

# Western Monmouth - Mercer East 2021 Babe Ruth Baseball COVID-19 Guidelines

Western Monmouth Mercer East (“League”) has prepared this Program Preparation Plan (“the Plan”) for the 2021 Season based on guidance provided by the New Jersey Department of Health (“NJDOH”) with respect to the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

All players, coaches, staff, spectators and any other attendees or spectators who attend any event including practices, games, league activities at the HEWYBL Hancock or Millstone Roosevelt Little League facilities must adhere to these guidelines.

All players, coaches, staff, spectators, and parents that participate in games outside of the HEWYBL or Millstone Little League Facilities must adhere to the league and/or facility guidelines.

**The information in this document is not intended, or implied, to be a substitute for guidelines published by Health Officials, including but not limited to the Guidance for Sports Activities published by the NJDOH, but rather are intended to be supplementary to any such guidelines. The Plan is provided for general informational purposes only and is based on information currently available to the League. As information available to the general public, including the League, surrounding COVID-19 are changing constantly, the Plan is subject to change without advance notice.**

**Refer to <https://covid19.nj.gov/> for the latest information regarding COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions.**

## **1. Guidelines for Participating in the 2021 Season**

Anyone who is not comfortable participating in the 2021 Season, or who does not feel comfortable following these guidelines, should not return for this season.

The following must be considered prior to every practice, game or event that is held by Western Monmouth – Mercer East Babe Ruth:

- Do not come to practice or competition if you or any member of your household are not feeling well or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
- Do not come to practice or competition if you or any member of your household have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.

## **2. Guidelines for the Use of HEWYBL and Millstone Little League (MRL) Facilities:**

### **Bathrooms:**

- Bathrooms will be open during games only and will be disinfected and/or cleaned on a regular basis.
- Every effort should be made to reduce the amount of people in the bathroom at one time.
- People waiting in line for the bathroom should ensure social distancing with people other than their immediate family.

The NJDOH published the Guidance for Sports Activities on March 18, 2021. These guidelines can be found at the following site: [https://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID\\_GuidanceForSportsActivities.pdf](https://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID_GuidanceForSportsActivities.pdf)

### Hygiene:

All players, coaches, umpires and spectators MUST:

- Practice “good hygiene” by regularly washing their hands with soap and water or using hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. HEWYBL and MRLI will supply sanitizer at the facility in multiple locations.
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid all unnecessary contact with other persons during practice or competition.
- Bring their own food or beverages that are clearly labeled with their name. There should not be any shared food or beverages.
- Avoid spitting.

The following are not permitted at the HEWYBL or MRLI facilities at any time:

- o Sunflower seeds
- o Chewing Gum
- o Any other snack food or candy which requires an individual to spit out any portion of such snack food or candy.

### Concession Stand:

The Concession Stand will be open for the 2021 season only at the MRLI facility. There is no concession stand this season at the HEWYBL facility. Everyone must follow the current NJDOH restaurant guidelines.

(<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/reopening-guidance-and-restrictions/what-are-the-reopening-rules-for-bars-and-restaurants-what-precautions-or-policies-must-they-take>)

## 3. Guidelines for Practices or Games:

### General:

- Prior to departing for the HEWYBL or MRLI facility, and prior to coming in contact with others, for each practice or game, the **Parent or Guardian** will conduct a health check on each player. The following questions will be asked of each player. ☐ Have you had a fever today?
  - o Have you had a cough today that is not explainable by another condition (such as allergies)?
  - o Do you feel sick or achy?
  - o Has anyone in your house been sick lately?

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- The **Parent or Guardian** will conduct a temperature check on the player prior to each game or practice. The **Parent or Guardian**, must verify the temperature is no higher than 100.3°F

***Anyone with a fever or answers YES to any of the above questions cannot participate and should not attend a practice or game until evaluated by a medical provider/professional and given clearance in writing prior to returning to the facility***

#### Coaches:

Coaches are responsible for the following:

- All coaches will wear a cloth or disposable face covering during practices and games when on the field and social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Ensure social distancing between players to the extent possible, such as: ☐ Additional spacing between players while playing catch.
- Changing drills so that players remain spaced out/socially distanced during warmups/drills.
- No congregating of players while waiting to bat.
- Disinfect shared equipment, such as catcher's equipment, after each game and practice or prior to providing to a new player. ☐ HEWYBL and MRLL will provide teams with disinfecting wipes.

