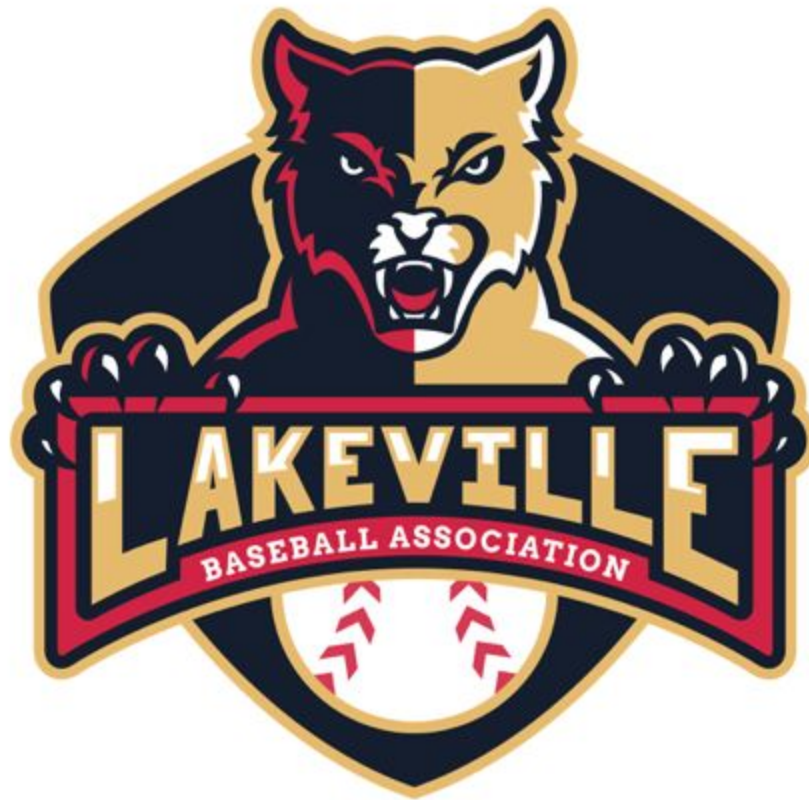


# Travel Handbook



Revised February 2020



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# Travel Baseball Mission

Our mission is to help young athletes develop love for the game of baseball and assist athletes in developing advanced baseball skills and provide the opportunity to compete with other players of similar abilities.

Our objectives are to provide an organized program for the youth of the community that will:

- Promote physical fitness, stamina and agility.
- Develop self-confidence.
- Develop respect for others, teamwork, pride in team and community.
- Teach the fundamentals of baseball.
- Incorporate the spirit of good sportsmanship in victory and defeat.
- Allow every player to have an opportunity to participate and develop.
- Play in a safe and healthy environment.
- Allow everyone to have fun and enjoy the game.

Our traveling program is built around the players. We believe players should have an honest evaluation of their abilities (evaluation), be put in a position to succeed (team selection), and be provided opportunities to improve (development). The intent of the program is to allow those players who want to play the appropriate level, the opportunity to play baseball, for as long as they want to play.

# Travel Program

## 10-11 Year Olds

"AAA", "AA", and an "A" team may be formed for each age level and will play in the Metro Baseball League and in weekend tournaments. If registration numbers justify it and resources allow, additional teams may be added.

- Bases will be 60 feet apart for 10 year olds and 65 feet apart for 11 year olds.
- The pitcher's mound is 46 feet from home plate.
- Players will pitch to the opposing team, and there will be no adults on the field except for the umpires and coaches in the 1st and 3rd base coaches' boxes.

## 12-13 Year Olds

"AAA", "AA", and an "A" team may be formed for each age level and will play in the Metro Baseball League and in weekend tournaments. If registration numbers justify it, and resources allow, additional teams may be added.

- Bases will be 75 feet apart for 12 year olds and 75-82 feet apart (home fields are 80 feet apart) for 13 year olds.
- The pitcher's mound is 52 feet from home plate for 12 year olds and 54 feet from home plate for 13 year olds.
- Runners are allowed to lead off and pitchers will pitch from the stretch.

## 14-15 Year Olds

"AAA" and "AA" teams may be formed for each age level and will play in the Metro Baseball League and in weekend tournaments. If registration numbers justify it, and resources allow, additional teams may be added.

- Bases will be 90 feet apart (full size).
- The pitcher's mound is 60½ feet (full size) from home plate.
- A combined 14/15 year old "A" team may be formed and will play in the Metro Baseball League and in weekend tournaments. If registration numbers justify it, and resources allow, additional teams may be added.

## In-House Registration

Those players not making one of the traveling teams are automatically registered for the LBA In-House Baseball program.

# Fees

## Registration Fee

The registration fee covers the team's expenses for participation in league games, three (3) tournaments, umpires, equipment, field usage, field maintenance and improvement, and association administration and support.

## **Tryout Fee (non-refundable)**

The tryout fee will/can be used to hire outside evaluators or high school coaches and for other costs specifically related to the tryouts. The tryout fee is non-refundable and will be collected at the time of registration or at first tryout session.

