

CAPITOL CITY LITTLE LEAGUE



SAFETY MANUAL

Year 2023

Please contact the League Safety Officer at safety@capcityll.org with any questions, concerns or corrections regarding this manual.

Safety – A Shared Responsibility

Everyone involved in Little League baseball wants kids to have fun and learn to be better baseball players. Our top priority, however, is doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our players, coaches and spectators.

CapCity's MISSION in this regard is to promote a safe environment for the players, coaches, umpires, family and fans of our league by fostering and maintaining an active interest in safety by the entire CapCity community; to assist in the overall effort to minimize the frequency of accidents or injury; and to identify corrective measures needed to eliminate or control potential safety hazards.

This manual sets out guiding safety protocols and precautions that can help promote a safe environment. However, it should be noted that: a.) baseball is a physical activity that -- like every sport -- involves an inherent amount of risk, and b.) not every scenario involving safety can be predicted. This manual, therefore, is at times general out of necessity.

What can be stated with specificity, however, is that everyone involved with CapCity -- parents, coaches, players, officials, etc -- has a responsibility to ensure safety is maximized and, whenever possible, enhanced.

With that in mind, if any member of the CapCity community has a safety concern, question or suggestion, it should be raised. If it is an immediate issue during a game, for example, it should be brought to the attention of managers and/or umpires. General issues or concerns should be brought to the attention of the CapCity Safety Officer. Any incident involving an injury, or a "near miss" that had potential for injury, should be reported within 48 hours using the attached accident form (also available on the Little League website).

Each year, the League Safety Officer – a member of the CapCity Board – will be registered with Little League International, and he/she should submit the League's Safety Plan along with a qualified safety plan registration form to Little League International. He/she should also send the League's Safety Plan to the DA or DSO. Finally, this safety manual will be made available on the league website, as well as distributed to volunteers, coaches, and others prior to the start of each season.

For the 2023 season, the League Safety Officer is Jonathan Hecht who can be reached at safety@capcityll.org.

However, in the event of emergencies of any type – medical, fire, or public safety – your first call should always be to 911.

Thank you for cooperating with CapCity Little League and doing your part to help ensure a safe, fun baseball season.

I. Managers, Coaches, Adult Volunteers

Team Safety Officer (TSO)

Managers should recruit a Team Safety Officer. The TSO is responsible for understanding, promoting and enforcing the safety policies enumerated in this guide. If a team does not have a Safety Officer, then the responsibility of this role is to be filled by the manager or coach in addition to their regular responsibilities.

Volunteer Application and Background Check / Player Data

Anyone who provides regular services to Capitol City Little League or comes in regular contact with players or teams (including managers, coaches, scorekeepers, team safety officers, board members, volunteers or hired workers) **must** fill out a Little League Volunteer Application Form (which is processed through a background check service provider), as well as provide a government-issued identification card for verification.

Capitol City Little League will, at a minimum, conduct a search on all volunteers or service providers on the U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Registry (www.nsopr.gov). In addition to checking the National Sex Offender Registry, the Board of Directors reserves the right to also conduct a supplemental criminal records search of any person associated with Capitol City Little League, which may require that the volunteer provide his/her social security number. Anyone refusing to fill out the Volunteer Application or provide required additional information is ineligible to be even a league member.

The President of CapCity Board will confidentially retain these forms and any information related to background searches, for the year of service.

Background checks must be approved before interacting with any players. The Cap City Little League Board Safety Officer will advise managers of their and their volunteers' approval status. Being accepted as a volunteer, and fulfilling your responsibilities, entitles you to become a regular member of Cap City Little League.

Player Roster/Registration, Coach and Manager data should be submitted by CapCity officials via the Little League Data Center at www.LittleLeague.org.

Coaches / First Aid Training

At least once a year, Capitol City Little League will distribute and discuss the safety plan at a mandatory coaches meeting. This presentation may be combined with other trainings, coaches meetings, etc.

In addition, a skills training shall be held for managers and coaches that emphasizes proper coaching of hitting, sliding, fielding, pitching, from both a skills development and safety perspective. One representative from each team

(coach or manager) is required to attend each year; all coaches and managers are required to attend training at least once every three years.

