**Game Preliminaries**

1. The T-Ball team will consist of 4-6 year-old players, per official Little League age chart for 2021.
2. All teams must have a minimum of nine (9) players.
	1. If the team does not have nine (9) players, the head coach, must contact the player agent, at least one (1) hour prior to the start of the game.
	2. If less than one (1) hour, please provide as much time as possible, so that the player agent, may have ample time to attempt to fill the vacancy.
3. The team **WILL** consist of players, equal to a regular season team, **NOT** an all-star team!
	1. In other words, **NO ROSTER STACKING**!!
4. The coaching staff shall consist of **NO MORE** than four (4) **ADULTS.**
	1. Suggested composition of coaching staff includes: One (1) Manager (Head Coach), One (1) Assistant Coach, One (1) Pitching Coach and One (1) Dugout Coach (a.k.a. Team Mom)
	2. All members of coaching staff **MUST** have completed a volunteer application and background check, prior to interacting with the players, for practice and/or games.
5. **The allotted game time will be 60 minutes. The home team will be allowed to finish the inning (if they are behind), should the game time expire, while still on offense.**
	1. **This means both sides will have an equal opportunity to play offense & defense, depending on the game situation.**
	2. **This does NOT constitute a “drop-dead” situation.**
6. Each team **WILL** furnish an official lineup card to the opposing team **AND** to the official scorekeeper, with a continuous batting order.
	1. Complete player name **AND** number shall be included.
7. Any late arriving player(s) can still be entered into the, game AFTER the opposing team is notified & the change(s) are reported to the official scorekeeper.
	1. The player(s) are to be placed at the end of batting order.
	2. The player must arrive PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION of the first (1st) inning.
	3. There will be **NO** late players permitted, following the conclusion of the first (1st) inning.

**Equipment & Field Regulations**

1. The standard “league-issued” uniform shall always be worn, with the appropriate patches affixed.
	1. Please ensure the players have their shirts tucked at all times & their number should always be visible.
	2. Please ensure that all league-issued jerseys, shall be placed over any cold-weather gear.
	3. Please ensure that all players, on defense, have their hat on (facing forward).
		1. (Exception: All levels of softball.)
	4. All players must be “properly & legally equipped to play.”
	5. The catcher must wear approved protective equipment.
	6. **All male catchers MUST wear a protective cup**.
2. The bases shall be set at sixty (60) feet apart & properly secured.
3. If any batted ball lands within a twelve (12) foot radius of home plate, will be a foul ball & considered a dead ball.
	1. This ruling would be in the judgment of the Umpire & the ruling is **NOT** protestable.
4. The bat shall be twenty-eight (28) inches or less & not greater than 2 5/8” inches, in diameter.
	1. Competitive T-Ball Baseball should have **BPF rating of 1.15** & it must be stamped with appropriate USA Baseball logo.
	2. Competitive T-Ball Softball should have a **BPF rating of 1.20** & it must be stamped with appropriate USA Baseball logo.
5. The game ball shall be a Flexi-ball.
	1. Each coach is responsible for providing a new, unused ball for each game
6. The pitching circle should be drawn six (6) feet in diameter, using the forty-six (46) foot pitching rubber for baseball or the forty (40) foot pitching rubber for softball, being the center of the circle.
	1. The “Coach-Pitcher” may pitch **at any distance,** if the coach-pitcher is in alignment of Home Plate & Second (2nd) base.

**Offensive Rules**

1. Any coach-pitched ball will not be called a “ball” or “strike.”
2. The batter will get five (5) pitches **OR** two (2) swinging strikes, whichever occurs first.
	1. The batter will then be given two (2) attempts to hit the ball from the tee.
	2. The batter is ruled “out,” if they fail to make contact, on the last swing.
	3. Should the player make contact and a “Foul Ball” is called, during the batters last swing, the batter will be allowed another attempt.
	4. The player may choose whether to hit from the tee.
		1. **Any** **player not using the tee will be allowed a maximum of two (2) more pitches**.
			1. If the first (1st) pitch results in a swing & a miss, the batter is “Out.”
3. The infield fly rule is **NOT** in effect.
4. All batters will remain in the dugout, until their turn to bat.
	1. There will be **NO** players on field, “On-Deck.”
5. If an offensive player bats “out-of-lineup” and such infraction is discovered by the opposing team and is properly protested, the batter will be called “Out.”
	1. This is applicable **ONLY** if the batter has reached base, after putting the ball into play.
	2. However, should the batting order discrepancy be noted while the batter is still batting, the player will be replaced with the correct batter.
		1. That batter will assume the current ball-strike count.
6. Each team will get three (3) outs **OR** five (5) runs per inning UNLESS extra innings are required.
	1. In this case, each team will start their time at bat with two (2) outs & a runner on second (2nd) base (International Tie-Breaker Rule). The runner shall be the last player on the batting order for that inning.
7. In an interest of player safety, any player, while at bat, who throws or otherwise “slings” their bat, shall be ruled “Out” by the Umpire. The teams are warned at the home plate conference between the Umpire(s) and Managers. This is applicable in the following situations:
	1. The thrown bat makes physical contact with the player-catcher and/or Umpire,
8. Or at which time, the bat travels a distance that is determined to be unsafe or hazardous to the game being played, in the judgement of the Umpire.
9. The batter is “Out,” should they reach first (1st) base with the bat still in hand.
10. All base runners will stay in contact with the base, until the ball is hit into fair territory.
	1. In other words, NO leading off is permitted.
	2. If a runner is determined to have left contact with the base, prior to the ball being put into play, the runner will be called “Out.”
11. The recommended offensive coach positioning is as follows: One (1) offensive coach in the first (1st) base coaches’ box, One (1) offensive coach in the third (3rd) base coaches’ box, One (1) offensive coach designated as the “Coach-Pitcher” and the last offensive coach in the dugout, with remaining players.
12. The “Coach-Pitcher” must immediately move to the designated pitching circle after the ball is put into play.
	1. Any failure of the Coach-Pitcher to do so, will result in a “Dead Ball” **AND** the batter is ruled “Out.”
		1. The Coach-Pitcher shall not coach or otherwise instruct the player once the ball is put into play and considered a “Live Ball.”
	2. If any other runners have advanced, they will return to their original base, which they were at, prior to the dead-ball incident.
	3. When a ball is at a base, runners that are in between bases may advance at their own risk to the next base and stop.
	4. If a batted ball is put into play & contacts the coach, while in “Live-Ball” territory, the play is “Dead.”
		1. This will be counted as a “No Pitch.”

