



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

## COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



### Manager and Coaches Handbook

#### “Why do I coach?”

Fifty years from now it won't matter who struck out, who dropped the fly ball, who hit the home run, or how many wins and losses your Little League team had. But the world could be different if you were important in a little child's life, your own or someone else's. The goal of the League is to teach children the fundamentals of the game, have fun while playing Little League baseball, build character, courage, and loyalty under the safest conditions utilizing background checks, safe equipment, and the education of board members, managers, coaches, umpires, and parents.

#### Division: T-Ball

- Have Fun
- Go over basic Baseball rules
- Position Basics (who's who and who does what)
- Teach Baseball positions
- Proper grip and throwing technique (“ankle eye”, “step”, “throw hard”)
- Proper catching techniques including glove placement (look at your partner, thumb down)
- Ground Balls (athletic stance, move your feet, alligator)
- Proper batting grip and swing basics off a tee (Swing Hard)
- Base running basics (direction and technique)
- Basic outs strategy (force outs)
- Emphasize working together as a team

#### Division: Minor C

- Have Fun
- Introduce pitching (Begin ASAP, Give everyone a chance who wants to, come towards the catcher to receive the ball)
- Introduce Catching (blocking, throwing back to the pitcher, communication with infielders,)
- Incorporate youth live pitching to hitters in practice
- Intermediate Infield (faster pace, proper double play turns, get the ball back to the pitcher)
- Intermediate Outfield (backing up, covering gaps, proper drop step)
- Emphasize working together as a team

#### Division: Farm

- Have Fun
- Continued Position Basics From T-Ball
- Playing catch with teammates (less missed balls and chest high throws)
- Outfield (proper footwork, communication, cut offs)
- Forced Outs/ Tag Outs/ Run Downs
- Introduce tracking outs and where's the play
- Hitting-Foot (Good Stance), Hands (Proper Grip), Eyes (Find the Ball), Load (Weight Back), Explode (Shift and Swing Hard)
- Baserunning (Run Hard, Follow League Divisional Rules for extra bases, work with the other manager)
- Emphasize working together as a team

#### Division: Minor B

- Have Fun
- Stealing bases (Signs)/ Steal Defense
- Intermediate pitching (introduce change up)
- Intermediate catching (blocking, throwing to bases, communication, signs)
- Bunt/ Bunt Defense
- Utilize youth live pitching to hitters in practice
- Advance Infield (faster pace, proper double play turns)
- Advance Outfield (cutting off gaps, proper drop step)
- Emphasize working together as a team



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## Division: Minor A

- Have Fun
- Add more advanced steal defense (i.e., first and third)
- Advance bunt defense
- Stealing bases
- Advance pitching (pitch location, selection)
- Advance catching (blocking, throwing to bases, communication with infielders, position set-up)
- Utilize youth live pitching to hitters in practice
- Advance Infield (faster pace, proper double play turns, back picks)
- Advance Outfield (cutting off gaps, proper drop step)
- Emphasize working together as a team

## Division: Majors

- Have Fun
- Advance playing catch (short hop, bad ball drills)
- Advance game situations
- Playing the fence (fly balls) Taking away extra bases
- Situational hitting (Identifying individual strengths and perfecting them)
- Advance pitching strategy (when to throw what, location, pitch to dominate)
- Advance catching (Leadership, calling the game, pop time)
- Emphasize working together as a team

## Manager's Guidelines

Your attitude and conduct during games and practices will set the tone of our league. Please remember the goals of Little League and behave accordingly. Stress to your Players and their Parents what is expected of them in the way of behavior. Be sure to police yourself with respect to language, attitude, and emotions. Encourage a positive attitude among your Players, Parents, and Spectators. Your priority should be to provide a positive experience for all players, ensuring they will want to play next season. We strongly suggest that the first thing you do as a manager is to hold a Parent's/Players meeting. At this time, you should clearly establish the priorities that FVLL has set. Keep these priorities throughout the season.

