

ATLANTA MSBL LOCAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Effective 04-01-05

The following constitutes the Local Rules for the Atlanta Men's Senior Baseball League. Any rule not specified herein shall be governed by the National MSBL rules or, in absence of such, by the Official Playing Rules of Major League Baseball. All Atlanta Men's Senior Baseball League (MSBL) games will follow the National Rules and Regulations as published on their official website, as well as Major League Baseball Rules as published on their national website, except as provided in the local rules below. The primary goal of the Local Rules is to provide a safe, friendly, and professional environment for Atlanta MSBL members to play baseball.

1. EQUIPMENT

1A. UNIFORMS

All teams must have full matching professional quality and style uniforms with player numbers (meaning a baseball uniform with matching jersey colors). Players' names are optional at a team's discretion, but must be consistent throughout. T-shirts are specifically forbidden. If for any reason a player cannot be properly uniformed for a game, his or her team must have a league issued uniform waiver.

1B. HELMETS

All batters and runners must wear ear-flap helmets (one flap helmets are permitted). Half helmets are required for catchers. Any minor in the dug out, i.e. batboy or batgirl, must wear a helmet at all times and is the responsibility of that team.

1C. BASEBALLS

MSBL approved baseballs are required. Each team must provide four (4) new baseballs at the beginning of the game.

1D. BATS

Metal, wood or wood composite bats may be used.

1E. CLEATS

Metal cleats are permitted.

1F. FIRST AID KIT

Each team must have a First Aid Kit available at all games.

1G. RULES

Managers are encouraged to have with them at every game a copy of MSBL Local and National rules, as well as a copy of Major League Baseball Rules. Should a ruling go against a team without such rules present, any appeal of the ruling may be adversely affected by the teams failure to have the rules present at the game.

2. GAME LENGTH, TIME LIMIT, RUN RULE

2A. All weekend MSBL single games are nine (9) innings in length. All double header games are seven (7) innings in length. All weekday evening games are seven (7) innings in length. By mutual consent of both managers prior to the start of a game, the game can be shorten as desired. A game cannot be lengthened by mutual consent of the managers. Any game started and then stopped prior to being an official game, for whatever reason, is considered a suspended game, and is continued for the point stopped when made-up. A game is official if called as a result of darkness after seven (7) innings are completed, and if called as a result of rain the game is official pursuant to MLB rules (i.e. after five (5) innings are completed, or 4½ innings if the home team is ahead). The decision as to whether to call a game due to darkness and/or rain is left to discretion of the umpires.

2B. Mercy Run Rule: If there is a fifteen (15) run discrepancy at the end of 7 innings OR the game has gone 2 hours and 30 minutes, the game will be ruled final at that point. This rule will not pertain in National and Regional Tournaments. [Note: this rule is different than the national rules which only require 5 innings and 2 hrs 30 min. See NR 2.b].

2C. Make-Up Games: Any rained out or cancelled games must be made up prior to the end of the regular season. Such games may be made up in any order desired. The League will schedule make-up games, most likely on a Saturday. Make-up games may also be scheduled by consent of the mangers AND then approved by the league. No make-up game schedule and time is official until approved by the League. It is nonetheless, the responsibility of the managers to check field availability, and propose make-up options to the League. Once a make-up game has been re-scheduled by the league, the game must be played by the date scheduled (subject to the scheduling and approval of the league discussed above). The League maintains the discretion to schedule and alter the schedule of make-up games, without the consent of the managers. Should a team fail to play and/or show up for a scheduled make-up game, the team shall forfeit the game, and the League may impose sanctions.

2D. In the event of rain, inclement weather, or other problems with the playability of the field, it is the responsibility of the primary field rep team, as assisted by any secondary field rep team(s), to notify the league in a timely manner that the game(s) must be cancelled and re-scheduled.

