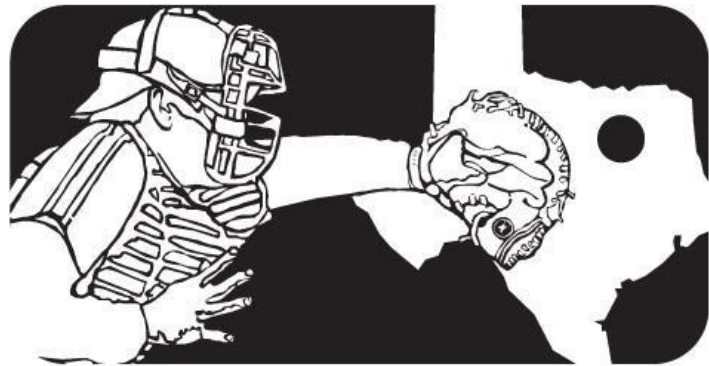


# DFW ADULT BASEBALL ASSOCIATION



**DFW ADULT BASEBALL ASSOCIATION**

## **Manager's Rulebook And Guidelines**

# **DFW ADULT BASEBALL ASSOCIATION**

**[www.dfw-aba.com](http://www.dfw-aba.com)**

## **DISCLAIMER**

**This document attempts to clarify and simplify as many rules as possible. The intent is to eliminate loopholes so that any one team does not receive an unfair advantage over another. In the event an issue, matter, or circumstance has not been addressed herein, the DFW ABA reserves the right to resolve said occurrence(s) in the best interest of the League as a whole, in the spirit of the game of Baseball and with impartiality to all the participants.**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The DFW Adult Baseball Association (DFW ABA) is headquartered in Euless, Texas. The DFW ABA offers adult amateur baseball to adults in the Dallas/Ft. Worth surrounding areas. The DFW ABA is organized in groups categorized by age – those categories (leagues) are 18 & Over, 25 & Over, 35 & Over, 40 & Over, 50 & Over, 55 & Over, 60 & Over. These leagues may be divided into classifications based on experience level and ability – Advanced (AAA), Intermediate (AA) or Recreational (A).

**MISSION STATEMENT**

DFW ABA plays under a common set of rules designed to organize amateur adult baseball into consistent, fairly run, and responsible adult baseball leagues. DFW ABA is family oriented, but competitive. The DFW ABA’s aim is to provide adults over the age of 18, with fair, well-organized, and enjoyable amateur baseball leagues in the DFW Area communities.

No arbitrary distinction or discrimination due to a potential player’s gender, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability shall be inferred or permitted.

**GOALS OF THE DFW ABA:**

1. Provide a well-organized and well-run League that is administered in a fair and impartial manner that keeps the player in mind and provides a forum for adults of all ages to play baseball, not softball; and
2. Provide leagues that are designed to accommodate different ages and abilities to eliminate the fear of intimidation; and
3. Create an organized and consistent “amateur baseball league” for adults ages 18 & Over.

## **DESCRIPTION OF LEAGUES:**

DFW ABA leagues are organized into different age groups with levels of competition play and ability. The 18 & Over Leagues (18AAA, 18AA, 18A) are for players age 18 or older and are organized into an 18 “AAA” League (advanced: the most competitive league), an 18 “AA” League (intermediate league), and an 18 “A” League (recreational league). The 25 & Over, 35 & Over, 40 & Over, 50 & Over, 55 & Over, 60 & Over leagues (hereafter referred to as 25+, 35+, 40+, 50+, 60+) are limited to players who meet the minimum age requirements for those leagues (25, 35, 40, 50, 55, 60 respectively) and then, as the league grows in size and number of teams, are organized by competitive level of play and ability into “AA” and “A”. Players that are over 25, 35, 40, 50, 55 or 60 may participate in an 18 & Over League or any age group league below their current age.

## **MAJOR LEAGUE RULES & DFW ABA RULES:**

All games are played under the rules of baseball as stated in the most recent **Official Rules of Baseball** published by the National Baseball Congress, Inc. with the exceptions, additions, or notations contained in this rule book. Rules in this Manager’s Rulebook and Guidelines apply to the DFW ABA. DFW ABA rules allow baseball to be played with the strategies and tactics that are unique to baseball and yet allow for more participation by all players. Each year these are reviewed, revised and republished if necessary. **Managers may not, at any time, alter any DFW ABA rules under informal agreements.** Protests involving informal agreements made before, during, or after a game will not be considered.

