

A Year in the Life of Hometown Little League.



**A practical, season-by-season guide to
The operation of a Chartered League
Fall • Winter • Spring • Summer
Little League Baseball and Softball
Revised: December 2011**

www.LittleLeague.org

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - WHERE ARE WE?	2
Little League Organization in the U.S	2
Growth	2
Purpose	3
Chapter 2 - FALL	3
Notice of Election	3
Absentee Ballot	3
Election Day	3
Election Procedures for Hometown Little League	4
Membership	4
Chapter 3 - WINTER	5
Officers Meet with DA and District Staff	5
Review Constitution	5
Incorporation/Tax Exemption	5
Local Rules, Ground Rules and Bylaws	6
Local League Finances	6
Trademarks	6
The Hometown Homepage	6
Umpires	7
Player Membership Drive	7
Registration Day - Part 1	8
Registration Day - Part 2	9
Parent Orientation Program	9
Fund-Raising Ideas	9
Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Pt. 1)	9
Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Pt. 2)	10
Inspections, Part 1	10
Inspections, Part 2	11
Equipment	11
Volunteers and Background Checks	11
Appointments (Managers, Coaches, Umpires)	11
Releasing a Player during the Off-Season	12
Double-Checking Eligibility	12
Clinics and Educational Programs	12
Chapter 4 - SPRING	12
Divisions: How Do We Line Up?	12
Preparing for the Tryout	13
Conducting the Tryout	13
Pitch Count Program	13
The Draft	13
Trading Players	14
Scheduling Games	14
Practices	14
Waiver Forms	14
Charter Committee Waivers	15
How Hometown Little League Applies for a Waiver	15
Team Rosters	15
Interleague/Combined Teams Forms	15
Opening Day	15
Multiple Participation	15
Protest Committee	16
President, Vice President(s) and Player Agent(s)	16
Injured Player Procedure	16
When a Player is Released During the Season	16
Disciplining a Member	17
Post-Season Playoffs	17
Chapter 5 - SUMMER	18
Special Games	18
Selection of Tournament Teams	18
Tournament Affidavit	19
Tournament Team Practice	19
Tournament Briefings with DA	19
Awards	19
International Tournament	19
The World Series	20
Second Season (Training and Development Program)	20
Conclusion	20
Glossary	20

Introduction

This manual was created to help league presidents and other league officers better understand the annual activities of a local league in Little League Baseball and Softball. It is arranged in chronological order, starting with events that normally occur in the Fall, and ends with the World Series in late Summer.

Most of the information in this manual can be found in other publications of Little League Baseball and Softball, such as the current versions of the Official Playing Rules and Regulations, the Operating Manual, the Model Constitution, and several of the pamphlets that are available from Little League.

However, this publication brings many of the most common challenges together in a form that can help your local league run smoothly. A weekend instructional clinic is also offered at each U.S. Regional Center that serves as a companion course for this manual.

This manual is not intended to replace the Rules, Regulations or Policies of Little League Baseball and Softball. It is a guide to a league's smooth operation. The final word on any issue is always the Rules, Regulations and Policies of Little League Baseball and Softball. Where applicable, references to other publications are included.

Hometown Little League is a fictitious local league. It is located in a fictional state called "Any State, USA." None of the officers listed in the upcoming pages exist, however, the problems they encounter do.

Hometown Little League will run into many challenges in the "upcoming season," and will handle them according to the Rules, Regulations and Policies of Little League Baseball and Softball. Anything less and it isn't Little League.

Chapter 1 - WHERE ARE WE?

Hometown Little League is part of the world's largest organized youth sports program. The language of healthy competition in Little League Baseball and Softball is spoken in scores of countries on six continents around the world. Little League International has full-service centers in six U.S. states and Europe, with offices in Canada, Latin America and Asia.

Nearly 2.5 million youngsters took part in Little League Baseball and Softball programs last year, under the direction of more than 1 million adult volunteers.

Little League Organization in the U.S.

Hometown Little League is part of a chain of command. If the operation is to run smoothly, the chain of command must be observed. At the top of the chain is the International Headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Next are the various Regional Headquarters, then the District Administrators and their staffs. At the heart of it all is the local league, without which, of course, there could be no Little League Baseball and Softball.

Growth

Hometown Little League is part of a growing phenomenon. Although baseball has been known largely as an American sport since its beginnings more than 100 years ago, the movement has spread. In some cases, world politics played a part in this.

When the U.S. began opening relations with Japan in the early 1900s, baseball was introduced to Japanese culture by American Service Members. Today, Japan's baseball programs thrive. In fact, baseball is extremely popular all over the Far East.

Major League Baseball attempted to export the game to other countries in the past, but it never really caught on. Little League Baseball and Softball, however, was able to bring the game to more than 20 countries by the 1970s and 40 countries by the 1980s.

Two events caused those numbers to skyrocket in recent years. The fall of the Iron Curtain and the advent of baseball and softball as an Olympic sport resulted in Little League being the organization of choice for nations wishing to emulate "The Great American Pastime" and to develop young athletes in preparation for the Olympics.

Little League brings together on the playing field such diverse nations as Jordan and Israel, The People's Republic of China, Russia and Japan. It is truly international in scope.

Purpose

Little League Baseball and Softball is much more than just bats, balls, a field, dugouts, or any of the other dozens of physical items that go into baseball and softball.

It has become, over the years, a leadership program for both children and adults, with the aim of helping children to become good and decent citizens. Through the application of Little League Rules, Regulations and Policies, developed over decades of experience, Little League has become a beacon throughout the world.

Children learn the positive values of good sportsmanship, fair play and teamwork — values they can use throughout their lives. Adults involved as volunteers in a local league gain a sense of belonging in a community, and can convey their leadership qualities to today's children so they will grow to be tomorrow's leaders.

Any decision made by a Chartered Little League should be with both of these questions answered positively:

1. Is it in the best interests of the children of the community?
2. Will it bring credit to the Little League Program and to the community as a whole?

Chapter 2 - FALL

Hometown Little League, like many leagues, tends to rest in the Fall. Sure, Hometown has a “Second Season” program (Training and Development, discussed in the Summer section of this publication.) But since most people associate baseball and softball with Spring and Summer, interest in the local league naturally wanes when the weather gets cooler. Even so, the Fall can set the tone for the entire coming season.

The groundwork for the success (or lack of it) of a season can often be found in how well (or how poorly) the league conducts its operations during this time of year. The key, as with much of Little League, are proper communication and application of Rules, Regulations and Policies.

Notice of Election

Hometown Little League’s constitution is the same as the Model Constitution, recommended for adoption by local leagues, with all the optional spaces checked off and the blanks filled in. This constitution was written with the specific purpose of giving a local league a document that conforms to Robert’s Rules of Order, State Laws, Federal Laws and Little League Rules, Regulations and Policies.

At Hometown Little League, written notice of the election (Annual Meeting) is delivered to all Regular Members in good standing, at least 10 days before the election. The process is by mail, unless an alternate process has been approved by the membership (not the board) in advance of the Annual Meeting. A sample letter from Hometown Little League to its members is included with this publication.

The notice includes the date, time and place of the Annual Meeting. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6.) Membership, and who should have it, is discussed later in this chapter.

Absentee Ballot

Because proxy voting is no longer recommended, the accepted practice is now absentee voting. If properly supervised, absentee voting affords far less chance of the election being “rigged.” (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 5.)

At Hometown Little League, the absentee ballot is only distributed when requested by a Member. It must be obtained IN PERSON from the league secretary, in a sealed envelope. The ballot itself lists plenty of blank spaces for the number of Board of Directors likely to be elected, according to the number listed in the constitution. At Hometown Little League, the minimum is seven. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 b.)

The voters list their chosen candidates in order of preference. There is no requirement to fill in all spaces on the ballot. Ballots are returned, in a sealed envelope, to the secretary, by the Member, IN PERSON. A sample absentee ballot for Hometown Little League is included in this publication.

Election Day

Usually, the best time to hold the election is the last week of September. This is because the fiscal year for Little League Baseball, Incorporated, starts on October 1 of each year. Electing a board in the spring or summer is allowed, but results in a “lame duck” board being in control for an extended period of time, until the fiscal year starts. The sequence of events that should take place at the Annual Meeting for Hometown Little League is listed below.

Election Procedures for Hometown Little League

- Determine if a quorum is present. A quorum at Hometown Little League is one-third, as listed in the constitution.
- If a quorum is not present, the election cannot be held and another meeting will need to be scheduled. Notice of the new meeting should be in accordance with the “Notice of Election” section above. (Robert’s Rules of Order.)
- Membership should be limited to those who qualify as volunteers. Leagues having difficulty obtaining a quorum usually consider all parents to be Members.
- Appoint an election Chairperson. (May or may not be the current president.)
- Ratify the Membership and Membership list for those present, by election. (In other words, the Members elect new Members for the coming year.) (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6.)
- Determine how many people will serve on the Board of Directors. The number must be at least the number listed in the constitution. Hometown Little League has 15. They could have less than 15, but not less than seven, since the Hometown constitution calls for a minimum of seven. (Model Constitution, Article V Section 6 (b)).
- The nominating committee presents its report on those who have agreed to serve. Nominations are not by position. The nominating committee should begin its work in June. (Model Constitution, Article IX, Section 1.)

- Nominations are opened to the floor. Any Regular Member in good standing is eligible for nomination. (Robert's Rules of Order.)
- Nominations are closed by vote of Membership.
- Every Regular Member receives one ballot.
- Voters list names of eligible candidates in the number previously determined. (Fifteen or less at Hometown for this season.)
Exception: Absentee ballots are voted according to preference and may list more than the pre-determined number.
- Nominees must receive at least 51 percent of the vote to be elected.
- New board is announced.
- Membership votes to approve the results of the election.
- New board meets to elect officers from among its number (required). At a minimum, the officers are: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, player agent, safety officer and coaching coordinator. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 (d); Regulation I (b)).
- Establish meeting dates for board.

First official responsibilities: Notify the District Administrator, Regional Headquarters and International Headquarters, by mail, of the results of the election. (Must include proper addresses and telephone numbers of board officers.) If the league has a PO Box (recommended), supply headquarters with a physical address so packages can be shipped (many package delivery companies cannot deliver to a PO Box).

At this time, the Board of Directors should also appoint a committee to conduct the background checks of board members and other volunteers and/or hired workers who provide regular services to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams. (Regulation I (b) and (c) 8 and 9).

Little League International recommends the Board of Directors appoint the local league president and two other individuals to handle the background checks. These other individuals may be from the board or individuals outside the board. For instance, the Board of Directors may appoint individuals who have significant professional background in this area, such as law enforcement officers or individuals with a legal background.

Membership

At Hometown Little League, there are two types of members: regular members and player members. This section deals with regular members — the people usually defined as eligible to vote at the annual meeting and other general membership meetings provided they are in good standing with the league.

Regular members of Hometown Little League include, by definition, all current managers, coaches, volunteer umpires, board members, officers of the board, team moms/dads, volunteer maintenance workers, volunteer concession stand workers, etc. Just who exactly is a member is defined in the Hometown Little League Constitution. (Model Constitution, Article III, Section 2 (b)).

One of the worst mistakes any league can make is to define its membership as all the parents in the league. Think of it the same way as any parent/teacher organization in a school. Simply having a child in the school does not mean you are a member of the organization. You must **DO SOMETHING** to be a member — even if it's simply to pay the annual dues.

So it is with a regular membership in Hometown Little League. The player registration fee paid at Hometown Little League does not include dues for being a regular member. In fact, the league does not even solicit for new regular members at registration time, since it knows a majority of the parents who sign their children up will probably not attend general membership meetings.

Hometown Little League requires those who wish to be regular members to pay \$5 in dues annually. If dues are not paid prior to one day before the annual meeting, the member is dropped from the rolls. However, your league could choose to waive a membership fee for the volunteers mentioned earlier in this section.

A league that includes all of its participants' parents in membership is inviting problems, such as:

- The single parent of four children in the league could charge the system is unfair, and that he/she should have **FOUR** votes.
- Which parent gets to vote? If both get to vote, the single parent above has an even more compelling argument of unfairness.
- The normal quorum for a meeting is one-third of the members. In a league with 200 participants, this could result in more than 400 eligible members, requiring more than 132 members to be present before any business can be conducted. If business is conducted with fewer members, the election could be challenged.

Chapter 3 - WINTER

This is when Hometown Little League starts gearing up for the season. Supplying the proper paperwork to the District Administrator, Regional and International Headquarters is critical at this time. Whether Hometown Little League will be financially sound, or strapped, in the next year will also be determined in the Winter.

At this time, all board members ought to have submitted their mandatory Little League Volunteer Applications, giving their consent for the league to conduct a nationwide background check that contains the applicable government sex offender registry data. Information on background checks is available at www.littleleague.org.

Officers Meet with DA and District Staff

It is vital that the Hometown Little League officers meet with the District Administrator and his/her staff at this time.

Plans for the coming year need to be discussed. There might be another league in the district that has discovered a terrific fund-raising plan, and that information can be shared.

This is when Hometown Little League's new directors learn what the District Administrator's role is, and the limits of his or her authority. (Operating Manual - Role of District Administrator.) The boundaries of Hometown Little League should be discussed to ensure no other leagues in the area overlap those of other chartered Little League programs. If the leagues cannot agree on the boundaries, the District Administrator has the authority to adjust them as he or she sees fit, subject to the review and approval of the Charter Committee in Williamsport. (Regulation II (f)). This is also a good time to set meeting dates and to coordinate start-finish times for the regular season and interleague play.

Review Constitution

If Hometown Little League wants to change its constitution, it will need to follow the proper procedure for amending it. (Model Constitution, Article XII.)

Any changes must be approved by Membership (not the board) and Regional Headquarters, in writing, before the amendment is put into effect. A draft of the proposed amendment can be sent to Regional Headquarters before or after the Membership approves it. However, it is recommended that the proposal be approved by Regional Headquarters before it goes to the Membership. If your league's constitution cannot be located, simply call your Regional Headquarters for a copy. The constitution, as well as any league document of a general nature, must be made available to any Member upon request. Hometown Little League keeps copies of the constitution handy for inspection at all times. Members can pay a nominal fee for their own copy. (NOTE: See the "Local Rules, Ground Rules and Bylaws" section for information on day-to-day operations at the local league.)

Incorporation/Tax Exemption

Hometown Little League found out that incorporation was a good idea when its Board of Directors discovered that being incorporated could protect them individually in lawsuits. (Operating Manual - Incorporation, Little League.)

Generally, if an incorporated league is sued, the corporation is sued, not the individuals. However, if individuals are personally liable, they may still be sued individually.

Investigating whether Hometown Little League is incorporated is easy. The president merely needs to call his/her Secretary of State (Division of Incorporation) for information. The incorporation may have lapsed, and will need to be renewed. If not incorporated, the league can request an information packet from their Regional Headquarters on how to accomplish this.

Obtaining exemption from state and/or local sales taxes is different in many states and municipalities. As an organization entitled to federal income tax exemption as a non-profit educational entity, Hometown Little League has applied for exemption in its state and does not have to pay sales tax when purchasing goods such as equipment, plumbing and electrical supplies and groceries for the concession stand. (Remember, items sold by a Local Little League may be subject to sales tax at the time of sale.)

NOTE: In some states there may be a corporate income tax. For more information on state tax laws, contact the Department of Revenue in your state.

Local leagues in the U.S. are also required by federal law to annually file a year-end statement with the Internal Revenue Service if they raise and spend more than \$25,000. Form 990 EZ is used if the league raises and spends more than \$25,000, but less than \$100,000. If the league raises and spends more than \$100,000, Form 990 must be used. The forms must be filed by the 15th day of the fourth month following the end of the fiscal year. Since Hometown Little League's fiscal year ends on September 30, the form must be filed by January 15 each year.

Leagues that normally have annual gross receipts of \$25,000 or less and do not have to file Form 990EZ or 990, must file an e-Postcard Form (Form 990-N) to retain their tax exempt status.

For more information on federal taxes, contact the local office of the Internal Revenue Service.

Local Rules, Ground Rules and Bylaws

The local rules, ground rules and bylaws for any local league should be brief, and Hometown Little League is no exception. The local rules, ground rules and bylaws of Hometown Little League are developed, maintained and approved annually by the

Hometown Board of Directors, and are not considered part of the Constitution. Some of the local rules, ground rules and bylaws at Hometown Little League are included in the section at the end of this publication.

You will notice that none of the local rules at Hometown Little League conflicts with Little League Rules, Regulations or Policies. Also, they don't re-state any existing Little League Baseball and Softball Rule, Regulation or Policy, as this invites conflicting interpretations.

Local rules, ground rules and bylaws expire each year (unlike the constitution, which governs the league meetings, etc., until it is amended by the Membership and approved by Regional Headquarters). Hometown Little League approves and issues its local rules, ground rules and bylaws in the winter, so there is no confusion later on in the season.

Local League Finances

Instances of theft and embezzlement from non-profit organizations are not uncommon. As such, it is imperative that Hometown Little League manage and control its finances. The Little League Operating Manual provides a significant amount of guidance in this area.

Prior to the start of the season, Hometown Little League develops a budget created by the treasurer and approved by the Board of Directors. The league treasurer is then responsible for providing accurate periodic (e.g.: monthly) reports to the Board of Directors. These reports include a copy of the latest bank statement.

All expenditures during the season at Hometown Little League are made by check and all checks are signed by the treasurer and another officer or board member.

Finally, at the end of the fiscal year, an audit is performed of all of the financial records. A copy of the year end audited financial report is forwarded to the District Administrator and Little League International.

Trademarks

This is the time of year when Hometown Little League starts to mail correspondence to its Membership, to Regional and International Headquarters. The letterhead can include the Official Little League emblem and name, but neither can be used in conjunction with any other organization or enterprise. Little League trademarks are protected by Federal statute, and can only be used when referring to the activities of the international program and its chartered leagues (Operating Manual - Use of Little League Marks).

The Hometown Homepage

Thanks to Little League's relationship with the Active Network, Hometown Little League, and every league in the world, can have its own free eteamz Website and league management tools. Find out how at www.eteamz.com.

During the winter at Hometown, a League Information Officer (LIO) is secured - someone who will devote the time needed for creating and updating. This job takes on even more importance later, when providing rosters to Williamsport.

Remember, any use of any Little League trademark requires specific written approval from Little League Headquarters, including use on the Internet (Operating Manual - Use of Little League Marks/Internet Use).

Umpires

Hometown Little League now begins the process of screening and qualifying umpires for the next season. Notices around town, in the paper, etc., help bring out interested adults.

It is a fallacy to assume that paying umpires will result in better umpiring.

Some of the dangers and considerations in paying ANYONE for a service normally rendered by a volunteer are:

- Worker's Compensation laws
- Internal Revenue Service regulations
- State income tax regulations
- Little or no control over paid umpires in an association
- Explanation of independent contractor

Acceptable forms of compensation used at Hometown Little League: pins, plaques, jackets, T-shirts or, allow the umpire to use a set of equipment for two or three years as a volunteer, then own it (Operating Manual - Umpire).

Player Membership Drive

This is one of the major events in any year in Hometown Little League. An aggressive membership drive can help keep the league growing, and can keep it financially successful. Check out these suggestions:

- The notice of registration at Hometown Little League (sample included with this publication) includes the following:
 - Clear information on dates, times, places.
 - Information on boundaries.
 - Who: boys and girls, ages 4-18. (Regulation IV a-c).

- Programs offered: Baseball, Softball and Challenger.
- Information on birth record needed (not a photocopy). This must be an original or government-certified copy of an official birth record. (After the player agent examines the record, the document may then be returned to the parents, but the parents should be reminded that it will again be required should the youngster be selected for the league's tournament team).
- Information on acceptable proof of residence (Regulation II (a)(f)(g) and Operating Manual - Player Systems).
- How to contact league personnel for more information.

How does Hometown Little League announce registration? Direct mailing to last year's parents (Hometown Little League qualifies for a bulk mailing permit as a non-profit entity); Flyers distributed in schools (Hometown Little League gets permission from the principal and/or school board); Newspaper, radio, television announcements (Hometown Little League writes these as media releases, not advertisements); Posters and billboards; League website, Eblast, church, Facebook, managers call all players from the previous year even those "graduating" to the next level.

NOTE: Do not include the cost of registration in the announcement. It will drive some potential players and valuable volunteers away.

Let's say your league decides not to apply for charter in a particular division. If so, your league is not authorized to allow, or give any kind of waiver to, any children living in your league's boundaries to play in another chartered league. For example, if Hometown Little League does not apply for a charter in girls' softball, no girl living in Hometown Little League's boundaries can play softball for that season.

Conversely, Hometown Little League cannot accept a child who lives outside the Hometown Little League boundaries, even if the league in which that child resides does not offer a program in that child's division or age group. The only exceptions are under Regulation II (d) and Regulation IV (h), which are covered later in this publication.

There are ways to ensure everyone gets a chance to play, however. Let's say Hometown Little League advertised in all the usual ways for Girls Senior League Softball, but only 17 players signed up (too many for one team, not enough for two). Using a completed and approved Combined Teams Request Form (available at www.littleleague.org), Hometown's 17 Girls Senior League Softball candidates could combine with those from a neighboring league. Hometown would be required to charter at least one Girls Senior League Softball team (depending on the total teams formed.) Either league could enroll to insure the number of teams actually fielded. With permission from the Regional Director, Hometown and the neighboring league could also combine to form one Tournament team.

