

2026 League Administrative Rules

General

- Age Breakdown
 - League age is determined by the age of the child prior to May 1 of that season.
- Levels
 - T-ball, ages 4-5
 - Transition, ages 6-8
 - Minors, ages 8-10
 - i. 10 YO's without ML experience recommended to enroll at ML level
 - Little League, ages 10-12
 - i. 10 YO's with 2 years ML experience recommended to enroll at LL level
 - IRB, ages 13-14
- Limited exceptions based on the skill level and/or developmental need of children will be considered
 - Parent/guardian requests to play-down will be considered
 - Parent/guardian requests for play-up a level not accepted (board/evaluators may recommend post-evaluation process)
 - Parent/guardian must submit a request for an exception to the board in writing within a minimum of two weeks prior to evaluations. Players may be asked to attend multiple evaluations.
 - No play-ups will be granted unless:
 - i. the interested party's evaluation lands within the top 50% of evaluated players at the desired level of play
 - ii. AND such a move is needed to maintain an adequate and balanced number of players per roster
- This set of rules does not apply to travel ball teams (9U-14U). Travel teams are managed separately.

League Selection Process

- General
 - A coach's kid or a sibling of a current player are required to attend evaluations
 - A coach's son/daughter or the sibling of a player who is already assigned to a ML, LL or IRB is automatically placed on the team his/her parent coaches or that his/her sibling plays for in the round as determined by an evaluation by all coaches for that respective age group. An average score of all coaches in that respective level of play will be used to make that determination. The board will resolve all disputes.
 - If parent/guardian wishes to split siblings, submit request in writing to the board prior to evaluations. The request is subject to board approval.
- IRB
 - Coaches shall select teams at their discretion, with minimum roster size of 10 players, with no defined maximum roster size (coach's discretion), contingent on board approval

- Player selection will be by a “snake” style draft
- Coaches to select any new league 14-year-olds and eligible 15-year-olds (see below) prior to league 13-year olds.
- Unless determined otherwise by the Board, returning players will maintain their team assignments
- Necessity of tryout/evaluation to be determined on an annual basis by coaches based on their experience and line of sight with players
- Any prospective player new to the program must attend an evaluation prior to team selection process
- Any league 13-year-old not selected to an IRB team will be offered the option to play Little League (contingent on board approval)
- League 15-year-olds not selected to the Hibbing VFW team are eligible to play IRB.
 - Any 15-year-olds interested in playing VFW that are concerned they may not make team and would like to have another opportunity to play summer baseball would be advised to sign up for IRB, under the strict requirement that they tryout for VFW or are otherwise informed by VFW coaches that they will not be selected for the VFW team.
 - If they are selected to VFW team, a 15 year-old would not be IRB eligible and a refund of league fee will be provided (player still responsible for purchased raffle tickets).
 - No late signups for IRB will be accepted beyond the designated signup date of March 31, 2026.
 - VFW tryouts are typically held in May
 - Any interested 15-year-olds would be advised to further consult with HYB board and VFW coaches prior to sign ups
- Other IRB notes
 - 2026 bat rule is potentially in flux. In 2025 and prior, league rules only dictated bat diameter be 2-5/8” or less (USSSA, BBCOR and USA stamps accepted, all drop levels accepted), but potentially will change for 2026. Timeframe for rule change is TBD in 2026.
 - IRB is competitive travel baseball. Prospective players and parent/guardians should be aware that the league has no minimum playing time requirements, only a recommendation that in games not shortened due to a 10-run mercy rule that each player gets 1 at bat and 2 innings in the field per game.
- Little League
 - Team Formation
 - Teams will be reset each year
 - A predetermined number of teams will be set by the board following registration.
 - Any league 13-year-olds not selected for IRB that opt to play summer baseball will be selected on a little league team (must attend LL evaluation)