## **Volunteer Fee**

Each LBA family participating on a travel baseball team (10's through 15's) will be required to complete 3 volunteer hours per baseball season per family. LBA volunteer opportunities will be posted continuously on the LBA website throughout the season for sign up.

A family may opt out of performing volunteer hours for that year by paying a \$100 opt out fee at the time of registration. If a family does not complete their required 3 hours of volunteer time, a fee of \$150 will be assessed to their account and they will not be allowed to register for the following season without completing payment.

### **What qualifies as approved volunteer hours:**

- One (1) head coach and two (2) assistant coaches from each travel team (10's to 15's)
- One (1) team manager per travel team (10's to 15's)
- Volunteer assignments that are posted on the LBA website for sign up. Some volunteer events are;
  - o Spring/Fall Clean up
  - o Uniform and Apparel sizing
  - o All Star Festival
  - o Tournaments
- Current LBA Board Member
- Member of an LBA Board Sub-Committee and approved by the LBA Volunteer Coordinator
- Any event preapproved by the LBA Volunteer Coordinator prior to working

### **What DOES NOT qualify as volunteer hours:**

- Keeping the scorebook or statistics for your team(s)
- Field prep or clean-up for games and/or practices
- Coaching or managing a team at any other level than travel (i.e. House or Senior Youth teams)
- Any event that is not posted on the LBA website for sign up that is not pre-approved as a volunteer position by the LBA Volunteer Coordinator

## **Refunds**

Registration fees are non-refundable. Refunds of fees will be considered upon written request to the LBA Finance Director. Refund request will only be accepted up to two weeks after registration

closes. Refunds are granted solely at the discretion of the LBA board of directors. If a refund is made, a \$25 per player cancellation processing fee will be assessed.

## Tryout Process

### Eligibility

A player is eligible to participate in LBA Travel Program tryouts subject to the following criteria:

- In accordance with LBA Board policy, membership is open to all children who reside within the City of Lakeville or within the boundaries of Independent School District 194 (ISD 194).
- Must be a registered member of LBA
- Must have paid all applicable fees.
- Must meet age guidelines specified by the national governing organizations.

### Birth Date Cutoff

As established by the Metro Baseball League, the birth date cutoff is May 1st. The team (age level) for which a player is eligible is the same as the player's age on that birth date cutoff date or grade they are in. A player cannot "play up" (i.e., play on a team older than his/her age level or grade level) unless granted permission by the Traveling Director. However, a player cannot "play down" (i.e., play on a team younger than his/her age level) for any reason, per the national governing organizations. A copy of the child's birth certificate should be supplied to the head coach at the first parent/coach pre-season meeting.

Whatever the player's age as of April 30, 2019, will determine the age group. For example, birthdate is April 30, 2004, the age group is 15 and if birthdate is May 1, 2004, the age group is 14 but is allowed to play up in age group 15 if they are young for their grade or stay back in age group 14.

### Participation

A player must participate in all scheduled tryout sessions unless an excused absence is granted prior to the start of that session by the Travel Director. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each tryout session. A player absent without being excused may be disqualified. Extenuating and unusual circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### Injury or Illness Absence

A player who has registered for tryouts and cannot participate due to an injury or illness will be excused, prior to the start of the tryout session, upon delivery of a doctor's note describing the player's limitations. A player excused due to injury or illness must present a signed doctor's release indicating that the player is medically fit before he/she will be allowed to participate in any LBA Travel Program activity. However, a spot will not be held for a player unless it is reasonable to believe he will be ready to play without limitations by opening day of the season.

**It is not the Lakeville Traveling Baseball Program's intent to prohibit players experiencing a short-term injury from playing in the Lakeville Traveling Baseball Program. All reasonable accommodations will be made to determine an injured player's skill level and place them on the appropriate team. Items used in determining skill level may include a modified tryout, a**

**specially scheduled tryout, and the previous year's coach evaluations and statistics among other methods.**

### **Player Identification**

Each player will be identified by a number assigned at the tryout sessions. A player must not wear clothing from a prior year's traveling team, use any paraphernalia identifying him/her as a previous traveling player, or wear any article of clothing with his/her name imprinted on it.

### **Player Tryout Evaluation**

Every player's baseball skills will be evaluated by a team of impartial evaluators provided by the LBA. The evaluators will be people who are known to possess the knowledge necessary to evaluate a player's skill at a particular level. It is the intent of the program to utilize impartial ISD194 coaches whenever possible.

### **Team Selection**

Players will be placed on a team based upon their own merits. If players have played on a previous year's team, their prior commitment and character may also be considered. No player will be placed on a team over a more deserving candidate because he/she has previously played on a traveling team.

Once tryouts are complete, the data collected along with recommendations by the evaluators will be submitted to the Travel Director and/or their designees for review and final team selection.

Players, parents and family members are prohibited from contacting Board Members, Evaluators, Lakeville Travel Coordinators and Coaches during the tryout, evaluation or selection process for the purpose of talking about player selection or tryout scores.

**Wait 24 hours after teams are announced before contacting any LBA representative or Board member.**

### **Team Formation and Structure**

**'AAA'** – This is the most competitive traveling team and will play in 3 metro tournaments. Based on trying to put players in the best possible position to succeed, some age levels may not have a AAA team.