Remember, the minimum number of players allowed from one division in one league on a Combined Teams Request Form is six. This is to ensure that the league is making an effort to field at least one team. Exceptions must be approved only by the Charter Committee.

The responsibility for offering programs to all interested children in the league boundaries rests solely with the Board of Directors of the local league and the Membership of that league. If children are being denied the opportunity to play because a local league does not offer a division, the adult Board of Directors at the local level is at fault. A free registration promotion kit is available at www.littleleague.org/manuals/registration.

Registration Day - Part 1

When people enter the Hometown Little League Meeting Hall, they see a large map behind the first table inside the front door. The map shows the actual approved boundaries of the league, so parents can identify their residence on the map.

The first step is for the parent to produce identification showing that their legal residence is within the boundaries on the map. The identification should be LEGAL identification — a document that shows the address as recognized by a government entity (Operating Manual - Little League Residency Requirements).

Some of the legal documents acceptable are a driver's license, income tax records, homestead exemption records or a voter ID card. It is unlawful to falsify the primary residence on these documents, so these items are acceptable as proof of residence (Regulation II (a),(f),(g)).

What about a utility bill? These alone are not acceptable because a person could own several properties at which they are paying the utility bills. Hometown Little League demands legal proof, and never has problems with residency because of it. If the parent lives outside the league boundaries, Hometown Little League shows them the Regulations pertaining to residence. Also, Hometown has a list of neighboring leagues on hand to direct the parent to the correct league. If the parents do not live in any chartered Little League's boundaries, they are directed to the District Administrator so that a league can be established where they reside, or so the boundaries of an existing league might be expanded.

Remember, your league must not accept any player of any age into any division if the player does not legally reside in the league boundaries, or does not qualify for an exception under Regulations II (d) or IV (h). These regulations are discussed in Chapter 4 - SPRING. This applies whether the child is a four-year-old Tee Ball candidate or a fire-balling 12-year-old left-hander. Improper policies of, or mistakes made by, last year's Board of Directors do not apply and must be corrected immediately.

If the birth certificate is not available, Hometown has the parent obtain one from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state in which the child was born. If still not available, follow the procedure on the policy statement regarding birth documents to obtain a Statement in Lieu of Birth Certificate — available online at www.littleleague.org/forms.

A notarized copy of a birth certificate is not acceptable. A Notary Public does NOT have authority to verify the authenticity of documents from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. He or she only has authority to authenticate signatures (Regulation IV (b) and or (c)).

The parent should fill out a Registration Form, copied from the form provided in your league supplies by Little League. Certain information on the form is essential. A form is available at www.littleleague.org. At this time, the player/parents must declare if the candidate intends to play baseball or softball (Regulation IV (c)).

They also fill out a Medical Release Form supplied by Little League. Hometown Little League has a volunteer who is a Notary Public to notarize these forms when desired by the league.

Part of Hometown Little League's registration form gives the league a profile of the parents. This determines if the parents are willing to help umpire, manage, coach, work in concession stand, do field work, carpentry, plumbing, computers, give legal advice, etc. Such information can be very useful later in the season, and is a great way to bring in new volunteers.

The next step is to explain the nature of Little League Insurance. More information on insurance is included later in this chapter.

Hometown Little League then gives the parent a copy of the pamphlet "Parents News," as well as a letter explaining the Hometown and Little League policies (sample included in this publication), then explains that their child is now eligible to compete in the league during the coming season.

Hometown Little League may also ask parents to complete a Little League Volunteer Application and provide a copy of a government-issued photo ID, which is required of all volunteers who may provide regular service to or have repetitive access to players and teams.

Registration Day - Part 2

At Hometown Little League the Tryout/Draft System is explained to the Little League parent. A copy of the system is also given to the parent, all but eliminating the possibility of confusion over the system (Operating Manual – Player Selection Systems).

Second, the budget for the previous year is explained to the parent, even if he or she was not involved in the league. The parent has a right to know where the money was spent, and often has no idea how much it costs to operate a Little League for an entire year. As most league officers know, there are many hidden costs (utilities, insurance, charter fees, equipment, rent/mortgage, etc.), while the average parent may only see certain highly visible items as the major expenses.

Third, they explain the budget for the coming season: where the league expects the funds to come from — and in what percentage — based on previous experience (fund-raisers, sponsorships, game collections, registration fees, concession income, etc.). If the parent knows he or she is getting a good value for his/her dollar, they will be willing to pay a reasonable fee.

If the league feels it necessary to charge a registration fee, it may do so. Remember, payment of a fee must not be a prerequisite for participation (Regulation XIII).

Hometown Little League explains that in order to meet the budget for the coming season, the parent should donate \$25 as a participation fee. The league explains that an amount above that figure will help to meet any emergency expenditure that may arise. Expecting parents to shoulder a large percentage of the financial responsibility at this time will turn people away and cause resentment. Nearly all will pay their fair share if they know they're getting a good value.

Parent Orientation Program

Hometown Little League understands how important it is to keep parents abreast of league operating procedures. Hometown Little League also wants all parents to know that proper fan behavior is a crucial part of keeping games and events enjoyable for players, volunteers and other fans. That's why Hometown Little League holds a Parent Orientation Program before the season begins. All parents are encouraged to attend/participate.

Hometown Little League's Parent Orientation Program can be presented by the League President, a board member or an adult volunteer with a good knowledge of local league operations.

Fund-Raising Ideas

One of the best ways to raise funds is through sponsorships. However, sponsorship of a team does not give the sponsor any rights in the operation of, or the outfitting of, any particular team. (Operating Manual - Local League Administration.)

The league may wish to recognize its teams' sponsors with a special day during the season, at which the sponsor is introduced before a game. Remember that sponsor names/logos on uniforms or fence signs should not offend community standards.

Fence sign advertisements are a good way to raise funds, but keep in mind the fence signs must meet local ordinances and codes for advertising. Any advertisement connected with a local Little League must not violate Little League policies regarding tobacco or alcohol.

Hometown Little League's biggest fund-raiser is Decal Day. Little League Decals are available from Regional Headquarters (10 cents each) to local leagues. The Decals are then sold at a cost of \$1 each within the community. This not only returns a huge profit to Hometown Little League, but it promotes Little League locally. Any leftover undated version decals can be stored until the following season.

Other ideas for fund-raising include plans using Little League licensees (the league is assured the fund-raiser is acceptable), garage sales, programs, bake sales, picnics, parties, dances, etc.

There is no limit to the number of fund-raisers using adults, but, only one fund-raiser using children per year is permitted (Regulation XIII).

Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Part 1)

This form is fairly self-explanatory. Problems arise when a league fails to complete all areas, including the current estimated population of all persons living within the league boundaries. Information about how to obtain a population estimate, at little or no cost, is available from your Regional Headquarters.

A blank Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form is mailed to the league president of record in the early Fall each year. A new form is available from the Regional Headquarters (Regulation II (g) and or (h)).

It is best to avoid the rush and send the Application for Charter to Williamsport before January 1st. Thousands of leagues send in their charter applications after this time, then don't get their league supplies in time because they waited until there was a backlog at Headquarters.

Even if you don't know the exact numbers of teams yet, chartering early is the best way to go. The numbers can be adjusted later with a telephone call to Williamsport.

Some leagues may not have the funds to send with the Application for Charter so early, but the fees can be deferred for a limited time with a letter of explanation.

The president of Hometown Little League is especially careful to ensure that he or she and one other board member have signed the appropriate section of the charter application verifying compliance with all regulations regarding background checks of volunteers (Regulation I (c) 8 and 9). Little League International will not accept any application for charter or any request for insurance coverage until this verification of compliance has been completed.

Lastly, it's important to have a post office box address AND a physical address on the charter application (many package delivery companies cannot deliver to a PO Box).

Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Part 2)

Group Accident Insurance meeting Little League standards is required for every Little Leaguer. The insurance offered through Little League International covers players, managers, coaches, volunteer umpires, official scorekeepers, player agents and safety officers in performance of their duties in authorized activities, and in travel by a direct route to and from scheduled games or practices. This also includes coaches appointed by the president and approved by the board as "assistant coaches" or "helpers" even if they are not listed on the official roster. Such names should be submitted on a supplemental roster to International Headquarters. (Regulation I (c)7; Regulation IV (a)).

Coverage begins when the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment and premium is received in Williamsport, or Jan. 1, whichever is later. Coverage ends at the completion of the playing season, when there are no longer any duties to perform on a volunteer basis for the league, or when a person is no longer a member of, or a volunteer worker for a league, whichever is earlier. Accident Insurance covers: only those players, managers and coaches of chartered teams whose names are listed on the rosters submitted to Williamsport; specific other volunteers including officers, umpires, official scorekeepers, etc. Those mentioned above are also covered while traveling to or from and while active in their official capacities at scheduled games and practice sessions, and while traveling by a direct route and without delay to and from scheduled games and practices. Certain volunteers are covered while traveling to and from and while attending clinics sponsored by Little League International. Accident Insurance covers teams competing in AUTHORIZED tournaments. Any Tournaments must be approved in writing by Regional Headquarters.

It must be understood that the Accident Insurance offered through Little League is not primary. This means it picks up where the insured's coverage leaves off. Claims filed must include the injured person's proof of insurance, or must include information on the lack of such insurance. The premium is based on the number of teams in the league.

Leagues can receive a significant credit on the following year's insurance by instituting ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program).

If coverage is obtained locally, a copy of the policy limits, exclusions, benefits, etc., must be submitted to the Insurance Department in Williamsport for review.

General Liability Insurance includes General Liability and Association Directors and Officers Liability.

General Liability Insurance is required and the plan offered through Little League covers the Local Little League, its sponsors, executive officers, directors, managers, coaches, umpires and volunteer workers. Coverage begins when the application is received in Williamsport, or Jan. 1, whichever is later, and ends on Dec. 31.

The premium is also based on the size of the league. The league can add others as additional insureds at a nominal amount for each entity named.

If coverage is obtained locally, a copy of the policy limits, exclusions, benefits, etc., must be submitted to the Insurance Department in Williamsport for review.

One word of caution: Each additional insured on the General Liability policy spreads out the benefits of the policy. A league should not name an entity as an additional insured if it is not required to by that entity. Directors and Officers Liability covers league personnel, including the Board of Directors, against lawsuits involving wrongful decisions or acts such as discrimination, slander, errors and omissions, libel or related wrongful acts, etc. Accident insurance will cover your league's players, managers, coaches, etc., at any site approved by the Board of Directors, provided it is an activity (such as a practice or game) approved or sponsored by Little League International.

Optional insurance offered through Little League includes: Crime (covers league against MONETARY loss caused by dishonesty, disappearance of money, securities or other property, and destruction of money and securities).

Remember, a significant accident insurance credit is available to leagues that submit a qualified Safety Program as part of ASAP. Approved safety plans will win your league a cash award based on the number of teams your safety plan covers, if you carry Little League Chartis Insurance.

Inspections, Part 1

Before the fields, bleachers, equipment, etc., are used, they must be inspected. This is one of the primary duties of the safety officer (Rules - Safety Code; Operating Manual - Artificial Lighting Standards).

The safety officer should inspect and inventory all equipment, replace worn straps, worn helmet pads, etc., and discard cracked helmets and other damaged equipment. At Hometown Little League, if equipment is still functional but will not be used, the league donates it to a league in another country where baseball/softball equipment is difficult to obtain. (Call Little League Headquarters for more information.) The safety officer should also inspect the bleachers, concession appliances, fences, lights and telephone(s). Emergency numbers should be in plain view near the telephone(s). Hometown also takes advantage of ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program) in which the best safety ideas from around the nation are shared.

The maintenance equipment (mowers, golf carts, tractors, etc.) should also be inspected. Minors should never operate such machines. The keys for these vehicles should never be left unattended. Pitching machines, if used, should also be inspected. Don't forget to inspect the extension cords and outlets as well.

Inspections, Part 2

Used uniforms in good condition should be re-used. Old uniforms may be used as "hand-me-downs" for Minor Leaguers. All uniforms must have the proper patches (must not be screened or ironed-on), which can be ordered from Regional Headquarters. (Rule 1.11 (a)-2.) It is not recommended that player names be on uniforms, as this makes them unusable in subsequent years, and could expose youngsters to increased risk from pedophiles. Players should not keep uniforms.

Equipment

All equipment used in games and practices must meet Little League standards and specifications for the intended division. It is NOT necessary that equipment have the Little League Trademark affixed. However, the league is assured that equipment meets Little League specifications if the Little League trademark is affixed. You or your sporting goods supplier can call your Regional Headquarters or visit www.littleleague.org to get a list of those manufacturers who have earned the right to place the Little League name and/or logo on their products.

Volunteers and Background Checks

Hometown Little League is required to have all board members, managers, coaches, and other volunteers or hired workers who provide regular service to the league or/and who have repetitive access to or contact with players or teams annually fill out the Little League Volunteer Application and provide a government-issued photo ID. Additionally, the league is required to conduct a background check on each of these individuals. Hometown Little League is required to sign an agreement on the charter application that it will comply with Regulations I(b) and (c) 8 and 9. The league also will be required to sign a statement on its Tournament Team Eligibility Affidavit verifying that the process under the regulations has been completed and implemented. Failure to sign the agreement on the charter application will result in the league not being chartered and failure to fulfill the requirements of the regulations will result in the league's status being referred to the Charter/Tournament Committee for action to revoke the league's charter and all privileges. By now, all volunteer applications should have been distributed to most of the league's volunteers/hired workers who fit the criteria of the regulations and the background check committee appointed by the Board of Directors should have completed most of the checks. All background checks must be completed BEFORE the individuals can assume their duties for the current year.

Appointments (Managers, Coaches, Umpires)

This is a critical time of year for Hometown Little League, as it is for every league (Regulation I (b) and (c); Pamphlet - Little League's Greatest Challenge). At Hometown, the first step is for committees to seek and screen those willing to serve. The next step is for the president to appoint managers, coaches and umpires at his/her discretion. **Exception:** Coaches new to a particular team cannot be named until after the draft. (Operating Manual - Local League Administration; Regulation I (b)).

The final step in the appointment process is for the Board of Directors to approve or disapprove that appointment. No person can manage, coach or umpire without the president appointing and the board approving that appointment. A president and/or Board of Directors SHOULD NOT give a reason to a person if he or she is not re-appointed or re-approved as a manager, coach or umpire for the coming season. No manager, coach or umpire has tenure, regardless of the years of service.

Leagues should send managers, coaches and umpires to Regional Headquarters for clinics, to an Emergency Management Training Course, First-Aid classes, etc., and take advantage of the Little League Education Program for Managers and Coaches. Appointments of managers, coaches and umpires must only be made after the background check is complete.

Releasing a Player During the Off-Season

In any contemplated release of a player, the manager MUST make the Board of Directors aware of the situation immediately (Regulation III (e)).

At Hometown, the player agent first determines (in writing from manager) why the manager wants to release the player, or why the parents want the player to be released. Playing ability cannot be a factor.

The issue is then brought before the Board of Directors for a decision. No release is valid without the board approval.

The player is then notified of the release in writing, in time to attend tryouts for the coming season. Sample letters of release from Hometown Little League are included in this publication.

Double-Checking Eligibility

The player agent at Hometown Little League gathers all information on player eligibility before the tryouts. This helps to ensure that no ineligible player is drafted or placed on a team. (If this happens and it is discovered later, the player must be released immediately and sent to the proper league.)

If no league services the player's residence, a new one must be formed or the boundaries properly changed to include the residence. Before the draft, the player agent also contacts all players who played last year, but have not signed up. Sample contact letters from Hometown Little League are included in this publication. The player agent gets statements, in writing if possible, from those who are not coming back. Those not returning are to be properly released, in writing, as stated in the previous section (Pamphlet - The Player Agent in Little League).

Clinics and Educational Programs

For Hometown Little League, the final step before spring begins is to ensure that the volunteers in the league are properly trained. The best way is to take advantage of Little League's extensive training programs.

Managers and coaches at Hometown Little League are sent to their Regional Center for a weekend clinic and coaching clinics. Internationally-known baseball and softball leaders actively contribute to www.littleleaguecoach.org.

Umpires also can receive personal instruction on the "Little League Way," either at International Headquarters or any of the Regional Centers. The Regional Centers also offer clinics for league officers, tracing Hometown Little League's year of operations through Power Points and videos. Some centers also offer clinics specifically designed for player agents, safety officers and scorekeepers. Also, regional and/or Little League International staff annually conduct district clinics in various states. Little League International also provides free training for managers and umpires at <http://www.LittleLeagueCoach.org> and <http://www.LittleLeagueUmpire.org>

Another aspect of Little League's commitment to education is ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program). This program gathers the best safety ideas from leagues all around the nation, and shares them with you. Bonus incentives are available for those leagues that choose to participate that will help your league save money. Call your Regional Center for more information on any of these programs.

Chapter 4 - SPRING

This is generally the time of year when the children of Little League become involved. As such, its smooth operation is critical to the success of the Regular Season.

If the fall and winter seasons are well-run, the spring season will be the payoff. If not, it can be one headache after another.

Divisions: How Do We Line Up?

The first step is to decide how Hometown Little League will be structured by ages. All 4-6 year-olds must play Tee Ball, but will the league allow some 7-year-olds to play Tee Ball? Will some 7-year-olds move up to Minors? How many players will be on each team? Will the Minor Division be separated into "Coach Pitch," "Player Pitch" and/or "Machine Pitch" divisions? These issues could change yearly (Regulation III (a)).

The number of players returning will be essential in deciding on the number of teams in each division. It is recommended the ratio of Minors to Majors not exceed 2:1 in the 9-12-year-old age group.

Since the Minor Division can include players who are league age 7-12, Hometown Little League separates the Minors into two parts. Minor League Coach Pitch is for players who are league age 7-10, with a few 6-year-olds (who played Tee Ball as 5-year-olds) also involved. Minor League Player Pitch is for players league age 10-11 (12-year-olds with Approved Waivers are allowed to play in Minor League Player Pitch). Some 10-year-olds play in the older division, some in the younger, depending on ability).

Hometown uses a pitching machine in some Major Division practices, and ensures the machine, extension cords, etc., are in proper working order, and operated only by an adult manager or coach. Hometown always looks to expand the Major Division,

invariably resulting in a stronger league. Options for expanding are in the Operating Manual, as well as information on team reduction. Remember to ensure each division has enough teams to play “in-house” games or that an Inter-league arrangement can be worked out with another Little League program.

Preparing for the Tryout

In the announcement of tryouts, Hometown Little League contacts all who signed up to inform them about the dates, times and sites of the tryouts. Tryout dates and times should be varied, and registration of new players continues up until the time of the tryouts. This allows for late registration, giving all children in the community ample opportunity to play.

All of those required to try out should be informed in writing of the dates and times, and the importance of attending the tryouts. A sample notice from Hometown Little League is included in this publication.

The player agent oversees the tryout and produces a list, for each manager, of the eligible candidates and their ages. All managers are informed that attendance at the tryout is mandatory. At Hometown, all eligible candidates must try out (including “Option” players). **Exception:** The league may opt to immediately place all 9 and/or 10 year-olds in the Minor League, without a tryout. It is recommended that any 11-year-olds who are not of sufficient ability to play in the Major Division be placed in the Minor Division. Twelve-year-olds can only be placed in the Minor Division with an Approved Waiver.

If a candidate fails to attend at least 50 percent of the tryouts, the first step is to find out why. At Hometown Little League, the player agent obtains a written excuse from the parents. If the excuse is acceptable to a majority of the board, the child can enter the draft and be placed on a team. If the excuse is not acceptable, the child cannot play in the league AT ANY LEVEL for that season.

With the exception of a 12-year-old playing in Minors with an Approved Waiver, any child who is placed on a Minor League team (and is the correct age for the Major Division) is IMMEDIATELY eligible to be called up to the Major Division, in the event of a vacancy. (Regulation IV (f)).

If a candidate fails to attend 50 percent of the tryouts, the child/parents should be sent a letter explaining this policy. A sample copy of the letter from Hometown Little League is included in this publication.

Conducting the Tryout

Candidates should be tested in five areas. All managers must attend, and all eligible players must attend at least 50 percent of the sessions. (Operating Manual-Tryouts).

Here are the five areas in which Hometown Little League tests its candidates:

Batting/bunting - Fielding fly balls - Fielding ground balls - Throwing - Running

Pitch Count Program (Baseball)

To protect the arms of young players, and in keeping with Little League regulations regarding baseball, Hometown Little League has a Pitch Count program (Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules, Regulation VI). Rather than limit pitching eligibility by number of innings pitched, the pitch count program defines the amount of rest needed based on the number of actual pitches thrown. This not only helps protect players from overuse injuries, it further highlights the need for throwing accuracy at all levels of baseball.

The Draft

There are almost always “Options” claimed in the draft at Hometown. Options regard only sons or daughters of the manager or eligible coach, or siblings of players. (Operating Manual-Options).

Most Options must be submitted in writing to the player agent 48 hours before the draft begins, so he or she can properly prepare the list of eligible candidates. Options are not secret, and should be discussed prior to the draft with all managers. If no option is submitted, the candidate may be drafted by any team at any time.

Regarding coach’s options, the coach must have been a manager or coach in Hometown Little League for at least the past two years AND must be returning to the same team on which he/she coached/managed last season (Operating Manual - Draft). “Gentlemen’s Agreements” are not valid during a draft.

Trading Players

Trades can only be conducted AFTER the draft, and before the 14th day of the regular season. If all of the following parties do not agree to the trade, then there cannot be a trade (Operating Manual - Draft):

- * The managers of both teams
- * The player agent
- * The Board of Directors (by majority vote)

The board must decide if the trade is for justifiable reasons. Just exactly what is “justifiable” is totally up to the Hometown Little League’s Board of Directors.