## **DFW ABA LEAGUES AND DIVISIONS:**

**LEAGUE** – An age group or level of play. For example: 18AAA: for players with experience at the junior college level or higher; 18AA: for players with experience at the high school varsity level; 18A: for players that have not played in a while or have never played. 25+: for players of any ability that are at least 25 years of age; 25AA: for 25+ Advanced players that are at least 25 years of age; 25A: for 25+ Recreational players that are at least 25 years of age; 25AA: for players with experience at the high school varsity level; 35 for players of any ability that are at least 35 years of age; 40+: for players of any ability that are at least 40 years of age; 50 for players of any ability that are at least 50 years of age; 55+: for players of any ability that are at least 55 years of age; and 60: for players of any ability that are at least 60 years of age.

**DIVISION** – A division within a particular League (i.e. the American and National divisions of an 18 & Over A League)

## **EMAILS / WEBSITE / COMMUNICATION:**

The DFW ABA communicates primarily by email and web site (dfw-aba.com). The league president will utilize these means of communication to communicate valuable important league information such as league standings, game scores, schedule changes, field directions, field maintenance procedures, all-star game information, and many others.

Experience has shown that those managers who inform their players of the league information at every game have better involved players with a sense they truly “belong” to an organized baseball league. As a manager, you will feel less pressured as a “go-between” or “middle-man” if you keep your players informed.

**NOTE:** It is the team’s responsibility to notify the league president of any changes to the team’s status (i.e. new email address, change in managers, unable to field a team for an upcoming game).

INFORMATION PUT FORTH REGARDING SCHEDULE CHANGES, FIELDS, SUSPENSIONS, ETC. SHALL BE CONSIDERED OFFICIAL LEAGUE POLICY.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR**

### **Managers:**

As a team manager you represent your team to other teams, field representative, fans, and the DFW ABA. Be a responsible manager. If you have questions about rules, field locations, or other problems contact your League President. He is there to help you during the season.

Check the web site frequently. There could be notices, changes to schedules, meeting dates, or other information that you need. While the League President tries to provide an established schedule of games, there may be unavoidable changes and the web site and email are ways that you may be notified of those changes.

Read your manager's contract, the player's contract, the DFW Rulebook and Guidelines, and any other material given or forwarded to you. Become informed about how the DFW ABA works and keep updated so that you stay informed. One of the best ways to help your team and have fun is to review all the DFW ABA and baseball rules and policies.

### **PLAYER CONDUCT:**

Control yourself and your players. Make sure your players know the rules that affect them. **Make sure they read the contract they accept to play in the DFW ABA.** Good sportsmanship is expected of every player. It is up to each player to make the game competitive and enjoyable for the other players, managers, and umpires that participate, as well as for friends, family, and other spectators who come to watch. Fighting and/or physical abuse of players, umpires, or spectators, or abusive language directed at players, umpires, or spectators, will not be tolerated.

### **ALCOHOL, DRUGS & TOBACCO:**

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND/OR DRUGS ARE SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED ON HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CAMPUSES BY A VARIETY OF MUNICIPAL, COUNTY, AND STATE LAWS. IN ADDITION, THE DFW ABA EXPRESSLY PROHIBITS ANY ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND/OR DRUGS IN THE VICINITY (INCLUDING PARKING LOTS) OF ANY FIELD USED BY THE DFW ABA SO AS TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF VIOLATING THESE LAWS. THIS APPLIES TO ALL MANAGERS, PLAYERS, COACHES, AS WELL AS FANS, FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS, OR SPECTATORS THAT COME TO GAMES. ANY MANAGER OR PLAYER FOUND TO BE IN VIOLATION OF THESE RULES MAY BE SUSPENDED IMMEDIATELY FOR A MINIMUM OF TWO GAMES. ADDITIONAL SANCTIONS MAY ALSO BE APPLIED AGAINST ANY OFFENDER(S).**

A second violation may result in expulsion from the DFW ABA, either individually or as a team. Please notify all participants and spectators of this rule. Umpires have the authority from the DFW ABA to stop or forfeit games if there is a problem with drinking or drugs at any game or facility being utilized.

Teams are to police their fans, friends, family members, or spectators for violations of league rules. Both team managers should attempt to persuade any person or persons participating in or watching the game and who are in violation of this section to leave the premises. **To Reiterate: Umpires have the authority from the DFW ABA to stop or forfeit games if there is a problem with drinking or drug use at any game or facility.**

Many school districts, city or county ordinances may prohibit all or some forms of tobacco use (cigarettes, dip, chew, etc.) at a facility. It is very important to observe these rules wherever and whenever they may be in force. In those instances, where tobacco use is not prohibited, please use courtesy, common sense, fire-safety awareness and sanitation in both the use and disposal of all tobacco products. No coach or incoming players want to see cigarette butts and chew-spit tarnishing the field and dugouts. The League President may enforce penalties or prohibit use for repeated offenses.