**'AA'** - This is a competitive traveling team and will play in 3 metro tournaments. The number of 'AA' teams will vary at each age group. Some age groups may not have a 'AA' team.

**'A'** –We are expecting all age groups will be able to form an 'A' level traveling team. A Teams will play in 3 tournaments and have the option to play in additional tournaments.

Parents may request their child to play at a level not higher than AA or A level to match their families commitment or to help aide their players' skill development in baseball. This must be done prior to the player's first tryout session for the upcoming season with a written email to the Travel Director.

In travel baseball, players can only move up or down one level from year to year (can't move from AAA to A or A to AAA).

Anyone who does not make a travel team will NOT automatically be registered for a House team. If you have been playing "House" and/or do not wish to try out for traveling, please register for the age appropriate House team.

## **Start of the Season**

Weather permitting, practices will begin shortly after the city opens the fields for the season. League play begins in May and continues through July, with approximately 16 weekday league games, plus 3 to 5 regular season tournaments played on weekends. The number of tournaments, and whether or not one is played out of town, is at the discretion of the team. Post season tournament play (state and national events) is by invitation and depends upon success in qualifying tournaments during the season. **Post season tournaments require an additional fee that will be paid for by the assigned players on the team.**

# **Equipment**

## **Uniforms**

The traveling baseball uniform consists of the following articles:

- Baseball Pants
- Baseball Socks
- Baseball Hat
- Jersey
- Belt

The cost of the uniform is not included in the registration fee thus; the cost of the uniform is the responsibility of the player. The LBA will work with a local vendor to arrange for these articles to be available at a reduced price.

In addition to the required uniform, each player must provide his/her own helmet; bat (see bat regulations below), glove, baseball cleats, and personal protective equipment (except catcher's equipment). Most leagues require, and we encourage, the wearing of a hard protective cup. Parents are responsible for providing any additional safety equipment that they choose to use.

Properly fitted, correctly sized equipment is very important to a player's success, especially in terms of gloves and shoes. Players are encouraged to use cleated baseball shoes with hard rubber or metal cleats according to the rules of the league in which they participate.

The traveling baseball program also supplies all catcher's gear, practice and game balls, and other equipment necessary for games and practices. Any damage caused by negligence or intentional abuse will be reimbursed by the player and/or parents. Failure to do so will result in denial of any further participation in any LBA program by the player or any other member of his/her family.



## **Age Specific Equipment Information**

### **10-13 year olds**

Rules: National Federation of State High School Associations rules, with specific modifications by age.

Spikes: Hard rubber only. Metal spikes are allowed for 13 year olds.

Bats: Bats must be 2 1/4" with unlimited weight differential or bats must be between 2 1/2" and 2 3/4" and have a -10 differential or less (i.e. 30" – 20.0 oz.) **All bat regulations are determined by the national governing organizations and are subject to change.**

### **14-15 year olds**

Rules: National Federation of State High School Associations rules.

Spikes: Metal spikes are allowed.

Bats:

14-U, 14-15A: Bats must be 2 5/8" with a -5 or less differential and USA Baseball Stamp.

15-U: Bats must be 2 5/8" with a -3 or less differential. BBCOR or wood.

## **Coach Selection**

Anyone who desires to be a head coach or assistant coach will be required to fill out an application and may need to sign up for an interview.

All interview candidates are informed during their interview that their status as coach (if selected) will be provisional upon their child qualifying for that team via the tryout/evaluation process. If the player qualifies for a different team, or no team, the Provisional Coach will be excused, and a new coach will be selected from the parent/coach applicants of the players who qualified/were chosen for the team.

Primary selection criteria include past baseball coaching and playing experience, personal coaching and human development philosophies, organizational skills, strong moral and ethical characteristics, coaching ability, ability to work with others, willingness to teach others, active in the Lakeville Baseball program, follows LBA policies/procedures, and the applicant's commitment to devote several hundred hours to the program during the season and off season.

Coaches' responsibilities are a year round commitment with tournament selection, league meetings, continuation of coach training, caring for equipment, recommendations/feedback to players, coach mentoring, and helping with other LBA activities. Coaches will be required to evaluate each player at the end of the year and hand in results to the Travel Director and review them with the players. This is required and could affect your chances of coaching the next season if this is not completed.

While it is important that a traveling team coach has expertise in the sport, it is just as important for the coach to have the welfare of the individual players and the player's character and confidence development foremost in mind. Even a person of integrity, sincerity, and high idealism needs other

qualifications (i.e., the ability to remain even-tempered under pressure, the ability to discover ways to impart his/her knowledge to each individual player, and the ability to understand children, to relate to them, and to be sensitive to their developmental requirements). If chosen as a coach, a background check will be conducted.

A mandatory coaches meeting will be held to review coaching requirements and to further define coaching responsibilities and the selection process. **The Travel Director will make all final coach selections.**

## **USA Baseball**

In an effort to better serve our Lakeville Baseball Athletes and Coaches, we have partnered with USA Baseball to offer a free three-tiered coaching certification. The USA Baseball Coaches Certification Program is a certification pathway for any and all individuals who are currently coaching baseball or aspire to coach at any level of the game. The program aims to create a higher standard of coaching education and enhance the ability of coaches to better serve their athletes, their team and their communities.

