

# SUBURBAN BASEBALL

## LEAGUE RULES/REGULATIONS Koufax Division (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade)

[www.leaguelineup.com/wmasssuburbanbaseball](http://www.leaguelineup.com/wmasssuburbanbaseball)

### Section A: Philosophy of the League

The goal of the Suburban Baseball Koufax Division is to provide a competitive baseball league stressing participation, sportsmanship, fun and development of skills for boys in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade boys. This league continues to provide the next level of baseball on a full size 90-foot diamond.

### Section B: Eligibility

- A. Players must be in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade to participate.
- B. Players in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade can play if they are not on any other high school, prep, travel, junior legion or similar level team. This rule can be waived by a vote of the coordinators participating in this division and is intended for kids that might play high school and do not play due to a no-cut policy.
- C. Players cannot turn 15 before May 1, 2026.
- D. Players must be from the town of the team for which they are playing on and/or attend school in the town through a "school choice" program with the following exceptions:
  - a. If a community does not offer a team in the league or division, a player from that community may play for another community.
  - b. If a player wants to play for another community and their community has a team in that division, they must get permission (written and/or email) between coordinators.
  - c. Players that live-in non-Western Mass Baseball league communities and do not school choice or have a parent living in those communities cannot play in the league.
- E. Borrowing players: the league would rather have teams put in smaller teams where kids get to play versus larger teams where there is less playing time. Here are the rules when it comes to borrowing players:
  - a. Players can only play up a division. They can never play down.
  - b. Teams can share players if they have 10 or less in uniform from another team in their community.
  - c. Players cannot play pitcher or catcher and must bat in the bottom spots of the lineup.
  - d. While we would like to see a variety of kids get this option to play more baseball, there are no rules against the number of times a player is borrowed.

### Section C: Organization

- A. Schedule
  - a. Games can begin April 25.
  - b. Regular season is capped at 15 games.
  - c. Regular season ends Sunday, June 14.
  - d. Playoffs: June 17-June 21 (June 22-26 Rain dates)
    - i. Top 4 teams will make the playoffs.
- B. Team Selection
  - a. Selection of teams will be determined by using the team selection policy respective to each town.
- C. Game Times:
  - a. Weekday games will begin at 5:45pm unless lights are utilized.
  - b. Weekend games can start at any time.

## Section D: Equipment

- A. **All bats must have a BBCOR, USSSA and/or USA Baseball certification stamp.** Metal or wooden bats may be used. Bats may not have a weight length difference of more than -5 (ex. -6, -7, etc... are illegal) and the barrel can't exceed 2 ¾". The drop on the bat must be legible to be eligible for game use. All "air attack," "nitrogen filled" or other types of pressurized bats are illegal for play. BBCOR and BESR bats are both legal.
- B. The standard League ball can be: Diamond D1, D1 AL, Rawlings R-100, ROA, RON, Wilson A1010
- C. Sneakers or molded sole rubber or Metal cleats may be worn.
- D. Batters, runners, catchers and on-deck hitters are required to wear a league-approved helmet.

## Section E: Fields

- A. The bases will be 90 feet apart.
- B. The pitching mound set at 60 feet 6 inches.

## Section F: Rules

- A. Governing Rules
  - a. The Western Mass Suburban Baseball League is a Recreational Baseball League that consists of towns of South Hadley, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Hampden, Granby, Palmer, Monson and Belchertown. Any community from the surrounding area may request to join; however, they must have the backing or support from their local park and recreation department and/or a recognized parent association.
  - b. The basis for the rules will be the NFHS rules book as amended here.
  - c. Teams are required to have a minimum roster of 10 players with a maximum of 18 players.
  - d. All players must play a minimum of three (3) innings per game regardless of skill level, unless the player is being disciplined. The opposing coach and parent of disciplined player must be notified if the player is not going to play the required three (3) innings.
  - e. Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed, providing the three-inning rule is carefully observed. Teams can change their defensive lineup every inning.
  - f. A minimum of eight (8) players is necessary to start a game. The opposing team may still field nine (9) players on the field.
    - i. If one team has less than the mandated eight (8) players to start the game the said team will be forced to forfeit the game. Teams are encouraged to scrimmage.
    - ii. There will be a fifteen (15)-minute grace period before a forfeit is awarded.
  - g. A regulation game will be seven (7) innings. A game will be declared official after four (4) complete innings.
  - h. Any game called at the end of half an inning, will revert to the last completed inning to determine the final score.
  - i. Any game called due to darkness, will revert to the last completed inning, regardless of inning and be a completed game.
  - j. Any game tied after seven (7) innings will play one (1) extra inning. A tied game after the extra inning will be declared a tie.
  - k. If a game is suspended due to weather and it isn't a complete game yet, when the game is made up, it will continue from the same point in which it was stopped. We do not start over in this instance.
  - l. No new inning can begin after the (2:15) two hour and fifteen-minute time limit.
    - i. Applies to both weekday and weekend games.