### **SAFETY RULES FOR STANDS, PLAYING FIELD, BENCHES/DUGOUTS:**

Only players, managers, and coaches are allowed on the field or in the dugouts. Only players, managers, and coaches under contract with the DFW ABA are permitted to coach bases. Scorekeepers, other than a manager, coach, or player must remain in the stands.

**Exception:** A team may designate two (2) bat boys or girls but they must be at least 10 years of age or older and must wear protective helmets at all times while in the dugout or on the field. They must remain in the dugout except when retrieving equipment after an at bat or other play in the field. Any parent who allows or designates their boy or girl as

a bat boy or bat girl at a DFW ABA game accepts responsibility for any liability that may be caused to them by their own actions, or by the action of others.

## ORGANIZING YOUR TEAM

### INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS & MANAGER MEETINGS:

Before the start of the season, the DFW ABA has a 5-6 week organizational period that may include:

- An Informational Meeting on DFW ABA, which is open to new and returning managers and players
- First Manager's Meeting open to managers who are entering teams in any league. Rules, procedures, tryouts and plans for the season are covered at this meeting
- Tryouts
- A final Manager's Meeting or due date, when all fees and player registrations are due. **Insurance regulations and the Rules of the DFW ABA mandate if a team has not submitted the above material by the due date they shall not be allowed to begin play.**

As a manager, you are responsible for making sure your team is represented at all manager's meetings and tryouts. If you cannot attend personally be sure to have another coach or team representative to attend.

### TRYOUTS, TEAM FORMATION & DRAFT INFORMATION:

The purpose of the tryouts is to assist players in joining a team roster and to assist managers who are looking for one, two, or maybe fourteen players to fill out their team rosters. Managers who are content with their team do not need to draft. Managers should think about this, even if you have a full team, there could always be good talent at the draft. Adding one special back up player or pitcher never hurts. All managers should attend the tryouts even if they are not going to draft. This shows league unity and provides a confidence boost to the players trying out that enough managers are present to find a roster spot.

All managers should check in with the League President and reaffirm their draft position before tryouts begin. **ALL MANAGERS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE AND SIGN A DFW ABA CONTRACT BEFORE ATTENDING AND PARTICIPATING IN THE TRYOUT/DRAFT. MANAGERS MUST ALSO SUBMIT A \$500 TEAM DEPOSIT PRIOR TO THE DRAFT. MANAGERS FAILING TO DO THIS WILL LOSE THEIR DRAFT ORDER AND NOT BE ALLOWED TO DRAFT.** All managers are required to remain in the designated manager's area throughout the tryouts except in specific instances as directed by the League President or other league representatives.

**No manager is allowed to speak with players before or during tryouts.** Any manager doing so will lose his/her 1<sup>st</sup> round draft pick, additionally; the player or players involved will not be allowed to play for that manager's team that season. All players will be informed of this rule. If you draft a player, you are making a commitment to give that player an opportunity over the first four games of the season to make your team and to participate in games. Likewise, players must be available to you for four games, before they can pursue opportunities with other teams.

**Note:** Please be aware that the DFW ABA reserves the right to alter the draft order for managers recruited by the league at the tryout venue.

The tryouts will follow this format:

- ❖ Registration and warm up;
- ❖ League President's Address to players – Approximately ten minutes spent introducing the DFW ABA, discussing the tryout procedure, schedule, games, costs and insurance; also volunteer managers will be asked for if the number of players trying out exceeds the players the existing managers are seeking.
- ❖ Tryout Procedure – Outfield, infield, pitching/catching, and hitting. If necessary, this procedure may vary slightly based on circumstances or the discretion of the League President.
  - a. Outfield – Each player will receive two fly balls from the pitching machine and throw the ball to third base. Manager's may line up on the left field line but are not to cross it.
  - b. Infield – Each player will receive two opportunities to field a ground ball. They will then throw it to first base. There, players trying out as first basemen will alternately take the throws.
  - c. Pitching/Catching – Each pitcher will throw eight pitches of their choice. Catcher's will receive pitches and throw down the last pitch to second base. Catchers will alternate every 2-3 pitchers depending on total number of pitchers/catchers trying out.
  - d. Hitting – In groups of ten, (numerically from smallest to largest in each age group) each hitter will get 8-10 pitches, based off attendance. This will continue in groups of ten until all players have hit.