2E. Time Limit: All Atlanta MSBL games will have a three (3) hour time limit. No new inning shall start after three hours have elapsed. If after nine innings, regardless of time limit, the game is tied, one (1) additional inning will be played. If still tied, the game will be officially recorded as a tie. All doubleheaders will have a thirty-minute (30) break from the end

of the first game and the start of the second, with no grace period, unless agreed upon by the managers and the umpires.

There is a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the scheduled start time (this does not affect, i.e. count toward, the three hour game time limit). If either team is unable to field nine (9) players after the grace period, that team shall forfeit the game. [Note: the 9 player requirement is different than the national rules which only require 8 players. See NR 3.j].

If, during the course of the game, an extended delay occurs (i.e., rain delay or injury), the umpire may stop the game clock and resume after the delay. The umpire will have the sole authority of the game (and break) clock. The umpires, in their discretion, may suspend, cancel or call a game if the safety of the players is compromised for any reason.

3. TEAMS, PLAYERS, ELIGIBILITY, and LINEUPS

3A. LEAGUE ELIGIBILITY

A player shall be eligible to participate in Atlanta MSBL League games as long as the player turns twenty-eight (28) years of age during the calendar year (by or on December 31st of that year), or be older than twenty-eight (28) years of age at the start of the season. Further, a player must be in good standing, and not suspended by any MSBL/MABL League.

3B. PLAYER MOVEMENT GUIDELINES

See NR3.b, NR3.l and NR9.h (as always our Local Rules take precedent).

1. Player movement shall be as follows:

a. During the season:

At no time during a season may a player leave one team to play for another team within the League without the consent of both team managers and approval by the League Board. If the proposed player movement is not approved, the player involved must either remain on the roster of the team with which he began the season, or: withdraw as a player for the remainder of the current season, or: the player can be added to the League player pool and be administered by the Board and the designated Player Pool Director. Final placement will be at the discretion of the Board and Player Pool Director.

b. Conclusion of the Season

(1) Player movement to an existing team.

At the conclusion of the season, each player shall become a free agent within the League and may play for any existing team in the League (an existing team defined for purposes of these rules as being a team with at least seven of the same players from the prior season remaining on

its team roster), subject to the following restrictions:

One free agent per season may be added to the roster of any existing team finishing in the top 1/4 of all teams (ex. Teams 1 – 8 in a 32 team league), based on winning percentage at the end of the regular season.

Two free agents per season may be added to the roster of any existing team finishing in the second quarter of all teams (ex. Teams 9 – 16 in a 32 team league), based on winning percentage at the end of the regular season; and

Four free agents per season may be added to the roster of any existing team finishing in the bottom half of all teams (ex. Teams 17 – 32 in a 32 team league), based on winning percentage at the end of the regular season.

(2) Player Movement for New or Transferred Teams.

Teams new to the league (no previous recreational or league baseball experience) will be allowed to add up to four free agents. Teams transferring from other Leagues, MSBL or otherwise, will be treated the same as a “merged” team (see Rule b(3) below) and will be allowed to add free agents as reviewed by the Board.

No teams, either new or existing, will be allowed to add more than two free agents from any one team in the League without review from the League Board .

The provisions of this player movement rule shall apply solely to League players, defined for purposes of this rule as any player who appeared on a team roster for the preceding season.

In the event any team withdraws or is expelled from the League during the course of the regular season (a "withdrawn team") and does not complete its schedule, the Board of Directors will supervise and make all decisions regarding player movement on that teams roster.

Any team with less than seven of the same League players on its team roster from the preceding season shall be considered a new team and shall submit to the League Board for review its intent to join the League. Unless otherwise determined by the Board, any such new team shall be treated as finishing last in the League standings for the previous regular season for purposes of the player movement rule. New teams will be allowed to draft at the conclusion of the first round after all returning teams have had an opportunity to make their draft selection. Changing your team name does not make you a “new” team.

(3) Player Movement Involving a “Merged” Team.