Please keep the desire to win in its proper perspective. Help each player feel that he/she is an important part of the team. Stress their strengths and help them improve those skills where they need improvement. Remind them they are there to learn and that often you learn more from losing than from winning.

The players are there to learn the rules of baseball, improve their skills, and begin to learn about the strategy of the game. We want them to enjoy the experience and gain a positive attitude about themselves and baseball. Be constantly aware of what is going on in the game. Make sure your team is following and respecting the rules of the game and each other. Rules such as no headfirst sliding, pitching limitations, etc., are there for the Player's safety. Baseball can be a very fast paced game, not only for the kids but also for the Managers, Coaches, Umpires, Parents, and Spectators. Please be sure to always hold your composure in every situation (stressful or not). Know your surroundings and remember this is a game and life lessons are being taught on the Baseball Diamond.

## Volunteer Forms

Fountain Valley Little League will have its Board Members, Managers, Coaches, Parent Volunteers, and Umpires complete a current Volunteer Application Form each new season. All leagues are mandated to require Volunteer Applications and the background checks required by California Law and Little League International, including JDP background check and LiveScan. Minimum background check: Megan's Law. Leagues may make a request for authorization to receive State Summary Criminal History Information Pursuant to Penal Code Section 11105.3 and may require fingerprinting.



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



## **The following certifications are required to be completed by all volunteers:**

- All volunteers are required to create a profile and register on the FVLL website for any positions being volunteered for. [www.fvlittleleague.com](http://www.fvlittleleague.com)
- All volunteers are required to complete all sections of the [Volunteer Background Information](#) page.

## **Manager's Responsibilities**

Fountain Valley Little League expects Team Managers to accept certain responsibilities when they agree to be a manager. Please be certain to read and be familiar with all Little League rules as well as local rules.

## **Coaches and Managers Meeting**

FVLL will host a mandatory meeting for all Coaches and Managers. This meeting will outline the league's goals and rules for the upcoming season. Coaches and Managers' Handbooks will be distributed and all Coaches and Managers will sign and return an agreement to follow the league's rules and code of conduct. Managers and Coaches will receive instruction from the League Safety Officer.

## **Managers and Coaching Training**

All Managers and Coaches are required to attend mandatory coaching clinics. All Managers and Coaches are required to complete training in areas of child abuse reporting, concussion, sudden cardiac arrest, and any other trainings required by law, Little League International, or the FVLL Executive Board.

## **Parent/Player Meeting**

Each Manager should hold a Parents/Player Meeting. A sample agenda for this meeting is included at the end of this section. The meeting will be your opportunity to inform parents of your needs, and the needs of the league, and the ways in which they can participate. Since we are a volunteer organization, we need each family to do its part. You will have a better relationship with your team's parents if you inform them of as many details as you can. Set up your practice and game schedule as far in advance as possible and distribute it to your families. You will need to recruit volunteers for coaches, scorekeepers, umpires and snack bar shifts.

## **Team Parent Coordinator**

This person will be the person responsible for notifying parents of team issues and getting commitments for work days (field maintenance, painting, etc.), game-day field prep and snack bar duty. He/she will notify parents of any special information the President, Player Agent, the Team Manager or Coaches request to be passed on. He/she may wish to establish a contact list to the team to coordinate and schedule Field Umpires, Plate Umpires (Tee-Ball, Farms, Minors, Scorekeepers, and team refreshments (if applicable, usually parents supply team refreshments for the younger teams on fields without a snack bar).

## **Scorekeepers**

All divisions supply an official Home Team Scorekeeper. Schedule parents in advance for each game(s) they will be scorekeeping. Be sure these parents/volunteers know how to scorekeep. Encourage parents to attend scorekeeper training, or contact a Board Member if additional assistance is needed in training.

## **Medical Releases**

Managers must have medical releases for all players at every practice and game.