The pathway consists of three certification levels ("A," "B," and "C"), as shown below, which are each free of cost, and require the completion of a series of courses, resources and programs offered by USA Baseball. The curriculum includes educational resources that cover important topics such as health and safety, creating a positive environment, recognizing and responding to misconduct, practice planning, game management, skill-specific development and hosting local coaching clinics in your own community.

This program is for all members of the baseball coaching community, regardless of age, level, or experience. With the launch of the Coaches Certification Program, USA Baseball hopes to proliferate a culture of continued development amongst the coaches of our great game. Ultimately, we aim to positively influence the maturation and experience of all athletes, at all skill levels.

LBA is very excited about this partnership and how it will assist us in player development through quality training of our volunteer coaches. The Coaching Certifications – ABC – do not expire, but the Pure Baseball Compliance Designation expires based on the expiration of the background check, which is on a yearly basis. [Click here](#) to read more about the USA Certification program.

## **Coach Responsibilities**

A coach is a teacher of baseball skills, a manager of the functions necessary to run a team, and is responsible for the social, psychological, and physical development of all players in his/her care. He/she is accountable to the players and their families, the LBA Traveling Director and the LBA Board.

### **Coach Responsibilities include but not limited to:**

- Obey and enforce all rules outlined in this handbook
- Treat all players in an equal and fair manner

- Provide equal playing time for all players regardless of skill level as outlined in the Playing Time section of this document.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship, self-control and proper behavior and encourage it in your coaches, parents and players
- Attend all mandatory coach meetings
- Teach the players to have fun and enjoy competition. Help the players to develop a healthy, competitive attitude toward winning and losing.
- Attend a minimum of 90% team practices and games
- **Conduct pre-season parents meeting.** At this meeting, the coach should set the tone and expectation for the season, distribute the schedule, roster, parent responsibilities/ code of behavior, etc.
- Schedule field times for practices and games
- Report any problems with fields to their Level Coordinator
- Recruit parent volunteers when needed
- Attend all mandatory coach training sessions
- **Track players playing time by position**
- Track players pertinent playing stats
- Take care of equipment (this includes team equipment and field equipment)
- Return field equipment to proper location
- Provide year-end player evaluations. One copy to the player and one copy to the LBA Travel Director
- Comply with the current tryout process by providing any required player scoring and associated information.

## **Playing Time**

Minimum playing time for 10-13 year olds will be **4 defensive innings per game on average. No player shall sit more than two consecutive innings unless for disciplinary reasons.** It is preferred that a player does not sit two consecutive innings. The starting lineup will provide an opportunity for every player to have a place in the batting order. Playing time should be the same for all players with the exception of time loss due to absence, injury, and discipline.

Minimum playing time for 14 and 15 year olds will be **4 innings defensively on average. No player shall sit more than four consecutive innings unless for disciplinary reasons.** Playing time should be the same for all players with the exception of time loss due to absence, injury or discipline.

## **Plate appearances**

Batting orders are at the discretion of the coaches. However, a rolling batting order is mandatory in league games.

10-13 age groups will have all players bat with the exception of injury, and discipline.

14-15 age groups must abide by league and tournament rules when creating batting orders. The general rule for this age group is 9 batting with a DH allowed.

## **Rotation of players**

A general rule of thumb is: Age 10-11 year old players will rotate players in 3-4 positions throughout the year. Age 12-15 will start focusing on 2-3 positions.

**\* Some game situations (e.g., 10 run rule) may prevent this from happening in a specific game. Note: If a player is in the lineup as a designated hitter (DH), he/she may not receive any defensive playing time for that game.**

## **Coach Evaluation Forms/Suggestions**

Parents and players are asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each season on their experience with the traveling baseball program and their coaches. This is your most significant opportunity to express your opinions and to help us make improvements. Contents of evaluations are confidential and are viewed by the Traveling Director and the Player & Coach Development Coordinator. Please take advantage of this opportunity. If you do not receive your evaluation form, please contact the appropriate Level Coordinator listed on our website. Program, coach, and player evaluation forms will be discussed at the preseason parents' meeting.

## **Player Development**

The LBA Traveling Program is committed to ongoing player development. It is our philosophy the critical skills of hitting, fielding, pitching and catching require off-season development. As such, the Traveling Program will work to provide appropriate off-season development opportunities.

It is also our philosophy that coaches should focus on separate player development skills during the baseball season. These include, but are not limited to, the following: base running, pitch selection (both batters and pitchers), situational fielding, situational hitting, bunting, base stealing, cutoffs, pickoff moves, balks, and sliding.

## **Player End of Year Evaluation**

Coaches shall conduct an end of year evaluation for all players on their team. The end of year player evaluations shall be tracked. Prior year evaluations and statistics may be used in next year's player selection process.

Players will receive a copy of their year-end evaluation. These are personal and confidential records and will not be shared with other families in the association.