- Mandatory evaluations will be conducted for all league 10, 11, and 12 year olds for team selection process
 - Players will not be eligible to be placed on a team without attending an evaluation. With the expectation that players make every effort to attend offered evaluation time, makeups would be provided.
- Evaluations will be anonymous, and a group of coaches and board approved non-coaches will perform the evaluations
- Evaluation scores will be tallied by age group and players assigned to teams based on a “snake” style of descending evaluation scores, with adjustments within each selection round to balance pitching, catching and coaching between teams.
- Final team distribution will be board approved.
- League 11- and 12-year-olds will be placed on LL teams, with board’s discretion to otherwise place if a player represents a safety or competitive balance issue
- If number of teams and players warrant as much, lower scoring league 10 year olds will placed on a ML team
- A minimum of 2 years of ML experience is required to play LL.
- If there are teams that aren’t full, highly ranked 9-year-olds may be placed on a LL team (or invited to makeup evaluation for LL or an opportunity to earn a spot at that level
- LL Roster Composition
 - The targeted maximum number of players per LL team is 12 to provide adequate playing time for all players.
 - Teams that are projected to exceed 12 players due to being coaches' kids or siblings may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Other LL Notes
 - LL Pitching Rules and Recording
 - There's no longer a stipulation limiting the catcher's ability to move to pitcher.
 - During a game, pitch counts must be confirmed by both Head coaches between innings with the plate umpire present. Pitch totals must be reported in writing within 24 hours of game completion. Forms for reporting will be available inside the concession stand.
 - Prior to a game, the plate umpire shall check the pitch reporting forms to verify what players are eligible to pitch that game. The umpire will then relay that information to both head coaches.
 - LL Bat Rules (applicable to ML as well)
 - Approved bat sizes are:
 - Barrel must not be larger than 2 ¾"
 - Must not be longer than 33"
 - Must have a USA or USSSA stamp

- Minor League
 - Team Formation
 - Teams will be reset each year
 - The targeted maximum number of players per ML team is 12 to provide adequate playing time for all players.
 - Teams that are projected to exceed 12 players due to being coaches' kids or siblings may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
 - Any league 10-year-olds not selected for LL that opt to play summer baseball will be placed on a ML team
 - Mandatory evaluations will be conducted for all league 8, 9 and 10 year olds for team selection process
 - Players will not be eligible to be placed on a team without attending an evaluation. With the expectation that players make every effort to attend offered evaluation time, makeups would be provided.
 - Evaluations will be anonymous, and a group of coaches and board approved non-coaches will perform the evaluations
 - Evaluation scores will be tallied by age group and players distributed to teams based on a “snake” style of descending evaluation scores, with adjustments within each selection round to balance pitching, catching and coaching. Final team distribution will be board approved.
 - League 9- and 10-year-olds not placed on a LL team will be placed on ML teams, with board’s discretion to otherwise place if a player represents a safety or competitive balance issue
 - If number of teams and players warrant as much, lower scoring league 8-year-olds may be placed on a transition league team

Coaching Assignments

- All coaching assignments must be approved by the board.
- All prospective coaches must declare interest prior to player evaluations
- A team may have a maximum of 3 coaches per team. A 4th adult who's willing to be a score keeper is allowed.
- The targeted maximum number of players per LL team is 12 to provide adequate playing time for all players.
- Teams that are projected to exceed 12 players due to being coaches' kids or siblings may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Background checks are required of all coaches over 18. Minors interested in coaching will be discussed by the board.
- Priority
 - Returning coaches have first opportunity to continue coaching
 - Parents who aren't currently coaching but are interested in doing so will have second opportunity to coach
- Anyone interested in coaching must designate such on the registration, complete a volunteer form and pass a background check.

- Concerns regarding coaches will be reviewed by the board. The board has discretion to remove any coach if it's deemed necessary. (Pg. 8-9 of by-laws)
- Discipline will consist of:
 1. Warning for 1st offense
 2. Suspension determined by the board for 2nd offense
 3. Removal of coach for 3rd offense