If during the off-season (the period between the completion of a season and up to the next seasons tryouts), any team does not meet both of the following; (a) has less than seven League players on its roster, and; (b) has no team member willing to take on the role and responsibilities of team manager, then the team and Board together can see fit to declared that team disbanded.

Members of a “disbanded” team will not fall under the “two free agents from one team” rule. Members potentially could be added to a team that has reached its allotted free agency limit, pending review and approval by the Board of Directors. (Ex. Three or more members of a disbanded team might be able to join an existing team above and beyond its remaining free agent slots, if the Board approves and determines that it is in the best interest of the League.)

Depending on the number of transferees from a disbanded team, the team receiving those players may be designated as a “Merged” team, at which time the Board will assign the team a slot in the League draft as befitting its revised status.

Any team (existing or new) may at any time recruit and add a new player(s) to the team's roster who is not a League player.

c. Interpretations - Exemptions - Rulings - Penalties

Except as otherwise specifically provided, responsibility for the application, enforcement and interpretation of the rules set forth herein shall be vested in the League Board. All decisions by the Board will be made in the BEST interest of the League over the interests of an individual player(s) or team. In the event any team or League player desires to seek exemption from the application of any rules stated herein, the team or player must submit a written application to the Board for review and recommendation. No player movement is final until reviewed and approved by the Board. All managers will be notified and made aware of any and all decisions or rulings made by the Board in regards to the above stated guidelines.

3C. LEAGUE TRY-OUTS AND DRAFT

All teams are required to have at least one representative attend the pre-season try-outs, even if their team has no need to draft any players. Team representatives conduct at the draft/try-out should promote the League and encourage all participants to join the Atlanta MSBL.

Team representatives may not encourage any player to alter his performance, or reduce his participation in these try-outs. Representatives and/or teams shall not communicate or make any negative comments about any other MSBL/MABL affiliated team, player, member or the leagues themselves. Representatives and/or teams may not offer any incentives to play for their team. Nor should any effort be made to persuade a player not to join the team he is drafted by. Any violation of these restrictions could result in sanctions from the league, including but not limited to loss of recruited player, loss of draft pick(s), loss of games or playoff positions, suspensions and/or fines.

Any player attending these tryouts is considered league property, and may not be recruited by any team outside the draft (except as otherwise provided pursuant to the Player Pool rules), regardless of which age group he intended to try out for, or if he is not drafted for any reason. Any player in attendance not drafted, as well as any players calling the league phone that do not attend the tryouts, are considered League property and will be added to the player pool.

All other new players who contact the League directly will be the property of the League

until drafted at the League tryouts. On “Draft Day” every player in attendance is considered the property of the League whether or not they have filled out the required draft day paperwork. All players in attendance are to be selected and placed on teams under the standard draft procedures and rules as directed during the pre-draft League meetings. Any un-drafted players, or those who contact the League after the draft, will be made available through the League player pool and will be administered by the Board and the designated Player Pool Director. *Teams will be allowed to tryout position players in lots of two. That team will not be allowed to review any other players from the player pool until they notify the League of their intentions for the first selected players and either select the player(s) or return them to the player pool.

3D. PLAYER POOL

Teams in the league desiring to add more players to their roster, may request information from the league player pool. Player information will be distributed to interested teams in a manner deemed fair by the league commissioner and the board. In general, a team that requests players for the Player Pool must tryout those players and then must notify the League in writing if the team intends to keep or reject the player(s). A team will not be provided with addition player pool names until the team has notified the league of the team’s acceptance or rejection of players previously provided from the pool. Any violation of the Player Pool restrictions could result in sanctions from the league, including but not limited to loss of recruited player, loss of draft pick(s), loss of games or playoff positions, suspensions and/or fines.

3E. ROSTERS

Each team roster at the start of the season will contain a minimum of fifteen (15) eligible players (or paid players). There is no maximum number of players that may be on a team’s roster.