Finally, Cap City shall arrange for an annual first-aid training for coaches and managers. One representative from each team (coach or manager) is required to attend each year; all coaches and managers are required to attend training at least once every three years. Licensed medical doctors, licensed registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and paramedics do not need to attend first aid training in order to meet this requirement, but each team should have at least one representative trained or licensed in first-aid. This training may be combined with other meetings or trainings.

The Board of Directors will document the date, location, and who is required to attend various trainings, as well who actually attended. Copies of attendees shall be saved for 3 years to track those volunteers who have had training in past three years. Failure to attend can result in an individual being prohibited from coaching until completing the mandatory training.

Concussion Training

Head injuries and concussions are one of the most important safety issues in youth sports today. Vigilance is required by all CapCity Coaches and Managers to identify potential concussions and take appropriate steps to safeguard our players' safety. As mandated by District of Columbia law, CapCity requires all Coaches and Managers to undergo concussion training. This mandatory course is provided by the CDC and provides crucial information on recognition of concussions and on participation of athletes following suspected or actual concussions. This free course, which you can access [here](#), is excellent and takes only about 30-40 minutes to complete. Once complete, you will receive a certificate of completion, which you should download and email to our Safety Officer at safety@capcityll.org. The certification is good for two years. Coaches and managers must complete the course before the start of the season. Coaches and managers will not be allowed to continue coaching until you complete the course.

Positive Coaching Alliance Workshops

In an effort to ensure that our Coaches, Managers, and Volunteers maintain the ideals of sportsmanship, hard work, and skill development essential to the Little League experience, CapCity has partnered with the [Positive Coaching Alliance](#) to help provide training to our coaches to create a positive and fun learning environment for our players. We can all improve on our coaching and interactions with kids, their families, other league volunteers, and umpires.

All Coaches and Managers are required to attend one of these important, informative workshops. Dates for the 2023 season will be announced before the start of the season.

Player Emergency Information

All managers should keep a player file that includes emergency contacts, phone numbers and allergy information. Managers and TSOs should have their team's emergency contact file, safety manual and cell phone available at each practice or game.

Player registration data or player roster data should be submitted by CapCity officials responsible for registration via the Little League Data Center at www.LittleLeague.org.

Player Pick-up

No player should ever be left unattended after a practice or game. Coaches should let parents or guardians know their policy related to pickup and dropoff. If a child is not picked up and a manager is unable to make contact with his or her parent/guardian, parents should know that the manager may make arrangements for their child to be taken to their home, or the home of a teammate.

If pickup is made by anyone else other than the child's parents, the parent/guardian should provide the manager with advance, written notification of arrangements.

Technology:

Coaches are the first line of defense in helping create a safe playing environment. As their full attention is required to create that environment, Cap City strongly encourages that managers and volunteers refrain from using technology (mobile phones, tablets, etc) during practices. Managers and base coaches are forbidden from using these forms of technology during games.

If a situation arises where a manager or coach needs to make a call, send/check a message, etc, during a game or practice, he/she should notify another coach and leave the playing area. He/she should not give the impression that they are actively coaching while otherwise preoccupied with technology.

Base coaches:

In the Majors, any individual under 18 years of age coaching a base must wear a batting / skull cap helmet -- this includes players and siblings alike. In any league play prior to Majors, players are required to wear a batting helmet if coaching a base; volunteer coaches are encouraged to do so.

In any event, base coaches must remain alert and facing the batter during an at bat. Base coaches should not keep score, serve as bench coaches, or use handheld electronic devices or phones while coaching a base.

Dugouts

Only the 2 Coaches are allowed in the dugout or bench area. Only base coaches and the manager are permitted to be outside the dugout / bench area when their team is on offense. Only the manager is permitted to be outside the dugout area when their team is on defense. All other coaches or approved team assistants must remain in the dugout / bench area during play.

Concessions

CapCity does not offer concessions at any of its games or practices. No concessions shall be offered by CapCity without written permission of the CapCity President and Safety Officer, and the establishment of safe food handling/prep policies, training and procedures.

II. PLAYERS

League Selection

Players have the right to feel safe while playing baseball and softball. A parent may always request that their child play in a lower league. In addition, the Safety Officer or League Commissioner may also move players “up” if they feel there is a safety risk to the other players due to incompatible skill levels.

Attire

Players may not wear jewelry, watches or hard/metal items during practice or games. Shoes with metal spikes are prohibited -- players should wear shoes with molded or plastic cleats. Shoes should be tied, shirts tucked in, and hats worn forward and straight.