Trades must be player for player only. **Example:** Two managers could trade players they have just drafted, pending the approval of the player agent and Board of Directors.

The player agent must monitor trades closely to prevent manipulation of the system.

There can be no trades between teams in separate charters or divisions. For example, a team in Downtown National Little League could not trade with a team in Downtown American Little League, even if both leagues are operated by one Board of Directors.

Scheduling Games

The schedule at Hometown Little League is arranged so teams play each other twice a week. For instance, Team A plays Team B twice in the first week of the season. In the second week, Team A plays Team C twice, and so on.

Obviously, this works best with an even number of teams. The advantage is in preventing one team from always using the same pitcher against another (Operating Manual - Sample Schedules).

At Hometown Little League the first-half winner plays the second-half winner for the league championship at the end of the season. This gives an advantage to a “quick start” team as well as a “late bloomer.”

Remember to allow for “rain dates.” At Hometown Little League, there are specific dates set up to replay games previously rained out, in the order in which they were rained out. That way, the schedule of “makeup” games is determined solely by the “luck of the draw.”

Here are some other points to remember when scheduling games:

- * Sunday games are NOT prohibited by Little League Regulations
- * The season must be at least half complete by June 15 (the day Tournament Teams are allowed to be announced) if the league intends to enter teams in Tournament Play
- * Little League recommends splitting the season in half
- * Curfews must be observed without exception

Practices

A practice schedule is determined by the Hometown Little League Board of Directors through individual division vice presidents. Practices may be off league property if the location is approved by the Board of Directors. (Regulation IX.) Practice games/scrimmages may only be conducted BEFORE the season begins, and can only be between teams in the same division (Regulation I (c) 5).

Waiver Forms

Regulation II (d) and Regulation IV (h) Waiver Forms must be completely filled out, or they will be returned. After verifying that each youngster meets the requirements of the waiver, the president of Hometown Little League then sends the forms to the District Administrator. Once the District Administrator verifies the documentation meets the regulations, he or she has the authority to grant approval of the waiver. Situations in which documentation is not available must be referred through the regional office to the Charter Committee at Little League International, whose decision is final and binding.

Failure to follow this procedure will result in having an ineligible player in the league. The player in question is not eligible until the leagues receives written confirmation from the DA or, in those cases where documentation is not available, from Little League International, and only if all the information on the form is true and remains correct. (Regulation IV (h)). Regulation II (d) and IV (h) waiver forms are available at www.littleleague.org, as well as on the ASAP Safety Manual CD and the League Supplies CD sent to Hometown Little League upon chartering.

Charter Committee Waivers

If a league wants to request a waiver of any other rule or regulation, it may do so. A specific procedure has been developed for this purpose, using the “chain of command.” Waiver Requests that do not follow this established procedure will be delayed (Rulebooks - General Information/Charter Committee). The procedure follows.

How Hometown Little League Applies for a Waiver

1. The Hometown Little League Board of Directors votes to request the waiver.
2. The president (Jane Hancock) writes a letter to the attention of “The Charter Committee, Williamsport, Pennsylvania” detailing the waiver and the reasons for requesting it. Any supporting documents are included.
3. The letter and documents are forwarded to the district administrator for his or her recommendation and/or investigation.
4. The letter and documents are forwarded to the Regional Director for his or her recommendation and/or investigation.
5. The letter and documents are forwarded to the Charter Committee for action.

Remember: Any waiver for any reason is for the current season only. Re-submissions the following year(s) must go through the same process.

Team Rosters

Team rosters must be submitted to Little League International annually. Failure to do so could result in ineligible players in the league during the regular season and tournament (Regulation IV g).

A player, manager or coach who is injured must be on roster at Headquarters to be covered by Little League insurance. Exception: A local league board of directors may approve a number of “volunteer helpers” or “assistant coaches” to assist in practices. (They are also covered by Little League accident insurance, if approved by the board and if noted on a separate list submitted to Headquarters).

Rosters should be submitted through the “Little League Data Center” on <http://datacenter.activeteamsports.com/llb>. This web site will provide a downloadable spreadsheet as well as accepting formats from Licensed Products and our sponsor, Active Network.

This is a secure and easy way to provide the required data on players, managers and coaches, and insures that Little League Baseball International receives the data that is required.

Further information is available by using your ID Number and Password and logging onto the Little League Data Center.

Interleague/Combined Teams Forms

As with all other forms, these are filled out completely by Hometown Little League. They are sent to the District Administrator, which will forward the Combined League Forms to Regional Headquarters. Until written permission is received from Regional Headquarters, Combined Teams Play should not be conducted. Interleague play must be approved by District Administrator (Regulation I (c)5).

The leagues involved should form an Interleague committee to work with the teams making up the Interleague arrangement. This is not the responsibility of the District Administrator. A sample Interleague Request Form and Combined Teams Request Form are available at www.littleleague.org.

Opening Day

This is often the biggest day of the year for Hometown Little League, and a perfect opportunity to gain new members and volunteers. Ceremonies are brief and meaningful, and the media is invited. News releases to the media place the emphasis on the people in the league, and the fact that there are so many involved (Operating Manual - Public Relations). Also, there are many religions represented in Hometown, USA. When a prayer is used, it is non-denominational one.

Multiple Participation

Although Hometown Little League runs so well that no other baseball or softball programs are in town, some of the neighboring towns have programs not affiliated with Little League. Players may participate in more than one program.

If a player repeatedly misses practices and/or games because of participation in another program, the manager may remove the player from the team, subject to the Board of Directors’ approval, for the current season or tournament play. A team in a chartered Little League must not participate as a Little League team in games with or against those of another organization (**Exception:** Little League teams may play games against Non-Little League Teams with an approved “Application for Special Games with Non-Little League Teams”).

Equipment and uniforms belonging to the local Little League must not be used in non-Little League approved games, and the team must not be identified as a team from a chartered Little League.

Protest Committee

The protest committee is composed of the president, player agent, league umpire in chief and one or more other officers or directors who are not managers or umpires. This committee is totally responsible for solving protests of regular season games at Hometown Little League (Rule 4.19 (f)).

The president of Hometown Little League may call the District Administrator or Regional Headquarters for help with an interpretation of a Rule or Regulation as it applies to the protest, but not for a ruling on a protest.

President, Vice President(s) and Player Agent(s)

Because of the obvious conflict of interest, Jane Hancock (president of Hometown Little League) cannot serve on the protest committee while managing, coaching or umpiring in any division in the league. Her responsibilities on the protest committee may be waived, however, in order to manage, coach or umpire. Vice president(s) can manage, coach or umpire in any division, provided they do not serve on the protest committee. Player agent(s) cannot manage, coach or umpire in the division in which they have responsibilities. The league cannot circumvent this regulation by applying alternate titles such as “Commissioner,” “League Representative,” etc. (Regulation I (b)).

Injured Player Procedure

An injured or ill player should be given basic first-aid treatment, and published procedures should be followed if bodily fluids are present (Rulebooks - Communicable Disease Procedure).

At Hometown Little League, the circumstances of the injury (safety officer/league president) are documented. If the injury or illness occurs during a game, the umpire may require an opinion from a medical person before allowing player to re-enter the game.

If an accident insurance claim is needed, the safety officer prepares the paperwork. The president reviews and submits the paperwork through proper channels.

The most common reason for delays in processing insurance claims is failure to complete all paperwork (particularly information on the parents' primary insurance, or lack of it).

Following the injury or illness, the player agent determines how long the player will be unable to play. The Board of Directors of Hometown Little League decided last Fall (in local rules/ground rules) the amount of time a player can miss before being replaced (Regulation III (d)).

If a player is replaced (properly released) on a Major Division team (any team other than Tee Ball or Minor League), the player must be notified of his/her release in writing. That player may not return to the league for the remainder of the season and is no longer a member of that team. As such, the player must attend tryouts next year if he/she wishes to play (Operating Manual - Local League Maintenance of Rosters).

A player called up from the Minor Leagues to a Major Division team at any time becomes a permanent member of that Major Division team. Such a player may refuse to become a member of a Major Division team. If so, he or she is not eligible to be placed on a Major Division team for the remainder of the season. (Regulation VIII.)

This is to help ensure that the Minor League is balanced, to help ensure that the players in the Major Division are of sufficient ability (in the opinion of Hometown Little League personnel) to compete in the Major Division, and to ensure that players in the Minor Division are not able to "pick and choose" the team for which they will play in the Major Division.

A local league should also have a policy in its local rules/ground rules regarding players who refuse to move up to a Major Division team. (**Example:** Such player must be transferred to another Minor League team.) At Hometown Little League, this policy is explained in writing to parents at the sign-ups so there is no question about the policy later on.

When a Player is Released During the Season

As in the off-season, the manager **MUST** make the Board of Directors aware of the situation immediately. Failure to do so may be cause for action against the manager for acting outside the best interests of the local league. Even so, the player agent must maintain strict observation of the league to prevent manipulation of the system. (Regulation III (d)).

At Hometown Little League, the player agent first determines (in writing from the manager) why the manager wants to release the player. Playing ability cannot be a factor (There also may be an underlying reason that should be addressed).

The issue is then brought before the Hometown Board of Directors for a decision by majority vote. No release is valid without the board approving it.

If the board votes to release the player, he or she is notified of the release in writing. **NOTE:** If the Hometown board feels the manager is releasing the player late in the season in an effort to obtain an "early draft choice," it may opt not to release the player.

Remember, a player **MAY NOT** be released from a Major Division team to play the balance of the season on a Minor Division team. If released, such a player must try out the following season (Operating Manual - Tryouts, Duration of Title). Sample letters of release from Hometown Little League are included in this publication.

Disciplining a Member

In the case of a Regular Member (not a player), Hometown Little League's procedure is for a committee to gather complaints, in writing if possible. The committee reports its findings to the Board of Directors (Model Constitution - Article III, Section 4 (a)).

At this point, the board could dismiss the case, or could send written notice to the accused, stating the charges in general, as well as when and where to appear to answer the charges.

At the disciplinary meeting for Regular Members:

- Re-state charges for the record.
- Give the accused ample opportunity to respond.
- Board could decide to take no further action.
- Board could decide to draft a warning or letter of reprimand.
- Board could decide to revoke all or part of the person's Membership privileges for a specific period of time, but not longer than the remainder of the fiscal year.
- Any punishment by the board must be approved by two-thirds vote of those present at any duly constituted board meeting.

In the case of a Player Member, a committee gathers complaints, in writing if possible, and reports its findings to the Board of Directors. The board could dismiss the case, or could send written notice to the accused, stating the charges, as well as when and where to appear to answer the charges. The player's manager should also be present (Model Constitution - Article III, Section 4 (b)). This process is detailed below.

At the disciplinary meeting for a Player Member (may be the entire board or the committee):

- Re-state charges for the record.
- Give the accused ample opportunity to respond.
- Board could decide to take no further action.
- Board could decide to draft a warning or letter of reprimand.
- Board could decide to revoke all or part of the person's player Membership privileges for a specific period of time, but not longer than the remainder of the season.
- Any punishment by the board must be approved by 2/3 vote of those present at any duly constituted board meeting.

DISCIPLINING a member should not be confused with **NOT RE-APPOINTING** a member to a specific position, such as manager, coach or umpire. If the local league president does not choose to re-appoint a person (annually), he or she **SHOULD NOT** give any reason for doing so.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL ANY PERSON WHO IS A KNOWN CHILD-SEX OFFENDER BE PERMITTED TO HOLD ANY OFFICE OR POSITION IN THE LOCAL LEAGUE OR ANY OTHER LEVEL OF LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL. ADDITIONALLY, ANY PERSON CONVICTED OF A CRIME INVOLVING OR AGAINST CHILDREN SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED TO HOLD ANY POSITION IN THE LOCAL LEAGUE (REGULATION I (c) 9).

Post-Season Playoffs

At Hometown Little League, playoff games are played between the first and second half champions in the same division, so no written permission is needed. Such games can only be played under Regular Season Rules (Regulations VII (f) and IX).

Any other games require written permission from Regional Headquarters as Special Games. A Special Games Request Form must be approved by the District Administrator and Regional Director prior to the games being played. Special Games may be played under Regular Season Rules or Tournament Rules, but not in combination. Protests in Special Games cannot be referred to Regional Headquarters.

Special Games Request Forms are available at www.littleleague.org.

Chapter 5 - SUMMER

If spring is the meat and potatoes for all the hard work put into Hometown Little League this season, then summer is the icing on the cake.

Special Games

Special Games includes Tournament of Champions, Strong Team Tournament, City Tournament, County Tournament, etc., as well as any kind of tournament other than games to determine a league Champion. (Regulation IX.)

A Special Games Request Form must be approved by the district administrator and Regional Director prior to the games being played. A form is available at <http://www.littleleague.org/learn/forms.htm>.

Special Games may be played under Regular Season Rules or Tournament Rules, but not in combination. Protests in Special Games cannot be referred to Regional Headquarters.

Selection of Tournament Teams

This is the source of many lawsuits and threats of lawsuits in Little League Baseball and Softball. If your local league, like Hometown Little League, conducts its Tournament Team Selection democratically, it will avoid many of these problems (Tournament Rules and Guidelines).

The criteria for selection must be limited to the following:

- Eligibility
- Availability
- Ability

Eligibility refers to:

1. Age
2. Participation in 60% of the regular season (as of the date the Tournament Teams are announced) in that division
3. Residence, as defined in the Operating Manual and Rulebooks (or a letter from Regional Headquarters specifically noting the eligibility of that player for that division in that league and in that year)

“Availability” refers to whether the candidate will be able to practice and play with the team. Will the player be away on vacation during some or all practices/games? If so, the league may wish to disqualify the player from consideration. “Ability” is solely in the opinion of those making the selections.

Hometown Little League follows Little League’s recommendation for selecting the Tournament Teams. The groups involved in voting are:

- Players in that division
- Managers in that division
- Coaches in that division
- Volunteer umpires
- Board of Directors

Every person in every group gets one vote, selecting up to 14 (16 for Senior Division and 17 for Big League, 14 for Senior Softball and 15 for Big League Softball) players. This method all but eliminates charges of favoritism by managers or the board. The players with the most total votes comprise the Tournament Team.

The selection of the manager and coaches for the Tournament Team is up to the Board of Directors. A Tournament Team manager or coach must have been an eligible manager or coach in that division of the league during the regular season.

At Hometown, those players who do not receive enough votes are placed into a pool, should there be a vacancy on the Tournament Team. If a vacancy arises, and the Board of Directors decides to fill it, the player who received the next-most votes is automatically placed on the team after verification of birth date and residence. However, these players **MUST NOT** travel with the team and are not covered by Little League Accident Insurance when traveling to and from games.

The announcement of the Tournament Team cannot be before the date specified in the Tournament Rules and Guidelines (June 15 for divisions above 10-11 Year-Olds). If conducted, tryouts for the Tournament Team cannot begin before that date. Violation may result in revocation of Tournament privileges by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport (Tournament Rules and Guidelines).

Tournament Affidavit

Like all forms, Hometown Little League fills these out completely. The president and player agent verify and are responsible for the residences and ages being correct on the form. The district administrator verifies and is responsible for the players’ ages being correct and that, at a minimum, all players of the district championship team meet the residence requirement.

At Hometown Little League, the maximum number of players allowed on the affidavit are named (16 Senior Division and 17 for Big League Baseball, 14 for Senior Softball and 15 for Big League Softball ,14 for all other divisions). The minimum number of players allowed is nine for all divisions.

Individuals may be added to the affidavit at any time during the Tournament, but must undergo the same verification process for age and residence as all other Tournament players. Hometown always places the maximum one manager and two coaches on the affidavit.

Replacement of players begins with drawing a line through the replaced player’s name or an “x” over that player’s entry. Such a player can no longer re-join the team from that point. Then, complete a block for a replacement player. Note the corresponding player number.

Tournament Team Practice

Practice (or tryouts) of the Tournament Team cannot begin before the date specified in the Tournament Rules and Guidelines (June 15 for all divisions except 9-10 year-olds or 10-11 year-olds). **Little/Junior/Senior/Big League:** Try-outs or practices by tournament teams shall not be held before June 15. *Tournament team practice may only take place against other teams within the same or contiguous district in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform.* (Little League accident insurance for tournament teams will not go into effect until June 15, or the date of the release of the names of tournament Team members, whichever is later).

9-10 & 10-11 Year-Old Divisions: Try-outs or practices by tournament teams shall not be held before June 15 or two weeks prior to the start of the tournament. *Tournament team practice may only take place against other teams within the same or contiguous districts in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform.* (Little League accident insurance for tournament teams will not go into effect until June 15, or the date of the release of the names of tournament Team members, whichever is earlier).

Tournament Briefings with DA

The success of these meetings is critical to the success of the District Tournament. The meetings should include all managers, tournament site directors and umpires.

The meetings should cover:

- Field Certification

- Tournament Rules and Guidelines (including the process for completing the affidavit).
- Code of Conduct
- Special situations that may arise in games

Awards

Any award given to any Hometown Little Leaguer is NOT for individual athletic accomplishment, such as having the highest batting average or most home runs. Some examples of awards given at Hometown are: Good Sport of the Year; Best Attitude; Most Decals Sold, etc. (Regulation XII.)

Awards should be inexpensive. Expensive awards can jeopardize a child's amateur status. Trophies or plaques for individuals on league championship or tournament teams are acceptable if they are given to all members of the team without reference to individual accomplishments.

Participation pins, available from Regional Headquarters, are an excellent way to provide all players with a lasting memento of their time in various levels of Little League.

Information is available from the state high school athletic association on the limits allowed for awards. Simply call any local public high school and ask for the activities director or athletic director for information on the cutoff between amateur and professional status in your state.

International Tournament

Once a team advances beyond district play, the league is reimbursed at a rate of \$1 per mile for one round trip (U.S. leagues only).

Reimbursement is in the form of a credit toward the next season's Charter and Insurance fees. The league may request, in writing, reimbursement by check. (Tournament Rules and Guidelines)

Information on hosting a Tournament is available in the Tournament Rules and Guidelines. Leagues with teams advancing beyond district play should contact the Tournament Director at the next level to see if there are special arrangements for housing, meals, etc.

Parents of Tournament Team players must not be shouldered with the burden of supplying uniforms or paying for the players' travel (these are league responsibilities). Every effort must be made to provide travel, housing and meals for the team players at no cost to the players' parents.

However, the league should not provide funds to assist parents in their travel, meals or lodging.

The World Series

Advancing to a World Series in Little League Baseball or Softball can be the pinnacle of any child's early years. Little League conducts World Series Programs in several divisions each year.

Second Season (Training and Development Program)

Second Season (Training and Development Program) allows parents to maintain their child in a supervised baseball or softball program in the fall and/or winter months. Programs should be conducted on an informal basis with training and instruction in a relaxed atmosphere. Regulations are the same as in Regular Season with regard to boundaries and interleague play. Leagues can assign players to divisions based on the current year's or next year's age chart. The Second Season (TAD) Brochure (available on www.littleleague.org) has details on league structure suggestions. Hometown Little League does not have to pay additional charter or insurance fees if its Second Season divisions are the same as its Regular Season divisions.

Conclusion

As any Local Little League volunteer knows, there is much more involved in the smooth operation of the league than simply making sure boys and girls get to play baseball or softball. We hope this publication has been helpful in making your league, like Hometown Little League, a more effective service organization to the youth of your community.

GLOSSARY

Many of these terms are Federally Registered Trademarks, and should never be used in reference to any program other than those chartered by Little League Baseball, Incorporated. They are not generic terms.

9 and 10 Year-Old Tournament: A tournament division in baseball and softball for participants of those league ages. Players may not be on both the 9-10 Year-Old and 10-11 Year-Old Division tournament teams.

10 and 11 Year-Old Tournament: A tournament division in baseball and softball for participants of those league ages. Players may not be on both the 10-11 Year-Old and the Little League Majors Division tournament teams.

50/70 Baseball Division: Pilot Program for league age 11-13 Baseball players. Players league ages 11/12 may participate in the 50/70 Division and the Major Division. League age 11 year olds may play in the Minor Division as well. Players league ages 12/13 may participate in the 50/70 Division and the Junior Division. All Players must have played in 60 percent of the games in the Division in which they wish to qualify for Tournament.

Big League Baseball: A program for participants 15-18 years old (league age).

Boys Big League Softball: A program for male participants 14-18 years old (league age).

Boys Junior League Softball A program for male participants 12-14 (league age)

Boys Little League Softball: A program for male participants age 9-12 (league age).

Boys Minor League Softball: A Minor Division of the Little League Softball charter, for male participants 7-12 years old (league age). A league may have further divisions at the local level, such as Boys Minor League Softball Coach Pitch, Boys Minor League Softball Machine Pitch, etc.

Boys Senior League Softball: A program for male participants 13-16 years old (league age).

Boys Tee Ball Softball: A minor division of the Little League Softball charter, for male participants of league ages 4-7. Participants 4-6 years of age (league age) must play only Tee Ball. Exception: If a player, league age 6, played a season of Tee Ball as a 5-year old, the league may allow the player to participate in the Boys Minor League Softball Coach Pitch or Machine Pitch Division but not in a Player Pitch Division. (See Boys Minor League Softball).

Board of Directors: At the local league level, a group of people elected by the league membership, in whom is placed the responsibility for the management of the property and affairs of the league, under the rules, regulations and policies of Little League Baseball, Incorporated. (See Little League International Board of Directors)

Bylaws: See “local rules.”