Tryout participants will be given a number at registration. They should pin this on the front of their shirts. Player numbers should be called out by each player as they come to their position or to hit. Latecomers will not be given special accommodations, nor will they be allowed to hit if hitting has ended.

After players have finished hitting the tryout procedure is over and the draft will begin. The draft begins as arranged at the previous manager's meeting. Leagues draft in the following order; 60 & Over, 55 & Over, 50AA, 50A, 40AA, 40A, 35AA, 35A, 25AA, 25A, 18AAA, 18AA, and 18A. With regard to the draft and levels of play, the League President may establish a total number of players or total number of rounds for the upper level division (this may be zero). This is done to allow the lower level teams to draft players. The total number of players at each age group will help determine this. **In certain age groups the League President may allow lower level teams the opportunity to draft with the higher level teams, only drafting the same amount of players as the higher level.**

Managers will stay on the third base dugout side of the field while drafting. Managers will select a player's number. If that player is still available, the League President will record the selection and the manager receive the contact information for the player drafted. The next manager then will make their selection and so on.

When all managers in a league are done drafting, the manager will call out to the players the numbers of those that they have drafted. Managers must wait until all drafting is done before introducing themselves to their draftees, giving them their team name, the team fee (if known), and next meeting or practice time. Each manager should also get all the information from the player needed to communicate future correspondence. If there is a drafted player that has already left, they should have the contact information from the League President.

#### **PLAYER POOL:**

After tryouts and throughout the season, the DFW ABA maintains a pool of players hoping to join a team. Managers looking for players should contact the League President to obtain the contact information of players in the pool. The League President will make it a practice to send players to teams that have forfeited games or are struggling to get more than nine players to a game.

**TEAM NAME, PLACEMENT, & ROSTER SIZE:**

**TEAM NAME:**

All new teams joining the league, as well as existing teams opting to change their team name, should contact the League President before committing to the expense of new uniforms. The intent is to eliminate the possibility of two or more teams in the same league with the same team name. This especially holds true when a team wins their league and is moved to the next level of competition where a team with their name may already exist.

The DFW ABA reserves the right to determine whether a team name offends community standards. Traditional baseball team names or team names reflecting sponsorship of the team are preferred but innovative or creative names are welcome but subject to approval by the DFW ABA.

**TEAM PLACEMENT:**

The DFW ABA reserves the sole right to determine which league a team is best suited to play. Team placement may be based on, but not limited to, team ability, past performance or the number of teams in each league to maintain an even schedule.

The DFW ABA is designed for competition and recreation. Teams too strong or too weak for their respective leagues will be placed by the DFW ABA into the appropriate league. Typically, League Champions must move up to the next highest level of play for the next following season. Teams winning a short fall season may not have to move up the next spring. Teams with a winning season over the .800 mark may also have the option to move up a league. Teams finishing with a .900 winning percentage and above for two seasons may be moved up by the DFW ABA. Team movement will be at the sole discretion of the League President and may be predicated on the availability of space in the appropriate league.

Teams finishing with a winning percentage of below .250 for two seasons may be moved to a lower level of play where they may be more competitive.

**TEAM ROSTER:**

Each team roster must have one manager and at least ten registered players on its roster at all times to be eligible to compete in league games. The League President will determine a maximum number of players per roster.

Any player not registered makes the player ineligible and the game is subject to protest by another manager. All managers should have a copy of their roster with them during games to prove a player's eligibility. Managers not having a copy of their roster with them when requested by an opposing manager may face a possible protest and investigation of their roster. This copy may be digital from the web site.

It is the manager's responsibility to insure all players are registered on their roster. It is NOT the League President's responsibility.

**PLAYER ELIGIBILITY FOR DFW ABA LEAGUE AND PLAYOFFS:**

**LEAGUE ELIGIBILITY:**

A player must be eighteen years of age or older. Players may not register before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Players who are currently active in university, collegiate, or junior college programs should play in the highest level available. Former players in Division I programs should be out at **least two years** unless they are playing in the highest skill level. This is just a recommendation for the players so they can compete and the best level for their talent.

Players who have been under verifiable professional baseball contracts in the last sixty days are ineligible to play in any league except the highest level. Teams violating this rule may risk forfeiting all games in which that player (or players) played even if the existence of a contract is discovered after the fact and all protests were handled correctly. Final resolution in such a situation is at the discretion of the League President.

