



**Return to Play Safety Guidelines  
& Reopening Plan  
June 2020**



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❖ *The information provided in this document is subject to change based on any future updates or guidance provided by Little League International, the State of CT, and/or the City of Norwalk.*



**Norwalk Little League Executive Committee:**

Michael Inzitari..... President  
Dan Balliett..... Vice President  
Francis Norris-Oliva..... Secretary  
Bryan Ennis..... Safety Officer  
Rob Riddell..... Majors & AAA Commissioner/Player Agent



## **GENERAL COVID-19 GUIDANCE**

**For:** Players  
Parents/Guardians/Caregivers and Other Children  
Managers/Coaches  
Umpires  
League and District Officials  
Fans/Spectators

### **Wash Your Hands Often:**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer will be provided, if possible. If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- All players, personnel, and spectators are encouraged to bring their own hand sanitizer for personal use. Hand sanitizer will be placed in all common areas off-field for easy use.

### **Cover Your Mouth and Nose with a Cloth Face Covering When Around Others:**

- Everyone is encouraged to wear a cloth face covering when out in public and around our Little League fields and parks, traveling to/from the venue, walking in/out of the venue, and not actively participating.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- The cloth face covering is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker, as it is important for these facemasks are available for those professionals needing that personal protective equipment.
- Continue to keep six feet between yourself and others. The cloth face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.

### **Cover Coughs and Sneezes:**

- If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash immediately.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.



### **Social Distancing:**

- All players, coaches, volunteers, and spectators should practice social distancing of six feet wherever possible from individuals not residing within their household, especially in common areas.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- Self-monitoring and quarantine:  
All individuals should measure their body temperature to ensure that no fever is present prior to participating or attending each Little League activity. Anyone with symptoms of fever, cough, or worsening respiratory symptoms, or any known exposure to a person with COVID-19 should not attend any Little League activity until cleared by a medical professional (CDC: Resource: If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone).
- Any individual, including players, at risk for severe illness or with serious underlying medical or respiratory condition should only attend Little League activities with permission from a medical professional.
- All organizers, staff, coaches, players, umpires, and officials must conduct daily symptom assessments (self-evaluation).
- Athletes are strongly recommended to travel to the venue with members of their immediate household, if possible.

### ***\*Resources:***

- Little League International Season Resumption Guide: <https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/general-guidance/>

- CT Sector Rules and Certification for Reopen: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports\\_FitnessCenters- C4\\_V1.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports_FitnessCenters- C4_V1.pdf)



## ON-FIELD GUIDANCE

**For:** Players  
Parents/Guardians/Caregivers  
Managers/Coaches  
Umpires

### **Healthy Practices:**

- No Handshakes/Personal Contact Celebrations.
- Coaches will begin each practice or game by asking each player to report their current and recent medical symptoms and any symptoms experienced by those in the player's household, specifically identifying the following symptoms:
  - Fever
  - Chills, Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smellPlayers reporting any such symptoms, or symptoms experienced by another in their household, will be refused participation and their parent or guardian will be notified. Norwalk Little League will be notified of any such denial of play. Such player will not be permitted to return to play until they meet CDC and CT Health Department guidelines.
- Players and coaches should take measures to prevent all but the essential contact necessary to play the game. This will include refraining from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc. Players will not huddle at any point during the game/practice. Norwalk Little League will line up outside the dugout and tip caps to the opposing team as a sign of good sportsmanship after a game.
- Players and families are to vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of their game to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators from the next game, ideally within 15 minutes.

### **Drinks and Snacks:**

- Athletes, managers/coaches, and umpires should bring their own personal drinks to all team activities. Drinks should be labeled with the person's name.
- Individuals should take their own drink containers home each night for cleaning and sanitation or use single-use bottles.
- There will be no use of shared or team beverages.
- Teams will not share any snacks or food. Players should bring individual, pre-packaged food, if needed.



### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- All managers/coaches, volunteers, umpires, etc., will wear PPE whenever applicable and possible, such as cloth face coverings and protective medical gloves for cleaning.
- Players will wear face coverings when in close contact areas and in places where recommended social distancing is challenging or not feasible.
- Players, especially younger divisions, are not required to wear a cloth face covering while on the field playing defense during game play. Older divisions will be required to do so while in the dugout area.
- Players will be permitted to wear a cloth face covering on the field during game play, if physically able to do so, based on any directive of a medical provider or individual determination of the player/parent/guardian.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- Spectators are required to bring and wear face coverings that cover the nose and mouth unless doing so would be contrary to his or her health and safety due to a medical condition.

