.
8. Understand and comply with league rules established by the board, as explained and supervised by the league commissioner.
9. Distribute and collect team and player equipment. All equipment shall be returned to the boxes following the game.
10. Coordinate distribution of and conformance to schedules. Notify all players of rescheduled games.
11. No smoking around players, on the field or in the dugouts.
12. Limit of three adults in dugout at any time during games.
13. Each team is responsible for cleaning up their side of the field before leaving (dugouts and surrounding area). Pitchers mound and batters boxes to be raked at completion of games and practices.

**Watchung Hills Baseball**

**GENERAL RULES**

1. Managers shall have a copy of the official rules and an official roster for the team at every game.
2. All managers must have a team meeting with the team parents prior to the start of the first game.  Review with them: The objectives of the program, behavior and safety rules.
3. Avoid formal protests by trying to resolve problems at that time with the umpires. If a protest is unavoidable, the protest must be called before the next pitch, and the coach must notify the umpire that the game is being continued under protest.  A letter detailing the nature of the protest must be delivered to the league commissioner within 24 hours.  Protests apply only to rules and will be addressed by the "dispute resolution committee."  Protests are not accepted on umpire judgment calls.
4. Violation of any pitching rule will result in a forfeit.
5. If a rule is not specifically addressed, the official rules of Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken baseball/softball will be followed, subject to modifications stipulated or interpreted by Watchung Hills Baseball Interleague Committee.

**STANDARD RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. MUST PLAY RULES – MUST PLAY rules apply to all LHLL Divisions.
	1. DEFENSIVE PLAYING REQUIREMENTS: All players will get 3 innings in the field.
		1. Violation of this rule will result in immediate player substitution or forfeit.
		2. Defensive changes are not permitted during an inning.  Exceptions: pitching changes; due to injury; player withdrawn from game.
		3. Play time for late arriving players starts from their arrival time.  I.e. an inning NOT PLAYED does not count as an INNING SAT.
	2. OFFENSIVE PLAYING REQUIREMENTS:  All players will be listed in the lineup, which will be the batting order for the entire game.  Thus all players will bat in order, whether they are playing the field at the time or not.
2. GAME TIME RULES AND FORFEIT RULES
	1. See schedule for game time.
	2. The home team, which is determined by referring to the schedule, is at bat last. Visitors are to bat first. Home team occupies the first base side of the field; visitors occupy third base side.
	3. Warm-ups: The visiting team has the field from 30 minutes to 15 minutes prior to game time. The home team has the field from 15 minutes prior to game time. NOTE: Back to back games (e.g., weekend and night doubleheaders) take priority over practices. A game will not be delayed to accommodate practice / warm up time. Remaining free time will be divided equally. This normally does not happen, so coaches should have pitchers warm up on the sidelines.
	4. Umpires should report to the field 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time. Ground rules and special league rules should be reviewed with the coaches prior to starting the game.
	5. A team must field SEVEN players by 15 minutes past game time.
	6. If at any time, a team falls below the required SEVEN players – the team shall forfeit.
	7. LATE ARRIVALS AND PLAYERS LEAVING:
		1. Late arriving players will be inserted as the last batter in the lineup whenever they arrive.
		2. If a player leaves a game for any reason, that player’s position in the line-up is simply skipped without penalty of an OUT.
3. OFFICIAL GAME: A game in which the losing team completed its time at bat in the fourth or subsequent inning, or the game was tied after at least four completed innings are played. For senior league five innings.
4. TIE GAMES AND EXTRA INNINGS:  Tie games may continue into extra innings, time and daylight permitting.  However, regular season games shall abide by the scheduled time constraints and simply be recorded as a TIE.
	1. Exception: PLAYOFF GAMES MUST BE COMPLETED WITH A WINNER.
5. CANCELLATIONS, RESCHEDULING:
	1. Cancellation prior to start of game must be made by the league commissioner or board representative.
	2. Coaches and commissioners shall work together to immediately reschedule any/all cancelled REGULAR SEASON games.
6. SUSPENDED GAMES
	1. Suspension of a game in progress: The umpire’s decision to call a game in progress, which is not yet an Official Game, due to weather or darkness is final.
	2. Suspended games will resume from the exact point that they were stopped.
		1. The coach of the team which was losing at the time the game was stopped has the option to not finish the game if he elects to do so.
	3. The score in games that end or are called because of rain, darkness or time that have completed enough innings to be considered OFFICIAL as defined above will revert back to the score at the end of the last complete inning.
	4. A power failure will be considered a SUSPENDED GAME if the game is not yet OFFICIAL as defined above.  (Note:  If the lights go out while the ball is in play, the ball is dead. When play is resumed, the batter will be up to bat with a clean count and all runners will assume the base they were on prior to the dead ball.)
7. ALL PITCHING RULES AND MUST PLAY RULES REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR EXTRA-INNING GAMES AND CONTINUATION OF SUSPENDED GAMES.
	1. Example: A pitcher can not re-enter the same game, regardless of extra innings or days rest between suspension and continuation of game.