Batting Safety

- **Warm-Up Swings:** For the safety of those around them, no player – including batters on-deck – may swing a bat during practice or a game unless that player is at bat, or unless there is a designated, fully enclosed on-deck area (e.g., Chevy Chase field).

Coaches should ensure that only one child enters the on-deck area at any time, and that the entrance to the area is latched at all times.

- **Helmets:** Batters must wear a Little League approved protective batting helmet (NOCSAE insignia) at each at bat, at all practices and games. Team hats may not be worn under batting helmets.
- **Pitcher Attire:** Pitchers may wear only dark-colored long-sleeve undershirts during games; white long-sleeve shirts are not permitted as they can obscure the ball as it leaves the pitchers hand, creating an unsafe disadvantage for the batter.

Pitcher Safety

- **Protective Headgear:** Pitchers at all levels are strongly encouraged to wear in-hat protective headgear. CapCity has in-hat protective gear available upon request in the event that a pitcher does not possess his / her own protective headgear.
- **Pitch Counts:** In an effort to stem the alarming increase in elbow and shoulder injuries among young baseball pitchers, Little League Baseball has continually adopted rules that limit the number of pitches a pitcher can throw in a game and how much rest he/she must take between pitching appearances.

These pitch counts are available on the Little League website at:

<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/pitch-count/>

Pitch counts should be treated seriously at all times – not just during playoffs. Coaches who ignore pitch counts are running serious risk of causing injury, and any parent, coach, player or official who has concerns about pitch counts should notify the League Safety Officer to voice those concerns.

In addition, managers and coaches should take it upon themselves to know whether their pitchers are playing in other non-CapCity games that would affect rest times. Likewise, parents should inform managers of their child's availability / unavailability to pitch due to pitching in other games.

Catcher Safety

- **Catcher Equipment:** Catchers must wear a complete catcher's ensemble *anytime* behind the plate, including during practices, games, or warming up between innings. That ensemble shall include, at a minimum: helmet, mask with throat protector, catcher's glove, chest protector, shin guards, and protective cup (males).

Umpires will be asked to assist with enforcement of the catcher equipment rules by performing a check before the start of games and with any catching change. Any catcher without the equipment listed above will not be permitted to catch.

- **Blocking the Plate:** The rules of baseball indicate that for obstruction to be called, the base runner must, in fact, be hindered. For example, if the catcher is set up across the base line while the runner is still rounding third base, there is technically no obstruction, because the catcher has not yet impeded the progress of the runner. Only when the runner collides with the catcher (provided he/she does not have the ball), or is forced to alter his or

her path to avoid or get around the catcher (again, provided he/she does not have the ball), does obstruction occur.

The rule above aside, catchers should be taught not to setup prematurely in the baseline, thus “inviting” a collision. If the catcher sets up early as a target for the throw on the baseline, cutting off home plate, he has deliberately created a potential obstruction. Catchers should be taught that the set-up point is in front of the plate (not along the third base side); that the first priority is making the catch (not parking on the baseline and hoping the throw is on target), and; that applying the tag involves footwork (giving the runner the bag before quickly taking it away).

Baserunner Safety

- **Bases:** Where available, first base consist of a bi-color “double-bag” that bisects the baseline. To avoid collisions, the “orange side” (in foul territory) should be used by the baserunner, allowing the fielders to use the “white side” (in fair territory).
- **Sliding:** Head-first sliding is **not** permitted except when the runner is returning to a base. Head-first sliding when attempting to advance on the base paths will result in the baserunner being out.

Fielder Safety

- No climbing is allowed on any of the fencing, backstops or storage areas.
- All male players are encouraged to wear a protective cup and infielders are urged to wear protective mouth guards during games.
- Collisions in the field are a major cause of baseball injuries. Fielders should be properly taught to “call it” (“got it”/“take it”) to avoid collisions (and dropping balls). Properly calling it should be continually taught and reinforced at practice and play.

III. SPECTATORS

All non-participants including parents and siblings should stay in the bleachers, or designated spectator areas. Only the 2 designated coaches are allowed in the dugout or bench area. Spectators should stay alert at all times for foul balls or errant throws.

No alcohol or tobacco products are allowed at any CapCity event, practice or game, or on any area administered by the Washington, DC Department of

Parks and Recreation. Spectators found using alcohol or tobacco may be precluded from attending future CapCity events, at the discretion of the League.