### **Dugouts:**

- Managers/coaches and players will be assigned spots in the dugout or on the bleachers so that they are at least six feet apart and must be placed behind a fence.
- Players are to stay at their assigned spots when on the bench or while waiting their turn to bat.
- Players and managers/coaches will wear face coverings while in the dugout/dugout area.
- Dugouts will be cleaned and disinfected before and after every use.

### **Player Equipment:**

- No personal player bat bags/equipment bags will be allowed in the dugout. Player equipment should be spaced accordingly outside the dugout to prevent direct contact.
- Players should have their own individual helmet, glove, bat, and catcher's equipment.
- Measures will be enacted to ensure athletes do not share equipment to the most extent possible. If shared, clean and disinfect frequently.
- Some critical equipment may not be able to be obtained by every individual. When it is necessary to share critical or limited equipment, all surfaces of each piece of shared equipment will be cleaned first and then disinfected with an EPA-approved disinfectant and allowed sufficient time to dry before used by a new player. Increased attention will be paid to detailed cleaning of all equipment directly contacting the head and face (catcher's mask, helmets).
- Player's equipment (e.g. bags, helmets, bats, gloves, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected after each use by a parent/guardian/caretaker, where applicable.
- Individuals disinfecting equipment are encouraged to use gloves while using disinfectants and follow the manufacturer's directions for use. All disinfectants should be stored properly, in a safe area, out of reach of children.



### **Baseballs:**

- Baseballs will be rotated through on a regular basis, at least every two innings, to limit individual contact.
- Umpires will limit their contact with the ball, and catchers should retrieve foul balls and passed balls where possible.
- Balls used in infield/outfield warm-up will be isolated from a shared ball container.
- Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by participating players, coaches, and umpires. No spectators will retrieve the ball.
- Balls will be disinfected before and after every practice and game.

### **Spitting, Sunflower Seeds, Gum, etc.:**

- Sunflower seeds, gum, or any food product, etc., will not be allowed in dugouts or on the playing field.
- All players and coaches are to refrain from spitting at all times, including in dugout areas and on the playing field.

### ***\*Resources:***

- Little League International Season Resumption Guide: <https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/on-field-guidance/>

- CT Sector Rules and Certification for Reopen: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports\\_FitnessCenters- C4\\_V1.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports_FitnessCenters- C4_V1.pdf)





## **GAME OPERATIONS & UMPIRE GUIDANCE**

**For:** Managers/Coaches  
Umpires  
League/District Officials and Volunteers

### **Pre-Game Plate Meetings:**

- When possible, plate meetings will be eliminated.
- Social distancing of six feet between individuals will be implemented during all pre-game plate meetings between teams and umpires.
- Plate meetings will only consist of one manager or coach from each team, and game umpires.
- All participants will wear a cloth face covering.
- No players should ever be a part of plate meetings.

### **Equipment Inspection:**

- Players will place their individual equipment in a well-spaced out manner for inspection. Umpires will avoid direct contact with equipment where possible but, when required, will use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol after the inspection of each individual piece of equipment.

### **Limit League/Game Volunteers:**

- For each game, there will only be the required team managers/coaches, umpires, and one (1) league administrator (i.e. Safety Officer, player agent, etc.) in attendance.
- Practices will be limited to the managers/coaches and players.
- Scorekeeping should be done by team coaches or team parent/guardian via GameChanger or remote scoring application when possible. Proper social distancing will be practiced.
- Press box at Broad River Park will not be utilized.

### **Field Preparation and Maintenance:**

- Fields will be prepared and lined prior to teams and spectators arriving and after they depart. Volunteers already participating in the game (managers/coaches, umpires, and league administrator) only to perform these tasks.
- Any shared field preparation equipment will be sprayed or wiped with cleaner and disinfectant before and after each use.



**Umpire Placement:**

- Umpires will be permitted to be placed behind the pitcher’s mound to call balls and strikes. Umpires will keep a safe distance from players as much as possible and wear protective gloves.
- If physically able, umpires will be encouraged to wear cloth face coverings while umpiring.

*\*Resources:*

- Little League International Season Resumption Guide: <https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/game-operations-and-umpire-guidance/>

- CT Sector Rules and Certification for Reopen: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports\\_FitnessCenters- C4 V1.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports_FitnessCenters- C4 V1.pdf)



## **FACILITY, FAN, & ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE**

**For:** League Administrators  
Parents/Guardians/Caretakers  
Fans/Spectators

### **Clean and Disinfect Shared Equipment and Surfaces:**

- Frequently touched surfaces are to be cleaned AND disinfected daily and in between all field uses, including practices and games. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, field equipment, stands, and dugouts.
- If surfaces are visibly soiled or dirty, they will be cleaned with a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