Challenger Division: A baseball program for participants 4-18 years old (league age; or older, for those still in school) who are mentally and/or physically disabled.

Charter: A written contract/agreement between Little League Baseball, Incorporated, and the Board of Directors of a local organization of volunteers interested in operating a Little League Baseball and/or Little League Softball program for a particular year. It is applied for annually by the local league.

Charter Committee: A group of personnel at Little League International in whom is placed (by the Little League International Board of Directors) the responsibility for the granting, suspension, termination or limitation of constitution: A document, produced at the local league level that governs the way the local league will operate. This document must be approved by Little League International to be valid. The membership of the local league is responsible for its enforcement.

District Administrator: A volunteer position at the local level. Districts hold elections once every three years on a rotating basis. Each league in a district (a geographic area within a state or country) can nominate any person, and receives one vote at the election.

Dr. Creighton J. Hale International Grove: A housing, dining and recreation area at Little League International for participants in the Little League Baseball World Series and Summer Camp. Also used to house visitors/participants in seminars and schools, and has been used to house victims of natural disasters. It is named for the former president and chief executive officer of Little League Baseball, Incorporated.

Girls Big League Softball: A program for female participants 14-18 years old (league age).

Girls Junior League Softball: A program for female participants 12-14 years old (league age).

Girls Little League Softball: A program for female participants age 9-12 (league age).

Girls Minor League Softball: A Minor Division of the Little League Softball charter, for female participants 7-12 years old (league age). A league may have further divisions at the local level, such as Girls Minor League Softball Coach Pitch, Girls Minor League Softball Machine Pitch, etc.

Girls Senior League Softball: A program for female participants 13-16 years old (league age).

Girls Tee Ball Softball: A Minor Division of the Little League Softball charter, for female participants of league ages 4-7). Participants must play only Girls Tee Ball Softball. **Exception:** If a player, league age 6, played a season of Tee Ball as a 5-year-old, the league may allow the player to participate in the Girls Minor League Softball Coach Pitch Division. (See Girls Minor League Softball).

Ground Rules: See “local rules.”

Howard J. Lamade Stadium: The name of the stadium at which the Little League Baseball World Series has been played every year since 1959. It is named for a longtime Little League supporter who was instrumental in procuring the land and funds needed to construct the stadium.

International Tournament: The tournament that begins in early July at the district level and ends in August with a World Series in eight divisions of play (Little League Baseball for 11-12 year-olds; Junior League Baseball for 12-14 year-olds; Senior League Baseball for 13-16 year-olds; Big League Baseball for 15-18 year-olds; Little League Softball for 11-12 year-olds; Junior League Softball for 12-14 year-olds; Senior League Softball for 13-16 year-olds; Big League Softball for 14-18 year-olds). The International Tournament is under the administrative control of the Tournament Committee in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Junior League Baseball: A program for participants 12-14 years old (league age).

League Age: For baseball divisions, this is the age attained by a participant as of April 30 during the year in question. For softball, this the age attained on Dec. 31 of the year prior to the year in question. This is the factor used by Little League in determining the age bracket in which the child will be placed during that season. These dates were determined as a result of agreements with other youth baseball and softball organizations. Age charts are in the Operating Manual.

Little League Baseball, or Little League: Acceptable on first reference to the organization named below. Also used to identify the regular season division for participants age 9-12 (league age). (See International Tournament). Whenever used in letterhead or in a title, it should also be accompanied by a registration symbol. “(r)”

Senior League Baseball: A program for participants 13-16 years old (league age).

Tee Ball Baseball: A minor division of the Little League Baseball charter, for participants of league ages 4-7. Participants league ages 6 years of age or under must play only Tee Ball. **Exception:** If a player, league age 6, played a season of Tee Ball as a 5-year-old, the league may allow the player to participate in a Minor League Coach Pitch or a Minor League Machine Pitch Division but not in a Minor League Player Pitch Division (See Minor League Baseball).

Little League Baseball, Incorporated: The official title of the organization, founded in 1939 by Carl Stotz: in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. It is now the largest organized youth sports program in the world, providing baseball and softball programs to about 2.5 million participants ages 4-18 on 200,000 teams in more than 100 countries. **NOTE:** The word “Incorporated” should not be abbreviated.

Little League International Board of Directors: Board in whom is placed the responsibility for the management of the property and affairs of Little League Baseball, Incorporated. Nine members of the Board are District Administrators from each of the nine regions around the world who serve three year rotating terms. The members are elected by the District Administrators of each Region.

Little League International Congress: A congress of Little League Baseball and Softball district administrators held once every three years. Part of the agenda at each congress is to review any possible changes in the rules and regulations of Little League, and to make recommendation for changes to the Little League International Board of Directors.

Little League International: The name of the 62-acre complex in Williamsport, Pennsylvania that includes Howard J. Lamade Stadium, Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum, Dr. Creighton J. Hale International Grove and the John W. Lundy Little League Conference Center.

Little League (Western, Eastern, Southeastern, Southwestern, Central) Region Headquarters: These are the correct names of the various regional headquarters of Little League International, located in San Bernardino (California), Bristol (Connecticut), Warner Robins (Georgia), Waco (Texas), and Indianapolis (Indiana), respectively.

Little League European Leadership Training Center: The correct title for the European Regional Headquarters in Kutno, Poland.

Little League Foundation: A charitable, non-profit organization registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt residuary of funds, real or personal; and of other interests donated by gift, demise bequest or other transfer, to be used for the welfare and development of the children of Little League.

Local League: The administrative organization, participants, managers, coaches, umpires and all volunteers making up a chartered Little League program.

Local Rules (or Ground Rules, or Bylaws): Those rules enacted annually by a local league referring to daily operations (**Examples:** the 10 run-rule and tournament team selection method) not covered in the Official Regulations and Playing Rules and the local league’s constitution.

Member: See “regular member.”

Minor League Baseball: A minor division of the Little League Baseball charter, for participants 7-12 years old (league age). (See Tee Ball for exception.) A local league might have further divisions at the local level, such as Minor Coach Pitch, Minor Machine Pitch, etc.

Official Regulations and Playing Rules: There are three such publications produced each year by Little League in the following divisions: 1. Tee Ball, Minor League, Little League, Junior League, Senior League and Big League Baseball; 2. Tee Ball, Minor League, Little League, Junior League, Senior League and Big League Softball (Girls and Boys); 3. Challenger.

Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum: The title for the museum, located at Little League International.

Player Agent: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual, and in the brochure “The Player Agent in Little League.”

Player Member: Any participant placed on a team in a local league. Player members are not entitled to vote in the annual election, and have no duties or obligations in the management or affairs of the local league. They may be entitled to vote during Tournament Team selection, if stated in the local rules/ground rules of the local league.

President: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual.

Regular Member (or Member): A person who, if in good standing, is entitled to vote at the annual election for a local league, and is entitled to attend any meeting of the membership of the league. Membership, and who receives it, is defined in the local league's constitution. However, any manager, coach, volunteer umpire or board member is automatically a regular member.

Residence: The residence for a Candidate or Player Member is the residence of the parent or legal guardian, as shown on legal forms of identification (i.e., driver's license, income tax record, voter's identification, etc.) This is further defined in the Operating Manual and Rulebooks.

Rules Committee: A group of officials at Little League International, and members of the International Board of Directors in whom is placed (by the Little League International Board of Directors) the responsibility for evaluating the rules of the various divisions of Little League, and for recommending for adoption any changes to the rules.

Safety Officer: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual and in the ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program) publications.

Tournament Committee: A group of personnel at Little League International in whom is placed (by the Little League International Board of Directors) the responsibility for the operation of the International Tournament.

Treasurer: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual.

Vice President: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual.

Important Contact Numbers

Western Region Headquarters

6707 Little League Drive
San Bernardino, CA 92407
Phone: (909) 887-6444
Fax: (909) 887-6135
Email: westregion@littleleague.org

Central Region Headquarters

9802 East Little League Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46235
Phone: (317) 897-6127
Fax: (317) 897-6158
Email: centralregion@littleleague.org

Eastern Region Headquarters

PO Box 2926
Bristol, CT 06011
Phone: (860) 585-4730
Fax: (860) 585-4734
Email: eastregion@littleleague.org

Southeastern Region Headquarters

PO Box 7557
Warner Robins, GA 31095
Phone: (478) 987-7227
Fax: (478) 987-7232
Email: southregion@littleleague.org

Southwestern Region Headquarters

3700 South University Parks Drive
Waco, TX 76702
Phone: (254) 756-1816
Fax: (254) 757-0519
Email: southwestregion@littleleague.org

Canadian Headquarters

235 Dale Avenue
Ottawa, ONT
Canada K1G 0H6
Phone: (613)-731-3301
Fax: (613)-731-2829
Email: canada@littleleague.org

European, Middle East and Africa Region Headquarters

Little League Europe
Al. Melej Ligi 1
Kutno, 99-300, Poland
Phone: 011-48-24-254-4569
Fax: 011-48-24-254-4571
Email: europa@littleleague.org

Asia-Pacific Region Headquarters

Asia-Pacific Regional Director
C/O Hong Kong Little League
Room 1005, Sports House
1 Stadium Path
Causeway Bay
Hong Kong
Phone: 011-852-2504-4007
Fax: 011-852-2504-8629
Email: llbapr@hkbaseball.com.hk

Latin America Region Headquarters

PO Box 10237
Caparra Heights, Puerto Rico 00922-0237
Phone: (787)-982-3076
Fax: (787)-982-3076 or (787)-728-8164
Email: latinamerica@littleleague.org

For Summer Camp inquiries for International and Hillsgrove (Green Acres), or other Headquarters events, contact: Summer Camp/Clinic Inquiry, PO Box 3485, Williamsport, PA 17701, or call (570) 326-1921, or fax (570) 326-1074.

District Administrator: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Little League® does not limit participation in its activities on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference or religious preference.

Sample Notice of Election

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
September 1**

Dear Hometown Little League Member:

Hometown Little League will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. on September 28 at the Hometown City Hall. The purpose of the meeting is the electing of the Board of Directors for the coming year. Only those Regular Members in good standing will be eligible to vote.

For more information, or if you can not attend (but wish to obtain an absentee ballot), please contact our league secretary, Dolly Madison, at 555-1234.

FIGURE 1

Sample Absentee Ballot

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
Absentee Ballot

INSTRUCIONS:

Fill in names of people you want on the Hometown Little League Board of Directors
IN THE ORDER OF YOUR PREFERENCE.

Return this ballot IN PERSON to the league secretary (Dolly Madison) in a sealed envelope on or
before September 28.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

FIGURE 2

Sample Notice of Registration

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
November 15

Dear Hometown Little League Member:

It's registration time!

- What's going on?
Registration for the Hometown Little League Baseball/Softball Season.
- Who can play?
Any boy or girl ages 4-18 whose parent(s)/guardian(s) reside in Hometown Little League's boundaries — map available at registration. (Challenger Division available for mentally/physically disabled children ages 4-18).
- When can I sign up my child?
Every Saturday and Wednesday in December and January.
- What time?
Saturdays from noon until 3 p.m. and Wednesdays from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.
- Where?
Hometown Little League Meeting Room (1234 Main Street).
- What should I bring?
A parent (preferably BOTH parents) or legal guardian with a current driver's license; An ORIGINAL or STATE-CERTIFIED copy of the child's birth certificate (will be inspected and returned at registration). It's also helpful to bring an insurance card.
- How do I get more information?
Just call 555-1234.

NOTE: THIS SHOULD ALSO BE USED AS A NEWS RELEASE TO LOCAL MEDIA!!!

FIGURE 3

Sample Notice of Tryouts

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
January 15

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Hometown Little League will hold tryouts at the Hometown Little League Complex on the following dates and times:

Saturday, **February 6**, 9 a.m.; Monday, **February 8**, 7 p.m.; Wednesday, **February 10**, 7 p.m.; Saturday, **February 13**, 9 a.m.

Because your child (candidate) was not assigned to a Hometown Little League Major Division team last year, or will be moving up to another division this season, your child is *required to try out for a team*.

If such candidate fails to attend at least 50 percent of the tryouts above, he or she **will not be eligible** to play in the league for the current season. However, if a written excuse is presented and **found acceptable** by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors, the child will be placed on a team. (Regulation IV (f)). Presentation of an excuse does not guarantee assignment to a team.

For more information, please contact league player agent Thomas Jefferson at 555-6789.

FIGURE 4

Sample Contact Letters

About two weeks *before* the deadline (tryouts), these letters go to the homes of last year's players who have not yet registered.

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 1

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Our records show that you have not registered your child, Tammy Adams, who was a player in Hometown Little League last season.

We must inform you that if Tammy is not signed up by February 15 (last day of tryouts), she may not be permitted to participate at Hometown Little League until next year. Only by registering before February 15 (last day of tryouts) will Tammy be assured of being placed on a team.

Please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789, as soon as possible, to let us know if Tammy will play ball this season.

This letter is used for Minor League players, or for players moving up to another division.

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 1

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Our records show that you have not registered your child, Billy Smith, who was a member of the Major Division Blue Jays last season.

We must inform you that if Billy is not signed up by February 20 (draft day), he will be released from his team and may not be permitted to participate at Hometown Little League until next year. Only by registering before draft day will Billy be assured of returning to his team.

Please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789, as soon as possible, to let us know if Billy will play ball this season.

This letter is used for players returning to a Major Division team.

FIGURE 5

Sample Notice of Tryouts

After the deadline for signing up has passed, these letters go to the homes of last year's players who have not registered

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 21**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Our records show that you did not register your child, Billy Smith, who was a member of the Major Division Blue Jays last season.

We must inform you that Billy has been released from his team by action of the Board of Directors, and is not eligible to play in Hometown Little League for the coming season. However, Billy will be eligible to try out next year.

If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.

This letter is used for players who would have returned to a Major Division team.

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 16**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Our records show that you did not register your child, Tammy Adams, who was a player in Hometown Little League last season.

We must inform you that Tammy has been released by action of the Board of Directors, and is not eligible to play in Hometown Little League for the coming season. However, Tammy will be eligible to try out next year.

If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.

This letter is used for Minor League players from the previous season, or for players who would have been moving up to another division.

FIGURE 6

Sample Contact Letter

After the tryouts, this letter goes to the homes of players who have signed up, but failed to attend at least 50 percent of the tryouts.

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 16**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Our records show that you registered your child, Pat Thompson, but Pat failed to attend at least 50 percent of the tryout sessions as required.

As of this time, Pat is not eligible to play at any level at Hometown Little League. However, if a written excuse is presented and found acceptable by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors, Pat will be placed on a team. (Regulation IV (f)).

If you wish to present an excuse, please write to League President Jane Hancock, PO Box 1234, Hometown, AN 54321-1234. For more information, call Player Agent Thomas Jefferson at 555-6789.

This letter is used for players whose league age requires them to try out for a team.

FIGURE 7

Sample Contact Letter

This letter goes to the home of a player who has been released.

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 16**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

This letter is to inform you that your child, Susan Dole, has been released from Hometown Little League by action of the Hometown Little League Board of Directors, effective immediately.

As such, your child is no longer a member of any particular team at Hometown Little League. She may register and try out for a team next season if she wishes.

If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.

This letter is used for players who are being released during the season or off-season.

FIGURE 8

Hometown Little League Local Rules

1. The method for selecting Tournament Team players for all divisions will be the same as the method suggested in the Little League Baseball and Softball Tournament Rules and Guidelines for the current year. The Board of Directors will select the managers and coaches of the various Tournament Teams. (See Tournament Rules and Guidelines)
2. The Draft Method for all divisions above Minors will be the same as “Plan A - Method for Existing Leagues” in the current Little League Operating Manual. (**NOTE:** The last team to draft in each round is the team that won the previous year’s championship, regardless of overall record.)
3. Any player who is out of the lineup for more than three consecutive weeks (or six games) is subject to being removed from his/her team by action of the Board of Directors. However, the Board of Directors reserves the right to allow such player to remain on the roster. Managers must make the player agent aware if any player misses more than two consecutive games for any reason. Failure to do may be cause for disciplinary action against the manager. (See Regulation III (d))
4. No player may be called up from a Minor League to a Major League team in the last two weeks of the regular season. (See Regulation III (d) 2)
5. In all Major Divisions, the season will be split into two halves, with the first-half champion playing the second-half champion in a best two-out-of-three tournament at the end of the season. The championship games will be played on the first Monday, Wednesday and Saturday after the first and second half champions have completed all regular season games. If the same team wins both halves, it will be declared champion. The first and second half champions will be determined based on overall records in that half. If two or more teams are tied for first place at the end of either half with identical records, the winner will be determined by a one-game playoff on the first Tuesday following the end of the regular season, or a date determined by the Board of Directors.
6. It is Hometown Little League policy that if a Minor Division player declines to move up to a Major Division team when a vacancy occurs in the Major Division, that player shall be transferred to another team in the Minor Division, preferably a team lower in the standings. However, the Board of Directors reserves the right to waive this policy on a case by case basis. (See Regulation VIII)
7. Division Alignment (Team numbers may be adjusted depending on enrollment):
 - Tee Ball Baseball and Softball: 4-7 year-olds; 14 Baseball teams; 5 Softball teams
 - Minor League Coach Pitch Baseball and Softball: 7-10 year-olds; 4 Baseball; 1 Softball
 - Minor League Baseball and Softball: 9-12 year-olds; 5 Baseball; 2 Softball
 - Major League Baseball and Softball: 11-12 year-olds; 8 Baseball; 4 Softball
 - Junior League Baseball and Softball: 13-14 year-olds; 2 Baseball; 2 Softball
 - Senior League Baseball: 15-16 year-olds; 4 teams
 - Senior League Softball: 14-16 year-olds; 2 teams
 - Big League Baseball and Softball: 17-18 year-olds; 1 Baseball; 1 Softball

For the current season, all players league age 4-6 will play Tee Ball. (**Exception:** With concurrence of the parents, player and Player Agent, those 6-year-olds who played Tee Ball last season may be moved up to Minor League Coach Pitch). All players 7 year-olds will be evaluated and, based on the evaluation, placed into the Tee Ball or Minor League Coach Pitch Division. All players league age 8-10 will be evaluated and, based on the evaluation, placed in the Minor League Coach Pitch Division or the Minor League Division. All players league age 11-12 will try out for Major Division teams. If not selected for a Major Division team, these players will be placed in the Minor Division. Junior Baseball and Softball: All players league age 13-14 will try out and will be placed on a team. Senior League Baseball: All players league age 15-16 will try out and will be placed on a team. Senior League Softball: All players league age 14-16 will try out and will be placed onto a team. Big League: All players league age 16-18 will try out and will be placed on a team.

FIGURE 9

Hometown Little League Local Rules (cont.)

8. The home team manager or coach will line the field prior to each game.
9. All trash must be removed from dugouts after games. The manager is responsible for this.
10. All managers, coaches and umpires must attend a clinic sponsored by the District Administrator or Little League International, prior to the start of the season. The vice president of each division is responsible for giving information on clinics to the managers and coaches. The umpire-in-chief is responsible for giving information to the umpires.
11. Optional rules and regulations for Minor League/Tee Ball divisions are:
 - There is a 90-minute time limit on Tee Ball games, and a 2-hour time limit on Minor League Coach Pitch games. (See Regulation VIII)
 - Adults (offensive team manager or coach) will pitch in the Minor League Coach Pitch Division.
 - In Minor Divisions the 5 run rule is waived in the last inning. (see Rule 5.07)
 - Protests must be resolved before the next play in Minors. Protests not resolved before the next play will not be considered. (See Rule 4.19)
 - A runner leaving the base early in Minor League Coach Pitch will be called out. (See Rule 7.13)
12. Final placement of teams (for draft purposes the following season) will be determined by overall records/winning percentage. (**Exception:** The first place team is always determined by the outcome of the playoffs, regardless of records.) If two or more teams are tied, it will be broken by the results of head-to-head games between the teams involved. If still tied, the tie will be broken by calculating the runs allowed per inning played on defense in all games played by the teams. The team having the lowest ratio receives the higher placement. Every effort will be made to play all games scheduled. However, it may be necessary to use winning percentage to determine placement, even if there is an uneven number of games played.

FIGURE 10

A Year in the Life of Hometown Little League®



**A practical, season-by-season guide to
The operation of a Chartered League**

Fall

Winter

Spring

Summer

Little League Baseball Incorporated

Revised: November 2011

www.LittleLeague.org

Little League Baseball, Incorporated
P.O. Box 3485, Williamsport, PA 17701
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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - WHERE ARE WE?	2
Little League Organization in the U.S	2
Growth	2
Purpose	3
Chapter 2 - FALL	3
Second Season (Training and Development Program)	3
Review Constitution	3
Membership	3
Notice of Election	4
Absentee Ballot	4
Election Day	4
Election Procedures for Hometown Little League	5
Chapter 3 - WINTER	5
Officers Meet with DA and District Staff	6
Incorporation/Tax Exemption	6
Local Rules, Ground Rules and Bylaws	6
Local League Finances	7
Trademarks	7
The Hometown Homepage	7
Umpires	7
Player Membership Drive	7
Registration Day - Part 1	8
Registration Day - Part 2	9
Parent Orientation Program	9
Fund-Raising Ideas	10
Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Pt. 1)	10
Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Pt. 2)	10
Inspections, Part 1	11
Inspections, Part 2	11
Equipment	12
Volunteers and Background Checks	12
Appointments (Managers, Coaches, Umpires)	12
Releasing a Player during the Off-Season	12
Double-Checking Eligibility	12
Clinics and Educational Programs	13
Chapter 4 - SPRING	13
Divisions: How Do We Line Up?	13
Preparing for the Tryout	13
Conducting the Tryout	14
Pitch Count Program	14
The Draft	14
Trading Players	14
Scheduling Games	15
Practices	15
Waiver Forms	15
Charter Committee Waivers	15
How Hometown Little League Applies for a Waiver.	15
Team Rosters	16
Interleague/Combined Teams Forms	16
Opening Day	16
Multiple Participation	16
Protest Committee	16
President, Vice President(s) and Player Agent(s)	16
Injured Player Procedure	17
When a Player is Released During the Season	17
Disciplining a Member	17
Post-Season Playoffs	18
Chapter 5 - SUMMER	18
Special Games	18
Selection of Tournament Teams	19
Tournament Affidavit	19
Tournament Team Practice	20
Tournament Briefings with DA	20
Awards	20
International Tournament	20
The World Series	21
Conclusion	21
Glossary	21

Introduction

This manual was created to help league presidents and other league officers better understand the annual activities of a local league in Little League Baseball and Softball. It is arranged in chronological order, starting with events that normally occur in the Fall, and ends with the World Series in late Summer.