## **Level Coordinators**

The Level Coordinators are also parent volunteers. The role of the level coordinator is to:

- Assist with coach interviews
- May assist with team selection in partnership with head Coaches and the Travel Director, if requested
- Coordinate tournament selection for age level
- Sounding board for coaches
- Second line of contact for parents within the age group.

Level Coordinators will not be a head coach.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

The Lakeville Baseball Association's disciplinary policies will mirror those of our parent organization, the Metro Baseball League. However, the LBA reserves the right to build upon those policies.

The Travel Director and Level Coordinator reserve the right to discipline any coach, parent, or player who violates the LBA Discipline policy provided by the LBA Board of Directors.

A coach or umpire may suspend any player, parent, or coach who acts in a non-sportsmanlike manner, as described in the "Behavior" section below. Subsequent violations may result in the player, parent, or coach being removed from the program. All violations must be reported to the Travel Director and Level Coordinator.

### **Behavior**

The highest standards of sportsmanship will be expected from the players, parents, coaches, umpires, and spectators.

Conduct that will not be tolerated includes verbal abuse, tantrum-like acts, profanity, physical aggression on or off the field, and acts intended to cheat the spirit of the rules or to intimidate the umpires. Umpires may use their discretion whether to issue a warning or to immediately eject the violator (coach, player, or spectator) from the game. If a spectator is ejected from the game, the Head Coach is also ejected. The umpires and/or coaches are responsible for reporting all incidents to the Travel Director and the Level Coordinator. Subsequent violations may result in suspension from play and/or attendance. If a parent or player has a problem with the performance of an umpire, he/she should direct his/her concerns to the team's coach. The coach represents the LBA Travel Program and should be the only person communicating with the umpires.

One of the objectives of the program is to teach respect for the officials and the proper procedure for dealing with any problems with the umpires. Unless playing in the field, at bat, on base, on deck, or coaching, all players shall remain on the bench. It is mandatory that each batter, on deck player, runner, player in a coach's box, or person on the field wear a batting helmet that meets NOCSAE standards.

Players will treat their coaches, parents, teammates, the umpires, and the opposition with respect. After each game, the participants will line up and shake hands. Spectators are restricted to the areas that are "out of play" and away from the benches.

### **Guidelines: (These are cumulative through the season)**

- 1. Throwing/abuse of equipment**
  - a. First occurrence – sit one inning
  - b. Second occurrence – sit rest of game
  - c. Third or more occurrence – sit rest of game & one game suspension
- 2. Arguing Umpire**

- a. First occurrence – verbal warning
- b. Second occurrence – sit one inning
- c. Third or more occurrence – sit rest of game & one game suspension

### **3. Inappropriate Language**

- a. First occurrence – sit one inning
- b. Second occurrence – sit rest of game
- c. Third or more occurrence – sit rest of game & one game suspension

### **4. Ejection**

- a. First ejection will result in one additional game suspension. (player must still attend the suspended game)
- b. Second ejection will result in a one game suspension (player must still attend the suspended game). A meeting between player, parents, coach, Level Coordinator will be conducted to discuss issue and define a resolution.
- c. Third ejection can result in player being removed from the team if a resolution cannot be found. Three game suspension (player must still attend the suspended games). A meeting between player, parents, coach, Level Coordinator, Travel Director, and LBA Commissioner will be conducted to discuss issue and resolution.
- d. Fourth ejection will result in the child being removed from the team.

## **Respect the Game**

Players are responsible for their actions on and off the field. This is true during practices, team activities, and games as you are representing Lakeville Traveling Baseball.

***The following actions may incur discipline through a reduction in playing time – (recommended: inning per occurrence cumulative throughout the season)***

#### **1. Hustle**

- a. Players are expected to run on and off of the field of play between innings. The field of play is defined by the white foul lines.
- b. Running to first on hit balls. Any player not running out a play to first.

#### **2. Uniform**

- a. Hats will be worn facing forward.
- b. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

#### **3. Umpires**

- a. No arguing balls and strikes will be allowed.
- b. Play calls will not be argued/contested.

#### **4. Other Player and Coaches**

- a. Respect will be shown for all opposing and own team players at all times.
- b. Respect will be shown for all opposing Coaches and your Coaches at all times.

#### **5. Practice**

- a. Practice time is the most important time for players to hustle and listen.
  - i. Players not hustling between activities.
  - ii. Players goofing off or not listening while a coach is speaking.

#### **6. Games**

- a. Supporting fellow teammates should be conducted at all times.
  - i. While in the dugout all players should be paying attention to the game and cheering on fellow players.
- b. Player readiness.
  - i. All players should be ready to bat when it is their turn.

- c. All players should be ready to take the field. Non baseball activities shall not be conducted in the dugouts or on the field during a game.

## **Player Removal**

Once a team is selected, a coach cannot replace a team member solely because of lack of skill. A player may be released for the following specific reasons:

- Frequent flagrant disregard of the player's responsibilities.
- Continued play in such a manner as to endanger others and/or self.
- Displaying an uncaring attitude which results in not applying oneself, thus hurting the team's competitive and team building potential.
- Failure to work within a team environment (placing self-interest before the teams).
- Repeated non-sportsman like behavior.
- Four unexcused absences.