### **Spread Out Scheduling of Practices and Games:**

- League administrators will schedule sufficient time between practices and games to facilitate the complete of individuals from a previous practice or game from the premises and allow for proper cleaning/disinfecting before the next group enters.
- Coaches to keep players in small groups at practice to allow for physical distancing.
- Players/families/spectators will be instructed not to show up to fields more than 40 minutes before game time.
- Where possible, individuals will check in and enter our complex through one point of entry and exit through another.
- Arrivals to the complex will be scheduled to help ensure a large number of individuals are not arriving at the same time.
- If there is a game or practice prior to another, families and spectators will be encouraged to stay in their vehicles or at recommended social distances until the start of their game play to prevent overcrowding.
- On-field warm-up will be limited as much as is reasonably possible and no more than 30 minutes.
- All Norwalk Little League practices and games will follow local and state directives and limit gatherings to 50% capacity.
- Games will be scheduled with at least a 30-minute buffer to prevent overlap of participants.
- Start times will be staggered where no more than half of the complex is changing over at any given time. Games may end in a draw if time expires.



### **Limiting Spectator Attendance:**

- All spectators will be asked to follow best social distancing practices — stay six feet away from individuals outside their household; wear a cloth face covering; avoid direct hand or other contact with players/managers/coaches during play.
- Norwalk Little League reserves the right to minimize the exposure risk to spectators by limiting attendance to only essential volunteers and limited family members.
- Spectators should bring their own seating or portable chairs when possible.
- Individuals shall not congregate in common areas or parking lots either before or after a game or practice.
- Access to bleachers may be limited or prohibited to allow for the proper distancing of players and participants. If bleachers are accessible, they will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.

### **A spectator with any of the following conditions should not attend a practice or game until evaluated by a medical provider and given clearance to do so:**

- Active COVID-19 infection
- Known direct contact with an individual testing positive for COVID-19
- Fever
- Cough
- Those at higher risk for severe disease should consider consultation with their medical provider before attending a game and should ensure the strictest adherence to guidelines regarding face coverings, distancing, and handwashing. Such groups include:
- Those with a serious underlying medical condition, including heart disease, morbid obesity, diabetes, lung disease, immunocompromise, chronic kidney disease, and chronic lung disease.
- Those currently residing in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- Those over 65

### **Public Restrooms:**

- Access to public portable restrooms will be limited, if available.

### **Concession Stands:**

- No food or concession will be open.
- Families will be encouraged to bring their own food/beverages.



### **Member Communication:**

- Norwalk Little League will disseminate information to all families, volunteers, about the Coronavirus risk and the efforts we will be undertaking to mitigate those risks, as outlined above. Information will be disseminated by way of email, league website, and social media.
- Norwalk Little League will display posters and signs at the fields to frequently remind visitors to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These messages may include information about:
  - Staying home if you are sick or do not feel well, and what to do if you are sick or feel ill.
  - Using social distancing and maintaining at least six feet between individuals in all areas of the park.

### **CDC Resources:**

- Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces
- Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting (PDF Download)
- Guidance for Administrators in Parks and Recreation Facilities
- Visiting Parks and Recreation Facilities

### ***\*Resources:***

- *Little League International Season Resumption Guide:* <https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/facility-fan-and-administrative-guidance/>

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## **ADDITIONAL, DIVISION SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

**For:** Players  
Parents/Guardians/Caregivers  
Managers/Coaches  
Umpires  
League and District Officials

### **Tee Ball and Coach Pitch:**

- Number of players on each team will be reduced, to help limit the number of individuals at practices and games.
- Volunteers will be encouraged to be from the same household as players, as much as possible.
- The focus on these divisions will remain on fun and player development.
- Coaches will wear cloth face coverings whenever possible.

### **Little League Challenger Division® and Senior Challenger Division:**

- Buddies should be from the same household as the player whenever possible.
- Buddies should wear cloth face coverings whenever possible, protective gloves are also encouraged.
- Parents/Guardians of players with high risk health concerns should consult a medical professional prior to having their player participate.

### **Little League® Sandlot Games**

- If Norwalk Little League holds or participates, the adult volunteers overseeing Little League Sandlot Games will provide a thorough overview of appropriate mitigation efforts and are responsible for ensuring these guidelines are followed.

#### ***\*Resources:***

- Little League International Season Resumption Guide: <https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/additional-division-specific-guidance/>

- CT Sector Rules and Certification for Reopen: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports\\_FitnessCenters- C4\\_V1.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports_FitnessCenters- C4_V1.pdf)



## References

- Little League International Season Resumption Guide Best Practices: <https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/>
- CT Sector Rules and Certification for Reopen: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports\\_FitnessCenters- C4\\_V1.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery-Phase-2/Sports_FitnessCenters- C4_V1.pdf)