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



## **Practices**

No practice shall be held until equipment has been assigned to the team. Practice only on authorized fields with FVLL insurance coverage in place. The minimum or maximum number of practices shall be left to the discretion of the Board. All practices must have adult supervision. It is required by California law that two approved volunteers who have completed LiveScan and child abuse training are present at all FVLL functions. It is the Team Manager's responsibility to ensure that there are the requisite two volunteers at all times. It is the Team Manager's responsibility to ensure no child is left unattended at a practice or after a game. The Manager or Coach will check equipment before each practice (helmets, throat guards on catcher's helmet, etc.). All equipment worn by players will be checked for proper fit. Umpires will inspect equipment before each game.

## **Use of Practice Fields**

Only use certified practice fields at specified scheduled times. Failure to do so may negate Little League Insurance and jeopardize FVLL privileges to use those fields particularly at elementary schools. FVLL baseball fields will be allotted according to Division priority:

1. Majors
2. Minor A
3. Minor B
4. Minor C
5. Farm
6. T-Ball



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



## Equipment: USA Bats, Batting Helmets, and Catcher's Gear

- All bats must have the USA Bats insignia labeled on the neck of the bat. This is valid for the Farm thru Juniors divisions. The Tee-Ball division does not need to have the USA Bat logo but should be free of defects. If a player uses an illegal non-USA approved bat, the manager and player will be subject to a potential suspension.
- Little League® requires our batters to wear helmets that meet National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) specifications and bear the NOCSAE stamp. Batting helmets must be free of cracks or other visible damage, and all of the internal padding must not be missing, tattered, torn or frayed. No stickers are permitted on the helmets, unless there is a letter of certification from the helmet manufacturer affirming the stickers are permitted to be affixed to the helmet. For more information about C-Flaps and Face Guards see link: <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/modifying-helmets-with-additional-attachments/>
- Catcher's gear needs to be in good working condition. Shin guards, Chest Protector, Helmet, and Catcher's Mitt (Minor C-Majors) are needed. Helmets must have throat guards properly attached and all of the internal padding must not be missing, tattered, torn or frayed. No stickers are permitted on the helmets, unless there is a letter of certification from the helmet manufacturer affirming the stickers are permitted to be affixed to the helmet.
- **Male players are required to wear athletic supporters and cups.**
- **Cleats must be rubber-soled for TBall–Majors Divisions.**

## Game Day

FVLL relies on parents and volunteers to provide the players with the best experience possible. Each and every parent must do their part to make for a successful team and a fulfilling season. Managers and coaches need to take the time to prepare players for games and manage the activities on the field. We encourage each manager to select their Team Parent based on the ability to organize and be a leader in the completion of required tasks and the ability to get other parents involved. Parents should be organized by task early in the season and attend the appropriate clinics and workshops (Field Preparation Day, Umpire Clinics, Team Parent Meeting, Snack Bar Duties, etc.).

No game will start until qualified Volunteers have been provided by each team. Any team which cannot fulfill these responsibilities or make suitable arrangements may forfeit the game. Delayed games will be shortened to accommodate league play schedules.

### Home Team Responsibilities

- Prepare the field before each game
  - Rake the base paths, baselines, and pitchers-mound
  - Water the infield (if required)
  - Paint baselines and batters boxes
  - Remove base plugs and place bases
- Home Plate Umpire or Field Umpire (Certain Divisions)
- Official Scorekeeper with training and appropriate experience when possible
- Pitch Log Recorder (Certain Divisions)
- Lead Pledge of Allegiance and Little League Pledge

### Visiting Team Responsibilities

- Scorekeeper (optional)
- Pitch Log Recorder (Certain Divisions)
- Breakdown the field following the game (if there is a game scheduled to follow, remove bases and place them on the infield grass, **replace plugs** in preparation for the field to be dragged. If there is no game scheduled, place bases in field sheds, replace tarps at the plate and pitcher's mound and place field closure sign on pitcher's mound