3F. PRE-GAME MEETING

Five (5) minutes prior to each game, both managers (or player designate) are to meet with both umpires at home plate. Ground rules will be discussed, game balls will be given to plate umpire, lineups exchanged and courtesy runners declared. Rule exceptions shall be declared at this time with the consent of both managers. Rule exceptions may be disallowed by the umpires, if they determine that the safety of the players and/or the fundamental integrity of the game is being altered (i.e.: managers can not agree to four strikes per out or four outs per inning).

3G. LINEUPS

Each team has a hitting and defensive lineup that are independent of each other. Players may play in either lineup or both, but are NOT required to be in both lineups.

(1) OFFENSIVE LINEUP

Each team must bat a minimum of ten (10) players (unless less than 10 players are present

at the game). Once a player has been removed from the offensive lineup, he may not return to the offensive lineup. A team may add players to the bottom of the lineup at any time. A team may collapse the lineup when a player becomes unavailable due to injury or emergency, which includes having to leave a game early or prior to its conclusion, and all other players have been used in the offensive lineup during the game. If a team collapses its lineup, for any reason other than ejection of a player, then the first time this vacated spot comes up in the batting order, an out will be assessed, and after that one time out, no further out will be assessed for skipping the collapsed spot in the batting order. See NR3.i. If a player is ejected from the game and there is no one available to take his place in the offensive lineup, the lineup will not be collapsed and that spot will become an automatic out for the remainder of the game.

Any offensive changes to a team's lineup must be announced to the umpire prior to the player batting or an out will be charged. See NR3.h.

(2) A/B BATTING SLOTS

A team may use the option of designating the batter as an "A/B" slot in any position in the batting order. Once a position is designated as A/B it must remain an A/B position for the entire game, except as detailed below. Additional "A/B" slots may be added once the game has been started, consistent with the National MSBL rules (see NR3.f), but a single batter slot cannot be converted to an "A/B" during the course of a game. As an "A/B" batter slot, two players occupy the same position in the batting order and alternate turns batting. The first time through the batting order the "A" player bats and the second time through the batting order the "B" player bats. This rotation continues throughout the game.

Should either player in an "A/B" batting slot not be able to fulfill his turn at bat, due to injury, emergency or leaving the game, a legal substitution must be used in his batting position or the slot skipped, A or B, becomes an out the first time the skipped batting slot comes up, and the "A/B" slot then collapses into a single batting slot, with the remaining A or B batter continuing to bat in that slot. Should either player in an "A/B" batting slot not be able to fulfill his turn at bat due to ejection, and no legal substitution is available, then the skipped slot, A or B, will not be collapsed and that spot will become an automatic out for the remainder of the game.

(3) DEFENSIVE SUBSTITUTIONS

Free substitutions are allowed in the defensive lineup (meaning a player may be moved, removed and returned to the defensive lineup as desired), with the exception of the pitcher. A pitcher may reenter the defensive lineup, as a pitcher, during the game, but not in the same inning in which the pitcher was removed. See also NR 3.k.

3H. PLAYER MINIMUMS

Each team MUST field at least nine (9) players to start the game (at the conclusion of the grace period, see LR 2E). [Note: the nine (9) player requirement is different than the national rules which only require 8 players. See NR 3.j]. A Team may borrow a player (1) from the

opposing team or another MSBL team, with the opposing manager's consent. If consent is not given, a forfeit will be declared. If during the course of the game, a team has only eight (8) players due to injury or emergency, NOT ejection, that team may complete the game with eight (8) players. If the number of eligible players for either team falls below eight (8) for any reason, that team will forfeit the game.

4. PLAYER BEHAVIOR AND TEAM RESPONSIBILITY

4A. COLLISIONS

Players shall not intentionally collide with any other players, and shall make every effort to reasonably avoid collisions. Offensive players MUST make every effort to avoid unnecessary contact with a defensive player's attempt to make a play (i.e. running over the catcher or crashing into the pivot man on a double play is not permitted). Defensive players MUST make every effort to avoid blocking a runner from a base path, base, or home plate, unless they are making a play with the ball or are about to immediately receive the ball and will be able to make an apparent play on the base runner. Where any contact is deemed incidental by the umpires, no collision call will be made, and the play will stand as called on the field.

