

CONNECTICUT MEN'S SENIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE ("CNMSBL")

2021 RULES AND REGULATIONS

***STANDARD MAJOR LEAGUE RULES AND MSBL NATIONAL RULES APPLY, EXCEPT AS MODIFIED BY
CNMSBL**

PLAYERS

1. Each player in CNMSBL is to review and maintain access to the current league rules and MSBL National rules. Team managers should make team members aware of league rules, and to assist in enforcement. Being uninformed of league rules and policy will carry absolutely no weight in arbitrating disputes. The CNMSBL Board of Directors will be the sole determining authority for league disputes. Refer to the following link for MSBL national rules. <http://www.msblnational.com/Rules.html>
2. League Player eligibility is as follows:
 - a. Signed / executed waiver on file for current season:
 - i. for liability purposes, players cannot take the field without an executed waiver on file
 - b. Photocopy of current driver's license on file
 - c. League player dues / fees are paid
 - d. For the 25+ Division: Players must turn at least 25 during the current year.
 - e. For 2015, the B division will transition to a 35+ division. All new players must turn at least 35 during 2015. Players currently on any CNMSBL roster are grandfathered in regardless of age. Any exceptions will require review and authorization by the Board.
3. Each team is required to pay and register at least fifteen (15) players, with current signed / executed waiver forms for each year a player participates in CNMSBL. New first year teams may be given an exception to this rule.
 - a. Team Payments to CNMSBL:
 - i. Payments must be made to the league on time so as to meet MSBL deadlines.
 - ii. Team Administration and Insurance fee must be received by the February league meeting. Any team failing to meet this deadline will be charged a late fee of \$100. Furthermore, the insured (normally their park and rec company) will be notified of the termination of insurance as of March 1 of the current season.
 - iii. If a team fails to pay said fees by the Feb. meeting, and hasn't done so by start of the season, that teams games will count as a forfeit until payment is received
 - iv. Any fine levied on a team for late payment must be paid in full by the Tuesday before the start of play-offs. Failure will result in disqualification from the play-offs.
 - v. If checks are returned due to insufficient funds, payment must be made by close of business the following Friday, otherwise the team will be suspended from league play and forfeit games until his waiver is submitted, and his financial obligation is fully paid to CNMSBL.
 - vi. Any player who plays without having first submitted his waiver and fully paid his CNMSBL dues will be deemed ineligible and the team he played for will forfeit any game played.
 - vii. Final date for player roster change is that point in the season where 60% of the scheduled games remain. The exact date to be determined each year as schedule is set and placed in the regular monthly meeting minutes. New players are not allowed to play until MSBL eligibility is met and opposing managers are notified. Exceptions may be considered, and require authorization of the Board of Directors.
 - b. Player movement from one team to another is subject to league Board of Directors review and approval:
 - i. Teams are subject to lose two (2) players per year to other CNMSBL teams, provided the movement is during the off-season.
 - ii. Players must notify the league and manager, in writing, of their intention to move - those who do so first will be the first allowed to move freely.
 - iii. After losing two players, teams have the right to refuse additional players from transferring:
 - iv. Players not wishing to remain with their original team under this rule must sit out one season.
 - v. Teams must not use this rule to invoke revenge on players who may wish to move on.
 - vi. Players should use common courtesy and properly inform their original team and the league, as soon as possible, of their intentions to play elsewhere. Acceptable forms of notification are a letter and/or an email. It is advisable for managers to confirm receipt so as to avoid any question of a player's intent to play elsewhere.
 - vii. Players who owe their previous team money will not be allowed to play in the CNMSBL until their account is reconciled.
 - viii. Players may not change teams during a season unless they receive a release from their current team and approval of the league Board of directors.
 - ix. A player who leaves mid season, without release, must sit out for the remainder of the season before being allowed to play for an existing CNMSBL team

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- x. Team managers must keep an accurate account of all games/innings played, plate appearances and innings pitched for the purpose of tracking player playoff eligibility.
- c. Teams are requested and encouraged to enter individual game statistics onto the CNMSBL.org website used to verify / determine Playoff eligibility
 - i. For teams that choose not to enter statistics on the website, refer to section covering Playoffs for player eligibility

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d. RULES

4. In limited cases, the Board of directors reserves the right to override rules to act in the best interest of the league in areas that are not already addressed.
5. For definition purposes the term "game" is defined to include: Batting practice and/or fielding warm-ups on the field of play which also includes benches, dugouts, and foul territory one-half hour prior to game time and until an individual player leaves the field of play at the end of the second game. The time between doubleheaders will be included as game time so long as the players are in the general vicinity to the field of play.
6. The length of games will be 7 innings or 9 innings as reflected in the league schedule posted on the CNMSBL web site.
7. Games are to be played as scheduled. It is recommended that the first game of a doubleheader be scheduled to start at 10:00 a.m., yet shall start no later than 1:00 p.m. Game start times can be scheduled earlier at the discretion of the home team., but no earlier than 9:00 a.m. Exceptions can be made due to field availability with prior agreement between teams. Any change in starting time should be made at least one week in advance of the scheduled date, and the visiting team and league are to be notified by that time so players and umpires can be properly informed. If it cannot be agreed upon between the teams, the Board of directors will then determine the schedule change.
8. Unless by prior agreement between the teams and the umpire, managers are required to field a team when so instructed by the umpire. Otherwise, the team that does not take the field is subject to a forfeit.
9. Every attempt should be made by all teams to avoid rainouts. Games called due to inclement weather or inadequate field conditions are ultimately under the authority of the home team manager until a game has started. **This rule is not intended to get around a potential game forfeit.** The visiting manager **and the umpires** are to be notified as early as possible (minimum of 2 hours, i.e. 8 am for a 10 am start) to eliminate wasted travel time / expense and umpire fees. Once a game is started, the umpire has the sole authority to call a game.
10. Any team forfeiting two games during the regular season faces potential disciplinary action after review from the Board of directors - including expulsion from any post season play and/or expulsion from the league without any refund to the expelled team. If a team is excluded from post-season play, the teams with the next best records would move up in playoff seed as applicable.
11. Free Defensive Substitutions
 - a. **Defensive** players may come in and out of the field at the manager's discretion.
 - b. A pitcher removed from the mound can return to resume pitching one additional time provided the player remains in the field defensively and can not return until 3 consecutive outs are recorded.
 - c. If a pitcher is removed from the mound a second time, that player cannot return to the mound to pitch a third time.
12. Batting order:
 - a. The following rules are in addition to MSBL rules for batting order plus may override MSBL rules.
 - b. If there are then fewer than 9 players in the line-up, and there is a bench-player who has been removed from the line-up, he can re-enter at the bottom of the line-up to maintain 9 batters in the order.
 - c. If a team has only 10 uniformed players ready to play, the team has the option to bat 9 or 10 players. Note: if both teams have >10 players ready to play, they have to bat at least 10.
 - d. Anytime a team is only batting 9 players, the opposing team has the option of also batting 9.

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13. Courtesy Runners:
 - a. The following rules are in addition to the MSBL rules regarding courtesy runners.
 - b. A player who reaches base and has been declared as having a courtesy runner must use that runner or lose it for the rest of the game. A manager cannot then name another player to use that courtesy runner in the future.
 - c. If in the first inning a courtesy runner is needed, and no outs have been recorded, then the last batter in the order shall be the courtesy runner.
 - d. If the need arises for an additional courtesy runner as requested by a team manager, an additional courtesy runner may be granted, but only at the discretion of the opposing team manager.
 - e. Pitchers and catchers may be skipped as courtesy runners per decision of their manager.
 - f. Pitchers are not granted the same courtesy as catchers. Unless declared as one of the two batters having courtesy runners at the beginning of the game, pitchers must run for themselves.
 - g. When there are two outs and the catcher is on base, he will then be asked one time per occurrence if he wants a courtesy runner. If he refuses the runner, he will continue on the bases until he scores or there are 3 outs. Once a pitch is thrown, any catcher remaining on base must complete the inning on the bases.
 - h. In the event a player becomes injured during a game, the opposing team manager can allow the team to use an additional courtesy runner. If the opposing manager does not grant an additional courtesy runner, and a bench player is available, a pinch runner must be used. The bench player must then take subsequent turns in the batting order for the injured player throughout the remainder of the game. If there are no remaining bench players available, a courtesy runner is used, the injured player is removed from the line-up and all players lower in the batting order move up one spot.
14. Every effort should be made by both teams to maintain a quick pace to each game. Warm-up pitches are limited to eight (8) for a new pitcher and six (6) pitches between innings. In the event of injury, there is no pitch limit to the pitcher warming up.
15. For 35+: When a pitcher hits a 3rd batter, the opposing coach now has the discretion to allow the pitcher to stay in the game or to be removed as a pitcher. If a 4th batter is hit by the same pitcher, he will then automatically be removed as a pitcher. 25+: The pitcher must be removed as a pitcher after hitting a 3rd batter.
16. Mercy Rule: a game shall be called official and complete if a team is leading by:
 - a. ten (10) runs after five (5) complete innings
 - b. fifteen (15) runs after four (4) complete innings
 - c. refer to Playoffs rules for Mercy rules in post-season games
17. Equipment.
 - a. Regarding helmets/head gear: MSBL national rules apply except, base coaches are encouraged to wear helmets (ear flaps are optional).
 - i. Base coaches not wearing helmets do so at their own risk.
 - b. Only wood bats and wood composite bats are allowed.
18. For 2015 the league voted to adopt the major league rule to third rule being a balk.
19. For 2017 the league voted to adopt the new major league rule that the pitcher does not have to throw pitches for an intentional walk. From National rules as well: Only one is allowed per game.
20. The home team is responsible for providing new baseballs for regular season games in the quantities required (refer to Playoffs rules for team requirements on supplying new baseballs):
 - a. A minimum of 3 new baseballs are required at the start of each game. Additional balls are added as needed.
 - b. Teams should purchase a minimum number of baseballs based upon their home schedule and playoffs
 - c. Purchases of baseballs is through CNMSBL
 - d. Only CNMSBL approved baseballs are permitted

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CONDUCT

21. NEGATIVE, BELLIGERENT, and/or SLANDEROUS BEHAVIOR IS UNACCEPTABLE, and WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Inappropriate behavior may result in suspension or expulsion from the league, without refund after Board review and vote.
22. Players are to STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE RULES OF THE VARIOUS FIELDS, and to BE RESPECTFUL OF LOCAL RULES. Teams and/or players not following field rules and guidelines are subject to disciplinary action by the Board, up to and including expulsion, without refund.
23. FIGHTING OR AGGRESSIVE PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH AN UMPIRE OR AMONG PLAYERS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Players expelled from a game for either violation are be subject to automatic suspension as set forth in these rules or possible expulsion from the league after the vote of the Board, without refund. THE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PURPOSEFUL INTENT TO DO BODILY HARM TO A PLAYER DURING A GAME (as defined) WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION, pending a decision by the Board of directors.
24. MSBL national rules section 4.e regarding collision, decoys, blocking bases etc. are to be strictly enforced.
25. If an umpire detects a pitcher intentionally throwing at a batter, the pitcher will be ejected from the game.
26. CODE of CONDUCT – Players and managers must abide by the current CNMSBL rules and MSBL national rule:
 - a. Managers and players are expected/encouraged to file complaints/incident reports to the Board of directors
 - b. The appropriate procedure for filing a complaint must be followed
 - c. The Board of directors will formally respond to each reported incident
 - d. Offenders are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, without refund
 - e. Repeated incidents are subject to more severe sanctions, as determined by the Board.

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UMPIRES

27. Umpiring costs are to be shared equally each week by both teams (see below for playoffs).
28. If a rainout is declared with teams and umpires present prior to the first pitch being thrown, a travel fee will be paid to each umpire, as determined by the local umpiring board.
29. In the event of a forfeit, or a rainout after a first game is started, umpires are due one game fee. Similarly, if a second game is started or forfeited, then they are to be paid for the second game as well.
30. **DO NOT VERBALLY OR PHYSICALLY ABUSE ANY UMPIRE.** Our league specifically supports our umpires as an integral and important partner in the success of our league. **NO UMPIRE SHALL BE VERBALLY OR PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER A GAME.** This includes safe refuge from the field of play to the parking area, which includes exiting the parking area.
 - a. Players are encouraged to interact in a positive manner conducive to collegiality with our umpires..
 - b. Verbal assault is considered a minor infraction and is subject to the penalties of minor infractions.
 - c. Physical assault on an umpire will be considered a **major** infraction and is subject to the penalties governing major infractions. (refer to section on Infractions/Penalties).
 - d. An ejected player must leave the area of the field, and the premises, as defined by the Umpire.
 - e. An umpire's ruling of the above is final, and will be reported to the league

PLAYOFFS

31. Playoff criteria must be established by the Board before the season begins:
 - a. postseason schedule, format and seeding will be determined prior to the start of the season by agreement of the league managers for each division.
 - b. playoff games are to be scheduled for weekends only last minute exceptions are allowed due to field availability or rain provided that both teams agree.
 - c. seeding and tie-breakers are established as follows:
 - i. winning percentage
 - ii. forfeits
 - iii. head-to-head record
 - iv. average (per game) runs allowed
 - v. coin-toss
 - d. Player playoff eligibility is maintained on the CNMSBL web site.
32. For teams that do not enter player statistics on the website:
 - a. Managers are required to turn in scorebook copies of each game played, with written statistics compiled for each player as defined below for eligibility.
 - b. Scorebook copies and (compiled statistics must be turned over to the league the Tuesday prior to the first scheduled playoff game to verify player eligibility.
 - c. For teams that do not comply, if there is any question concerning player(s) eligibility, the default ruling will automatically be against the player(s).
33. For the 25+ division: Copies of Scorebook must be sent to cnmsblstats@gmail.com by Wednesday after the game or else those games may not be considered towards playoff eligibility.
34. In order for a player to be eligible for CNMSBL postseason playoffs, they must qualify as follows:
 - a. Participation in 40% of the team's regular season games played
 - b. Players must accumulate one point for each game played by their team during the regular season. Games forfeited by a team shall count as a game played. Points shall be calculated as follows:
 - i. 1 point per plate appearance
 - ii. 1 point per complete inning pitched (e.g. 3 outs)
 - iii. 1 point per two complete defensive innings played
 - c. exceptions can be made by the Board of directors for players with extenuating circumstances (e.g. injury)
35. During play-off competition, any pitcher ejected by an umpire for intentionally throwing at a batter, will be disqualified for further completion in the play-offs. The board may review this and override the disqualification
36. The board will review all forfeits prior to the start of play-offs. Any team determined to forfeit a game or games to manipulate play-off seedings will be disqualified from the play-off
37. Each team will split playoff game umpire fees.
38. Each team will supply a minimum of three (3) baseballs for each playoff game. If additional baseballs are required, both teams are to provide baseballs equally.

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39. If a playoff game is interrupted due to inclement weather, the game will resume from the point at which it was stopped at the next available opportunity (as established by the Board of directors).
40. Playoff games are not subject to Mercy rules, and must be played the scheduled number of innings.

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INFRACTIONS/PENALTIES

41. Any player ejected from a game is automatically suspended for the next game. An ejected or suspended player must leave the premises. There may be further disciplinary action as determined by the Board of directors. Both team managers and umpires are encouraged to report incidents to the board so they can properly be dealt with. If there is an ejection during game one of a play-off series, a further suspension of that player before must be decided by midnight before game 3. The board must be notified to consider further suspension.

42. A team has until 36 hours prior to their scheduled game to notify the opposing team of a cancellation without penalty. If the cancellation is made within 36 hours and is due to an insufficient amount of players, a forfeiture will be imposed. If umpires and players are notified and no travel occurred, then no monetary penalty will be imposed. It is important that the full schedule is played. Every game played carries importance as the goal of our league is to PLAY BALL. In addition failing to play as many games as possible has implications for postseason play and creates uncertainty and the specter of manipulation. After the scheduled start time for a game, there will be a fifteen (15) minute grace period to allow a team to field the minimum number of players. The grace period will begin at the scheduled game time. The game umpire will determine the starting time for purposes of running the time clock. In the event a team has absolute positive cell phone confirmation that its last player is in actual transit to the game and will likely arrive very soon after the grace period, then the team with the nine or more players may take the field and allow the other team with insufficient number of players to hit. If the player in transit does not arrive by the time his slot is reached in the batting order, or if the third out is made and the team with fewer than eight players has to take the field, the game is forfeited with monetary penalty. It is important that the full schedule is played. The monetary penalty for forfeiture is:
 - a. Pay a non-refundable forfeit fee to the league:
 - i. First forfeit is a \$100.00 forfeit fee
 - ii. Second forfeit is a \$150.00 forfeit fee and a Board of directors decision for the team's eligibility
 - b. Pay all umpiring fees. If the forfeiting team does not have money enough to cover both umpires then the other team will cover the remaining fee and shall be reimbursed by the forfeiting team. Remember, teams are splitting the costs for umpires each week.

43. Forfeiting teams must make arrangements for payments of penalties with the Board of Directors by the Tuesday following a forfeited game. Failure to abide by this rule may lead to further sanctions as determined by the Board of Directors.

44. All protests or complaints must be lodged to the league office by phone (or voice message) or by email by 11:59 pm on the date of the game, and followed by a written statement defining the reason for the protest / complaint prior to 11:59pm of the day before the team's next game and in no event later than 5 days after the game under protest. Failure to follow the above stated procedures will result in a dismissal of the protest or complaint.