Most of the information in this manual can be found in other publications of Little League Baseball and Softball, such as the current versions of the Official Playing Rules and Regulations, the Operating Manual, the Model Constitution, and several of the pamphlets that are available from Little League.

However, this publication brings many of the most common challenges together in a form that can help your local league run smoothly. A weekend instructional clinic is also offered at each U.S. Regional Center that serves as a companion course for this manual.

This manual is not intended to replace the Rules, Regulations or Policies of Little League Baseball and Softball. It is a guide to a league's smooth operation. The final word on any issue is always the Rules, Regulations and Policies of Little League Baseball and Softball. Where applicable, references to other publications are included.

Hometown Little League is a fictitious local league. It is located in a fictional state called "Any State, USA." None of the officers listed in the upcoming pages exist, however, the problems they encounter do.

Hometown Little League will run into many challenges in the "upcoming season," and will handle them according to the Rules, Regulations and Policies of Little League Baseball and Softball. Anything less and it isn't Little League.

Chapter 1 - WHERE ARE WE?

Hometown Little League is part of the world's largest organized youth sports program. The language of healthy competition in Little League Baseball and Softball is spoken in scores of countries on six continents around the world. Little League International has full-service centers in six U.S. states and Europe, with offices in Canada, Latin America and Asia.

Nearly 2.7 million youngsters took part in Little League Baseball and Softball programs last year, under the direction of more than 1 million adult volunteers.

Little League Organization in the U.S.

Hometown Little League is part of a chain of command. If the operation is to run smoothly, the chain of command must be observed. At the top of the chain is the International Headquarters in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Next are the various Regional Headquarters, then the District Administrators and their staffs. At the heart of it all is the local league, without which, of course, there could be no Little League Baseball and Softball.

Growth

Hometown Little League is part of a growing phenomenon. Although baseball has been known largely as an American sport since its beginnings more than 100 years ago, the movement has spread. In some cases, world politics played a part in this.

When the U.S. began opening relations with Japan in the early 1900s, baseball was introduced to Japanese culture by American Service Members. Today, Japan's baseball programs thrive. In fact, baseball is extremely popular all over the Far East.

Major League Baseball attempted to export the game to other countries in the past, but it never really caught on. Little League Baseball and Softball, however, was able to bring the game to more than 20 countries by the 1970s and 40 countries by the 1980s.

Two events caused those numbers to skyrocket in recent years. The fall of the Iron Curtain and the advent of baseball as an Olympic sport resulted in Little League being the organization of choice for nations wishing to emulate "The Great American Pastime" and to develop young athletes in preparation for the Olympics.

Little League brings together on the playing field such diverse nations as Jordan and Israel, The People's Republic of China, Russia and Japan. It is truly international in scope.

Purpose

Little League Baseball and Softball is much more than just bats, balls, a field, dugouts, or any of the other dozens of physical items that go into baseball and softball.

It has become, over the years, a leadership program for both children and adults, with the aim of helping children to become good and decent citizens. Through the application of Little League Rules, Regulations and Policies, developed over decades of experience, Little League has become a beacon throughout the world.

Children learn the positive values of good sportsmanship, fair play and teamwork — values they can use throughout their lives. Adults involved as volunteers in a local league gain a sense of belonging in a community, and can convey their leadership qualities to today's children so they will grow to be tomorrow's leaders.

Any decision made by a Chartered Little League should be with both of these questions answered positively:

1. Is it in the best interests of the children of the community?
2. Will it bring credit to the Little League Program and to the community as a whole?

Chapter 2 - FALL

Hometown Little League, like many leagues, tends to rest in the Fall. Sure, Hometown has a “Second Season” (Training and Development Program), but since most people associate baseball and softball with Spring and Summer, interest in the local league naturally wanes when the weather gets cooler. Even so, the Fall can set the tone for the entire coming season.

The groundwork for the success (or lack of it) of a season can often be found in how well (or how poorly) the league conducts its operations during this time of year. The key, as with much of Little League, are proper communication and application of Rules, Regulations and Policies.

Second Season (Training and Development Program)

Second Season (Training and Development Program) allows parents to maintain their child in a supervised baseball or softball program in the fall and/or winter months. Programs should be conducted on an informal basis with training and instruction in a relaxed atmosphere. Regulations are the same as in Regular Season with regard to boundaries and interleague play. Leagues can assign players to divisions based on the current year's or next year's age chart. The Second Season (TAD) Brochure (available on www.littleleague.org) has details on league structure suggestions. Hometown Little League does not have to pay additional charter or insurance fees if its Second Season divisions are the same as its Regular Season divisions.

Review Constitution

If Hometown Little League wants to change its constitution, it will need to follow the proper procedure for amending it. (Model Constitution, Article XII.)

If the current Constitution cannot be located, the Regional Office is called/contacted to obtain a copy.

Any changes must be approved by Membership (not the board) and Regional Headquarters, in writing, before the amendment is put into effect. **The best time to have the Membership approve such changes is at the Annual Membership / Election Meeting.**

A draft of the proposed amendments is sent to the Regional Office for review/approval before being presented to the Membership. If the Membership approves something different than what was approved by the Regional Office those changes are sent to the Region for review/approval PRIOR to being implemented.

The Constitution, as well as any league document of a general nature, must be made available to any Member in good standing upon request. Hometown Little League keeps copies of the constitution handy for inspection at all times. Members can pay a nominal fee of \$3.00 for their own copy. (Note: See the “Local Rules, Ground Rules and Bylaws” section for information on day-to-day operations at the local league.)

Membership

At Hometown Little League, there are two types of members: regular members and player members. This section deals with regular members — the people defined as eligible to vote at the annual meeting and other general membership meetings provided they are in good standing with the league.

Regular members of Hometown Little League include, by definition, those that volunteer as managers, coaches, umpires, board members, officers of the board, team moms/dads, maintenance workers, concession stand workers, etc.

Just who exactly is a member is defined in the Hometown Little League Constitution. (Model Constitution, Article III, Section 2 b).

One of the worst mistakes any league can make is to define its membership as all the parents in the league **and, as such, Hometown Little League refrains from doing that.** Think of it the same way as any parent/teacher organization in a school. Simply having a child in the school does not mean you are a member of the organization. You must DO SOMETHING to be a member — even if it's simply to pay the annual dues.

So it is with a regular membership in Hometown Little League. The player registration fee paid at Hometown Little League does NOT include dues for being a regular member. In fact, the league does not even solicit for new regular members at registration time, since it knows a majority of the parents who sign their children up will probably not attend general membership meetings.

Hometown Little League requires those who wish to be regular members to pay \$5.00 in dues annually. If dues are not paid at least one week prior to the date of the annual meeting the member is dropped from the rolls.

Hometown Little League waives its membership fee for the volunteers mentioned earlier in this section.

A league that includes all of its participants' parents in membership is inviting problems, such as:

- The single parent of four children in the league could charge the system is unfair, and that he/she should have FOUR votes.
- Which parent gets to vote? If both get to vote, the single parent above has an even more compelling argument of unfairness.
- The normal quorum for a meeting is one-third of the members. In a league with 200 participants, this could result in more than 400 eligible members, requiring more than 133 members to be present before any business can be conducted. If business is conducted with fewer members, the election could be challenged.

Notice of Election

Hometown Little League's constitution is the same as the Model Constitution, recommended for adoption by local leagues, with all the optional spaces checked off and the blanks filled in. This constitution was written with the specific purpose of giving a local league a document that conforms to Robert's Rules of Order, State Laws, Federal Laws and Little League Rules, Regulations and Policies.

At Hometown Little League, written notice of the election (Annual Meeting) is delivered to all Regular Members in good standing, at least 10 days before the election. The process is by mail, unless an alternate process has been approved by the membership (not the board) in advance of the Annual Meeting. A sample letter from Hometown Little League to its members is included with this publication (Figure 1).

The notice includes the date, time and place of the Annual Meeting. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6.) Membership, and who should have it, is discussed later in this chapter.

Absentee Ballot

Because proxy voting is no longer recommended, the accepted practice is now absentee voting. If properly supervised, absentee voting affords far less chance of the election being "rigged." (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 5.)

At Hometown Little League, the absentee ballot is only distributed when requested by a Member in good standing. It must be obtained IN PERSON from the league secretary, in a sealed envelope. The ballot itself lists plenty of blank spaces for the number of board of directors likely to be elected, according to the number listed in the constitution. At Hometown Little League, the minimum is seven. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 b.)

The voters list their chosen candidates in order of preference. There is no requirement to fill in all spaces on the ballot. Ballots are returned, in a sealed envelope, to the secretary, by the Member, IN PERSON. A sample absentee ballot for Hometown Little League is included in this publication (Figure 2).

Election Day

Usually, the best time to hold the election is the last week of September. This is because the fiscal year for Little League Baseball, Incorporated, starts on October 1 of each year. Electing a board in the spring or summer is allowed, but results in a "lame duck" board being in control for an extended period of time, until the fiscal year starts. The sequence of events that should take place at the Annual Meeting for Hometown Little League is listed below.

Election Procedures for Hometown Little League

- Appoint an election Chairperson (he/she may or may not be the current president).
 - Determine if a quorum is present. A quorum at Hometown Little League is one-third of the Regular Members, as listed in the constitution. Membership should be limited to those who qualify as volunteers.
 - If a quorum is not present, the election cannot be held and another meeting will need to be scheduled (Robert's Rules of Order). **Notice of the new meeting should be in accordance with the "Notice of Election" Section above.**
 - Ratify the Membership and Membership list for those present, by election. (In other words, the Members elect new Members for the coming year.) (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6.)
 - Determine how many people will serve on the board of directors. The number must be at least the number listed in the constitution. Hometown Little League has 15. They could have less than 15, but not less than seven, since the Hometown constitution calls for a minimum of seven. (Model Constitution, Article V Section 6 b.)
 - The nominating committee presents its report on those who have agreed to serve. Nominations are not by position. The nominating committee should begin its work in June. (Model Constitution, Article IX, Section 1.)
 - Nominations are opened to the floor. Any Regular Member in good standing is eligible for nomination. (Robert's Rules of Order.)
 - Nominations are closed by vote of Membership. fre
 - Every Regular Member in good standing receives one ballot.
 - Voters list names of eligible candidates in the number previously determined. (Fifteen or less at Hometown for this season.) Exception: Absentee ballots are voted according to preference and may list more than the pre-determined number.
 - Nominees must receive at least 51 percent of the vote to be elected.
 - Votes are tabulated and the new board is announced.
 - Membership votes to approve the results of the election.
 - New board meets to elect officers from among its number (required). At a minimum, the officers are: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, player agent, safety officer and coaching coordinator. (Model Constitution, Article V, Section 6 d; Regulation I b.)
- NOTE: If the number of elected members is less than the number approved by the Membership (eg: Membership approves 13 Board Members but only 11 nominees receive enough votes to be elected), the Board "elects / appoints" the remaining Board Members and these Board elected / appointed members have voting rights in Board meetings the same as those elected by the Membership.**
- The new Board establishes their meeting dates.

First official responsibilities: Notify the District Administrator, Regional Headquarters and International Headquarters, by mail, of the results of the election. (Must include proper addresses and telephone numbers of board officers.) If the league has a PO Box (recommended), supply headquarters with a physical address so packages can be shipped (many package delivery companies cannot deliver to a PO Box).

At this time, the Board of Directors should also appoint a committee to conduct the background checks of board members and other volunteers and/or hired workers who provide regular services to the league and/or have repetitive access to, or contact with, players or teams. [Regulation I (b) and I (c) 8 and 9]

Little League International recommends the board of directors appoint the local league president and two other individuals to handle the background checks. These other individuals may be from the board or individuals outside the board. For instance, the board of directors may appoint individuals who have significant professional background in this area, such as law enforcement officers or individuals with a legal background.

Chapter 3 - WINTER

This is when Hometown Little League starts gearing up for the season. Supplying the proper paperwork to the District Administrator, Regional and International headquarters is critical at this time. Whether Hometown Little League will be financially sound, or strapped, in the next year will also be determined in the Winter.

At this time, all board members ought to have submitted their mandatory Little League Volunteer Applications, giving their consent for the league to conduct a nationwide background check that contains the applicable government sex offender registry data. Information on background checks is available at <http://www.littleleague.org>.

Officers Meet with DA and District Staff

It is vital that the Hometown Little League officers meet with the District Administrator and his/her staff at this time. Plans for the coming year need to be discussed. There might be another league in the district that has discovered a terrific fund-raising plan, and that information can be shared.

This is when Hometown Little League's new directors learn what the District Administrator's role is, and the limits of his or her authority. (Operating Manual - Role of District Administrator.) The boundaries of Hometown Little League should be discussed to ensure no other leagues in the area overlap those of other chartered Little League programs. If the leagues cannot agree on the boundaries, the District Administrator has the authority to adjust them as he or she sees fit, subject to the review and approval of the Charter Committee in Williamsport. (Regulation II f.) This is also a good time to set meeting dates and to coordinate start-finish times for the regular season and inter-league play.

Incorporation/Tax Exemption

Hometown Little League found out that incorporation was a good idea when its board of directors discovered that being incorporated could protect them individually in lawsuits. (Operating Manual - Incorporation, Little League.)

Generally, if an incorporated league is sued, the corporation is sued, not the individuals. However, if individuals are personally liable, they may still be sued individually.

Investigating whether Hometown Little League is incorporated is easy. The president merely needs to call his/her Secretary of State (Division of Incorporation) for the information. The incorporation may have lapsed, and, if so, it will need to be renewed.

If not incorporated, the league can request an information packet from their Regional Headquarters on how to accomplish this.

Obtaining exemption from state and/or local sales taxes is different in many states and municipalities. As an organization entitled to federal income tax exemption as a non-profit educational entity, Hometown Little League has applied for exemption in its state and does not have to pay sales tax when purchasing goods such as equipment, plumbing and electrical supplies and groceries for the concession stand. (Remember, items sold by a Local Little League may be subject to sales tax at the time of sale.)

Note: In some states there may be a corporate income tax. For more information on state tax laws, contact the Department of Revenue in your state.

Local leagues in the U.S. are also required by federal law to annually file a year-end statement with the Internal Revenue Service if they raise and spend more than \$25,000. Form 990 EZ is used if the league raises and spends more than \$25,000, but less than \$100,000. If the league raises and spends more than \$100,000, Form 990 must be used. The forms must be filed by the 15th day of the fourth month following the end of the fiscal year. Since Hometown Little League's fiscal year ends on September 30, the form must be filed by January 15 each year.

Leagues that normally have annual gross receipts of \$25,000 or less and do not have to file Form 990EZ or 990, must file an e-Postcard Form (Form 990-N) to retain their tax exempt status.

For more information on federal taxes, contact the local office of the Internal Revenue Service.

Local Rules, Ground Rules and Bylaws

The local rules, ground rules and bylaws for any local league should be brief, and Hometown Little League is no exception. The local rules, ground rules and bylaws of Hometown Little League are developed, maintained and approved annually by the Hometown Board of Directors, and are not considered part of the Constitution.

Some of the local rules, ground rules and bylaws at Hometown Little League are included in the section at the end of this publication (Figure 3).

You will notice that none of the local rules at Hometown Little League conflicts with Little League Rules, Regulations or Policies. Also, they don't re-state any existing Little League Baseball and Softball Rule, Regulation or Policy, as this invites conflicting interpretations.

Local rules, ground rules and bylaws expire each year (unlike the constitution, which governs the league meetings, etc., until it is amended by the Membership and approved by Regional Headquarters). Hometown Little League approves and issues its local rules, ground rules and bylaws in the winter, so there is no confusion later on in the season.

Local League Finances

Instances of theft and embezzlement from non-profit organizations are not uncommon. As such, it is imperative that Hometown Little League manage and control its finances. The Little League Operating Manual provides a significant amount of guidance in this area.

Prior to the start of the season, a budget will be developed by the treasurer and approved by the board of directors. The league treasurer is then responsible for providing accurate periodic (e.g.: monthly) reports to the board of directors. These reports should include a copy of the latest bank statement.

All expenditures during the season should be made by check and all checks should be signed by the treasurer and another officer or board member.

Finally, at the end of the fiscal year, an audit should be performed of all of the financial records. A copy of the year end audited financial report should be forwarded to the District Administrator and Little League International.

Trademarks

This is the time of year when Hometown Little League starts to mail correspondence to its Membership, to Regional and International headquarters. The letterhead can include the Official Little League emblem and name, but neither can be used in conjunction with any other organization or enterprise. Little League trademarks are protected by Federal statute, and can only be used when referring to the activities of the international program and its chartered leagues (Operating Manual - Use of Little League Marks).

The Hometown Homepage

Thanks to Little League's exclusive relationship with activeteamsports.com, Hometown Little League, and every league in the world, can have its own free homepage on the World Wide Web.

During the winter at Hometown, a League Information Officer (LIO) is secured - someone who will devote the time needed for creating and updating. This job takes on even more importance later, when providing rosters to Williamsport.

Remember, any use of any Little League trademark requires specific written approval from Little League Headquarters, including use on the Internet (Operating Manual - Use of Little League Marks/Internet Use).

Umpires

Hometown Little League now begins the process of screening and qualifying umpires for the next season. Notices around town, in the paper, etc., help bring out interested adults.

It is a fallacy to assume that paying umpires will result in better umpiring.

Some of the dangers and considerations in paying ANYONE for a service normally rendered by a volunteer are:

- Worker's Compensation laws
- Internal Revenue Service regulations
- State income tax regulations
- Little or no control over paid umpires in an association

Acceptable forms of compensation used at Hometown Little League: pins, plaques, jackets, T-shirts and/or, allowing the umpire to use a set of equipment for two or three years as a volunteer, then to own it (Operating Manual – Umpire).

Player Membership Drive

This is one of the major events in any year in Hometown Little League. An aggressive membership drive can help keep the league growing, and can keep it financially successful. Check out these suggestions:

- The notice of registration at Hometown Little League (sample included as Figure 4) includes the following:
- Clear information on dates, times, places.
- Information on boundaries.
- Who: boys and girls, ages 5-18. (Regulation IV a-c.) NOTE: Leagues may allow 4 year olds to play Tee Ball.
- Programs offered: Baseball, Softball and Challenger.
- Information on birth record needed (not a photocopy). This must be an original or government-certified copy of an official birth record. (After the player agent or designated representative examines the record, the document may then be returned to the parents, but the parents should be reminded that it will again be required should the youngster be selected for the league's tournament team).
- Information on acceptable proof of residence (Regulation II a-f-g - Operating Manual - Tryouts and Player Selections).
- How to contact league personnel for more information.

How does Hometown Little League announce Registration?

- Direct mailing to last year's parents (Hometown Little League qualifies for a bulk mailing permit as a non-profit entity)
- Flyers distributed in schools (Hometown Little League gets permission from the principal and/or school board)
- Newspaper, radio, television announcements (Hometown Little League writes these as media releases, not advertisements)
- Posters and billboards; Managers call all players from the previous year, even those "graduating" to the next level.

NOTE: Do not include the cost of registration in the announcement. It can drive some potential players and valuable volunteers away.

Let's say your league decides not to apply for charter in a particular division. If so, your league is not authorized to allow, or give any kind of waiver to, any children living in your league's boundaries to play in another chartered league. For example, if Hometown Little League does not apply for a charter in girls' softball, no girl living in Hometown Little League's boundaries can play softball for that season.

Conversely, Hometown Little League cannot accept a child who lives outside the Hometown Little League boundaries, even if the league in which that child resides does not offer a program in that child's division or age group. The only exceptions are under Regulation II (d) and Regulation IV (h), which are covered later in this publication.

There are ways to ensure everyone gets a chance to play, however. Let's say Hometown Little League advertised in all the usual ways for Girls Senior League Softball, but only 17 players signed up (too many for one team, not enough for two). Using a completed and approved Combined Teams Request Form (available at www.littleleague.org), Hometown's 17 Girls Senior League Softball candidates could combine with those from a neighboring league. Hometown would be required to charter at least one Girls Senior League Softball team (depending on the total teams formed.) Either league could enroll to insure the number of teams actually fielded. With permission from the Regional Director, Hometown and the neighboring league could also combine to form one Tournament team.

Remember, the minimum number of players allowed from one division in one league on a Combined Teams Request Form is six. This is to ensure that the league is making an effort to field at least one team. Exceptions must be approved only by the Charter Committee.