IV: FIELD CONDITIONS

Field Inspections:

Managers and coaches are required to walk fields for hazards and dangerous objects (glass, sticks, stones, rocks, holes, live or dead animals, paraphernalia or weapons, etc.) before games and practices. Field inspections should include attention to mounds, backstops and dugout areas. Bases should be checked to ensure they are the required safety bases that disengage, and that they lay properly on the field.

This should be done by several coaches, managers or volunteers, with or without the umpire, but must be done by at least one volunteer from each team prior to the start of play.

No games or practices should be held when field conditions are not approved or correctable. Common sense should prevail when making determinations about field safety.

Unsafe field conditions should be reported in writing to:

The Cap City Fields Coordinator
2023 – Joe Sheehy (fields@capcityll.org)

The Cap City League Safety Officer
2023 –Jonathan Hecht (safety@capcityll.org)

No practices or games can be held with inadequate lighting. The umpire shall have final say in whether or not a game shall be called due to inadequate lighting.

Field Maintenance Equipment:

All field equipment should be stored under lock in a League or field shed (rakes, shovels, tamper, drag, liners, tarps, signage, fencing, wheelbarrow, etc.)

All chemicals should be properly stacked on tarps or pallets to avoid spills (lime & calcite clay), and all equipment should be stored in a standing position separate from chemicals.

After lining the fields, all equipment and supplies should be promptly returned to the shed.

Field Survey

The Capitol City Little League board will complete the annual Little League Facility Survey. A requirement each year, this survey requires that fields be physically reviewed for changes and needs from the prior year’s survey.

V. WEATHER

No games or practices should be played during storms, ominous conditions, or when thunder is heard or lightning seen.

Managers and umpires should meet to decide if weather conditions deteriorate after a game has started. If either manager or the umpire determines that weather conditions compromise player safety, then play shall be postponed or cancelled, at the umpire’s discretion.

Ultra-violet light exposure is a risk for melanoma (skin cancer). Little League recommends the use of sun screen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 as a means of protecting players from UV rays.

Lighting Facts and Safety Procedures

Lightning strikes are the leading - yet in almost all cases preventable - cause of fatalities in youth baseball. Especially in the DC area, where storms can be powerful and quick to develop, extreme caution should be exercised. As a rule of thumb: *When you hear it – CLEAR IT! When you see it – FLEE IT!*

Once the leading edge of a thunderstorm approaches to within 10 miles, you are at immediate risk. On average, thunder can only be heard over a 3 – 4 miles, depending on humidity, terrain and other factors. This means that by the time you hear thunder, you are already in the risk area for lightning strikes.

Lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles. Even when the sky looks blue and clear, be cautious. If you hear thunder, take cover, indoors if possible. Outdoors is the most dangerous place to be when lightning is present.

Storm, Thunder & Lightning Safety Rules:

When lightning is seen, thunder is heard, or when dark clouds are observed the game should be suspended. Once a field is cleared, play may only resume if after 15 minutes no thunder or lightning is heard or seen.

Players should quickly move into a vehicle or indoors and remain there until well after the lightning storm ends.

To the extent possible, teams should remain together so managers, coaches and/or team safety officers can account for players.

Equipment should be left and retrieved after the storm.

Rain with No Lightning or Thunder Present

If it begins to rain, managers should meet with the umpire to evaluate the strength of the storm, etc. and determine if the playing field or ability to play is being compromised. If it is a light rain that is not impacting the field, visibility or player ability to throw/run -- and there is NO lightning and the umpire agrees -- then play may continue. Use common sense and always consult with your fellow manager and umpire.

VI. TEAM EQUIPMENT

First Aid Kits:

First-Aid kits and ice packs will be made available to each team. A safety kit will also be in each field shed (Upshur, Chevy Chase, Takoma; Macomb has one at the rec center building, for 2023). The team safety officer is responsible for making certain their team's first aid kit is present at all practices and games. All managers, coaches and team safety officers should be familiar with the contents and use of the first aid kits. Supplies for kits can be replenished by contacting the League Safety Officer.

Equipment Bag:

Only equipment with an approved Little League or NOCSAE seal or designation may be used.

