

2025 National Tournament Rules and Policies

INTRODUCTION

Since 1925, The American Legion has sponsored youth baseball as a national program for the primary purpose of teaching good sportsmanship (win or lose), teamwork and good citizenship, while providing competitive supervised recreation. Listed on the next several pages are various tournament rules and policies of The American Legion. These policies and rules are reviewed and approved annually by the National Americanism Commission. The Commission is a group of American Legion volunteers from many different Departments (states) who give of their time and service to supervise the youth programs of The American Legion.



All National Tournaments will be played under the policies and rules established by the National Americanism Commission. All disputes and questions shall be referred to the on-site National Tournament Director appointed by the National Commander. Any situations not specifically covered by National Rules, or the tournament regulations will be referred to the National Americanism Division, whose decision shall be final.

It is important that the coaching staff read and understand these instructions, tournament rules and policies. There are many policies which are designed to provide for the safety of the players and provide a level playing field.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT TEAM/PLAYER CERTIFICATION

National Tournaments will comprise of a 64-team field across 8 regional tournaments, with each region having no greater than 8 teams. No single department may have greater than 2 teams playing in a regional tournament.

The breakdown of the 64-team field of regional tournaments is as follows:

- One team each from 51 departments
- One additional team each from the eight regional hosts
- One team from each of the top 5 departments nationally having the highest total number of registered senior teams AND who do not already have 2 teams represented in their regional tournament.

The championship team from each of the 8 regions advance to play in the American Legion World Series.

All Americanism Commission supervised tournaments will be eight team double elimination tournaments with the exception for the American Legion World Series.

The Team Manager and the Department Chairman are responsible for ensuring the following items are sent via email to the national office (baseball@legion.org), immediately following the conclusion of the Department Championship Tournament, Official Certification of Champion (**Form #18**), Acknowledgment and Understanding of Risk Management Policies (**Form #4**), Tournament Housing List (**Form #25**), and team photograph with Photo ID (**Form #10**).

It is critical that forms reach national office immediately following the completion of the department tournament. Completed forms should be emailed to baseball@legion.org.

NOTE: The team roster will be downloaded from the national baseball website baseball.legion.org. Department Chairman will verify that the team manager, coaches, and adult players have successfully passed mandated risk management requirements.

The Team Managers **will hand carry** and deliver to the onsite Regional Tournament Director the following forms:

1. For each Player, a state-issued driver's license that complies with the Federal Real ID Law; **or**
 - a. Original or State Certified Birth Certificate; **or**
 - b. An American Legion Baseball ID card produced by Department Headquarters; **or**
 - c. A military ID, dependent ID, a US passport.
2. Signed copies of each Player's Emergency Information **Form #2**.
3. Signed copy of the Acknowledgment And Understanding of Risk Management Policies **Form #4**
4. Signed copies of applicable Player's **Form #76** or **Form #77**.

Failure to deliver the proper paperwork can disqualify a player and/or the team from competing in the regional tournament.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY PROTESTS

Eligibility protests of players involved in national tournaments must be in writing and provide proof of ineligibility. They must be filed with the Tournament Director at each tournament site (Department, Regional, and World Series) no later than 9:00 a.m. local time on the first day of the tournament involved, except when there is a discovery of a rule's violation. When a rules violation is discovered, the eligibility protest and a written description of the alleged violation must be filed immediately. (National Rule 9.D)

Should a player eligibility rule violation be discovered and confirmed after the first day deadline, that team manager/head coach in violation shall be suspended for the remainder of post season tournament games.

All other protests concerning game situation shall be filed as specified in the Official Baseball Rules and National Rule 10.

GAME PROTESTS

Each tournament shall have a Tournament Rules and Protest Committee with at least three members.

The Committee shall consist of the Tournament Director and two individuals, not affiliated with any team on the field. These members shall be appointed by the Tournament Director, who will chair the Committee. Protests will be handled and settled by the Tournament Rules and Protest Committee at the time they are lodged.

TOURNAMENT RULES and POLICIES

1. Teams competing in American Legion Baseball senior tournaments must always have nine players available for participation at department, regional, and world series tournaments. Teams with fewer than 12 players, are permitted to bring up players registered on their affiliated Junior American

Legion Baseball team roster to the senior team to have 12 players but may not bring up a player to exceed 12 players. Any senior team that does not have nine players will forfeit its right to participate and the National Americanism Division, in consultation with the Department Baseball Chairman, shall determine a suitable replacement team. (National Rule 9.L.)