The responsibility for offering programs to all interested children in the league boundaries rests solely with the board of directors of the local league and the Membership of that league. If children are being denied the opportunity to play because a local league does not offer a division, the adult board of directors at the local level is at fault. A free registration promotion kit is available at <http://www.littleleague.org/manuals/registration>.

Registration Day - Part 1

When people enter the Hometown Little League Meeting Hall, they see a large map behind the first table inside the front door. The map shows the actual approved boundaries of the league, so parents can identify their residence on the map.

The first step is for the parent/legal guardian to produce identification showing that their legal residence is within the boundaries on the map. The identification should be LEGAL identification — a document that shows the address as recognized by a government entity (Operating Manual - Little League Residency Requirements).

Some of the legal documents acceptable are a driver's license, income tax records, homestead exemption records or a voter ID card. It is unlawful to falsify the primary residence on these documents, so these items are acceptable as proof of residence (Regulation II a, f, g).

What about a utility bill? These alone are not acceptable because a person could own several properties at which they are paying the utility bills. Hometown Little League demands legal proof, and never has problems with residency because of it. If the parent lives outside the league boundaries, Hometown Little League shows them the Regulations pertaining to residence. Also, Hometown has a list of neighboring leagues on hand to direct the parent to the correct league. If the parents do not live in any chartered Little League's boundaries, they are directed to the District Administrator so that a league can be established where they reside, or so the boundaries of an existing league might be expanded.

Remember, your league must not accept any player of any age into any division if the player does not legally reside in the league boundaries, or does not qualify for an exception under Regulations II (d) or IV (h). These regulations are discussed in Chapter 4 - SPRING. This applies whether the child is a five-year old Tee Ball candidate or a fire-balling 12-year old left-hander. Improper policies of, or mistakes made by, last year's board of directors do not apply and must be corrected immediately.

If the birth certificate is not available, Hometown has the parent obtain one from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state in which the child was born. If still not available, follow the procedure on the policy statement regarding birth documents to obtain a Statement in Lieu of Birth Certificate — available online at <http://www.littleleague.org/forms>.

A notarized copy of a birth certificate is not acceptable. A Notary Public does NOT have authority to verify the authenticity of documents from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. He or she only has authority to authenticate signatures (Regulation IV b-c).

The parent should fill out a Registration Form, copied from the form provided in your league supplies by Little League. Certain information on the form is essential. A form is available at www.littleleague.org. At this time, the player/parents must declare if the candidate intends to play baseball or softball (Regulation IV c).

They also fill out a Medical Release Form supplied by Little League. Hometown Little League has a volunteer who is a Notary Public to notarize these forms when desired by the league.

Part of Hometown Little League's registration form gives the league a profile of the parents. This determines if the parents are willing to help umpire, manage, coach, work in concession stand, do field work, carpentry, plumbing, computers, give legal advice, etc. Such information can be very useful later in the season, and is a great way to bring in new volunteers.

The next step is to explain the nature of Little League Insurance. More information on insurance is included later in this chapter.

Hometown Little League then gives the parent a copy of the pamphlet "Parents News," as well as a letter explaining the Hometown and Little League policies (sample included in this publication), then explains that their child is now eligible to compete in the league during the coming season.

Hometown Little League may also ask parents to complete a Little League Volunteer Application and provide a copy of a government-issued photo ID, which is required of all volunteers who may provide regular service to or have repetitive access to players and teams. (See Page 8, top, and Page 13 "Volunteers and Background Checks")

Registration Day - Part 2

At Hometown Little League the Tryout/Draft System is explained to the Little League parent. A copy of the system is also given to the parent, all but eliminating the possibility of confusion over the system (Operating Manual – Player Selection Systems).

Second, the budget for the previous year is explained to the parent, even if he or she was not involved in the league. The parent has a right to know where the money was spent, and often has no idea how much it costs to operate a Little League for an entire year. As most league officers know, there are many hidden costs (utilities, insurance, charter fees, equipment, rent/mortgage, etc.), while the average parent may only see certain highly visible items as the major expenses.

Third, they explain the budget for the coming season: where the league expects the funds to come from — and in what percentage — based on previous experience (fund-raisers, sponsorships, game collections, registration fees, concession income, etc.). If the parent knows he or she is getting a good value for his/her dollar, they will be willing to pay a reasonable fee.

If the league feels it necessary to charge a registration fee, it may do so. Remember, payment of a fee must not be a prerequisite for participation (Regulation XIII).

Hometown Little League explains that in order to meet the budget for the coming season, the parent should donate \$25 as a participation fee. The league explains that an amount above that figure will help to meet any emergency expenditure that may arise. Expecting parents to shoulder a large percentage of the financial responsibility at this time will turn people away and cause resentment. Nearly all will pay their fair share if they know they're getting a good value.

Players who played in the previous season who did not register should be informed that they are being released (sample letter included as Figure 6).

Parent Orientation Program

Hometown Little League understands how important it is to keep parents abreast of league operating procedures. Hometown Little League also wants all parents to know that proper fan behavior is a crucial part of keeping games and

events enjoyable for players, volunteers and other fans. That's why Hometown Little League holds a Parent Orientation Program before the season begins. All parents are encouraged to attend/participate.

Hometown Little League's Parent Orientation Program can be presented by the League President, a board member or an adult volunteer with a good knowledge of local league operations. Hometown Little League also takes advantage of the free Parent Orientation Program materials provided by Little League International and available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.littleleague.org/programs/parentorientation/index.htm>.

Fund-Raising Ideas

One of the best ways to raise funds is through sponsorships. However, sponsorship of a team does not give the sponsor any rights in the operation of, or the outfitting of, any particular team. (Operating Manual - Local League Administration.)

The league may wish to recognize its teams' sponsors with a special day during the season, at which the sponsor is introduced before a game. Remember that sponsor names/logos on uniforms or fence signs should not offend community standards.

Fence sign advertisements are a good way to raise funds, but keep in mind the fence signs must meet local ordinances and codes for advertising. Any advertisement connected with a local Little League must not violate Little League policies regarding tobacco or alcohol.

Hometown Little League's biggest fund-raiser is Decal Day. Little League Decals are available from Regional Headquarters (10 cents each) to local leagues. The Decals are then sold at a cost of \$1 each within the community. This not only returns a huge profit to Hometown Little League, but it promotes Little League locally. Any leftover und-dated version decals can be stored until the following season.

Other ideas for fund-raising include plans using Little League licensees (the league is assured the fund-raiser is acceptable), garage sales, programs, bake sales, picnics, parties, dances, etc.

There is no limit to the number of fund-raisers using adults, but, only one fund-raiser using children per year is permitted (Regulation XIII).

Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Part 1)

This form is fairly self-explanatory. Problems arise when a league fails to complete all areas, including the current estimated population of all persons living within the league boundaries. Information about how to obtain a population estimate, at little or no cost, is available from your Regional Headquarters.

A blank Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form is mailed to the league president of record in the early Fall each year. A new form is available from the Regional Headquarters (Regulation II g-h).

It is best to avoid the rush and send the Application for Charter to Williamsport before January 1st. Thousands of leagues send in their charter applications after this time, then don't get their league supplies in time because they waited until there was a backlog at Headquarters.

Even if you don't know the exact numbers of teams yet, chartering early is the best way to go. The numbers can be adjusted later with a telephone call to Williamsport.

Some leagues may not have the funds to send with the Application for Charter so early, but the fees can be deferred for a limited time with a letter of explanation.

The president of Hometown Little League is especially careful to ensure that he or she and one other board member have signed the appropriate section of the charter application verifying compliance with all regulations regarding background checks of volunteers [Regulation I (c) 8 and 9]. Little League International will not accept any application for charter or any request for insurance coverage until this verification of compliance has been completed.

Lastly, it's important to have a post office box address AND a physical address on the charter application (many package delivery companies cannot deliver to a PO Box).

Filling out the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment Form (Part 2)

Group Accident Insurance meeting Little League standards is required for every Little Leaguer. The insurance offered through Little League International covers players, managers, coaches, volunteer umpires, official scorekeepers, player agents and safety officers in performance of their duties in authorized activities, and in travel by a direct route to and from scheduled games or practices. This also includes coaches appointed by the president and approved by the board as "assistant coaches" or "helpers" even if they are not listed on the official roster. Such names should be submitted on a supplemental roster to International Headquarters. (Regulation I c-7; Regulation IV a)

Coverage begins when the Application for Charter/Insurance Enrollment and premium is received in Williamsport, or Jan. 1, whichever is later. Coverage ends at the completion of the playing season, when there are no longer any duties to perform on a volunteer basis for the league, or when a person is no longer a member of, or a volunteer worker for a league, whichever is earlier. Accident Insurance covers: only those players, managers and coaches of chartered teams

whose names are listed on the rosters submitted to Williamsport; Specific other volunteers including officers, umpires, official scorekeepers, etc. Those mentioned above are also covered while traveling to or from and while active in their official capacities at scheduled games and practice sessions, and while traveling by a direct route and without delay to and from scheduled games and practices. Certain volunteers are covered while traveling to and from and while attending clinics sponsored by Little League Baseball, Incorporated. Accident Insurance covers teams competing in AUTHORIZED tournaments. Any Tournaments must be approved in writing by Regional Headquarters.

It must be understood that the Accident Insurance offered through Little League is not primary. This means it picks up where the insured's coverage leaves off. Claims filed must include the injured person's proof of insurance, or must include information on the lack of such insurance. The premium is based on the number of teams in the league.

Leagues can receive a significant credit on the following year's insurance by instituting ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program).

If coverage is obtained locally, a copy of the policy limits, exclusions, benefits, etc., must be submitted to the Insurance Department in Williamsport for review.

General Liability Insurance includes General Liability and Association Directors and Officers Liability.

General Liability Insurance is required and the plan offered through Little League covers the Local Little League, its sponsors, executive officers, directors, managers, coaches, umpires and volunteer workers. Coverage begins when the application is received in Williamsport, or Jan. 1, whichever is later, and ends on Dec. 31.

The premium is also based on the size of the league. The league can add others as additional insureds at a nominal amount for each entity named.

If coverage is obtained locally, a copy of the policy limits, exclusions, benefits, etc., must be submitted to the Insurance Department in Williamsport for review.

One word of caution: Each additional insured on the General Liability policy spreads out the benefits of the policy. A league should not name an entity as an additional insured if it is not required to by that entity. Directors and Officers Liability covers league Personnel, including the board of directors, against lawsuits involving wrongful decisions or acts such as discrimination, slander, errors and omissions, libel or related wrongful acts, etc. Accident insurance will cover your league's players, managers, coaches, etc., at any site approved by the board of directors, provided it is an activity (such as a practice or game) approved or sponsored by Little League International.

Optional insurance offered through Little League includes: Crime (covers league against MONETARY loss caused by dishonesty, disappearance of money, securities or other property, and destruction of money and securities).

Remember, a significant accident insurance credit (20 percent) is available to leagues that submit a qualified Safety Program as part of ASAP.

Inspections, Part 1

Before the fields, bleachers, equipment, etc., are used, they must be inspected. This is one of the primary duties of the safety officer (Rules - Safety Code; Operating Manual - Artificial Lighting Standards).

The safety officer should inspect and inventory all equipment, replace worn straps, worn helmet pads, etc., and discard cracked helmets and other damaged equipment. At Hometown Little League, if equipment is still functional but will not be used, the league donates it to a league in another country where baseball/softball equipment is difficult to obtain. (Call Little League Headquarters for more information.) The safety officer should also inspect the bleachers, concession appliances, fences, lights and telephone(s). Emergency numbers should be in plain view near the telephone(s). Hometown also takes advantage of ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program) in which the best safety ideas from around the nation are shared.

The maintenance equipment (mowers, golf carts, tractors, etc.) should also be inspected. Minors should never operate such machines. The keys for these vehicles should never be left unattended. Pitching machines, if used, should also be inspected. Don't forget to inspect the extension cords and outlets as well.

Inspections, Part 2

Used uniforms in good condition should be re-used. Old uniforms may be used as "hand-me-downs" for Minor Leaguers. All uniforms must have the proper patches (must not be screened or ironed-on), which can be ordered from Regional Headquarters. (Rule 1.11 a-2.) It is not recommended that player names be on uniforms, as this makes them unusable in subsequent years, and could expose youngsters to increased risk from pedophiles. Players should not keep uniforms.

Equipment

All equipment used in games and practices must meet Little League standards and specifications for the intended division. It is NOT necessary that equipment have the Little League Trademark affixed. However, the league is assured that equipment meets Little League specifications if the Little League trademark is affixed. You or your sporting goods supplier can call your Regional Headquarters or visit www.littleleague.org to get a list of those manufacturers who have earned the right to place the Little League name and/or logo on their products.

Volunteers and Background Checks

Hometown Little League is required to have all board members, managers, coaches, and other volunteers or hired workers who provide regular service to the league or/and who have repetitive access to or contact with players or teams annually fill out the Little League Volunteer Application and provide a government-issued photo ID. Additionally, the league is required to conduct a background check on each of these individuals.

Hometown Little League is required to sign an agreement on the charter application that it will comply with Regulations I(b) and I(c) 8 & 9. The league also will be required to sign a statement on its Tournament Team Eligibility Affidavit verifying that the process under the regulations has been completed and implemented. Failure to sign the agreement on the charter application will result in the league not being chartered and failure to fulfill the requirements of the regulations will result in the league's status being referred to the Charter/Tournament committee for action to revoke the league's charter and all privileges.

By now, all volunteer applications should have been distributed to most of the league's volunteers/hired workers who fit the criteria of the regulations and the background check committee appointed by the board of directors should have completed most of the checks. All background checks must be completed BEFORE the individuals can assume their duties for the current year.

Appointments (Managers, Coaches, Umpires)

This is a critical time of year for Hometown Little League, as it is for every league (Regulation I (b) and I (c); Pamphlet - Little League's Greatest Challenge). At Hometown, the first step is for committees to seek and screen those willing to serve. The next step is for the president to appoint managers, coaches and umpires at his/her discretion. Exception: Coaches new to a particular team cannot be named until after the draft. (Operating Manual - Local League Administration; Regulation I b.)

The final step in the appointment process is for the board of directors to approve or disapprove that appointment. No person can manage, coach or umpire without the president appointing and the board approving that appointment. A president and/or board of directors SHOULD NOT give a reason to a person if he or she is not re-appointed or re-approved as a manager, coach or umpire for the coming season. No manager, coach or umpire has tenure, regardless of the years of service.

Leagues should send managers, coaches and umpires to Regional Headquarters for clinics, to an Emergency Management Training Course, First-Aid classes, etc., and take advantage of the Little League Education Program for Managers and Coaches. Appointments of managers, coaches and umpires must only be made after the background check is complete.

Releasing a Player During the Off-Season

In any contemplated release of a player, the manager MUST make the board of directors aware of the situation immediately (Regulation III e).

At Hometown, the player agent first determines (in writing from manager) why the manager wants to release the player, or why the parents want the player to be released. Playing ability cannot be a factor.

The issue is then brought before the board of directors for a decision. No release is valid without the board approval.

The player is then notified of the release in writing, in time to attend tryouts for the coming season. Sample letters of release from Hometown Little League are included in this publication (Figure 5).

Double-Checking Eligibility

The player agent at Hometown Little League gathers all information on player eligibility before the tryouts. This helps to ensure that no ineligible player is drafted or placed on a team. If this happens and it is discovered later, the player must be released immediately and sent to the proper league and this could result in the need for a re-draft.

If no league services the player's residence, a new one must be formed or the boundaries properly changed to include the residence. Before the draft, the player agent also contacts all players who played last year, but have not signed up. Sample contact letters from Hometown Little League are included in this publication (Figure 6).

The player agent gets statements, in writing if possible, from those who are not coming back. Those not returning are to be properly released, in writing, as stated in the previous section (Pamphlet - The Player Agent in Little League).

Clinics and Educational Programs

For Hometown Little League, the final step before spring begins is to ensure that the volunteers in the league are properly trained. The best way is to take advantage of Little League's extensive training programs.

Managers and coaches at Hometown Little League are sent to their Regional Center for a weekend clinic and coaching clinics. Internationally-known baseball leaders actively contribute to <http://www.littleleaguecoach.org>.

Leagues and districts also have a chance for visits in person by well-known instructors. Another program available for any league volunteer is the Emergency Management Training Program — a way to help your volunteers recognize and deal with injuries, and how to help prevent them.

Umpires also can receive personal instruction on the “Little League Way,” either at International Headquarters or any of the Regional Centers. The Regional Centers also offer clinics for league officers, tracing Hometown Little League's year of operations through overhead transparencies and videos. Some centers also offer clinics specifically designed for player agents, safety officers and scorekeepers. Also, regional and/or Little League International staff annually conduct district clinics in various states.

Another aspect of Little League's commitment to education is ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program). This program gathers the best safety ideas from leagues all around the nation, and shares them with you. Bonus incentives are available for those leagues that choose to participate that will help your league save money. Call your Regional Center for more information on any of these programs.

Chapter 4 - SPRING

This is generally the time of year when the children of Little League become involved. As such, its smooth operation is critical to the success of the Regular Season.

If the fall and winter seasons are well-run, the spring season will be the payoff. If not, it can be one headache after another.

Divisions: How Do We Line Up?

The first step is to decide how Hometown Little League will be structured by ages. All 5-6 year olds must play Tee Ball (with approval of the Board of Directors, 4-year-olds can be allowed to play Tee Ball), but will the league allow some 7 year olds to play Tee Ball? Will some 7 and/or 8 year olds move up to Minors? How many players will be on each team? Will the Minor Division be separated into “Machine Pitch,” “Coach Pitch,” and/or “Player Pitch” divisions? These issues could change yearly (Regulation III a).

The number of players returning will be essential in deciding on the number of teams in each division. It is recommended the ratio of Minors to Majors players not exceed 2:1 in the 9-12 year old age group.

Since the Minor Division can include players who are league age 7-11, Hometown Little League separates the Minors into two parts. Minor League Coach Pitch is for players who are league age 7-10, with a few 6-year olds (who played Tee Ball as 5-year olds) also involved. Minor League Player Pitch is for players league age 10-11 (12-year-olds with Approved Waivers are allowed to play in Minor League Player Pitch but they are not allowed to pitch). Some 10 year olds play in the older division, some in the younger, depending on ability.

Hometown uses a pitching machine in some Major Division practices, and ensures the machine, extension cords, etc., are in proper working order, and operated only by an adult manager or coach. Hometown always looks to expand the Major Division, invariably resulting in a stronger league. Options for expanding are in the Operating Manual, as well as information on team reduction. Remember to ensure each division has enough teams to play “in-house” games or that an Interleague arrangement can be worked out with another Little League program.

Preparing for the Tryout

In the announcement of tryouts, Hometown Little League contacts all who signed up to inform them about the dates, times and sites of the tryouts. Tryout dates and times should be varied, and registration of new players continues up until the time of the tryouts. This allows for late registration, giving all children in the community ample opportunity to play.

All of those required to try out should be informed in writing of the dates and times, and the importance of attending the tryouts. A sample notice from Hometown Little League is included in this publication (Figure 8).

The player agent oversees the tryout and produces a list, for each manager, of the eligible candidates and their ages. All managers are informed that attendance at the tryout is mandatory. At Hometown, all eligible candidates must try out

(including “Option” players). Exception: The league may opt to immediately place all 9 and/or 10 year olds in the Minor League, without a tryout. It is recommended that any 11 year olds who are not of sufficient ability to play in the Major Division be placed in the Minor Division. Twelve year olds can only be placed in the Minor Division with an Approved Waiver.

If a candidate fails to attend at least 50 percent of the tryouts, the first step is to find out why. At Hometown Little League, the player agent obtains a written excuse from the parents. If the excuse is acceptable to a majority of the board, the child can enter the draft and be placed on a team. If the excuse is not acceptable, the child cannot play in the league AT ANY LEVEL for that season.

With the exception of a 12-year-old playing in Minors with an Approved Waiver, any child who is placed on a Minor League team (and is the correct age for the Major Division) is IMMEDIATELY eligible to be called up to the Major Division, in the event of a vacancy. (Regulation IV f.)

Conducting the Tryout

Candidates should be tested in five areas. All managers must attend, and all eligible players must attend at least 50 percent of the sessions. (Pamphlet - The Player Agent in Little League.) If a candidate fails to attend 50 percent of the tryouts, the child/parents should be sent a letter explaining this policy. A sample copy of the letter from Hometown Little League is included in this publication (Figure 9).

Here are the five areas in which Hometown Little League tests its candidates:

- Batting/bunting
- Fielding fly balls
- Fielding ground balls
- Throwing
- Running

Players are rated in each category from 1 to 5 (5 being the highest). Players scoring 15 or above should be considered to be eligible for drafting onto a major team.

Pitch Count Program (Baseball)

To protect the arms of young players, and in keeping with Little League regulations regarding baseball, Hometown Little League has a Pitch Count program (Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules, Regulation VI). Rather than limit pitching eligibility by number of innings pitched, the pitch count program defines the amount of rest needed based on the number of actual pitches thrown. This not only helps protect players from overuse injuries, it further highlights the need for throwing accuracy at all levels of baseball.

The Draft

There are almost always “Options” claimed in the draft at Hometown. Options regard only sons or daughters of the manager or eligible coach, or siblings of players. (Pamphlet - The Player Agent in Little League.)