Former Major League players are restricted to the highest level of play within the age group they play. A Major League player is one who may be found in the Baseball Encyclopedia or Baseball-Reference.com. This restriction is removed if the player is 45 years or older. The above rule governing professionals also applies.

No player may play on teams in two different leagues within the same age group simultaneously (e.g. 18AA & 18A). Players may play in different age groups simultaneously. Example: John Smith is 32 years old; therefore, he may play on a 25+ team and a team in the 18 & Over league. Note; if a player wishes to participate in more than one league they may have to pay separate team fees for each league they participate.

Players must be 18 years old to play. Players must have reached their 25<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, 55<sup>th</sup>, and 60<sup>th</sup> birthday by the end of the current season's calendar year (December 31<sup>st</sup>) to register and play in the respective age leagues.

A player must be registered with the DFW ABA for each team and each league they play. All players should be prepared with a valid picture ID in the event a player's age or identity is questioned. **Any player unable to produce a valid picture ID will be ineligible to continue in a game.** Any substitute player must enter the game under the rules governing player ejection. Managers shall be responsible for verifying the eligibility of their players.

Women are eligible to participate in any level of play within the appropriate age group.

#### **PLAYOFF ELIGIBILITY:**

Players added to a team's roster before the approximate ¾ mark of the season (a date will be set at the start of the season) are eligible for playoffs. New players added after the date set are eligible for regular season games but may not play in playoff games. This will allow struggling teams to acquire players and remain in the league without forfeiting games.

The standard ¾ mark of a season is the date representing the ¾ mark, not the number of games played by that date. **Any proven violation of player or playoff eligibility rules may result in a protest by an opposing team.**

#### **PLAYER REGISTRATION CONTRACTS & TEAM FEES:**

##### **REGISTRATION & FEES**

A player, coach or manager may not compete in a game until they have registered and properly executed completing a contract. Anyone found participating without a contract is ineligible and the game may be forfeited, even if the violation is discovered after the fact. An opposing manager has 2 hours from the start time of the game to protest an ineligible player. For additional information see section on "Protest". **The manager of his team accepts responsibility for having each player register and complete a player contract before competing in any DFW ABA sanctioned game. The team manager accepts the total responsibility of the player's personal contract if he, as the manager knowingly allows a player to participate in a DFW ABA sanctioned game without completing a contract.**

The DFW ABA operates under a team fee concept. The team fee is to be paid in full to the League President before a team will be allowed to participate. The League President will determine a roster limit per team. This roster limit is usually over 20 players. The DFW ABA believes this concept will allow managers great flexibility in building their teams and staying competitive throughout the season. **Note: Any awards handed out for champions or runner ups will have a limit of 18 awards per team.**

## **COMPLETING REGISTRATION AND CONTRACTS:**

The DFW ABA registration and contract process is done on line through the internet. If any players do not have access to the internet they should contact their manager to help them get access to fill out their contract.

1. As a manager you must first be registered with the league. If you are not registered you should go to the league web site address ([www.dfw-aba.com](http://www.dfw-aba.com)) and register yourself on the player pool. If you are already registered or have played in a previous season you do not need to register again. However, you should check for accurate information on your profile, especially your email address.
2. Once you are registered your league president will assign your team on the site for the current league. You will receive an email such as the one below. This email will notify you that your team has been created for the season and provide you with a link to begin administering the team.

Email Sample: Your team, 2020 Spring 25A Redbirds, has been added. Please join the team via: [https://www.dfwaba.com/bbreg/user\\_join\\_team.cfm?TeamID=109&UserID=62](https://www.dfwaba.com/bbreg/user_join_team.cfm?TeamID=109&UserID=62). You may then administer the team.

3. Once you have accessed the team administration page you may begin to add your players to your roster. You will need the players email address.\* Team administrators should enter in each players information and “click” the add button to add their players. **You must enter in accurate information or the player will not be added correctly. If you are missing a letter, number, or email address is misspelled, or missing a character the registration process will not recognize the player. Please be sure to use accurate information.** If you have managed a team in the past you may also “invite” previous players that have played for your team by utilizing the tool bar provided. Please keep in mind the players email address must be valid for them to receive confirmation of them being invited to be added to the roster.
4. Once you have entered each player they will receive an email letting them know and inviting them to join the team. After receiving the email each player should “click” on the link to complete their registration. **They must select “player” on the top of the form and they must accept the agreement of the DFW-ABA contract.**

Email Sample:

Joe Smith,

You have been asked to join 2020 Spring 25A Redbirds.

Please click on the following URL if you wish to play on this team.