**Defensive Rules**

1. The defensive team will field ten (10) players, with four (4) players in the Outfield.
2. One defensive coach allowed on the playing field, positioned in the outfield behind ten (10) foot line.
3. There **WILL** be a chalk-drawn line, ten (10) feet behind each base (1st, 2nd & 3rd), which shall divide the Infield & Outfield.
4. The ball must be returned from the outfield to the infield & it is considered a “live-ball,” until this occurs. To stop live-ball play, the ball is to be thrown to the coach.
	* + - 1. The Umpire, at his or her judgement, will announce & signal “time,” when this occurs.
				2. Any runner, who is beyond the 3-foot line when time is called, shall be awarded the next base.
5. A defensive player may not change positions, between batters, without proper substitution If the ball remains in the possession of an infielder **AND** the runner tries to advance toward the next base, the defensive team has the option to throw the runner out, applying a tag to the runner, resulting in an “Out” **OR** throwing the ball to the “Coach-Pitcher.”
	* + - 1. If the ball is thrown to the “Coach-Pitcher”, the runner **MUST** stop at the next base.
				2. The runner’s position is determined by the Umpire, at such time, where they were, when the ball is released.
				3. A ball thrown from the outfield must be fielded by an infielder then thrown to the “Coach-Pitcher.”
6. The “player-pitcher” must be in a position, with at least, one (1) foot touching the circle, preferably with one (1) foot inside of the circle, to limit confusion.
7. An infielder may not “run-down” the batter-runner or any other base runner, over three (3) feet, outside of their designated base path.
	* + - 1. In this case, the Umpire will call “Time” and the following runner will be awarded one base.

**First (1st) Base: The runner advances from Home to 2nd.**

**Second (2nd) Base: The runner advances from 1st to 2nd.**

**Shortstop (SS): The runner advances from 2nd to 3rd.**

**Third (3rd) Base: The runner advances from 2nd to Home.**

**Catcher: The runner advances from 1st to 3rd.**

**Pitcher: The runner advances from 1st to Home OR Home to 3rd.**

1. An Infielder, under no circumstance, shall proceed into the Outfield. Likewise, an Outfielder shall not come into the Infield.
	* + - 1. An Infielder may cross the ten (10) foot line to retrieve the ball, once an Outfielder has made an attempt to throw the ball **OR** to retrieve a ball that has been thrown into foul territory.
				2. Any Infielder **OR** Outfielder crossing the ten (10) foot line, will result in the base runners being awarded an extra base, **AFTER** the play is “Dead.”

If a “throwing motion” should carry a defensive player over the ten (10) foot line, the extra base(s) are not awarded.

**NOTICE TO ALL MANAGERS/ASSISTANT COACHES**

Any rule(s) or situations that are not expressively covered directly in these ground rules, you are hereby advised that the most current Little League Rule Book, will be used as guidance for these situations. Furthermore, the Manager/Assistant Coaches acknowledge that at no time should they or any other team representative, produce a rule book, whether a physical copy or an electronic copy of a rulebook or these ground rules, during the game.

Additionally, any conduct deemed to be detrimental to the public image of St. Bethlehem Little League (STBLL) by any Manager or Assistant Coach, at the discretion of the Umpire **OR** any League Official, while serving in an official capacity, understand the following penalties will be considered.

1. The penalty for this infraction, is immediate restriction of the Manager/Assistant Coach involved to the dugout for the remainder of the game.
	1. EXCEPTION: The usage of vulgar language will result in the immediate ejection of the Coach or Assistant Manager involved.
2. Any secondary infraction of this rule shall result in the immediate disqualification of the Manager or Assistant Coach. The Manager or Assistant Coach involved, should immediately leave the facility, and return to his or her vehicle, for the duration of the day.
3. If a Manager or Assistant Coach is disqualified during a game, the Manager or Assistant Coach acknowledges that he/she will be subsequently be disqualified from the next game played.
4. The Manager or Assistant Coach involved will also be **REQUIRED** to apologize to his or her players, other Managers or Assistant Coaches **AND** to the player’s families, **BEFORE** being permitted to resume coaching duties.
5. Moreover, the Manager and/or Assistant Coach, acknowledge that an administrative review will be performed of the situation and STBLL reserves the right to impose additional penalties, up to and including revocation of coaching privileges in the future.