Most Options must be submitted in writing to the player agent 48 hours before the draft begins, so he or she can properly prepare the list of eligible candidates. Options are not secret, and should be discussed prior to the draft with all managers. If no Option is submitted, the candidate may be drafted by any team at any time.

Regarding coach’s Options, the coach must have been a manager or coach in Hometown Little League for at least the past two years AND must be returning to the same team on which he/she coached/managed last season (Operating Manual - Draft). “Gentlemen’s Agreements” are not valid during a draft.

Trading Players

Trades can only be conducted AFTER the draft, and before the 14th day of the regular season. If all of the following parties do not agree to the trade, then there cannot be a trade (Operating Manual - Draft):

- * The managers of both teams
- * The player agent
- * The board of directors (by majority vote)

The board must decide if the trade is for justifiable reasons. Just exactly what is “justifiable” is totally up to the Hometown Little League’s board of directors.

Trades must be player for player only. Example: Two managers could trade players they have just drafted, pending the approval of the player agent and board of directors.

The player agent must monitor trades closely to prevent manipulation of the system.

There can be no trades between teams in separate charters or divisions. For example, a team in Downtown National Little League could not trade with a team in Downtown American Little League, even if both leagues are operated by one board of directors.

Scheduling Games

The schedule at Hometown Little League is arranged so teams play each other twice a week. For instance, Team A plays Team B twice in the first week of the season. In the second week, Team A plays Team C twice, and so on.

Obviously, this works best with an even number of teams. The advantage is in preventing one team from always using the same pitcher against another (Operating Manual - Sample Schedules).

At Hometown Little League the first-half winner plays the second-half winner for the league championship at the end of the season. This gives an advantage to a “quick start” team as well as a “late bloomer.”

Remember to allow for “rain dates.” At Hometown Little League, there are specific dates set up to replay games previously rained out, in the order in which they were rained out. That way, the schedule of “makeup” games is determined solely by the “luck of the draw.”

Here are some other points to remember when scheduling games:

- * Sunday games are NOT prohibited by Little League Regulations
- * The season must be at least half complete by June 15 (the day Tournament Teams are allowed to be announced) if the league intends to enter teams in Tournament Play
- * Little League recommends splitting the season in half
- * Curfews must be observed without exception

Practices

A practice schedule is determined by the Hometown Little League board of directors through individual division vice presidents. Practices may be off league property if the location is approved by the board of directors. (Regulation IX.) Practice games/scrimmages may only be conducted BEFORE the season begins, and can only be between teams in the same division (Regulation I (C) -5).

Waiver Forms

Regulation II (d) and Regulation IV (h) Waiver Forms must be completely filled out, or they will be returned. After verifying that each youngster meets the requirements of the waiver, the president of Hometown Little League then sends the forms to the District Administrator. Once the District Administrator verifies the documentation meets the regulations, he or she has the authority to grant approval of the waiver. Situations in which documentation is not available must be referred through the regional office to the Charter Committee at Little League International, whose decision is final and binding.

Failure to follow this procedure will result in having an ineligible player in the league. The player in question is not eligible until the leagues receives written confirmation from the DA or, in those cases where documentation is not available, from Little League International, and only if all the information on the form is true and remains correct. (Regulation IV h). Regulation II (d) and IV (h) waiver forms are available at www.littleleague.org, as well as on the ASAP Safety Manual CD and the League Supplies CD sent to Hometown Little League upon chartering.

Charter Committee Waivers

If a league wants to request a waiver of any other rule or regulation, it may do so. A specific procedure has been developed for this purpose, using the “chain of command.” Waiver Requests that do not follow this established procedure will be delayed (Rulebooks - General Information/Charter Committee).

How Hometown Little League Applies for a Waiver

1. The Hometown Little League board of directors votes to request the waiver.
2. The president (Jane Hancock) writes a letter to the attention of “The Charter Committee, Williamsport, Pennsylvania” detailing the waiver and the reasons for requesting it. Any supporting documents are included.
3. The letter and documents are forwarded to the district administrator for his or her recommendation and/or investigation.
4. The letter and documents are forwarded to the Regional Director for his or her recommendation and/or investigation.
5. The letter and documents are forwarded to the Charter Committee for action.

Remember: Any waiver for any reason is for the current season only. Re-submissions the following year(s) must go through the same process.

Team Rosters

Team rosters must be submitted to Little League International annually. Failure to do so could result in ineligible players in the league during the regular season and tournament (Regulation IV g).

A player, manager or coach who is injured must be on roster at Headquarters to be covered by Little League insurance. Exception: A local league board of directors may approve a number of “volunteer helpers” or “assistant coaches” to assist in practices (they are also covered by Little League accident insurance, if approved by the board and if noted on a separate list submitted to Headquarters).

Rosters should be submitted through the “Little League Data Center” on www.littleleague.org. This web site will provide a downloadable spreadsheet as well as accepting formats from Licensed Products and our sponsor, Active.com.

This is a secure and easy way to provide the required data on players, managers and coaches, and insures that Little League Baseball, Incorporated receives the data that is required.

Further information is available by using your ID Number and Password and logging onto the Little League Data Center.

Interleague/Combined Teams Forms

As with all other forms, these are filled out completely by Hometown Little League. They are sent to the District Administrator, which will forward Combined League Forms to Regional Headquarters. Until written permission is received from Regional Headquarters, Combined Teams Play should not be conducted. Interleague play must be approved by District Administrator (Regulation I c-5).

The leagues involved should form an Interleague committee to work with the teams making up the Interleague arrangement. This is not the responsibility of the District Administrator. A sample Interleague Request Form and Combined Teams Request Form are available at www.littleleague.org.

Opening Day

This is often the biggest day of the year for Hometown Little League, and a perfect opportunity to gain new members and volunteers. Ceremonies are brief and meaningful, and the media is invited. News releases to the media place the emphasis on the people in the league, and the fact that there are so many involved (Operating Manual - Public Relations). Also, there are many religions represented in Hometown, USA. When a prayer is used, it is non-denominational one.

Multiple Participation

Although Hometown Little League runs so well that no other baseball or softball programs are in town, some of the neighboring towns have programs not affiliated with Little League. Players may participate in more than one program.

If a player repeatedly misses practices and/or games because of participation in another program, the manager may remove the player from the team, subject to the board of directors’ approval, for the current season or tournament play. A team in a chartered Little League must not participate as a Little League team in games with or against those of another organization (Exception: Little League teams may play games against Non-Little League Teams with an approved “Application for Special Games with Non-Little League Teams”).

Equipment and uniforms belonging to the local Little League must not be used in non-Little League approved games, and the team must not be identified as a team from a chartered Little League.

Protest Committee

The protest committee is composed of the president, player agent, league umpire in chief and one or more other officers or directors who are not managers or umpires. This committee is totally responsible for solving protests of regular season games at Hometown Little League (Rule 4.19 f).

The president of Hometown Little League may call the District Administrator or Regional Headquarters for help with an interpretation of a Rule or Regulation as it applies to the protest, but not for a ruling on a protest.

President, Vice President(s) and Player Agent(s)

Because of the obvious conflict of interest, Jane Hancock (president of Hometown Little League) cannot serve on the protest committee while managing, coaching or umpiring in any division in the league. Her responsibilities on the protest committee may be waived, however, in order to manage, coach or umpire.

Vice president(s) can manage, coach or umpire in any division, provided they do not serve on the protest committee.

Player agent(s) cannot manage, coach or umpire in the division in which they have responsibilities. The league cannot circumvent this regulation by applying alternate titles such as “Commissioner,” “League Representative,” etc. (Regulation I b).

Injured Player Procedure

An injured or ill player should be given basic first-aid treatment, and published procedures should be followed if bodily fluids are present (Rulebooks - Communicable Disease Procedure).

At Hometown Little League, the circumstances of the injury (safety officer/league president) are documented. If the injury or illness occurs during a game, the umpire may require an opinion from a medical person before allowing player to re-enter the game.

If an accident insurance claim is needed, the safety officer prepares the paperwork. The president reviews and submits the paperwork through proper channels.

The most common reason for delays in processing insurance claims is failure to complete all paperwork (particularly information on the parents’ primary insurance, or lack of it).

Following the injury or illness, the player agent determines how long the player will be unable to play. The board of directors of Hometown Little League decided last Fall (in local rules/ground rules) the amount of time a player can miss before being replaced (Regulation III d).

If a player is replaced (properly released) on a Major Division team (any team other than Tee Ball or Minor League), the player must be notified of his/her release in writing (Figure 10). That player may not return to the league for the remainder of the season and is no longer a member of that team. As such, the player must attend tryouts next year if he/she wishes to play (Operating Manual - Local League Maintenance of Rosters).

A player called up from the Minor Leagues to a Major Division team at any time becomes a permanent member of that Major Division team. Such a player may refuse to become a member of a Major Division team. If so, he or she is not eligible to be placed on a Major Division team for the remainder of the season. (Regulation VIII.)

This is to help ensure that the Minor League is balanced, to help ensure that the players in the Major Division are of sufficient ability (in the opinion of Hometown Little League personnel) to compete in the Major Division, and to ensure that players in the Minor Division are not able to “pick and choose” the team for which they will play in the Major Division.

A local league should also have a policy in its local rules/ground rules regarding players who refuse to move up to a Major Division team. (Example: Such player must be transferred to another Minor League team.) At Hometown Little League, this policy is explained in writing to parents at the sign-ups so there is no question about the policy later on.

When a Player is Released During the Season

As in the off-season, the manager **MUST** make the board of directors aware of the situation immediately. Failure to do so may be cause for action against the manager for acting outside the best interests of the local league. Even so, the player agent must maintain strict observation of the league to prevent manipulation of the system. (Regulation III d.)

At Hometown Little League, the player agent first determines (in writing from the manager) why the manager wants to release the player. Playing ability cannot be a factor (There also may be an underlying reason that should be addressed).

The issue is then brought before the Hometown board of directors for a decision by majority vote. No release is valid without the board approving it.

If the board votes to release the player, he or she is notified of the release in writing. Note: If the Hometown board feels the manager is releasing the player late in the season in an effort to obtain an “early draft choice,” it may opt not to release the player.

Remember, a player **MAY NOT** be released from a Major Division team to play the balance of the season on a Minor Division team. If released, such a player must try out the following season (Operating Manual - Tryouts, Duration of Title). Sample letters of release from Hometown Little League are included in this publication (Figure 10).

Disciplining a Member

In the case of a Regular Member (not a player), Hometown Little League’s procedure is for a committee to gather complaints, in writing if possible. The committee reports its findings to the board of directors (Model Constitution - Article III, Section 4 a).

At this point, the board could dismiss the case, or could send a written notice to the accused or verbally notify the accused, stating the charges in general, as well as when and where to appear to answer the charges. The procedure for disciplining a regular member is on the next page.

DISCIPLINING a member should not be confused with **NOT RE-APPOINTING** a member to a specific position, such as manager, coach or umpire. If the local league president does not choose to re-appoint a person (annually), he or she **SHOULD NOT** give any reason for doing so.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL ANY PERSON WHO IS A KNOWN CHILD-SEX OFFENDER BE PERMITTED TO HOLD ANY OFFICE OR POSITION IN THE LOCAL LEAGUE OR ANY OTHER LEVEL OF LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL. ADDITIONALLY, ANY PERSON CONVICTED OF A CRIME INVOLVING OR AGAINST CHILDREN SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED TO HOLD ANY POSITION IN THE LOCAL LEAGUE (REGULATION I (c) 9).

At the disciplinary meeting for Regular Members:

- Re-state charges for the record.
- Give the accused ample opportunity to respond.
- Board could decide to take no further action.
- Board could decide to draft a warning or letter of reprimand.
- Board could decide to revoke all or part of the person's Membership privileges for a specific period of time, but not longer than the remainder of the fiscal year.
- Any punishment must be approved by two-thirds vote of the board members present.

In the case of a Player Member, a committee gathers complaints, in writing if possible, and reports its findings to the board of directors. The board could dismiss the case, or could send written notice to the accused or verbally notify the accused, stating the charges, as well as when and where to appear to answer the charges. The player's manager should also be present (Model Constitution - Article III, Section 4 b). This process is detailed below.

At the disciplinary meeting for a Player Member (may be the entire board or the committee):

- Re-state charges for the record.
- Give the accused ample opportunity to respond.
- Board could decide to take no further action.
- Board could decide to draft a warning or letter of reprimand.
- Board could decide to revoke all or part of the person's player Membership privileges for a specific period of time, but not longer than the remainder of the season.
- Any punishment must be approved by two thirds vote of the board members present.

Post-Season Playoffs

At Hometown Little League, playoff games are played between the first and second half champions in the same division, so no written permission is needed. Such games can only be played under Regular Season Rules (Regulations VII f and IX).

Any other games require written permission from Regional Headquarters as Special Games. A Special Games Request Form must be approved by the District Administrator and Regional Director prior to the games being played. Special Games may be played under Regular Season Rules or Tournament Rules, but not in combination. Protests in Special Games cannot be referred to Regional Headquarters.

Special Games Request Forms are available at www.littleleague.org.

Chapter 5 - SUMMER

If spring is the meat and potatoes for all the hard work put into Hometown Little League this season, then summer is the icing on the cake.

Special Games

Special Games includes Tournament of Champions, Strong Team Tournament, City Tournament, County Tournament, etc., as well as any kind of tournament other than games to determine a league Champion. (Regulation IX.)

A Special Games Request Form must be approved by the district administrator and Regional Director prior to the games being played. A form is available at www.littleleague.org or www.activeteamsports.com.

Special Games may be played under Regular Season Rules or Tournament Rules, but not in combination. Protests in Special Games cannot be referred to Regional Headquarters.

Selection of Tournament Teams

This is the source of many lawsuits and threats of lawsuits in Little League Baseball and Softball. If your local league, like Hometown Little League, conducts its Tournament Team Selection democratically, it will avoid many of these problems (Tournament Rules and Guidelines).

The criteria for selection must be limited to the following:

- Eligibility
- Availability
- Ability

Eligibility refers to:

1. Age
2. Participation in 60% of the regular season games (as of the date the Tournament Teams are announced) in that division
3. Residence, as defined in the Operating Manual and Rulebooks (or a letter from Regional Headquarters specifically noting the eligibility of that player for that division in that league and in that year)

“Availability” refers to whether the candidate will be able to practice and play with the team. Will the player miss some or all practices or games? If so, the league may wish to disqualify the player from consideration.

“Ability” is solely in the opinion of those making the selections.

Hometown Little League follows Little League’s recommendation for selecting the Tournament Teams. The groups involved in voting are:

- Players in that division
- Managers in that division
- Coaches in that division
- Volunteer umpires
- Board of Directors

Every person in every group gets one vote, selecting up to 14 (16 for Senior Division and 17 for Big League) players. This method all but eliminates charges of favoritism by managers or the board. The players with the most total votes comprise the Tournament Team.

At Hometown, those players who do not receive enough votes are placed into a pool, should there be a vacancy on the Tournament Team. If a vacancy arises, and the Board of Directors decides to fill it, the player who received the next-most votes is automatically placed on the team after verification of birth date and residence. However, these players **MUST NOT** travel with the team and are not covered by Little League Accident Insurance when traveling to and from games.

The announcement of the Tournament Team cannot be before the date specified in the Tournament Rules and Guidelines (June 15 for divisions above 10-11 Year Olds). If conducted, tryouts for the Tournament Team cannot begin before that date. Violation may result in revocation of Tournament privileges by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport (Tournament Rules and Guidelines).

The selection of the manager and coaches for the Tournament Team is up to the board of directors. A Tournament Team manager or coach must have been an eligible manager or coach in that division of the league during the regular season.

Tournament Affidavit

Like all forms, Hometown Little League fills these out completely. The president and player agent verify and are responsible for the residences and ages being correct on the form. The district administrator verifies and is responsible for the players’ ages being correct and that, at a minimum, all players of the district championship team meet the residence requirement.

At Hometown Little League, the maximum number of players allowed on the affidavit are named (16 Senior Division and 17 for Big League Baseball and Softball, 14 for all other divisions). The minimum number of players allowed is nine for all divisions.

Individuals may be added to the affidavit at any time during the Tournament, but must undergo the same verification process for age and residence as all other Tournament players. Hometown always places the maximum one manager and two coaches on the affidavit.

Replacement of players begins with drawing a line through the replaced player's name or an "x" over that player's entry. At that point, that player can not re-join the team. The applicable block for the replacement player is then completed, including noting the corresponding player number.

Tournament Team Practice

Practice (or tryouts) of the Tournament Team cannot begin before the date specified in the Tournament Rules and Guidelines (June 15 for all divisions except 9-10 and 10-11 Year Olds). Little/Junior/Senior/Big League: Try-outs or practices by tournament teams shall not be held before June 15. *Tournament team practice may only take place against other teams within the same or contiguous district in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform.* (Little League accident insurance for tournament teams will not go into effect until June 15, or the date of the release of the names of tournament Team members, whichever is later).

9-10 & 10-11 Year Old Divisions: Try-outs or practices by tournament teams shall not be held before June 15 or two weeks prior to the start of the tournament. *Tournament team practice may only take place against other teams within the same or contiguous districts in the same division, providing such practice is done out of uniform.* (Little League accident insurance for tournament teams will not go into effect until June 15, or the date of the release of the names of tournament Team members, whichever is earlier).

Tournament Briefings with DA

The success of these meetings is critical to the success of the District Tournament. The meetings should include all managers, tournament site directors and umpires.

The meetings should cover:

- Field Certification
- Tournament Rules and Guidelines (including the process for completing the affidavit).
- Code of Conduct
- Special situations that may arise in games

Awards

Any award given to any Hometown Little Leaguer is NOT for individual athletic accomplishment, such as having the highest batting average or most home runs. Some examples of awards given at Hometown are: Good Sport of the Year; Best Attitude; Most Decals Sold, etc. (Regulation XII.)

Awards should be inexpensive. Expensive awards can jeopardize a child's amateur status. Trophies or plaques for individuals on league championship or tournament teams are acceptable if they are given to all members of the team without reference to individual accomplishments.

Participation pins, available from Regional Headquarters, are an excellent way to provide all players with a lasting memento of their time in various levels of Little League.

Information is available from the state high school athletic association on the limits allowed for awards. Simply call any local public high school and ask for the activities director or athletic director for information on the cutoff between amateur and professional status in your state.

International Tournament

Once a team advances beyond district play, the league is reimbursed at a rate of \$1 per mile for one round trip (U.S. leagues only).

Reimbursement is in the form of a credit toward the next season's Charter and Insurance fees. The league may request, in writing, reimbursement by check. (Tournament Rules and Guidelines)

Information on hosting a Tournament is available in the Tournament Rules and Guidelines. Leagues with teams advancing beyond district play should contact the Tournament Director at the next level to see if there are special arrangements for housing, meals, etc.

Parents of Tournament Team players must not be shouldered with the burden of supplying uniforms or paying for the players' travel (these are league responsibilities). Every effort must be made to provide travel, housing and meals for the team players at no cost to the players' parents.

However, the league should not provide funds to assist parents in their travel, meals or lodging.

The World Series

Advancing to a World Series in Little League Baseball or Softball can be the pinnacle of any child's early years. Little League conducts World Series Programs in several divisions each year.

Conclusion

As any Local Little League volunteer knows, there is much more involved in the smooth operation of the league than simply making sure boys and girls get to play baseball or softball. We hope this publication has been helpful in making your league, like Hometown Little League, a more effective service organization to the youth of your community.

GLOSSARY

Many of these terms are Federally Registered Trademarks, and should never be used in reference to any program other than those chartered by Little League Baseball, Incorporated. They are not generic terms.

9 and 10 Year Old Tournament: A tournament division in baseball and softball for participants of those league ages. Players may not be on both the 9-10 Year Old and 10-11 Year Old Division tournament teams.

10 and 11 Year Old Tournament: A tournament division in baseball and softball for participants of those league ages. Players may not be on both the 10-11 Year Old and the Little League Majors Division tournament teams.

50/70 Baseball Division: Pilot Program for league age 11/12 and/or 12/13 Baseball players. Players league ages 11/12 may participate in the 50/70 Division and the Major Division. Players league ages 12/13 may participate in the 50/70 Division and the Junior Division.

Baseball and Softball Divisions: Tee-Ball, Minors, Little League (Majors), Juniors, Seniors and Big League in Baseball, Girls Softball and Boys Softball. Age limits for each Division are provided in the applicable Rulebook.

Board of Directors: At the local league level, a group of people elected by the league membership, in whom is placed the responsibility for the management of the property and affairs of the league, under the rules, regulations and policies of Little League Baseball, Incorporated. (See Little League Baseball International Board of Directors)

Bylaws: See "Local Rules."

Challenger Division: A baseball program for participants 4-18 years old (league age; or older, for those still in school) who are mentally and/or physically disabled.

Charter: A written contract/agreement between Little League Baseball, Incorporated, and the board of directors of a local organization of volunteers interested in operating a Little League Baseball and/or Little League Softball program for a particular year. It is applied for annually by the local league.

Charter Committee: A group of personnel at Little League Baseball International in whom is placed (by the Little League International Board of Directors) the responsibility for the granting, suspension, termination or limitation of constitution: A document, produced at the local league level that governs the way the local league will operate. This document must be approved by Little League Baseball Headquarters to be valid. The membership of the local league is responsible for its enforcement.

District Administrator: A volunteer position at the local level. Districts hold elections once every three years on a rotating basis. Each league in a district (a geographic area within a state or country) can nominate any person, and receives one vote at the election.