[https://www.dfwaba.com/bbreg/user\\_join\\_team\\_v2.cfm?TeamID=8FYSWdM5HX&UserID=87vd](https://www.dfwaba.com/bbreg/user_join_team_v2.cfm?TeamID=8FYSWdM5HX&UserID=87vd) Your team administrator has been copied on this email message.

- (If you have had a team in a previous season you may be able to transfer your roster from then to the new season.)

## **TROUBLESHOOTING:**

If you experience trouble, please check your information for accuracy. **Check the spelling and special characters in the email address of your player.**

\*If your player does not have internet access or an email address you must use your email address to register the player. Please be sure to have the player with you or on the phone and explain the details of the DFW-ABA contract information as you register them.

Each player will be able to access their information to keep in current and up to date.

## **PLAYER ADDS, DROPS & TRANSFERS**

### **PLAYER ADDS:**

After the start of the season a player may be added. The added player must register and complete a contract prior to participating in any game.

### **PLAYER DROPS:**

Managers must notify the League President, in writing, if a player leaves the team. (Email will suffice in this situation). Said writing must specify player's information so the League President may take him off the roster.

### **PLAYER TRANSFERS:**

These are the allowable player transfer moves during a season. These moves must be made before the playoff eligibility deadline ( $\frac{3}{4}$  mark of the season) for a player to be eligible for playoffs. The following rules are to be adhered to without exception.

- ❖ Within the same league: Player may move from one team to another but must sit out one game for each transfer.
- ❖ From one league to another:
  - Higher league to a lower league: Player must sit out one game before playing. Player may not play at a higher level for the remainder of the season.
  - Lower league to a higher league: Player may play immediately after the transfer. Player may return to the lower league later that season but must sit out one game and must remain in the lower league the remainder of the season.
- ❖ Players transferring from a team that has folded after the playoff deadline to a potential playoff team are immediately eligible to play the next scheduled regular season game with that team. Player eligibility for playoffs shall remain applicable as set forth above.

The first game of a double header satisfies the one game requirement for the cases above. A game won by forfeit satisfies this one game requirement.

Coaches having players transferring to their team must notify the League President in writing. (Email will suffice in this situation).

**All player drops or transfers must be in writing and received by the League President to be valid. Players may not be dropped or added by phone.**

## **FIELDS**

### **OBTAINING FIELDS:**

If you know of a field you would like to use as your home field, or that you feel the league could use, please contact the League President before using the field or approaching the coach or administration for permission. The League President can tell you whom you should talk to, provide you with valuable information, and help you arrange for its use by the league.

If you are instrumental in bringing a field into the league, you can be assigned to that field. Anywhere from 1-4 teams may be instrumental in securing a field and thus be assigned to that field. Understandably, with 4 teams

assigned to a field only 2 could play there any given day, so only 50% of any team's games could be played there.

#### **TYPE OF FIELDS:**

All fields used by the DFW ABA must be under contract with the DFW ABA in its name for insurance purposes. Insurance cannot be provided to fields under contract in a team or manager's name. Fields must be under contract for official league events. Fields are under contract for such Official League Events only, not for team practices.

An "assigned field" is a field that a team has been instrumental in obtaining use for the League. That team, having been "assigned" to that field as a result, would play at least 50% and possibly as much as 75% of their games (depending on the number of other teams with home fields and other scheduling issues) at that field. Your team may be the home team or the visiting team on your assigned field depending on the schedule.

A "shared field" is a field that most teams in a league play on at one time or another. Arrangements for use are made separately by the league without individual involvement.

#### **FIELD MAINTENANCE:**

Fields maintenance may be mandated by the city/school owning the field. In some cases fields must be returned to their original condition after each game and before teams leave the field. This may include raking the mound and home plate area, raking base paths, cleaning up dugout area, and cleaning up litter on the field and stands.

Tobacco, cigarette butts, chewing tobacco, dip, as well as other trash such as sunflower seeds, gum, or the like, is something the coaches do not want to see when they return to their field. The DFW ABA will not tolerate this occurrence either. Stands and bleachers are a part of the field and must be picked clean of trash.

#### **TEAMS PLAYING THE MORNING GAMES ARE NOT EXCUSED FROM THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CLEANING UP THEIR DUGOUTS AND PREPARING THE FIELD FOR THE TEAMS PLAYING THE AFTERNOON GAMES.**

Failure to perform this work after a game or practice can result in loss of the field to the team involved and potential loss of the field to the league if the fields are abused. Teams may be fined and are subject to league suspensions for failure to properly maintain the fields.