- ii. The time limit begins with the start of the first pitch. It is the umpire's responsibility to establish the time of the first pitch.
    - iii. Once the game is ended due to the time limit, the game is considered final in regard to the number of innings played rule.
    - iv. If the game is delayed due to weather/lightening, the (2:15) two hour and fifteen-minute time limit will be extended by the length of the delay.
  - m. The infield fly rule does apply.
  - n. Ground rules specific to the field or other game conditions are to be discussed and agreed upon by the two managers in the presence of an umpire prior to the start of each game. The umpire will specify the ground rules only if the two managers cannot agree. In the event a game situation occurs not covered by a specific rule, the umpire's decision will be FINAL.
  - o. The home team will have the field for warm-ups thirty-five (35) minutes before the scheduled start time. The away team will have the field twenty (20) minutes before the scheduled start time. The coach/umpire meeting will take place five minutes before the scheduled start time.
  - p. The Home team is allowed to provide music during warm ups, between innings, and for batter walk ups. If an Away team wishes to provide music at a game they should check with the home teams coach and coordinator 24-48 hours before the game. All music must be age appropriate with no foul language.
  - q. The HOME team is responsible for supplying a minimum of two (2) new game balls for each game and any extras that are needed during the game.
  - r. Rainouts must be rescheduled within seven (7) days. The game does not need to be played in the next seven (7) days, just a new date established.
  - s. Protests will not be allowed in the Suburban Baseball League.
  - t. League standings will be determined by a point system as follows:
    - i. 2 points for a win
    - ii. 1 point for a tie
    - iii. 0 points for a loss
  - u. The Hidden Ball Play is prohibited.
- B. Batter
- a. Each coach will prepare a list of players who are present and eligible to play at the start of each game. This list is the batting order and all players will bat in this rotation regardless of the 2-inning rule. The batting rotation cannot be changed once the game has started.
  - b. Players that are injured, leave early, are sick, etc... during a game and cannot continue will not count as an out towards the batting order. All players batting after the injured player will be bumped up one spot.
  - c. Tardy players must be added to the bottom of the batting order once the game has begun.
  - d. All players must bat unless there is written approval from the director due to a medical issue.
  - e. Bunting is allowed.
  - f. The batter may advance on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
  - g. Teams can bat around once in an inning (based on the roster with the most number of players so some players could bat two times). If by mutual agreement the coaches choose to end an inning earlier, they have that option.
- C. Pitcher
- a. This league will be all player pitch.
  - b. A player may only pitch a maximum of four (4) innings in a game. One (1) pitch is considered an inning.

- c. Pitchers can pitch twelve (12) innings per league week. A league week is 12:01am Monday –Sunday at 12:00am.
- d. Pitchers pitch from the rubber at 60 feet 6 inches.
  - i. Any balk will be penalized per NFHS rule.
- e. A pitcher can be removed from the game and return to pitch once during the game. This can happen on either the first or second trip. If the player returns to pitch, he must do so in a different inning than the one he came out in.
- f. The pitcher may have a designated runner when he is on base with any number of outs. The player who made the last out will be the designated runner.

#### D. Catcher

- a. Every catcher will be required to wear protective gear that includes, helmet (one-piece hockey style), mask, chest protector, leg guards, throat guard, protective cup and a regulation catcher's mitt. The catcher may have a designated runner when he is on base with any number of outs. The player who made the last out will be the designated runner. This will enable the catcher to put his gear on without delaying the game.