2. No team shall be required to play more than two games in one day.
3. The playing days begin at 8:00 a.m. local time.
4. No tournament game shall start after 11:00 p.m. local time unless both teams agree in writing to waive the "start time."
5. All Department, Regional and World Series games are seven (7) innings. 10-Run mercy rule after five innings of play or 4 ½ innings if the home team has the lead.
6. All games shall be played in accordance with National Rule 1 of the American Legion Baseball Rulebook.
7. Designated Hitter (DH) Rule (pitcher only) – A hitter may be designated to bat for the starting pitcher and all subsequent pitchers in any game without otherwise affecting the status of the pitcher(s) in the game.
8. The American Legion does **NOT** permit any type of re-entry rule during tournament play.
9. The American Legion does **NOT** permit courtesy runners during tournament play.
10. **Extra Innings:** If the score is tied after nine (9) complete innings, each half-inning following the ninth inning will begin with a runner on second base. The runner placed on second base at the start of each half-inning shall be the player in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter. By way of example, if the number five hitter in the batting order is due to lead off the tenth inning, the number four player in the batting order shall begin the inning on second base.
11. The use of one-way electronic equipment in the dugout is prohibited. A tablet computer used for scorekeeping purposes only is permissible.
12. Suspended games will be completed from the point of suspension.
 - a. A suspended game completed on a second day will not count toward the two games in one-day rule. Teams that complete a suspended game can still play an additional two (2) full games.
 - b. Pitch Count Rule 1.S. applies to suspended games.
13. In the case of rain, games may be moved to other locations at the discretion of the Tournament Director on site. **Note:** American Legion tournaments have a time limitation, and Tournament Directors must make every effort to complete tournaments on time. The Tournament Director has additional instructions for rain delayed tournaments.
14. Teams will dress in the hotel or at home. No team shall dress at the ballpark unless dressing rooms are provided.
15. Any coach ejected from a game must leave the park and may not communicate in any form or manner with the team or return while the game is in progress. Any player ejected from a game must leave the dugout. The Tournament Director and umpire shall file an ejection report to the National Office.

16. Players removed from a game (other than ejection by an umpire) may be used as a base coach.
17. The Tournament Director must approve all batboys or batgirls.
18. At Regional and World Series competition, the National Headquarters appoints the official scorekeeper. **No team is permitted to have a scorekeeper in the dugout unless that person is in uniform and listed on the National Team Roster.**
 - a. The only non-uniformed personnel permitted in the dugouts are certified medical trainers or a Legionnaire stationed in the dugout at the direction of the tournament director. Tournament Directors may, at their discretion, require the medical trainer provide a copy of their certification.

HOME/VISITORS DETERMINATION

To determine Home/Visitors for double elimination and pool play games 1 through 12:

1. A coin toss will determine Home/Visitors for all games. A daily coin flip will be conducted at the morning coaches meeting.

To determine Home/Visitors for double elimination games 13 and 14, and pool play semifinals:

1. The undefeated team in double elimination will have choice of Home/Visitors.
2. The divisional champion in each pool will have choice of Home/Visitors.

To determine Home/Visitors for double elimination and pool play championship game 15:

1. In double elimination play, a coin toss will determine the Home/Visitors.
2. If both semifinal winners are divisional champions, a coin toss will determine the Home/Visitors.
3. If both semifinal winners are divisional runners-up, a coin toss will determine the Home/Visitors.
4. If teams are from the same division in the championship game, the divisional champion will have the choice of Home/Visitors.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT - ON FIELD CONDUCT

The umpires are instructed to monitor, promote, and enforce the following:

1. Only one on-deck batter will be out of the dugout. Other personnel are to remain in the dugout, bullpen, or coaches' box. Umpires are also instructed to keep players off the dirt around home plate after a home run.
2. Except for lengthy delays, the pitcher will be limited to five (5) warm-up throws between innings.
3. When warming up a pitcher in the bullpen, the catcher (coach or player) must wear a mask and if needed, a third player must protect the bullpen from line drives and foul balls.
4. Shirttails are to be tucked in.
5. Do not "charge" an umpire.
6. List the first and last names along with uniform numbers of all players, including non-starters, on the line-up cards.
7. The umpires are expected to keep the games moving at all times, so expect verbal encouragement from them.
8. Any player, coach, manager, or party accompanying a team may be ejected for the remainder of the game from the time of the rule infraction if they:

- a. Use profane language in any manner.
- b. Make any unnecessary gestures or comments in protesting an umpire's decision. (Only the team manager or coach may ask for a clarification of a rule, but never argue.)
- c. Throw bats or any other equipment.
- d. Make unnecessary gestures or comments to fans, opposing players or coaches.