If a field is wet, **DO NOT MOVE DIRT OR ANY OTHER MATERIAL ON OR OFF A FIELD** to make it playable. If the field cannot be made playable by light raking, do not play on it! Do not subject a wet field to footprints or heavy raking. Requirements for field maintenance may vary from field to field depending on requirements from coaches, athletic directors, etc.

#### **RESPECT FOR FIELDS:**

All players and managers are reminded that pre-game stretching and throwing should be done on the outfield grass not on the infield or in front of the dugouts.

Hitting drills against any fence are prohibited because it damages chain link fences and jeopardizes player safety. Do not pitch batting practice from in front of the mound.

No climbing or jumping over fences to gain access to a field. If a field is locked and a team does not have a key, stay off the field.

Cutting locks or removing gates to get on a field or obtain field equipment is expressly prohibited. Any such actions shall result in a fine and subject that player/team to league suspension.

**Both managers of each team are responsible for verifying the field playing conditions and ensure they are playable before a game starts. If a field is determined by a manager not to be in playing condition for any reason the umpire and its opposing manager must agree the game should not be played. All un-playable field conditions should be reported immediately to the League President so the field can be corrected or so the League can move future games off the field.**

**Players, managers, and teams are liable for the cost of damages to a field or facility in addition to being subject to fines and suspension without refund.**

## UMPIRES

### FORFEIT BOND:

A forfeit bond of \$150.00 is required by the DFW ABA. The forfeit bond will be held in trust until the end of the season. The DFW ABA will cash all checks or money orders submitted as a forfeit bond. This is the only way to verify their validity. Umpire fees for forfeited games are not automatically deducted from the forfeit bond. If a team fails to pay forfeit fees at the field the forfeit bond may be used to cover payment of umpires for forfeited games, fines, damage to property at the fields. The bond is refundable at the end of the season if not used. The team may elect to "roll over" the bond to the next season.

### POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR REFUND OF FORFEIT BOND:

Any request for the refund of a forfeit bond must be in writing. (Email will suffice). The request must be submitted to the League President. The request must be submitted by the manager of the team or the person of record who submitted the bond. The League President may require that additional information or verification be provided before the release of a bond is authorized. All timely refund requests, which are proper and complete, will be processed and mailed within thirty days of the end of the season. Forfeit bonds not refunded shall be rolled over for the next season.

### FORFEITED GAMES:

If a team must forfeit a single game at the field, the forfeiting team should pay each umpire a \$35.00 forfeit fee. In the event of a Double-header and the 1st game is forfeited: The forfeiting team may elect to forfeit the 2nd game immediately after the first and pay only a \$50 forfeit fee to both umpires for both games. If the team elects to play the 2nd game, they will be responsible for a full forfeit fee if the game is forfeited. (Total of \$140 for both games). Failure to pay the umpires will result in a \$10 fine and may result in a one game suspension for the manager.

Teams knowing they will not be able to field a team for a particular game and need to forfeit may eliminate paying forfeit fees if the League President is notified by at least 72 hours prior to scheduled game time. Teams will be charged a \$10 cancellation fee. Managers must receive confirmation from the League President.

If a team forfeits and does not pay the umpire fees for the forfeit they have until 5:00 PM, three days before its next scheduled game to submit payment to the League President for the previously forfeited games. Failure to do so within the allotted time may result in the next game being declared a forfeit. Failure to submit payment before the next scheduled game will result in a second forfeit and possible suspension of the team from league play. Upon forfeiture of a third game, the team will forfeit its entire bond and be expelled from the league. Any team forfeiting a playoff game will lose its bond.

### **FEES & PAYMENTS:**

Each game should have two umpires. Each team pays one umpire at the plate conference **before** the start of the game. Umpires should be paid in cash only. Umpire fees will be established prior to each season. If for some reason only one umpire shows up to the game, he should be paid 1 ½ times the regular fee for the game. Late umpires are to be paid when they arrive. However, no two teams shall be obligated for more than the normal fee for the game. In the event that a game is postponed due to rain or field conditions before it becomes official, the umpires will return 1/2 the fee to each team. **It is the responsibility of each team to get their money back, not the League.** Umpires are entitled to a full fee once the game is official.

### **BEHAVIOR TOWARD UMPIRES:**

Umpires **shall not** be physically or verbally abused. If you have a complaint about an umpire's call, explain it to him. If you are reasonable, they will be reasonable. If problems develop between a particular manager and team, you should notify your League President and provide them with the umpire's name. Just because you may have a problem with a particular umpire does not mean you may request to not have that umpire at your games.