Dr. Creighton J. Hale International Grove: A housing, dining and recreation area at Little League International for participants in the Little League Baseball World Series and Summer Camp. Also used to house visitors/participants in seminars and schools, and has been used to house victims of natural disasters. It is named for the former president and chief executive officer of Little League Baseball, Incorporated.

Ground Rules: See "Local Rules."

Howard J. Lamade Stadium: The name of the stadium at which the Little League Baseball World Series has been played every year since 1959. It is named for a longtime Little League supporter who was instrumental in procuring the land and funds needed to construct the stadium.

International Tournament: The tournament that begins in early July at the district level and ends in August with a World Series in eight divisions of play (Little League Baseball for 11-12 year olds; Junior League Baseball for 12-14 year olds; Senior League Baseball for 14-16 year olds; Big League Baseball for 16-18 year olds; Little League Softball for 11-12 year olds; Junior League Softball for 12-14 year olds; Senior League Softball for 13-16 year olds;

Big League Softball for 14-18 year olds). The International Tournament is under the administrative control of the Tournament Committee in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

League Age: For baseball divisions, this is the age attained by a participant as of April 30 during the year in question. For softball, this the age attained on Dec. 31 of the year prior to the year in question. This is the factor used by Little League in determining the age bracket in which the child will be placed during that season. These dates were determined as a result of agreements with other youth baseball and softball organizations. Age charts are in the Operating Manual.

Little League Baseball or Little League: Acceptable on first reference to the organization named below. Whenever used in letterhead or in a title, it should also be accompanied by a registration symbol. “(r)”

Little League Baseball, Incorporated: The official title of the organization, founded in 1939 by Carl Stotz in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. It is now the largest organized youth sports program in the world, providing baseball and softball programs to about 3-million participants ages 4-18 on 200,000 teams in more than 100 countries. Note: The word “Incorporated” should not be abbreviated.

Little League Baseball International Board of Directors: Board in whom is placed the responsibility for the management of the property and affairs of Little League Baseball, Incorporated. Nine members of the Board are District Administrators from each of the nine regions around the world who serve three year rotating terms. The members are elected by the District Administrators of each Region.

Little League Baseball International Congress: A congress of Little League Baseball district administrators held once every three years. Part of the agenda at each congress is to review any possible changes in the rules and regulations of Little League and to make recommendation for changes to the Little League Baseball International Board of Directors.

Little League Baseball International: The name of the 62-acre complex in Williamsport, Pennsylvania that includes Howard J. Lamade Stadium, Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum, Dr. Creighton J. Hale International Grove and the John W. Lundy Little League Conference Center.

Little League Baseball (Western, Eastern, Southeastern, Southwestern, Central) Region Headquarters: These are the correct names of the various regional headquarters of Little League Baseball, Incorporated, located in San Bernardino (California), Bristol (Connecticut), Warner Robins (Georgia), Waco (Texas), and Indianapolis (Indiana), respectively.

Little League European Leadership Training Center: The correct title for the European Regional Headquarters in Kutno, Poland.

Little League Foundation: A charitable, non-profit organization registered with the IRS as a tax-exempt residuary of funds, real or personal; and of other interests donated by gift, demise bequest or other transfer, to be used for the welfare and development of the children of Little League.

Local League: The administrative organization, participants, managers, coaches, umpires and all volunteers making up a chartered Little League program.

Local Rules (or Ground Rules, or Bylaws): Those rules enacted annually by a local league referring to daily operations (examples: the 10 run-rule and tournament team selection method) not covered in the Official Regulations and Playing Rules and the local league’s constitution.

Member: See “Regular Member.”

Official Regulations and Playing Rules: There are three such publications produced each year by Little League in the following divisions: 1. Tee Ball, Minor League, Little League, Junior League, Senior League and Big League Baseball; 2. Tee Ball, Minor League, Little League, Junior League, Senior League and Big League Softball (Girls and Boys); 3. Challenger.

Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum: The title for the museum, located at Little League Baseball International.

Player Agent: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual, and in the brochure “The Player Agent in Little League.”

Player Member: Any participant placed on a team in a local league. Player members are not entitled to vote in the annual election, and have no duties or obligations in the management or affairs of the local league. They may be entitled to vote during Tournament Team selection, if stated in the local rules/ground rules of the local league.

President: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual.

Regular Member (or Member): A person who, **if in good standing**, is entitled to vote at the annual election for a local league, and is entitled to attend any meeting of the membership of the league. Membership, and who receives it, is defined in the local league's constitution. However, any manager, coach, volunteer umpire or board member is automatically a regular member.

Residence: The residence for a Candidate or Player Member is the residence of the parent or legal guardian, as shown on legal forms of identification (i.e., driver's license, income tax record, voter's identification, etc.) This is further defined in the Operating Manual and Rulebooks.

Rules Committee: A group of officials at Little League Baseball International, and members of the International Board of Directors in whom is placed (by the Little League International Board of Directors) the responsibility for evaluating the rules of the various divisions of Little League, and for recommending for adoption any changes to the rules.

Safety Officer: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual and in the ASAP (A Safety Awareness Program) publications.

Tournament Committee: A group of personnel at Little League Baseball International in whom is placed (by the Little League International Board of Directors) the responsibility for the operation of the International Tournament.

Treasurer: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual.

Vice President: This position in the local league is defined in the Operating Manual.

Important Contact Numbers

Western Region Headquarters

6707 Little League Drive
San Bernardino, CA 92407
Phone: (909) 887-6444
Fax: (909) 887-6135
E-MAIL: westregion@littleleague.org

Central Region Headquarters

9802 East Little League Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46235
Phone: (317) 897-6127
E-MAIL: centralregion@littleleague.org

Eastern Region Headquarters

PO Box 2926
Bristol, CT 06011
Phone: (860) 585-4730
Fax: (860) 585-4734
E-MAIL: eastregion@littleleague.org

Southeastern Region Headquarters

PO Box 7557
Warner Robins, GA 31095
E-MAIL: southregion@littleleague.org

Southwestern Region Headquarters

PO Box 20127
Waco, TX 76702
Phone: (254) 756-1816
Fax: (254) 757-0519
E-MAIL: southwestregion@littleleague.org

Canadian Headquarters

235 Dale Avenue
Ottawa, ONT
Canada K1G 0H6
PHONE: 613-731-3301
FAX: 613-731-2829
E-MAIL: canada@littleleague.org

European Region Headquarters

Little League Europe
Al. Melej Ligi 1
Kutno, 99-300, Poland
PHONE: 011-48-24-254-4569
FAX: 011-48-24-254-4571
E-MAIL: europe@littleleague.org

Asia-Pacific Region Headquarters

Asia-Pacific Regional Director
C/O Hong Kong Little League
Room 1005, Sports House
1 Stadium Path
Causeway Bay
Hong Kong
PHONE: 011-852-2504-4007
FAX: 011-852-2504-8629
E-MAIL: llbapr@hkbaseball.com.hk

Latin America Region Headquarters

PO Box 10237
Caparra Heights, Puerto Rico 00922-0237
PHONE: 787-982-3076
FAX: 787-982-3076 or 787-728-8164
E-MAIL: latinamerica@littleleague.org

For Summer Camp inquiries for International and Hillsgrove (Green Acres), or other Headquarters events, contact: Summer Camp/Clinic Inquiry, PO Box 3485, Williamsport, PA 17701, or call (570) 326-1921, or fax (570) 326-1074.

District Administrator: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Little League® does not limit participation in its activities on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference or religious preference.

Sample Notice of Election

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
September 1**

Dear Hometown Little League Member:

Hometown Little League will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. on September 28 at the Hometown City Hall. The purpose of the meeting is the electing of the Board of Directors for the coming year. Only those Regular Members in good standing will be eligible to vote.

For more information, or if you can not attend (but wish to obtain an absentee ballot), please contact our league secretary, Dolly Madison, at 555-1234.

FIGURE 1

Sample Absentee Ballot

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
Absentee Ballot

INSTRUCIONS:

Fill in names of people you want on the Hometown Little League Board of Directors
IN THE ORDER OF YOUR PREFERENCE.

Return this ballot **IN PERSON** to the league secretary (Dolly Madison) in a sealed envelope on or before September 28.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

FIGURE 2

Sample Notice of Registration

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
November 15

Dear Hometown Little League Member:

It's registration time!

- What's going on?
Registration for the Hometown Little League Baseball/Softball Season.
- Who can play?
Any boy or girl ages 5-18 whose parent(s)/guardian(s) reside in Hometown Little League's boundaries — map available at registration. (Challenger Division available for mentally/physically disabled children ages 5-18).
- When can I sign up my child?
Every Saturday and Wednesday in December and January.
- What time?
Saturdays from noon until 3 p.m. and Wednesdays from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.
- Where?
Hometown Little League Meeting Room (1234 Main Street).
- What should I bring?
A parent (preferably BOTH parents) or legal guardian with a current driver's license; An ORIGINAL or STATE-CERTIFIED copy of the child's birth certificate (will be inspected and returned at registration). It's also helpful to bring an insurance card.
- How do I get more information?
Just call 555-1234.

NOTE: THIS SHOULD ALSO BE USED AS A NEWS RELEASE TO LOCAL MEDIA!!!

FIGURE 3

Sample Notice of Tryouts

Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
January 15

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Hometown Little League will hold tryouts at the Hometown Little League Complex on the following dates and times:

Saturday, **February 6**, 9 a.m.; Monday, **February 8**, 7 p.m.; Wednesday, **February 10**, 7 p.m.; Saturday, **February 13**, 9 a.m.

Because your child (candidate) was not assigned to a Hometown Little League Major Division team last year, or will be moving up to another division this season, your child is *required to try out for a team*.

If such candidate fails to attend at least 50 percent of the tryouts above, he or she **will not be eligible** to play in the league for the current season. However, if a written excuse is presented and **found acceptable** by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors, the child will be placed on a team. (Regulation IV f). Presentation of an excuse does not guarantee assignment to a team.

For more information, please contact league player agent Thomas Jefferson at 555-6789.

FIGURE 4

Sample Contact Letters

About two weeks *before* the deadline (tryouts), these letters go to the homes of last year's players who have not yet registered.

<p style="text-align: center;">Hometown Little League® Hometown, Anystate, USA February 1</p> <p>Dear Hometown Little League Parent:</p> <p>Our records show that you have not registered your child, Tammy Adams, who was a player in Hometown Little League last season.</p> <p>We must inform you that if Tammy is not signed up by February 15 (last day of tryouts), she may not be permitted to participate at Hometown Little League until next year. Only by registering before February 15 (last day of tryouts) will Tammy be assured of being placed on a team.</p> <p>Please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789, as soon as possible, to let us know if Tammy will play ball this season.</p> <p>-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This letter is used for Minor League players, or for players moving up to another division.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Hometown Little League® Hometown, Anystate, USA February 1</p> <p>Dear Hometown Little League Parent:</p> <p>Our records show that you have not registered your child, Billy Smith, who was a member of the Major Division Blue Jays last season.</p> <p>We must inform you that if Billy is not signed up by February 20 (draft day), he will be released from his team and may not be permitted to participate at Hometown Little League until next year. Only by registering before draft day will Billy be assured of returning to his team.</p> <p>Please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789, as soon as possible, to let us know if Billy will play ball this season.</p> <p>-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This letter is used for players returning to a Major Division team.</p>
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FIGURE 5

Sample Notice of Tryouts

After the deadline for signing up has passed, these letters go to the homes of last year's players who have not registered

<p>Hometown Little League® Hometown, Anystate, USA February 21</p> <p>Dear Hometown Little League Parent:</p> <p>Our records show that you did not register your child, Billy Smith, who was a member of the Major Division Blue Jays last season.</p> <p>We must inform you that Billy has been released from his team by action of the Board of Directors, and is not eligible to play in Hometown Little League for the coming season. However, Billy will be eligible to try out next year.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.</p> <p>----- This letter is used for players who would have returned to a Major Division team.</p>	<p>Hometown Little League® Hometown, Anystate, USA February 16</p> <p>Dear Hometown Little League Parent:</p> <p>Our records show that you did not register your child, Tammy Adams, who was a player in Hometown Little League last season.</p> <p>We must inform you that Tammy has been released by action of the Board of Directors, and is not eligible to play in Hometown Little League for the coming season. However, Tammy will be eligible to try out next year.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.</p> <p>----- This letter is used for Minor League players from the previous season, or for players who would have been moving up to another division.</p>
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FIGURE 6

Sample Contact Letter

After the tryouts, this letter goes to the homes of players who have signed up, but failed to attend at least 50 percent of the tryouts.

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 16**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

Our records show that you registered your child, Pat Thompson, but Pat failed to attend at least 50 percent of the tryout sessions as required.

As of this time, Pat is not eligible to play at any level at Hometown Little League. However, if a written excuse is presented and found acceptable by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors, Pat will be placed on a team. (Regulation IV f).

If you wish to present an excuse, please write to League President Jane Hancock, PO Box 1234, Hometown, AN 54321-1234. For more information, call Player Agent Thomas Jefferson at 555-6789.

This letter is used for players whose league age requires them to try out for a team.

FIGURE 7

Sample Contact Letter

This letter goes to the home of a player who was been released during the off-season.

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 16**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

This letter is to inform you that your child, Susan Dole, has been released from Hometown Little League by action of the Hometown Little League Board of Directors, effective immediately.

As such, your child is no longer a member of any particular team at Hometown Little League. She may still register and try out for a team for this coming season if she wishes.

If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.

This letter is used for players who are being released during the season or off-season.

FIGURE 8

Sample Contact Letter

This letter goes to the home of a player who has been released.

**Hometown Little League®
Hometown, Anystate, USA
February 16**

Dear Hometown Little League Parent:

This letter is to inform you that your child, Susan Dole, has been released from Hometown Little League by action of the Hometown Little League Board of Directors, effective immediately.

As such, your child is no longer a member of any particular team at Hometown Little League. She may register and try out for a team next season if she wishes.

If you have any questions, please call the Player Agent, Thomas Jefferson, at 555-6789.

This letter is used for players who are being released during the season or off-season.

FIGURE 9

Hometown Little League Local Rules

1. The method for selecting Tournament Team players for all divisions will be the method suggested in the Little League Baseball Tournament Rules and Guidelines. The board of directors will select the managers and coaches of the various Tournament Teams. (See Tournament Rules and Guidelines)
2. The Draft Method for all divisions above Minors will be the same as “Plan A - Method for Existing Leagues” in the current Little League Baseball Operating Manual. (Note: The last team to draft in each round is the team that won the previous year’s championship, regardless of overall record.)
3. Any player who is out of the lineup for more than three consecutive weeks (or six games) is subject to being removed from his/her team by action of the board of directors. However, the board of directors reserves the right to allow such player to remain on the roster. Managers must make the player agent aware if any player misses more than two consecutive games for any reason. Failure to do may be cause for disciplinary action against the manager. (See Regulation III (d))
4. No player may be called up from a Minor League to a Major League team in the last two weeks of the regular season. (See Regulation III (d) 2)
5. In all Major Divisions, the season will be split into two halves, with the first-half champion playing the second-half champion in a best two-out-of-three tournament at the end of the season. The championship games will be played on the first Monday, Wednesday and Saturday after the first and second half champions have completed all regular season games. If the same team wins both halves, it will be declared champion. The first and second half champions will be determined based on overall records in that half. If two or more teams are tied for first place at the end of either half with identical records, the winner will be determined by a one-game playoff on the first Tuesday following the end of the regular season, or a date determined by the Board of Directors.
6. It is Hometown Little League policy that if a Minor Division player declines to move up to a Major Division team when a vacancy occurs in the Major Division, that player shall be transferred to another team in the Minor Division, preferably a team lower in the standings. However, the board of directors reserves the right to waive this policy on a case by case basis. (See Regulation VIII)
7. Division Alignment (Team numbers may be adjusted depending on enrollment):
 - Tee Ball Baseball and Softball: 4-7 year olds; 14 Baseball teams; 5 Softball teams
 - Minor League Coach Pitch Baseball and Softball: 7-10 year olds; 4 Baseball; 1 Softball
 - Minor League Baseball and Softball: 9-12 year olds; 5 Baseball; 2 Softball
 - Major League Baseball and Softball: 11-12 year olds; 8 Baseball; 4 Softball
 - Junior League Baseball and Softball: 13-14 year olds; 2 Baseball; 2 Softball
 - Senior League Baseball: 15-16 year olds; 4 teams
 - Senior League Softball: 14-16 year olds; 2 teams
 - Big League Baseball and Softball: 17-18 year olds; 1 Baseball; 1 Softball
 - 50/70 Baseball: No Teams this season.

For the current season, all players league age 5 and 6 will play Tee Ball. (Exception: With concurrence of the parents, player and Player Agent, those 6-year olds who played Tee Ball last season may be moved up to Minor League Coach Pitch). All players 7 and 8 will be evaluated and, based on the evaluation, placed into the Tee Ball or Minor League Coach Pitch Division. All players league age 9-10 will be evaluated and, based on the evaluation, placed in the Minor League Coach Pitch Division or the Minor League Division. All players league age 11-12 will try out for Major Division teams. If not selected for a Major Division team, these players will be placed in the Minor Division. Junior Baseball and Softball: All players league age 13-14 will try out and will be placed on a team. Senior League Baseball: All players league age 15-16 will try out and will be placed on a team. Senior League Softball: All players league age 14-16 will try out and will be placed onto a team. Big League: All players league age 16-18 will try out and will be placed on a team.

Hometown Little League Local Rules (cont.)

8. The home team manager or coach will line the field prior to each game.
9. All trash must be removed from dugouts after games. The manager is responsible for this.
10. All managers, coaches and umpires must attend a clinic sponsored by the District Administrator or Little League Baseball, Incorporated, prior to the start of the season. The vice president of each division is responsible for giving information on clinics to the managers and coaches. The umpire-in-chief is responsible for giving information to the umpires.
11. Optional rules and regulations for Minor League/Tee Ball divisions are:
 - There is a 90-minute time limit on Tee Ball games, and a 2-hour time limit on Minor League Coach Pitch games. (See Regulation VIII)
 - Adults (offensive team manager or coach) will pitch in the Minor League Coach Pitch Division.
 - In Minor Divisions the 5 run rule is Waived in the Last Inning. (see Rule 5.07)
 - Protests must be resolved before the next play in Minors. Protests not resolved before the next play will not be considered. (See Rule 4.19)
 - A runner leaving the base early in Minor League Coach Pitch will be called out. (See Rule 7.13)
12. Final placement of teams (for draft purposes the following season) will be determined by overall records/winning percentage. (Exception: The first place team is always determined by the outcome of the playoffs, regardless of records.) If two or more teams are tied, it will be broken by the results of head-to-head games between the teams involved. If still tied, the tie will be broken by calculating the runs allowed per inning played on defense in all games played by the teams. The team having the lowest ratio receives the higher placement. Every effort will be made to play all games scheduled. However, it may be necessary to use winning percentage to determine placement, even if there is an uneven number of games played.

Little League, Volunteer Application - 2012

Do not use forms from past years. Use extra paper to complete if additional space is required.



A COPY OF VALID GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTO IDENTIFICATION MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION.

Name _____ Date _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Cell Phone _____ Business Phone _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 Date of Birth _____
 Occupation _____
 Social Security # (mandatory upon request or with LexisNexis) _____
 Employer _____
 Address _____
 Special professional training, skills, hobbies: _____

 Community affiliations (Clubs, Service Organizations, etc.): _____

 Previous volunteer experience (including baseball/softball and year): _____

 Do you have children in the program? Yes No If yes, list full name and what level? _____

 Special Certification (CPR, Medical, etc.): _____
 Do you have a valid driver's license: Yes No
 Driver's License #: _____ State _____
 Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to any crime(s): Yes No
 If yes, describe each in full: _____

 Have you ever been refused participation in any other youth programs? Yes No
 If yes, explain: _____

 In which of the following would you like to participate? (Check one or more.)
 League Official Coach Umpire Field Maintenance
 Manager Scorekeeper Concession Stand Other

Please list three references, at least one of which has knowledge of your participation as a volunteer in a youth program:

Name/Phone _____

AS A CONDITION OF VOLUNTEERING, I give permission for the Little League organization to conduct background check(s) on me now and as long as I continue to be active with the organization, which may include a review of sex offender registries, child abuse and criminal history records. I understand that, if appointed, my position is conditional upon the league receiving no inappropriate information on my background. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless from liability the local Little League, Little League Baseball, Incorporated, the officers, employees and volunteers thereof, or any other person or organization that may provide such information. I also understand that, regardless of previous appointments, Little League is not obligated to appoint me to a volunteer position. If appointed, I understand that, prior to the expiration of my term, I am subject to suspension by the President and removal by the Board of Directors for violation of Little League policies or principles.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____
 If Minor/Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Applicant Name (please print or type) _____

NOTE: The local Little League and Little League Baseball, Incorporated will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Local League Use Only:
 Background check completed by league officer _____
 on _____
 System(s) used for background check (minimum of one must be checked):
 Sex Offender Registry Criminal History Records *LexisNexis
**Please be advised that if you use LexisNexis and there is a name match in the few states where only name match searches can be performed you should notify volunteers that they will receive a letter directly from LexisNexis in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act containing information regarding all the criminal records associated with the name, which may not necessarily be the league volunteer.*
Only attach to this application copies of background check reports that reveal convictions of this application.

The World of Little League



Little League is enjoyed...

- . on six continents**
- . in scores of countries**
- . in all 50 U.S. States**
- . in Hometown, USA!**

**You can order more copies of this manual
by calling your region headquarters**

NOTES

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