In the case of a runner intentionally colliding with a fielder and/or failing to make a reasonable effort to avoid a collision with a fielder, the runner will be called out and may, at the umpire's discretion, be ejected from the game. All base runners must either slide or give up their right to a base (i.e. avoid a collision by stopping or leaving a base path) if the defensive player has possession of the ball, is in the act of receiving the ball. A runner will never be found to have failed to reasonably avoid a collision where the runner slides directly to the base or plate in a non-aggressive (i.e. cleats down) manner.

If not making or attempting to make an immediate play on a runner, the defensive player shall be responsible to avoid collision with a runner. Specifically, if a defensive player is not in possession of the ball, is not in the act of receiving the ball, or is not about to immediately receive the ball and will be able to make a play on the base runner, the defensive player cannot block the base or home plate, and cannot be in the base path so as to impede and/or obstruct the runner's right to that base (i.e. the catcher should stand in front of home plate and outside the base path, and other defensive players should not stand on the base or in the base path, unless necessary to make a legitimate play on a runner). Where the defensive player is out of position or is improperly blocking a base or the plate, if a collision does occur or the runner is forced to avoid a collision, the runner will always be considered safe and the obstruction rule shall be enforced, and the defensive player may be subject to ejection.

Notwithstanding the defensive players responsibilities to avoid collisions, the runner shall make a reasonable effort to avoid collision and cannot intentionally initiate a collision, even if the defensive player is out of position. Where a close play occurs involving the blocking of a base, the avoiding of a collision, and/or an actual collision, if, in the umpire's judgment, the runner would have been safe if the runner's direct path to the base or home plate was not impeded by the defensive player, the runner shall be called safe, regardless of the actual outcome

of the play (i.e. the catcher is making a play at home and blocks the plate to catch a throw ball, or the first baseball moves into the base path to receive a throw, or an infielder receives a cutoff throw from an outfielder in the base path, and a runner in a legitimate attempt to avoid or limit a collision slides and does not reach the base or otherwise misses the base and/or runs out of the base path, and the umpire believes the runner would have gotten to the plate or base prior to the ball but for the impeding defensive player, then the runner shall be called safe).

Please note that these types of determinations and calls are almost assuredly umpire judgment calls, and will not be subject to appeal.

See National Rule 4.e.

5. COURTESY RUNNERS

Each team is allowed two (2) courtesy runners during the course of the game. Each team must declare to the opposing team and umpires at the pre-game meeting which players are to be assigned the courtesy runner privilege or forfeit the privilege, except in the case of injury. If, during the course of the game, the player assigned a courtesy runner does not use the runner, the batter loses the privilege for the remainder of the game. The last batted out is to be used as the runner, unless that player has a courtesy runner declared. In this instance, the batted out prior to the last batted out is to be used as the runner. Should no batted out be available (i.e. no batted out has been recorded and/or they are on base), then the last batter in the batting order, or immediate prior batter in the lineup if the last batter has a designated courtesy runner, shall be used as the courtesy runner. If, due to an injury during the course of the game a player needs a courtesy runner, and the team has not used both of its courtesy runners, then a courtesy runner can be declared for the injured player. If, due to an injury it is necessary to have an additional courtesy runner, more than two, a runner can be added at the umpires discretion or with the consent of the opposing manager. The legitimacy and/or authenticity of any injury is left to the discretion of the umpires. In all cases of additional courtesy runners, the last batted out is to be used as the runner, unless that player has a courtesy runner declared, and then the batted out prior to the last batted out is to be used as the runner (or the bottom of the order, if necessary).

Please note that this is an optional rule and it is used at the team's discretion. Protests are therefore not likely to be considered valid.