#### Players:

Players are responsible for the following:

- Players do not need to wear a face covering while on the field.
- Players should wear cloth or disposable face coverings when not engaging in vigorous activity, such as when sitting on the bench/dugout, or when interacting with a coach or manager.
- Players are permitted to wear a face-covering at any time if the player or their parent/guardian/caretaker deem it necessary. It is recommended that all players use their own baseball equipment (gloves, helmets, and bats).
- Players must bring their own water/beverage to consume. No shared fountains or coolers.

#### Spectators:

- Spectators shall ensure social distancing with people other than their immediate family. Stay six feet away from individuals outside their household.
- Wear a cloth or disposable face covering.
- Avoid direct hand or other contact with the players, managers, and coaches during play.
- Spectators should bring their own seating or portable chairs when possible.
- A spectator with any of the following conditions should not attend an HEWYBL or MRLL Event:  
Active COVID-19 infection
- Known direct contact with an individual testing positive for COVID-19 .

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- Fever
- Cough
  
- Those at higher risk for severe disease should consider consulting with their medical professional before attending a game and should ensure the strictest adherence to guidelines regarding face coverings, social distancing, and handwashing. Such groups include:
  - Those with a serious underlying medical condition, including heart disease, morbid obesity, diabetes, lung disease, immunocompromised, chronic kidney disease, and chronic lung disease.
  - Those currently residing in a nursing home or long-term care facility
  - Those over 65.
  
- Refer to <https://covid19.nj.gov/> for the latest outdoor gathering restrictions.

## Guidelines for Games Only

### Scheduling:

- Game times will be spaced out to allow for teams to finish their game and leave the facility before other teams show up to play where needed.

### Pregame

- Players should not arrive any earlier than the coach has specified before game time. Anyone arriving earlier should remain in the car.
- Warm-ups should be limited to a reasonable amount of time and should follow social distancing protocols. Congregating players in the outfield to field grounders or pop-ups should try to maintain 6 feet apart whenever possible.
- Pitchers should be allowed to warm up with a catcher before each game.

### Baseballs

- It is recommended that each team should use their own balls while in the field during games.
- Each team should have a minimum of 3 baseballs per game.

### During the Game:

- Coaches and umpires must remain 6ft away. For the safety of all participants, the League will not allow aggressive arguing with any umpire. Anyone engaging in such behavior will be ejected from the premises.
- Coaches must refrain from celebratory physical contact and discourage players from doing the same.

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- Players not participating in the game must sit in a designated area while maintaining social distancing guidelines.
- A coach or team parent should be assigned by each team to supervise the players sitting in the designated area.
- All player equipment will be placed against the fence in front of the designated area and six feet apart.
- Umpires need to wear cloth or disposable face coverings.
- Umpires will call balls and strikes from either behind the pitcher or behind the plate pending Babe Ruth District Umpire guidelines.

#### End of the Game:

- There can be no handshakes before or after the games. It is recommended that players and coaches tip their hat to the opponents after the game.
- Players and their families are expected to leave the facility immediately after the game. No post game gatherings will be allowed.
- Trash must be discarded in a waste receptacle.

#### Guidelines for Handling a Positive COVID-19 Test

If a player or coach tests positive for COVID-19 or comes in direct contact with an outside person who tests positive for COVID-19, the league will take the following steps.

- Determinations should be made relating to any coach or players that may have been exposed to the virus and may need to take additional precautions. Notification relating to this potential exposure should be made to the parent or guardian of each player and each coach. Confidentiality must be maintained and therefore the person(s) that test positive for COVID-19 or came in direct contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 will not be identified. These potentially exposed individuals should quarantine for 14 days and self-monitor for symptoms and contact your health professional for additional guidance.