If an umpire ejects a player or a coach from the game, the ejected person shall be suspended for the remainder of the tournament, unless reinstated by the Tournament Director.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT - CONDUCT OFF THE FIELD

1. All persons traveling with an American Legion Baseball team are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will, at all times, reflect credit on their community, state, and the American Legion Baseball program.
 - a. Any player, manager, or team official, whose conduct may be considered detrimental or injurious to others, or the program, may be suspended for the remainder of the tournament and returned home by means of the first available transportation. A parent, coach or other team official will escort offending player home. The Department Baseball Chairman will be notified of such action.
 - b. If a team's conduct creates an embarrassment to The American Legion, the Tournament Director has final authority to suspend the team and or the Team Manager for two or more games.
2. Team Manager/Head Coach will be required to house with their players at the host hotel as part of their team's room block.
3. Team managers and coaches are responsible for player conduct at all times. Disrespect to facility staff and/or property, pushing, shoving or unnecessary playfulness in hotels, restaurants and other public areas will not be tolerated.
4. Teams are required to place a **security deposit of \$200.00** with the hotel. (A check, cash, or credit card is necessary.)
 - a. Any damaged or unclean rooms may cause their deposit to be forfeited. Hotel rooms are inspected prior to a team's arrival. Rooms are checked for damages and cleanliness prior to the team's departure. Discrepancies will be brought to the attention of the team manager.
5. Curfew will be 12:00 midnight, unless the team is involved in a late game, in which case the team will have two (2) hours after the completion of their game. Any player missing curfew may be sent home on the next available transportation at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Players must be always accounted for. Any player not with the team **OR** any player that must leave the immediate area must obtain prior permission from the Tournament Director. **(Teams must stay together and be under a coach's supervision.)** The team will travel as a group. A release/waiver form must be completed by the Tournament Director if a player wishes to depart the tournament site early or separate from the team.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

1. While in uniform, team members are expected to keep as neat as possible. Shirts will be buttoned, zipped, and tucked in at waistline.
2. At the team orientation, each certified player and two coaches will be provided a souvenir shirt.

3. Dress Code: Tournament Hosts often host a banquet or picnic for players and coaches the first evening prior to tournament play. The banquet or pre-tournament picnic is the host's option. The dress code is typically casual; however, teams are required to have dress or golf shorts of an appropriate length and clean athletic shoes. Most teams will be instructed to wear their baseball jersey to the pre-tournament social or banquet.
4. While in street clothes, players are encouraged to dress in a manner that would reflect credit upon their team, sponsor, and their community and the American Legion Baseball program.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT TIE BREAKER - Form #8

1. The American Legion is committed to giving each participating team an equal opportunity to win the tournament on the field. However, over the past nine decades we have experienced several game delays.
2. Rain, fog, hurricanes, power outages and other acts of God have required The American Legion and tournament personnel assigned to the tournament to take extraordinary measures to ensure teams are given equal opportunity.
3. It must be understood that there are times in which a champion cannot be crowned on the field because of the weather. If rain or other acts of God cause a serious delay in a game(s) or tournament. The Tournament Director is authorized to:
 - a. Change the schedule and require teams to play games at a back-up facility.
 - b. Move the tournament to another community (and ballpark) to complete the tournament.
4. If for unforeseen reasons we cannot crown a champion on the field of play or determine a "pool" winner, The American Legion will determine the winner by the following formula:

If two teams remain:

1. Head-to-head competition between teams
2. Fewest runs allowed overall
3. Most runs scored overall
4. A coin flip.

If three or more teams remain:

1. Fewest runs allowed overall
2. Most runs scored overall
3. Coin flip (first "odd-man" out wins)

NOTE: No team will be required to play three games a day.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT TEAM TRAVEL

The National Headquarters will arrange transportation for teams traveling to and from the Regional and World Series National Tournaments.

- a. The local tournament host is required to provide local transportation at the tournament. Questions concerning local transportation need to be directed to the local host committee.

NOTE: Several teams in the Midwest, Northwest and Western United States may be required to fly to a regional tournament site by commercial airline. **Due to the Federal Aviation Administration security alert**, team members are required to show and present a REAL PHOTO ID at check in.