Managers and coaches are responsible for their equipment. Each team should have an equipment bag with: 5 -6 batting helmets or various sizes; full catcher's gear (catcher's helmet, mask, throat guard, shin-guards, knee savers, chest protector, protective cup and mitt); several pitchers protective shields in different sizes.

During games and practices all team equipment should be stored within the team dugout or designated equipment area, behind screens and not areas considered in play.

Bad or damaged equipment should be removed or made unusable to stop players from attempting to 'save' potentially harmful equipment. If it needs repair, fix it or get rid of it. Managers should check their team's equipment often.

Baseballs:

Each division in Cap City Little League (Baseball National, American, Minors, and Majors; Softball Juniors and Majors) must use age appropriate RIF baseballs for their practices and games. RIF stands for Reduced Injury Factor. Use only the ball assigned for your division for practices and games. The following baseballs (or equivalent) are approved for use.

Baseballs (AA, AAA, Maj, Jun Div) - dozen	Rawlings RLLB1
Baseballs (A Div) - dozen	Rawlings RIFSL
Baseballs (National Div) - dozen	Wilson A1217

Bats:

Effective on January 1, 2018, Little League Baseball® will adhere to the new USABat standard. No bats previously approved for use in Little League Play (Junior League Baseball and below) will be permitted to be used in any Little League game or practice, or other Little League function, event, or activity. For more information on the USABat standard and a complete list of bats approved through the USABat Standard, visit usabat.com.

The new USA Baseball bat standard (USABat) administers rules for youth baseball bat performance based on precise, scientific measurement. Similar to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and National Federation of State High School Sports Associations (NFHS) BBCOR standard, which helped to eliminate discrepancies with different length bats, and thus provide a more direct measure of bat performance, the new USABat standard will allow youth baseball organizations in the United States to reach their goal of establishing a wood-like standard, a standard that will provide for the long-term integrity of the game.

Please contact the Cap City League Safety Officer for any concerns regarding bats or balls.

VII. INJURY PREVENTION & FIRST AID

Common Baseball Injuries:

Muscle strain can be most easily avoided by proper stretching and warm-ups. Exercises to stretch the legs, hamstrings, arm and shoulder should always be done before any game, practice or workout.

Be extremely cautious to avoid sore throwing arms. Pitchers must abide by the league pitching rules. Apply ice to the tender area and give the arm rest and time to recuperate – children should not “play through” arm pain or discomfort. If pain persists, they should see a doctor.

First Aid:

First-Aid kits and ice packs should be present at all practices and games.

Tips to remember:

- Reassure and aid players who are injured, frightened
- Provide medical attention for those who require it
- Know your limitations. Call 911 for emergency help.

Assist those who require medical attention – when administering aid remember to:

- LOOK for signs of injury (blood, swelling, joint deformity)
- LISTEN to the injured person’s description of what hurts
- FEEL gently for injured area

VII. Accident Reporting Procedures

WHAT TO REPORT:

Any incident that causes any player, manager, coach, umpire, spectator or volunteer to receive medical treatment and/or first aid **MUST** be reported to the League Safety Officer. Managers, coaches and team safety officers are encouraged to report 'near misses' when possible as a proactive tool to evaluate practices and avoid future injuries. This includes even passive treatments such as the evaluation and diagnosis of the extent of the injury.

WHEN TO REPORT:

All incidents described above should be reported within 24 to 48 hours. Reports should be made to the Cap City League Safety Officer Jonathan Hecht at safety@capcityll.org

HOW TO MAKE A REPORT:

Incidents should be reported in writing. Please use the form below, or visit the Little League website.

Remember, safety is everyone's job. Please report all hazardous conditions to the Safety Officer or any Capitol City LL Board member immediately. Don't play or practice on a field that is not safe or with unsafe equipment.

VIII. Covid-19 Safety

CapCity follows the District's DPR guidance on field usage, including guidelines on how to play sports safely in a COVID-aware way. DPR's guidelines are incorporated herein.

Have a safe, fun baseball season!

Capitol City Little League INJURY REPORT:

Please send this information to the CapCity LL Safety Officer within 48 hours of any incident.

Send to:

Jonathan Hecht, Safety Officer (safety@capcityll.org) and
Adam Kaplan, CCLL President (president@capcityll.org)

Name of injured person:

Address, telephone number of injured person:

Date, time, and location of the incident:

Detailed description of the incident:

Preliminary estimation of the extent of the injury:

Name and Telephone number of the person reporting the incident: