



Stamford North Little League

Guidelines for Playing Baseball in the COVID-19 Environment

6/16/20

This document summarizes the guidelines Stamford North Little League will do its best to follow and encourage all league participants, on- and off-field, and spectators to adhere to regarding the organizing, watching and playing of our league's Summer 2020 baseball season in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines are based on federal, state, city, Little League International, and SNLL input and are subject to change in light of new information from those sources.

All Stamford North Little League managers, coaches, umpires, league officials, and families must review and adhere to these guidelines to ensure the safety of all. Managers, coaches, league officials must sign an acknowledgment of their agreement to follow these guidelines during league activities associated with the Summer 2020 baseball season. All families with a player participating in the Summer 2020 Season will also be required to sign a waiver.

A. GENERAL GUIDANCE

Adherence to these items, even if you do not feel sick or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, will help to limit the spread of COVID-19 during league activities. All participants in the Summer 2020 baseball season are required to follow this guidance to the maximum extent possible.

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.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

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

- Everyone must wear a cloth face covering when they have to go out in public in accordance with Federal, State and Local Guidance. This includes public areas in and around all SNLL fields, parks, parking areas, viewing areas, common areas, etc.

Cover Coughs and Sneezes:

- 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% alcohol.

Social Distancing:

- All players, coaches, volunteers, umpires and spectators shall practice social distancing of six feet wherever possible from individuals not residing within their household.
- When social distancing is not possible, a face covering should be worn.

Self-monitoring and Quarantine:

- All individuals must measure their body temperature prior to participating in or attending SNLL events to ensure that no fever (100 degrees or higher) is present.
- 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.
- 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 and in accordance with the guidance of his or her medical professionals. Parents of players shall be solely responsible for monitoring these requirements during all SNLL activities.

B. ON-FIELD GUIDANCE**No Handshakes/Personal Contact Celebrations:**

- Players and coaches should take measures to prevent all but the essential contact necessary to play the game.
- Activities including handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc. will not be permitted.
- At the conclusion of each game, each team will line up outside the dugout while adhering to applicable social distancing requirements, and tip their caps to the opposing team as a sign of good sportsmanship.
- Players and families must vacate the field/facility as soon as is reasonably possible after the conclusion of their activity, preferable within 15 minutes of its conclusion, to minimize unnecessary contact with players, coaches, and spectators entering for the next activity.

Drinks and Snacks:

- Athletes, managers/coaches, and umpires must bring their own personal drinks to all team activities. Drinks should be labeled with the person's name.
- Individuals must take their own drink containers home each night for cleaning and sanitation, or use and properly dispose of single-use bottles.
- There shall be no use of shared or team beverages or snacks. Players must bring individual, pre-packaged food, if required.
- SNLL's snack bars will not be operational for any 2020 Summer season game.

Spitting, Sunflower Seeds, Gum, etc.:

- Sunflower seeds, gum, etc., shall not be allowed in dugouts or on the playing field.
- All players and coaches may not spit during baseball activities in all common areas, including but not limited to the dugout and player seating areas and on the playing field.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Thermometers will be made available so managers/coaches can check temperatures of game/practice participants prior to them taking the field. Any individual with a fever (100.4 degrees or higher) will not be allowed to participate.
- SNLL will supply all players and coaches with breathable gaitors (i.e., a face covering that can be worn around neck when not in use); however, any cloth face covering or mask that covers the mouth and nose will be considered acceptable for use.
- All managers/coaches, volunteers, umpires, etc., shall wear face coverings during games and practices.
- Players must utilize their face coverings when in close contact areas and in places where recommended social distancing is challenging or not feasible, such as in dugout area.
- Players are not required to wear protective medical gloves or batting gloves on the field during game play. Pitchers are not allowed to wear either while on the mound.
- Players are not required to utilize their face coverings while on the field during game play, but it is recommended they do if physically able to. This will be at the discretion of the player's parent/guardian.

In Game Hygiene:

- Players should bring their own hand sanitizer for personal use.
- Teams will be required to provide hand sanitizer for team use at games and practices.
- All players and coaches must use hand sanitizer upon arrival of the field.
- All players, managers and coaches must reapply hand sanitizer as regularly as possible.

Dugouts:

- The number of players allowed in the dugout at one time will be limited by the space allotted for proper social distancing (six feet between players).
- All other players will remain in an area outside of the dugout and behind their baseline fence. Those players will sit in a row of acceptably spaced chairs or on existing bleachers.
- Players are to stay at their assigned spots when on the bench or while waiting their turn to bat.
- A designated coach or parent will monitor non-batting players to cycle those players onto the field and into the dugout as the batting order continues.
- Managers/coaches and players should 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, managers/coaches and any parent volunteers assisting with the monitoring of players, cleaning of equipment, etc. must wear a cloth face covering while in the dugout area or player-utilized bleachers.

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. Markings will be provided to guide the players where to place his or her equipment.
- Players must have his or her own individual batter's helmet, glove, batting gloves and bat. Catcher's equipment is optional and personal catcher's equipment shall not be shared with other team members.

- Sharing equipment shall be avoided with the exception of league-issued catcher's equipment. SNLL provided catcher's equipment will be cleaned using disinfectant before a new player uses it.
- 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 must be cleaned and disinfected against COVID-19 and allowed sufficient time to dry before used by a new player.
- Increased attention should be paid to completely cleaning of all equipment directly contacting the head and face (catcher's mask, helmets).
- It is highly recommended that all player's equipment (e.g. bags, helmets, bats, gloves, etc.) be cleaned and disinfected after each use by a parent/ guardian/caretaker, where applicable.

Baseballs:

- Game baseballs will be rotated and sanitized on a regular basis, at least every two innings, to limit the spread of germs. The home team will be responsible for this.
- Pitchers and catchers must use hand sanitizer at the conclusion of every half-inning in which they played in the field.
- Umpires should limit their contact with the ball, and catchers should retrieve foul balls and passed balls where possible.
- Balls used in infield/outfield warm-up should be isolated from a shared ball container.
- Foul balls landing outside the field of play should be retrieved by participating players, coaches, and umpires whenever possible. Spectators should avoid retrieving the ball.

C. GAME OPERATIONS AND UMPIRE GUIDANCE

Pre-Game Plate Meetings:

- Plate meetings will be eliminated unless directed by the umpire.
- For any plate meeting, face coverings must be used and social distancing will be employed to the maximum extent practicable.
- Plate meetings will only consist of one manager or coach from each team, and game umpires.
- No players shall not be a part of plate meetings.

Equipment Inspection:

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

Limit League/Game Volunteers:

- For each game, there should only be the required team managers/coaches, umpires, and the minimal number of parent/league volunteers necessary to help support the coaches in monitoring players on the bench, moving players in and out of the dugout, cleaning and disinfecting baseballs, equipment and general areas.

- One (1) league administrator (i.e. Safety Officer, player agent, etc.) or league board member not involved in coaching the game at hand should be in attendance to monitor and remind teams and spectators of social distancing and safety protocols during games.
- Practices should be limited to the managers/coaches and players whenever possible.
- Only one person will be allowed in a press box at a time during a game for scorekeeping purposes. Scoring equipment, tables and chairs used must be cleaned and disinfected after use.

Field Preparation and Maintenance:

- Fields should be mowed, raked, and lined prior to teams and spectators arriving at the complex and after they depart. It is encouraged that volunteers already participating in the game (managers/coaches, umpires, and league administrator) perform these tasks to limit individuals at the site.
- Shared field preparation equipment should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.

Umpire Placement:

- Umpires are permitted to be placed behind the pitcher's mound to call balls and strikes.
- Umpires are encouraged to keep a safe distance from players as much as possible and wear protective gloves.
- Umpires must wear cloth face coverings while umpiring unless they are physically unable to do so.

D. FACILITY, FAN AND ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE

Clean and Disinfect Shared Equipment and Surfaces:

- The league will strive to clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily and in between all facility uses, including practices and games. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, facility equipment, dugouts, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

Spread Out Scheduling of Practices and Games:

- SNLL will schedule sufficient time between practices and games to facilitate the complete evacuation of individuals from a previous practice or game from the premises before the next group enters.
- Players/families/spectators are requested to not show up to fields more than 40 minutes before game time or 15 minutes before a practice.
- If there is a game or practice prior to your event, families and spectators are encouraged to stay in their vehicles or at recommended social distances until the start of their game play to prevent overcrowding of spectator spaces and walkways.
- On-field warm-up should be limited as much as is reasonably possible and last no more than 30 minutes.

Spectator Attendance:

- All spectators should follow best social distancing practices — stay six feet away from individuals outside their household, wear a face covering whenever possible, and avoid direct hand or other contact with players/managers/coaches/other spectators from outside their households during play.
- Due to limited space and the need for players to utilize bleacher space during games, it is recommended spectators bring their own chairs and space them apart appropriately.
- 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 or known direct contact with an individual testing positive for COVID-19
 - Fever or 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.

Public Restrooms:

- Access to public restrooms will be limited to a “one-in-one-out” policy, where only one individual is permitted within the restroom at one time.
- Restrooms will be professionally cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Public water fountains or refillable water stations will be turned-off to discourage use.

Concession Stands:

- The SNLL snack bBar will remain closed throughout the Summer 2020 season.
- Families are encouraged to bring their own food/beverages.

Post Information to Promote Everyday Preventive Actions:

- SNLL will display signs at the fields to remind visitors to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.