The American Legion annually purchases 500 airline tickets to fly players and coaches to Regional and World Series Tournaments. These airline tickets are nonrefundable and expensive. Tickets are purchased for those players from the housing list submitted following the completion of the state tournament. Unfortunately, The American Legion National Headquarters has purchased airline tickets for players who sometimes choose not to attend the tournament. **The American Legion will no longer absorb this cost. The team will be responsible to reimburse The American Legion for any unused airline ticket(s).**

1. Team Travel – 60-mile policy:

- a. Participating out-of-state teams that live within 60 miles of the Regional or World Series Tournament site may be authorized housing but will be required to provide their own transportation.
- b. Participating teams that are required to fly to a national regional tournament must provide their own transportation to the airport.
- c. Any team within a 60-mile radius of the airport shall provide their own transportation to and from the airport and the team will not be reimbursed for mileage.
- d. Any team outside a 60-mile radius of the airport shall provide their own transportation. However, the Tournament Director shall reimburse the team for mileage at \$1.50 per mile for a single round trip.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The American Legion will make every effort to return teams to the nearest major airport. HOWEVER, because many flights are often full it then becomes necessary to fly teams' home to another nearby airport. Again, teams must make their own travel arrangements home from the airport

2. **Team Travel:** The National Office shall determine the nearest airport for departure. Because of the high cost of airline tickets flying from small regional airports, The National Office shall determine the most economical airport for the transportation of teams to and from a national tournament.
 - a. The National Office may utilize commercial buses for transportation to Regional and World Series tournament sites. Any team that wishes to use their own team bus shall be reimbursed at \$3.00 per mile for a single round trip, if authorized by the National Office.
 - b. Each year, a few players must report directly to college from a national tournament. It is the parent's or legal guardian's responsibility to make transportation arrangements to the college.
 - c. National Headquarters is **NOT** responsible for team meals while traveling to or from the national tournament site.
3. Our liability insurance will not permit us to transport unauthorized team personnel. Only personnel listed on the National Team Roster, or those who have been approved by the National Headquarters, are permitted to be transported to the tournament site. Parents, batboys or batgirls, local Legion Officers, sponsors, scorekeepers, and wives etc., must make their own travel, housing, and meal arrangements. National Headquarters will not be financially obligated for any unauthorized personnel.

4. Meal allowances while at a national tournament will be:

Breakfast	\$5.00
Lunch	\$5.00
Dinner	\$5.00
5. The American Legion is not responsible for miscellaneous hotel charges such as movies, phone calls, meals, roll-a-way beds, etc. These charges will be the responsibility of the team.
6. Airline Luggage Reimbursement Policy: The American Legion's policy for checked luggage and carry-on bags is as follows:
 - a. Team members can check up to **TWO BAGS** per coach (two coaches only) and player listed on National Form 1 Roster. Example: 13 players and 2 coaches – 30 pieces of luggage; 18 players and 2 coaches – 40 pieces of luggage).
 - b. The team is financially responsible for equipment bags and overweight items and will not be reimbursed.
 - c. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure that the luggage checked is within prescribed weight limits. The participant is responsible for paying any fee levied for their overweight bags. **Please be sure to get receipts and provide those receipts to the tournament director at your regional site.** Team will be reimbursed at the tournament site by the tournament director.
 - d. It is the participant's responsibility to ascertain what is allowed as a carry-on and to pack accordingly. Baseball bats are never permitted as carry-on luggage.

AMERICAN LEGION FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The National Americanism Commission will arrange and be financially responsible for the certified players **listed on the National Team Roster** (not to exceed eighteen {18} players and two {2} adults traveling to and from national Regional and World Series tournaments).

- a. National Headquarters will be responsible for housing and meals while at Regional and World Series tournaments.
- b. No substitutions of coaches are allowed, unless authorized by the National Office. Any substitute players, batboys/batgirls, official scorekeepers, or extra coaches traveling, collecting meal monies, or being housed at American Legion expense will disqualify your team from further competition.
- c. Teams are responsible for arranging additional accommodations, travel, and banquet tickets for the extra coaches, trainers, equipment managers, team scorers, batboys, or batgirls, etc.

RULES AND POLICIES AUTHORITY

In accordance with Resolution No. 7 of the National Executive Committee of the American Legion, May 2021, The American Legion reserves the right to temporarily amend, delay or suspend any established rule or policy of its national youth programs when a program is subject to the occurrence of a circumstance whose cause is beyond the control of The American Legion, thereby making it impossible, illegal, impracticable, or inadvisable for The American Legion to conduct a youth program in accordance with established rules or policies. You may read Resolution No. 7 in its entirety by [clicking here](#) or by accessing it from The American Legion Digital Archive at legion.org/archive.