5A. SPEED-UP RULE

Atlanta MSBL does not automatically recognize the so called "speed-up rule" where runners are automatically allotted for pitchers and/or catchers on both teams. Prior to the start of the game, the opposing manager may agree to implement a speed-up rule. Both managers must agree on the rule, and any speed-up rule implemented must be communicated to the umpires. Unless, otherwise stipulated, the speed-up rule shall apply to both pitcher's and catcher's, and shall only be in effect when there are two outs. If, during the course of the game, the player assigned a courtesy speed-up runner does not use the runner, that batter loses the privilege for the remainder of the game. In all speed-up rule situations, the courtesy runner shall be the last batted

out, or the last batter in the batting order, should not be available.

6. PITCHERS

Intentional walks are allowed in the Atlanta MSBL. The pitcher must make a minimum of four pitches to affect the walk. The catcher is permitted to move from his position in the catcher's box, in accordance with Major League rules.

Any pitcher hitting four (4) batters during the course of the game must be removed and may NOT reenter the game as a pitcher for the remainder of that game.

7. FIELDERS: DECOYS

Defensive players are not allowed to decoy a throw or catch. Improper decoying is referred to as a false catch or throw done in an attempt to get the player to slide unnecessarily, where no strategic value is gained. Defensive players must not deceive base runners into sliding or giving up the right to a base, e.g. by faking or decoying a tag or throw, a legitimate play must be being made on the runner. Fake plays with a strategic value, such as the hidden ball trick, are permitted. If an improper deceptive play occurs, all runners shall be allowed to advance one base beyond the base held after all play stops and the deceiving player may be subject to ejection. If the same fielder decoys twice in the same game, the fielder shall be expelled from the game. The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary slides and/or injuries.

8. EX-PRO STATUS

All former professional players must not have played professionally, at any level, for at least three years.

9. GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

Any punishment for rules violations, misconduct, forfeiting of games, and/or other sanctionable offense(s) shall be left to the discretion of the League Commissioner and/or Board of Directors. In situations where the Commissioner and/or Board of Directors impose a punishment against a player and/or manager exceeding four (4) games in length, the impacted team, player and/or manager appeal to the League Members. Any appeal must be made in writing. An appeal will be considered at the next regularly scheduled League Meeting, so long as the League has sufficient time to notify the Membership of the pending appeal. Should the appealing team, player and/or manager wish to seek an expedited League meeting in order to obtain an appeal ruling, a League meeting may be called with written approval from two-thirds (b) of the League Membership.

9A. ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-SEASON PLAYOFF GAMES

In order for an otherwise eligible player to be permitted to play in post-season playoff games, a player MUST play in a of the teams regular season games (meaning six (6) games). In

order to count as having played in a regular season game, the player must complete one at bat and/or play one inning in the field. Each team should keep a detailed scorebook for each game, for the purpose of providing written evidence in the case of a roster dispute. Proof of eligibility falls directly to the named team manager as provided to the League. If a team only uses a player in the defensive line-up, it is that teams duty to ensure this is noted in their scorebook and the scorebook of the opposing team. Teams that are unable to provide proper proof of performance will not be allowed to participate in the Playoffs or will be penalized as deemed appropriate.

10. CODE OF CONDUCT

Managers and players shall conduct themselves in a sportsman like manner at all times. No manager and/or player, through word or action, may openly criticize, embarrass, disparage or in any way demean the performance, abilities or efforts of his players, opposing players and/or the umpires during the course of the game. Violation of this rule shall be grounds for expulsion from the game by the umpire along with any other sanctions deemed appropriate by the Commissioner and/or the Board of Directors.

Any punishment for rules violations, misconduct, forfeiting of games, and/or other sanctionable offense(s) shall be left to the discretion of the League Commissioner and/or the Board of Directors. See also NR 10: Conduct of Conduct for examples of sanctionable offenses and types of punishment possible.

11. GOVERNING RULES

Any rule not specified herein shall be governed by the National MSBL rules or, in absence of such, by the Official Playing Rules of Major League Baseball.