Before requesting the removal of a player, the coach must discuss the situation with the Level Coordinator and the player's parent(s) and attempt to correct the situation. The discussion should include an objective description of the behavior and of the intended discipline. If this fails to correct the situation, the coach must then notify the appropriate Level Coordinator and the Travel Director who must approve any further action. The Travel Director must, in turn, notify the LBA Board of Directors of the action taken within 72 hours of its occurrence.

## **Coach Removal**

Removal of a team coach is a very serious situation and must be dealt with in a fair and open manner.

**Coaches may be removed for the following reasons:**

- Failure to perform duties.
- Conduct detrimental to the player, the team, the organization, and/or the parents.
- Abusive behavior, whether physical or psychological, towards players, parents, opposing players, coaches, spectators, umpires, volunteers, or league officials.

**Any coach removed from league or tournament games will automatically receive a one game suspension.** A suspension means that a coach cannot attend the game either as a coach or a spectator. If a coach is removed a second time during the season, he will receive a minimum two game suspension AND will meet before a review committee consisting of the Travel Director, Coach and Player Development Coordinator and the Level Coordinator. The review committee will decide on the coach's future involvement in the program.

## **Umpires**

While our expectations of the quality of umpiring may be high, we must always exercise patience, understanding, good sportsmanship, and respect for their efforts. The character of our players, coaches, fans, and community, is gauged by the message the umpires carry out into the baseball community statewide.

# GENERAL POLICIES

## Attendance

Every player's presence is important and is expected. Unless otherwise exempted by the coach, all players are expected to attend all practices, league games, and tournament games. Excused absences will be granted for school, family and religious events; however, it is expected that the coach will be notified in advance of such events. Unexcused absences will result in a reduction of playing time.

### **Guidelines:**

- One unexcused absence may result in a partial or full game suspension (player must still attend the suspended game)
- Second unexcused absence will result in a one game suspension (player must still attend the suspended game). A meeting between player, parents, coach and Level Coordinator will be conducted to discuss the issue and define a resolution.
- Third unexcused absence can result in a player being removed from the team if a resolution cannot be found. Three game suspension (player must still attend the suspended games). A meeting between player, parents, coach, Level Coordinator, Travel Director, and LBA Commissioner will be conducted to discuss the issue and define a resolution.
- Fourth unexcused absence will result in the player being removed from the team.

## August Classic Team Selection

The MBL's August Classic team selections will be made by the team's coaches (or as dictated by the current MBL policy).

## Communication

We encourage appropriate communication between Board Members, Travel Director, Coordinators, Level Coordinators, parents, coaches and players. The Travel Director is responsible to promote reading this handbook at the parent meetings.

## Commitment

Traveling baseball requires a significant time commitment from players, coaches and parents, from April through July, and possibly into early August. Every player's presence is important and he/she is expected to attend all practices, league games, and tournament games. Unexcused absences may result in a reduction of playing time.

**Commitment from our parents is** as important as that from the players. In order for our association to be a success and for our children to maximize their joy of playing traveling baseball, we need your help in running these events. A three-hour volunteer commitment is required as part of your commitment to traveling baseball.

## Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, the coach will determine if there will be a practice. At games, the home team's coach is responsible for determining whether the game will be started. Once play begins, the umpire is responsible for determining whether play should be halted.



In all cases, unless you receive a call from your team's coach, you should appear at the site of the game or practice as scheduled. Weather conditions can vary widely even over short distances, so our policy is to make the decision at the field site.

Games and practices will be suspended when lightning is visible. If you (parent/guardian) are not able to be present during an event, be sure that your child knows another parent who will be present and with whom he/she can take shelter if bad weather suddenly threatens.

### **Blood Policy**

A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment cannot be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual will have to leave the game. (The length of time considered reasonable shall be in the umpire's judgment.) Once the bleeding has been stopped, the player or coach may re-enter the game. If there is a substantial amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before that individual may participate.

### **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

The LBA Travel Program mandates that all players/coaches/parents participating in an LBA Travel Program youth sport activity (practice/scrimmage/game) should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or a controlled substance. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player/coach, while participating in an LBA Travel Program youth activity, to use a beverage containing alcohol, or use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any controlled substance.

Once a violation has been brought to the Travel Director's attention and a decision has been made, the player/coach will be informed of his/her ineligibility by a written letter from the Travel Director.

- **First Violation:** Upon notification by the Travel Director, the player/coach shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive games or two weeks of a sport season in which the player/coach is participating, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted.
- **Second Violation:** The player/coach shall lose eligibility in traveling baseball for that sport season. No exception is permitted.
- **Accumulative Penalties:** Penalties shall be cumulative beginning with and continuing throughout the player's/coach's participation in any and all LBA Travel Program activities.

### **Tobacco/Vaping Policy**

The LBA Travel Program does not condone the use of tobacco/vaping by players under the legal tobacco age. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player participating in traveling baseball to use tobacco/vaping. Once a violation has been brought to the Board's attention, the player will be informed of his/her ineligibility. Ineligibility will be the same as for the drug and alcohol policy.

