



Inter County Baseball Association

PLAYING RULES & POLICIES (INCLUDING INTERLOCK SERIES)

APPROVED FEBRUARY 12, 2026

*This document is an approved supplement
to the Inter County Baseball Association (ICBA) General Rules & Policies Manual*

SPECIFIC PLAYING RULES

1. The most current revision of Baseball Ontario (OBA) Rules, and the Official Rules of Baseball, shall be the rules to govern all games of the ICBA. Deviations and clarifications are noted below and have been approved by the ICBA Board of Directors.
 - a. **8U/9U Specific Playing Rules**
 - i. ICBA uses the approved playing rules for 8U/9U as designated by Baseball Ontario.
 - ii. **ICBA Interpretation of Encroachment Rule:** The outfielder encroachment rule is to be made clear/defined and established during ground rules before every ICBA regular season and playoff game at all centers, for consistency and clarity. For less confusion the ICBA will use 15 feet beyond the base path including behind 2nd base and **NOT** refer to the OBA language, “whichever is closer”.
 - b. **Wood Bats and Baseballs:**
 - i. The legal diameter for bats shall be two and three-quarter inches (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ ”).
 - ii. Subject to the following, in addition to wood bats, non-wood bats shall be allowed in rep play:
 - For all 12U and 13U play, non-wood bats with a length-to-weight difference of minus ten (-10) or less are permitted.
 - For all 14U and 15U play, wood bats and non-wood bats may be used. Only non-wood bats with a length-to-weight differential of minus five (-5) or less are permitted.
 - For all levels of play 16U and above, only wood, wood composite, and wood-like material bats are permitted. Wood composite bats include wood or bamboo bats with fiberglass sheathing and wood-barreled bats with composite handles. Wood composite bats do not include any bat that has any metallic component.
 - All players must use the approved bats for the series in which they are playing, regardless of age or gender.
 - iii. Only baseballs approved by the OBA may be used in ICBA play.
 - c. **Pre-game warm ups:** Diamonds must be ready for teams to commence warm ups a minimum of one (1) hour prior to game start time. Minimum warm-up requirements for all ICBA games are expected to be as follows:
 - i. For 13U and below: Teams may take the field and share the diamond 55 minutes prior to the game start time. The visiting team will then take the field for ten (10) minutes of in/out warm-ups starting 25 minutes prior to the game start time. At 15 minutes before the games start time, the home team will take the field for their in/out warm-ups. The remaining five (5) minutes is to be used for ground rules prior to the commencement of the game. If the

visiting team is not ready to take the field at the correct time, then the home team may continue to use the field until the visiting team is ready.

- ii. For 14U and 15U: The visiting team may take the field 45 minutes prior to the game time. The visiting team will be allowed 30 minutes to hit and/or take the infield, after which the home team will then take the infield for the next ten minutes. The remaining five (5) minutes is to be used for ground rules prior to commencement of the game. If the visiting team is not ready to take the field at the correct time, then the home team may continue to use the field until the visiting team is ready.
- iii. For 16U and 18U: The visiting team may take the field one (1) hour prior to the game time. The visiting team will be allowed 30 minutes to hit, after which the home team will then take the infield for the next ten (10) minutes. The visiting team can then take the infield for the following ten (10) minutes. The final five (5) minutes prior to game start is to be used for ground rules. If the visiting team is not ready to take the field at the correct time, then the home team may continue to use the field until the visiting team is ready.

d. Time Limits (Regular Season and ICBA Playoffs):

- i. Game start times shall be 6pm for all designated non-lit parks during the playing season. NOTE: A “designated non-lit park” is a park with no lights or a park with lights that are not used for game play and noted as such prior to the season.
- ii. Games at 11U and below cannot start later than 7:30 pm unless mutually agreed upon by both head coaches/managers, or with convenor permission.
- iii. In regular season games teams will play with the time limits listed below. The time limits may range up to the maximum for each series, according to the chart below. Shorter time limits shall be allowed, but only for a valid reason such as city curfews on lights, or bylaws concerning noise, etc.

	8U through 11U	12U through 18U
Tier 1	2:00	2:30
Tier 2	2:00	2:15

- iv. Upon reaching the time limit, teams will complete the inning. At 12U and above, if the game is tied, any subsequent innings will be played using the international tie breaker format as outlined in OBA rule RP2.8. In Tier 1, at 12U and above, the international tie breaker format will be used until the tie is broken. In Tier 2, at 12U and above, the international tie breaker will be used for one (1) inning and if the game remains tied upon completion of that inning, the tie will stand.
- v. For ICBA playoffs all divisions will follow the above rules pertaining to time limits with the exception of the final game. All games must be played until a winner is declared.

e. Game Length:

