

RIVIERA LITTLE LEAGUE

2026 NATIONAL DIVISION RULES

A. Philosophy

The National Division introduces Riviera Little League players to competitive baseball. It is the responsibility of coaches to balance competition with fairness, learning, sportsmanship and fun, so that players are likely to continue playing baseball. The first two games of the season will be coach pitch – four (4) competitive pitches maximum unless the fourth pitch is fouled-off, in which case the batter will continue until the ball is in play or another pitch is thrown and either a swing and miss occurs, or the batter takes the pitch. One base maximum off any hit coach pitch. If the ball is not put into play after four pitches or a strikeout– the batter is out.

B. Rules

1. Pitching –

- a. The pitching distance will be 40 feet from the pitching rubber to home plate.
- b. Pitchers shall not throw more than 40 pitches (in the event that a pitcher starts a batter at or below 40 pitches, they may exceed 40 pitches in order to finish the at bat).
- c. Nine-year olds are not permitted to pitch in the National Division.
- d. In the event the pitcher causes three “Hits-by-Pitch” he will be replaced. Standard pitching rules apply and he cannot return to the game
- e. When it is coach pitch the player at the pitcher’s position shall be stationed to the right or to the left of the mound, with at least one foot touching the mound at the time of the pitch, and beyond the rubber. The coach is required to pitch from the pitching rubber on the mound.
- f. If a ball is put into play during coach pitch, the batter and any runners may advance a **maximum** of one base and cannot advance on an overthrow.
- g. The coach who is pitching shall be treated as part of the field.
- h. Rules of Play:
 1. No walks allowed.
 2. When a batter receives a 4-ball count, the coach will inherit the number of strikes in the count. The umpire will continue to callballs and strikes during coach pitch.

RIVIERA LITTLE LEAGUE

2026 NATIONAL DIVISION RULES

3. No stealing is allowed. Base runners may advance on a player thrown pitch that goes beyond the horizontal plane of the catcher. Runners may only advance one base. No advancement may occur during coach pitch.
4. Runners may advance only one (1) base on an overthrow.
Example: if a batter hits the ball to a fielder, and the fielder attempts to throw the batter out at first base and overthrows the base, the runner may advance to second base at his/her own risk. If a play is made to second base and an additional overthrow results, the player *must remain* at second base, and the play is considered over. If the runner is thrown out, the out is recorded.

2. **Batting** –

- a. The entire team will bat in rotation until three (3) outs are made or five (5) runs are scored (in which case the inning will conclude with the scoring of that fifth run).

3. **Fielders** – There may be (9) defensive players on the field with three of those required to be on the outfield grass.

4. **Bunting** – Bunting is allowed on kid-thrown pitches only.

5. **Player Rotation** – Each player shall play a minimum of nine (9) defensive outs per game, regardless of game length. No player shall sit a second inning until every player has sat out at least one inning. Each player must play a minimum of one (1) inning in the infield per game. Penalties for failure to follow this participation rule are:

- i. **First Offense:** Written warning issued to the coach. The player shall start the next game and play the entire game defensively (in the infield if the minimum one inning in the infield was missed) to make up for the previously denied playing time.
- ii. **Second Offense:** The coach shall be subject to the discipline of the Board of Directors.

RIVIERA LITTLE LEAGUE

2026 NATIONAL DIVISION RULES

The player's playing time shall be made up in the same manner as stated above.

iii. During playoffs there is **NO** circumvention of the player rotation rules, period.

6. Sliding – A runner must avoid contact at any base where a play is being made or likely to be made. There is no “must slide” rule. (See LLI)

7. Coaches – A team shall have no more than **four adults** allowed on the field once the game starts. There must be one adult coach in the dugout at all times. All adults in direct contact with players either in game or practice must be background checked by Rivera Little League. Violations of this rule will result in a coach suspension and/or removal at the discretion of the President.

8. Forfeit – If a team does not have eight (8) players on the field, ready to play at game time (refer to the umpire's watch), the game will be forfeited by that team. a. In the event that one or both teams have less than nine (9) players, the following will occur:

i. Team managers may borrow players, of equivalent or lesser draft round, from other teams within the division. If multiplayers are missing, coaches shall replace their players in order from lowest to highest draft picks. Replacement players must play the entire game in the outfield and bat last in the lineup. The replacement player must be approved by the opposing coach and Division Player Agent.

ii. To ensure there is a pool of replacement players at similar skill level, all players drafted in the last three rounds of the draft will be eligible to replace any players on other teams. Players drafted in earlier rounds will follow normal player replacement requirements.

iii. Undrafted players are not eligible to be used as replacement players.

iv. A team may play a game with 8 players, however an out will be recorded for the missing batter for every missed at bat in that spot in the order. If any team has less than 8 players at any point in the game,

RIVIERA LITTLE LEAGUE

2026 NATIONAL DIVISION RULES

they will forfeit the game.

v. If eight defensive players are on the field, the last out on the offensive team will play in the outfield closest to their dugout. At the start of the game, the player chosen will be the last player in the batting rotation.

vi. Managers cannot choose to forfeit a game unless the above forfeit criteria is met. Managers who violate this rule will be Subject to discipline by the RLL Board of Directors.

vii.

9. Infield Fly Rule – Not in effect.

10. Scorekeeping – Only the home team's scorekeeper will be recognized as official.

11. Protests – All protests will be reviewed and ruled on by the RLL Board of Directors.

12. Injuries – Any player leaving a game as result of an injury MUST have an incident and injury report filed with RLL's Safety Officer. The player's coach will be responsible for overseeing that this happens at the conclusion of that game.

13. Uniforms - Teams must wear uniforms provided by RLL (i.e. jersey w/LLI Patch, hat, belt and socks) at all RLL games, unless specifically approved by the RLL Board. Coaches cannot force, encourage, or circumvent league issued apparel by directing or encouraging parents or players to purchase other than league provided items (jersey, hats, belts and socks).

14. Game Length – The game length will be six (6) innings with no new inning after 90 minutes and a drop-dead time limit of 105 minutes. In the event the game is tied after six innings, and the 90-minute threshold has not been exceeded, the game will continue subject to the timelines described above.

A: If the Drop-Dead time limit is reached then the score will revert back to the previous complete inning's score. Note: In the case that the home team ties the score in the last inning of play when drop dead time limit is reached, the score will stand & not revert to the last inning score.

RIVIERA LITTLE LEAGUE

2026 NATIONAL DIVISION RULES

B. Regular season games may end in a tie.

15. Playoff Rules – All Little League and National Division regular season rules are in effect, except for the game length time limit – playoff games will have no new inning after 105 minutes. The National Division shall play a single-elimination playoff system to determine a Division Champion. The regular season standings determine the seeds for playoffs.

a. Playoff games will be 6 innings in length, unless tied after the 6th inning, in which case an additional inning(s) will be added until a winner is determined.

i. In the event of tie, starting with the 7th inning or any new inning after time expired, each team puts the batter who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half of the inning on second base and plays out a full inning.

Updated 11/2/2025