#### E. The Base Runner

- a. We will use the NFHS slide and collision rules.
- b. If a runner is injured while on the base paths, the replacement runner will be the last out.
- c. There is no limit on the amount of stealing for a team in a game.
- d. Players are permitted to steal home.

#### F. Coaching

- a. Coaches are responsible for the discipline and conduct of team members during a ball game. Players not batting or on-deck or on the field must remain on the bench.
- b. Coaches may not play any player that is not on their official roster.
- c. Alcohol and tobacco use (cigarettes, chewing tobacco, etc.) at practices and games is prohibited.
- d. The Suburban Baseball League is asking all coaches to use their judgment in severe weather conditions and stop the game for the safety of the participants.
- e. Any player or non-adult under 18 is required to wear a batting helmet with double ear flaps when coaching a base.

#### G. Thunder/Lightning Rule

- a. The league will follow the NFHS/MIAA rule on thunder/lightning.
- b. Once play has been suspended due to thunder/lightning, teams must wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
- c. Each subsequent flash will result in the 30-minute clock being restarted.
- d. We urge teams to use extreme caution when the weather is bad.

### **Section F: Cancellations/ Calling in Score**

#### Cancellations:

- A. Unless there is a last-minute storm, teams should cancel the game a minimum of 90 minutes prior to first pitch if the weather is bad and/or field is unplayable.
- B. During inclement weather, it is the home and visiting coaches' responsibility to call the home team's Park Department and/or head coach to determine if the scheduled game will be played. If no information to the contrary is provided, it is presumed that games WILL BE PLAYED and each

team must appear at the assigned field ready to play. "Ready to Play" is defined as having in attendance at the game field at least eight (8) players whose names appear on the official roster sheet as submitted to the League before the season or as properly amended.

- C. At the field, prior to the scheduled start time of the game, if BOTH teams are ready to play, the home team coach will decide if the game will be played. If the game starts, it is then the umpire's sole discretion to terminate the game.
- D. If the Parks Department does not cancel the game but the home team coach knows the field has become unplayable, the home coach should call the visiting coach AND the umpire **early enough** to stop them from traveling to the game site.
- E. With the league website, programs are expected to update the website to indicate if games are cancelled 90 minutes before the game time.

### Score Reporting:

- A. It is the winning team's responsibility to report their scores to their coordinator.
- B. Each community is responsible for assigning someone to upload their scores to the league website within 24 hours of the completion of the game.
- C. If the game ends in a tie, the home team should report the score.

### Umpires:

- A. The league will submit the Koufax schedule to the assigner for two umpires for every game. Each umpire will receive \$70 and the home team is responsible to pay for both umpires.
- B. Games can be played with 1 umpire and that umpire will receive one hundred and five dollars (\$105).
- C. If an umpire doesn't show up, the game should be played with coaches and/or parents officiating, and the results will be final. If coaches are umping, coaches should ump while their team is in the field.
- D. If a suspended game is made up on another day, the umpires will still be paid in full as if it was a new game.
- E. If the umpire shows up and the game is cancelled before it starts, they are due ½ of a game fee.
- F. The league does not allow protests of any baseball rule per the NFHS rule book.
- G. Protests are allowed for teams using illegal players and/or equipment after they have been warned. The penalty can be a warning, loss of games, forfeiture of season and/or anything else as deemed by the league directors.

**Section G: Rule Changes:** The Suburban Baseball coordinators reserve the right to implement additional rules and regulations that are deemed appropriate for the success of the baseball program.

### **Playoffs:**

- A. The top four (4) teams will make the playoffs.
- B. **Tie-breakers are as follows:**
  - a. Head-to-head
  - b. total wins
  - c. Run differential in the head-to-head games
  - d. Coin toss

- C. Players must play in at least 50% of their team's regular season games to be eligible to play in the playoffs. (Injury or disciplinary reasons must be cleared by the league)
- D. During playoffs, the game will continue until there is a winner without a time limit. In the event of darkness and the game needs to be suspended (per MLB rule) both coaches should contact the league coordinator to decide on place and time to finish the game.
- E. In the playoffs, there will be a 15-run mercy rule at the middle or end of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning.
- F. The visiting team will supply the games balls and the home team will pay for the umpire.

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