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



## Game Preliminaries

- The playing fields will be inspected by managers/coaches and/or umpires prior to each game. Identify any problems such as holes, damage, and or any foreign objects.
- The Manager or Coach will check equipment before each game and practice. All equipment worn by players will be checked for proper fit. Umpires will inspect equipment before each game. The umpire(s) will check bats (USA stamp, cracks and dents), catcher's helmet (cracks, padding, loose screws, and throat guard), and batting helmets (cracks, illegal stickers, and padding). Defective equipment must be removed from the field/ dugout. No paint or stickers on helmets unless accompanied by a manufacturer's letter of acceptance.
- Batters must wear Little League approved protective helmets during batting practice and games. If a player has a bat in their hand a helmet must be worn. No exceptions!
- All pre-game warm-ups will be performed within the confines of the playing field, not within areas frequented by spectators. No Hitting hard balls against the fences. Wiffle balls only may be used for the purpose of soft toss.
- Little League rules place the primary responsibility on team managers to inspect all equipment for safety and legality before each game. Managers must ensure bats, helmets (NOCSAE-approved, no stickers/paint), and catcher's gear (throat protector, etc.) meet standards, with illegal items removed immediately and potentially leading to severe penalties (ejection) if used during play.

<https://www.littleleague.org/university/articles/playing-equipment-inspection-batting-helmets-and-catchers-gear/>

## Game Time

Managers shall meet at home plate, they should shake hands and introduce themselves to each other as well as the umpire(s). If the manager is unavailable and unable to be at the plate meeting, whoever is representing the team at that meeting will be considered the manager for the duration of the game. The Plate Umpire will establish game rules and field guidelines. **They will ask each manager if their players are properly equipped and ready to play Little League Baseball, a verbal response is required.** This means that all players are in uniform, wearing rubber-soled cleats (T-ball-Majors), and that male players are wearing *an athletic supporter that protects the groin area*. Following the plate meeting Managers/Coaches/Players will line up for the Pledge of Allegiance and Little League Pledge.

Be sure to read and adhere to the Official Regulations and Playing Rules, which prohibits the use of tobacco, and alcoholic beverages in any form on the playing field, benches, and dugouts at any time. These same regulations are applied at all practices that are held for FVLL. Follow League rules when having sunflower seeds by properly disposing of seed shells.

- All team equipment will be stored within the team dugout, or behind screens. No bat handles will be hung on the inside or outside of the screens that face the field of play.
- Players will stay inside the dugout during the game and will not sit or stand in the door opening.
- Managers/Coaches will stay in the dugout or entirely behind the screen. No one will sit on buckets or squat outside of the doorway of the dugout.
- No offensive player will retrieve foul balls.
- All players should be alert and watch the batter on each and every pitch.
- Only players, managers, coaches, and umpires are permitted on the playing field or in the dugout during games and practice sessions.
- Both teams shall make every effort to keep the dugout and surrounding areas clean.



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



- Parents/Spectators should encourage players within the guidelines of the Little League International Code of Conduct
- Parents/Spectators are to place trash in appropriate bins prior to leaving the game. Neither manager should leave an evening game or the last game on Saturday until dugouts are clean, and trash is disposed of in the proper trash cans.
- When warming up pitchers, the catcher must wear a catcher's helmet and mask with a dangling throat guard and a cup with a supporter. This applies between innings and in the bullpen during games and practices. Managers and coaches **may not catch** pitchers warming up on game day. Also, Little League rules prohibit a parent, coach, or manager from "shagging" balls at the plate for the manager in pre-game warm-ups. This must be done by a player wearing the proper equipment.
- Please remember that **there is no on-deck circle in Little League.**
- Players may not wear watches, rings, earrings, pins, or metallic items during games or practices. Players may use sunglasses during games and practices, **so long as they are not reflective.**
- Managers, coaches, and umpires are to abide by the same rule, setting a good example. Medical Alert jewelry and wedding rings are an exception.
- Managers, coaches, parents, or any other person not listed as a player on the team roster shall not play catch with their team during a game, in between innings or at practice.
- Managers may not exit from the field to watch a pitcher warm up in the bullpen. Managers and coaches may not cross the foul lines and enter the field of play to observe a pitcher warm-up on the pitching mound prior to or during a game.
- All Managers, coaches, and umpires will have training on First Aid. First Aid kits will be issued to each team manager and should be kept up to date and complete. A First Aid kit will be located in the Snack Bar. Managers will always carry a First Aid kit to games, practices, and any Little League team function.

## PROCEDURE FOR TEMPORARY PLAYER REPLACEMENT IN MINOR B, MINOR A, AND MAJORS

These divisions will utilize a "Player Pool" system for temporary (one game) replacement of players only when a team does not have enough players. At the beginning of the year, each Manager shall identify those players willing to participate in the pool to play extra games if needed and forward such lists of names to the Player Agent. The Player Agent shall keep a list of the names of these players in order to assign them as needed. Only the Player Agent can assign extra players from the pool. No player in the Minors Divisions may be brought up as a one-game replacement to a Majors team. In addition, the pool player **MUST** wear their uniform from the team they are assigned to. **The pool player must play 9 consecutive out on defense. Pool players can bat in any spot in the lineup and play any position other than pitcher.** When a Manager first realizes that his/her team does not have 9 players available for a scheduled game, notification must be made immediately to the Upper Division Player Agent. The Player Agent will maintain the Pool Players roster and contact the player next up on the roster for replacement play. Once contact is made and availability is confirmed, the Player Agent will notify the Manager of the Pool Player's name and confirm that player will be available at the time scheduled for that game. This replacement Player may be used for ONE GAME only. If additional games require replacement players, a separate request must be made to the Player Agent and the next player up in the pool will be contacted. At no time will the Manager attempt to contact a Pool Player to play in a game. Teams shall only request a pool player for a game if they can field 9 or fewer players from their roster.



# FOUNTAIN VALLEY LITTLE LEAGUE

COURAGE • CHARACTER • LOYALTY



## Umpires

FVLL umpires are all volunteers. Managers, players, and spectators are expected to have a positive attitude towards umpires. The umpire is in control of the game. Judgment calls, such as whether a pitch is a ball or a strike, whether a runner is safe or out, or whether a ball is fair or foul, are final. No player, manager, or coach may object to judgment decisions. The Umpire has the right to eject from the game (and area) any player, manager or coach who continues to criticize his/her judgment and/or for any other unsportsmanlike conduct. Any person who receives a warning from, or is ejected by, an Umpire may be subject to additional disciplinary action by the League after review by the Board.

The Umpire shall first warn the Manager unless the situation is so flagrantly in violation of acceptable behavior (e.g., extreme verbal abuse or violence) that it demands immediate action. If comments by managers or players on the bench can be heard by the Umpire and players on the field, the Umpire may issue a warning (or eject, if a warning has already been issued). The Umpire may act even if the comment was directed to the person next to the one who made it.

As a manager, you aren't responsible for controlling spectator behavior, the Board of Directors is. However, you will often have a great deal of influence over spectator behavior, so please do what you can to keep spectators calm and maintain a positive environment. If you have a complaint regarding what you consider to be consistently bad judgment calls, notify the league's Umpire-In-Charge. Other managers may be contacted for observations made, and an evaluation completed.

## Little League Pledges

### Parent/ Volunteer Pledge

*I will teach all children to play fair  
and do their best  
I will positively support all managers,  
coaches, and players  
I will respect the decisions of the  
umpires  
I will praise a good effort despite the  
outcome of the game*



### Player Pledge

*I trust in God  
I love my country  
And will respect its laws  
I will play fair  
And strive to win  
But win or lose  
I will always do my best!*