- i. For 2026 Season: Games in 18U (both Tier 1 and Tier 2) shall be nine (9) innings in length for the entire season.
- ii. If there is to be discussion regarding game length at 18U, it must be in August for the following year to allow local associations to select appropriate player numbers to accommodate game length and set appropriate budgets.
- iii. ICBA play will adopt OBA Rule RP 2.8, as follows, for all league play.
 - Each team will begin the extra inning (and any subsequent necessary extra innings) with a player on second base only, no outs.
 - The placement of the runners of the extra inning will be determined by how the previous inning ended:
 - a. The hitter with the last plate appearance in the previous inning will be placed at second base.
 - The traditional system of the visiting team hitting in the top of the inning and the home team hitting in the bottom of the inning will remain in effect until a winner is determined.
 - All other rules remain in effect during any extra innings.
- iv. Games that are played under a time limit and that reach the time limit will be considered an official game by either reaching the time limit regardless of the number of innings played or by completing seven (7) innings.
- v. A seven (7) inning game will be considered a complete game after four (4) innings of play or three and one-half (3 ½) if the home team is ahead. A nine (9) inning game will be considered a complete game after five (5) innings or four and one-half (4 ½) if the home team is ahead. A game must have reached a point in this section to become an official game due to rain, anything prior to the above criteria the game is to be restarted from the beginning.
- vi. **Double Headers:** Teams may set up double headers between themselves and other teams within their schedule provided both teams and the convenor agree to the schedule change. All double headers will follow the existing rules along with a maximum two (2) hour time limit per game.

f. **Mercy Rules:**

i. **Seven (7) Inning Games:**

The ICBA will revert to the OBA mercy rule, Rule RP 2.7 h) in all games.

- RP 2.7 h) - In all OBA rep games the following mercy rule shall apply:
 - o 18 runs after three (3) innings
 - o 15 runs after four (4) innings
 - o 10 runs after five (5) innings or any subsequent inning thereafter.

If the home team leads after the top half of any such inning, the game shall be considered a mercy and the home team will not bat.

ii. **Nine (9) Inning Games:**

For a nine (9) inning game the mercy rule shall be as follows:

- 18 runs after five (5) innings
- 15 runs after six (6) innings
- 10 runs after (7) innings or any subsequent inning thereafter

- iii. A team that is ahead by 10 runs or more may not start its turn at bat after two (2) hours from the time of the first pitch, by the umpire's time. The team that is ahead will be declared the winner by the mercy rule, regardless of the inning. This time limit on mercy games does not apply to Tier 1 play from 12U through 18U.

g. **Pitching Rules:**

- i. All teams must adhere to OBA pitching rule RP 2.11 c) regarding maximum allowable pitches in a calendar day.
- ii. ICBA will adhere to OBA Rule RP2.11 l) for league play – “Once a player assumes the pitching position, they are no longer eligible to catch for the remainder of the day. Once a player assumes the catching position, they are no longer eligible to pitch for the remainder of the day.”
- iii. For all ICBA games, the home team is responsible for capturing the pitch count in the pitch count app in real-time, either pitch-by-pitch or at the end of each inning. Failure to complete this in real-time which results in either team using an ineligible pitcher will result in the home team's association being subject to a \$200 fine. Exception: where cell service is weak or down.
- iv. For ICBA play, if an ineligible pitcher is used, the offending coach must take corrective action once the error is noted and play will continue. No forfeits will be issued for use of ineligible pitchers.
- h. **Re-entry Rule:** The re-entry rule per OBA Rule RP 2.9 b) will apply in all series 12U to 18U.
- i. **Player Call-ups for Tier 1 & Tier 2 Teams:**

- i. **For Tier 1:** Teams in Tier 1 may call-up players rostered on Tier 2 teams within the same division (i.e., 15U T1 and 15U T2) to play in ICBA scheduled games provided the team the player is rostered with does not have a scheduled game at the same time. This rule may be used in regular season and playoff ICBA games only. OBA call-up rules are used in all other circumstances (i.e., classification games and OBA tournaments).
- ii. **For Tier 2:** Tier 2 teams may call up Tier 1 players from the division below theirs (i.e., 15U T2 and 14U T1).
- iii. Inter County will allow minor aged players who are rostered to a Tier 2 major team to play as a call up on their age-appropriate Tier 1 or Tier 2 minor team during the ICBA regular season and not classifications, playoffs, or OBA tournaments, provided the team they are rostered to is not scheduled to play at the same time. All age-appropriate pitching limitations will apply to the player's eligibility.

- iv. Locals with two or more teams in the same ICBA age division and tier cannot call across players to fulfill a roster for league play. They must call up from the league/division below.

ICBA SEASON-SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following policies/procedures are expected to be adhered to:

2. **Contacts:** Each club shall provide to the convenor the names and contact information of the team manager and at least one coach. Each team will also designate a person who will report game results on a timely basis to the convenor.

3. **Team Duties**

a. **Line-up Cards & Scorekeeping:**

- i. In all series, teams engaged in Inter County regular schedule or playoff games must use the ICBA-supplied batting order (line-up) cards. Only players eligible to participate in the game shall be listed on the batting order cards and only players listed on the official batting order cards may participate in the game.
- ii. Players' last names and numbers are to be listed on the batting order cards. Coaches' last names and numbers are also to be listed on the line-up card.
- iii. Substitutes may be added to the line-up card at any time during the game.
- iv. Umpires are instructed not to accept line-up cards until properly filled out.
- v. All coaches/managers/players under suspension must be indicated on the line-up card as being under suspension (i.e., Smith #10, serving 1 of 2).
- vi. Failure to abide by these rules will result in a fine of not less than \$100 or more than \$200 (ICBA Constitution Series Rules).
- vii. Home teams are responsible for keeping score. This can be done electronically via an app such as GameChanger or manually on self-provided scoresheets. Regardless of method, a copy of the scoresheet is to be made available to the visiting team upon completion of the game and the home team is expected to retain records to be provided to the ICBA upon request.

- b. **Reporting Game Results:** It shall be the responsibility of the home team to confirm the game score with the Convenor, via their preferred method of communication, within 24 hours of the game being played. In addition, any ejections and suspensions served (i.e., Smith #10, served game 1 of 2) must be reported. Failure to comply may result in fines and/or forfeits.

c. **Postponing/Cancelling Games:**

- i. The home team must notify the visiting team a minimum of three (3) hours before game time by phone in case of a rainout game. Rainouts must be rescheduled according to the

procedure outlined below in section 6 d).

- ii. **NEW (Aug. 12/25):** Any team shall have the right to refuse to play a regular season game if the temperature is forecasted to be 40 or more with humidex for game time provided at least 3 hours notice and convenor/series chair approval is received. Failure to adhere to the proper timeline would result in a forfeit.
- iii. If a team wishes to reschedule a game for any other reason than weather or unplayable grounds, it must first obtain the consent of the Convenor and give the other team at least seven (7) days' notice. The teams must then comply with the rescheduling procedures outlined below in section 6 d).
- iv. If a team wishes to reschedule and cannot make the seven (7) days' notice requirement, it is at the convenor's discretion to declare a win by forfeit for the non-offending team, or to reschedule the game at the soonest possible date.

d. Rescheduling/Make-up Games

- i. When a game is postponed, the home team must advise the division convenor within 24 hours from the original game time, the reason for postponement.
- ii. Within seven (7) days, the home team must propose a suitable date for the game to be played. Once a rescheduled date is agreed on, the division convenor must be notified. During the last two weeks of the schedule, the date **MUST** be set within 24 hours of the postponed game. If the two teams do not agree on a date, the date will be picked by the convenor after consideration of the playing schedule of both teams.
- iii. If within one (1) week from the scheduled date of the postponed game the teams have not set a rescheduled date, then the division convenor will at their sole discretion determine the time and place for the game to be played. This timing may be compressed at the end of the season and during playoffs. The home team will be responsible for all expenses regardless of location selected. Violation of this section or failure to comply with the convenor will result in forfeiture by the offending team or teams.
- iv. Each team must fulfill as much of its regular season commitment as possible to qualify for classification in the OBA championship and to qualify for the ICBA playoff championship. The division convenor, commissioners, and overall series chair will review questionable situations. A team completing less than 90% of its regular season commitment, including interlock games, will be automatically reviewed at the affiliate classification meeting and at the end of the regular season. Both forfeits and non-played games will be considered.
- v. If a team forfeits games three (3) times, by failing to field a team at the beginning of a scheduled game, it shall be suspended from the remainder of the season and fined \$200. The club has seven (7) days to pay the fine. The ICBA Board must review teams suspended for the season, before they will be accepted to play in the next year's playing schedule.

e. Ejections, Discipline and Suspensions:

- i. **NEW (Feb. 12, 2026):** Any player, coach, or manager ejected by an umpire during an ICBA regular season or playoff game is automatically suspended for two (2) additional games.

This is to be the very next ICBA games played by the team (regular season, playoff, or ICBA tournament game). A post game ejection will be an automatic three (3) game suspension with the potential for review and further disciplinary sanctions.

- ii. All ejections must be reported via the ICBA website by both coaches and umpires within 24 hours.
- iii. The player, coach, manager, and local association may be subject to further suspension or discipline by its Affiliate Association and/or the Protest & Discipline Committee, depending on the severity of the circumstances leading to the ejection.
- iv. ICBA-issued suspensions in excess of two (2) games may be appealed.
- v. Any ejection from OBA sanctioned play (tournaments and championships) must be reported to the division convenor. The affiliate and/or commissioners and overall series chair reserve the right to further suspend or discipline a player, coach, or manager as a result of an ejection at an OBA sanctioned game.
- vi. A player, manager, or coach ejected from their last ball game of the season or playoffs will have their actions reviewed by the affiliate and/or the ICBA disciplinary committee for any further suspensions.
- vii. Any player, coach, or manager under suspension may attend the game(s) but:
 - they are required to sit away from the team
 - they cannot be in uniform
 - they cannot take part in any activities including pre-game warmup
 - they are not permitted to communicate verbally or electronically with the team during the gameFailure to abide with the above will result in further sanctions.

When in doubt about any matter, please contact your convenor.

Additional information about matters such as appeals, protests, signing of players, etc. can be found in our [ICBA General Rules & Policies Manual](#).