**Furthermore, the LBA mandates that coaches refrain from the use of tobacco/vaping in any form during a youth sport activity (practice/scrimmage/game).**

## **Equipment Abuse**

Under no circumstances will the abuse of equipment be tolerated. Umpires and coaches are instructed that each instance of equipment abuse will result in disciplinary action. If the abuse of the equipment results in damage to the equipment, that player and/or their parents will be held responsible for reimbursing the cost of replacement. Players may be suspended from participation in future LBA Travel Program until reimbursement is made.

## **Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct**

As a parent/guardian of a child involved in a Lakeville Traveling Baseball Program, I/we agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines listed below:

- I/we will respect the property and equipment used at any sports facility, both home and away.
- I/we will encourage good sportsmanship through my/our actions, by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every game or practice.
- I/we will promote the emotional and physical well being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I/we will provide support for coaches and officials working with the athletes to provide a positive experience for all.
- I/we will demand a drug, alcohol, and tobacco/vaping free environment for my child, and agree to assist by refraining from their use at LBA Travel Program events, home or away.
- **I/we will remember the game is for the athletes and not for the parents.**
- I/we will demand that my/our child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, gender, or ability.
- I/we will treat all players, coaches, and officials with dignity and respect in language, attitude, behavior, and mannerisms.
- I/we will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others.
- I/we will inform the coach, within a reasonable period of time, of any anticipated absence from a game or practice my child might incur due to sickness, injury, vacation, or any other reason.
- I/we also agree that if I/we fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I/we may be subject to disciplinary action. This action could include, but is not limited to, the following:
  1. Verbal warning
  2. Written warning
  3. Parental game suspension
  4. Parental season suspension
  5. Parental banishment

***These actions may not be necessarily taken in an escalated manner, and LBA Travel Program reserves the right to select and apply any penalty depending upon the situation.***

## **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES**

LBA Travel Program is greatly concerned about the safety of our children, especially when it concerns abuse. The LBA Travel Program will not tolerate any form of child abuse. We make an active and, we believe, effective effort to prevent child abuse in our programs:

The LBA Travel Program adopts the following risk management policies:

- The Board of Directors shall make available to all LBA Program Directors and LBA Volunteers copies of the LBA Participant/LBA Protection Guidelines, via the website.
- LBA adopts and shall use the Disclosure Statement to do all background checks.
- All candidates for positions as Board Directors, Programs Directors, Coaches, and Assistant Coaches shall return a completed, signed Disclosure Statement their work with the LBA Participants. The LBA Commissioner shall also have Disclosure Statements completed and signed by any other LBA Volunteer he/she deems necessary due to the LBA Volunteer's access to the LBA Participants. If a candidate or current LBA Volunteer refuses to complete and sign a Disclosure Statement, the person's candidacy shall be rejected or he/she shall be dismissed from any position he/she then holds with LBA.
- At sign-ups for any LBA Program, if a person checks the box for Coach or Assistant Coach, the Disclosure Statement must be filled out and signed. Failure to do so will cause the person to not be considered for a coaching or assistant coaching position.
- The LBA will perform background checks at the association's expense.

## **LBA Volunteer Background Check**

### **Purpose**

To protect and provide a safe and healthful environment to the players participating in the Lakeville Baseball Association (LBA) program.

### **Background**

As awareness increases about the risks associated with individuals working with children who abuse their authority by committing sexual, physical, mental and emotional abuse, there is a need to provide a means of protection.

### **Position Statement**

LBA shall not knowingly permit any person convicted of a crime against persons or a crime of violence, to become or remain in any volunteer position for the organization. If background checks reveal convictions of any such crimes within the past 15 years from the date of application, the person's application shall be rejected or s/he will be dismissed from any position s/he holds in the organization. Any convictions occurring more than 15 years ago may be considered by the Background Check Panel in the determining of the applicant's suitability for the position, but will not automatically disqualify the application.

### **Applicability**

The policy applies to any of the following:

1. All LBA Board Members, including the Commissioner and Directors.

2. All coaches and assistant coaches.
3. Any other person working directly with the Board/players that the Board/Commissioner deems necessary.

## **Responsibilities**

The Background Check Panel consisting of the Rookie-3rd grade House Director, 4th-9th grade House Director, North Senior Youth Director, South Senior Youth Director, North Travel Director, South Travel Director and the Miracle League Director, overseen by the LBA Commissioner, will:

- Ensure that all affected volunteers comply with this policy.
- Advise LBA Board of Directors on modifications, additions, and enforcement of guidelines and policies.
- Determine if a person should be excluded from participation or involvement in LBA programs, based on the information received through the background checks.
- Notify applicants or existing members of their rejection or expulsion. Offer the applicant the opportunity to withdraw their name from coaching consideration.
- Review any other criminal convictions within the past 15 years by an applicant upon request by the Commissioner.
- Periodically review and update this policy as needed.
- Maintain confidentiality of all results of background checks.

# **PARTICIPANT / VOLUNTEER PROTECTION GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are adopted based on the philosophy that the lines of authority and separation between non-parent volunteers and participants must be respected. In general, LBA Participants are children. The following guidelines will provide the protection for LBA Participants while giving LBA Volunteers an outline of the conduct that is applicable:

- Sexual contact of any kind or type between LBA Volunteers and LBA Participants is prohibited, regardless of whether or not such contact is consensual.
- LBA Volunteers should not socialize or spend time alone with LBA Participants except at games, practices, or team functions.
- LBA Volunteers must be aware that any physical contact with players can be misinterpreted. Physical contact should be limited to that necessary and appropriate to teach skill, treat injury, or console/congratulate a player.
- Offensive and vulgar language by LBA Volunteers or LBA Participants is unacceptable. Language that is denigrating in nature, content, or tone, or that refers to one's gender, race, national origin, disability, or religion is unacceptable.
- An LBA Volunteer being in a one-to-one situation off the playing field with an LBA Participant is generally inappropriate. LBA Volunteers should avoid such situations, such as driving alone with an LBA Participant. In some circumstances, however, such as when an LBA Participant remains on a field waiting for his/her parent to arrive, the LBA Volunteer should wait with the LBA Participant on the field until the LBA Participant's parent arrives.

- LBA Volunteers should respect the privacy of LBA Participants. Separate shower facilities or changing rooms for LBA Participants and LBA Volunteers, or scheduling times for use of such facilities, so that LBA Participants and LBA Volunteers have separate use if necessary
- LBA Volunteers are responsible for seeing that field conditions are safe for the LBA Participants and that equipment is in good, safe condition prior to commencing play.
- When transporting LBA Participants, LBA Volunteers must model good driving and require LBA Participants and other vehicle occupants to wear safety belts at all times.
- If an LBA Participant reports physical sexual abuse to an LBA Volunteer, the LBA Volunteer must report this information immediately to the Lakeville Travel Director and LBA Commissioner.
- Violations of these guidelines by LBA Volunteers or LBA Participants will subject them to disciplinary actions, including, but not limited to, warnings, sanctions, suspensions, or release by the organization.
- Anyone witnessing a violation of these guidelines should report the violation to the Lakeville Travel Director and the LBA Commissioner.

### **Reporting Procedures/Actions**

- In the event an LBA Volunteer receives a complaint of physical or sexual abuse of an LBA Participant, the LBA Volunteer shall report the complaint to the Lakeville Travel Director and the LBA Commissioner who shall report the complaint to the local child protection authorities, and to the LBA participant's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- After a physical or sexual abuse complaint concerning an LBA Volunteer has been formally lodged with the local child protection authorities, the Lakeville Travel Director or the LBA Commissioner shall inform the alleged offender in writing that he/she is suspended immediately from all activities within the organization until the complaint is dismissed or withdrawn.
- Persons found to have violated the LBA Participant/LBA Volunteer Protection Guidelines are subject to discipline including, but not limited to, warnings, sanctions, suspensions, or terminations of their LBA participation/volunteering.
- If any complaint is made regarding a violation of the LBA Participant/LBA Volunteer Protection Guidelines, other than physical or sexual abuse, the Lakeville Travel Director and the LBA Commissioner shall speak to all parties involved, make a written report of the complaint, and report his/her findings to the LBA Board of Directors. The Lakeville Travel Director and the LBA Commissioner shall meet with complainant and the accused. The Lakeville Travel Director, the LBA Commissioner and the LBA Board shall make the final decision regarding discipline.

## **PROBLEM RESOLUTION GUIDELINES**

When a player or parent has a major concern about the handling of a team or an individual player, they should:

- **Adhere to the "24 Hour Rule"** which recommends a player/parent to wait at least 24 hours before approaching a coach on the matter.
- Choose a time and place that is convenient for all parties involved (not prior to or during a game or practice) and approach the situation in an appropriate manner (keep the emotions under control, keep the discussions polite and to the point, and keep the discussions private and out of the earshot of other players or parents).

If the problem between the player/parent and coach persists or cannot be resolved, within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the Level Coordinator. At this time, the Level Coordinator will act as a mediator between the player/parent and the coach. All parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution.

If the problem cannot be resolved at that level within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the Travel Director. Again, all parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution.

If mediation still is unable to resolve the issues and all of the above steps have been followed, the Travel Director shall inform both parties in writing within five (5) days that the complaint has been referred to the LBA Board of Directors for their ruling on the matter. The ruling of the LBA Board of Directors will be final.

If the Travel Director is the subject of the grievance, a written complaint should be submitted within five (5) days directly to the LBA Board of Directors by the parent/player. Failure to submit the grievance within five (5) days will result in a ruling by the LBA Board of Directors that no action on the matter is necessary. The LBA Board of Directors may extend the 5 day timeframe at their discretion.

### **DISCLAIMER**

***This handbook is intended to serve as an informational guideline. Any and all policies may be subject to change and all final decisions regarding such changes will be at the prerogative of the LBA Board of Directors***

## **Contacts**

LBA Board member and Travel Level Coordinator contacts are maintained on the LBA website:  
[www.lakevillebaseball.org](http://www.lakevillebaseball.org)