**VERBAL ABUSE OR PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH AN UMPIRE OR ANY ISSUES WITH THEIR PERSONAL PROPERTY (i.e., automobile, equipment, etc.) IN ANY WAY IS FORBIDDEN BY BOTH THE DFW ABA AND OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES. DISCIPLINE WILL INCLUDE A MINIMUM THREE GAME SUSPENSION, SEASON EXPULSION, OR PERMANENT EXPULSION FROM THE DFW ABA.**

**Discussions with umpires are to be done on the field. If any player or manager follows an umpire off the field they will be subject to suspension and expulsion from the DFW ABA.** Remember that, as with players, no umpire is perfect. Some are better than others. It is the manager's place to deal with the umpires; keep your players away from them. If anybody is ejected, it should be the manager, not any players. However, as a manager, do not make it a habit of being ejected. A manager ejected three times in a season may not be allowed to continue as a manager in the DFW ABA. Any player ejected in a game must serve a one game suspension. The ejected player will serve a one game suspension which will be served the next scheduled play date.

Umpires are subject to review by the DFW ABA. Any issues with umpires should be brought to the attention of the League President. Umpires also provide reports concerning ejections, protests, other incidents, and team behavior and attitude, and level of ability to the League President. The intent is to ensure teams are playing in the appropriate league and to weed out teams with abusive conduct.

### **SUBSTITUTE UMPIRES:**

If an umpire fails to show up for a game, the game should be played with agreement by both managers to allow one umpire to officiate. If both managers agree, one or two unpaid umpires may be chosen from the available players. Substitute umpires must be players or coaches who are on the roster and eligible to play. A player serving as a substitute umpire will be ineligible for that game. Substitute umpires will call balls and strikes from behind the mound.

The scheduled game may be played so long as there is a written agreement that a substitute umpire is acceptable to both managers. **The written agreement must be signed by both of the managers and a player from each team prior to the start of the game.** The League President must receive the written agreement within two days of the game. The home team is responsible for insuring that the League President receives the original agreement. If either manager declines to use the substitute umpire rule, the game is postponed and will be rescheduled if possible. If either team has less than 9 players and no umpires have arrived, the Eight Man Start Rule applies.

If umpires arrive after the start of the game, the substitute umpires must yield to the regular umpires. Late umpires are to be paid a prorated share of their fee based on the number of innings missed and the number of innings to be played.

## EQUIPMENT

### BASEBALLS AND BATS:

Each team is required to provide three baseballs per game to the home plate umpire. The baseballs should be in good shape. An umpire may refuse to use a particular baseball if they believe it is unacceptable for play. Teams will be provided DFW ABA approved baseballs at the beginning of each season. Teams may obtain additional DFW ABA approved baseballs at substantially discounted prices by contacting the League President. In addition to the DFW ABA approved baseball, the following baseballs are currently approved for play in the DFW ABA:

- Wilson A1036, 1010C, A1015, A1040, A1010;
- Rawlings RO, RO-A, RO-N, R-200, RRHS;
- Pro Nine CL, PRO, NFHS, OLA, NFHSA,
- Diamond Pro D1 (all models), DHS, DOL-A, DOL MVP, D1-NABA.

No rubber coated plastic, blems, or youth league or obviously defective baseballs are allowed. Use of unapproved baseballs shall cause the ball(s) to be removed from the game and a \$10.00 per ball fine may be imposed. Repeated use may result in further disciplinary action including, but not limited to, a fine and/or suspension of the manager or team.

All wood, aluminum, graphite, and ceramic bats are currently allowed for league play provided they conform to specifications described in rule 1.10(a) of the OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES.

**Exception:** 25+/35+/40+/50+/55+/60+ leagues will use only wood bats. Composite wood bats will be allowed.

Aluminum, graphite and ceramic bats must not have a bare handle. The bat must have a grip (leather, rubber, tape, etc.). Bats that have a -.03 ounce differential in weight vs. length or less are currently approved in the DFW ABA. All non-wood bats must have the BBCOR approved stamp on the bat. Bats with a "pebbled" or "golf ball" finish on the barrel are prohibited. Before a player invests in a "high-tech" bat with such a finish they should check with the League President. Unauthorized use will result in a recorded out, and ejection of the offending player.

### UNIFORMS:

The required minimum uniform for a team consists of matching shirts with individual numbers, and matching hats. Additionally, all players must wear some type of baseball pants and shoes. No shorts, cutoffs, sweat pants, workout pants, or jeans are allowed. Any team not in the minimum uniform is subject to a \$15.00 fine for the first time. The second time the fine will be increased to \$30.00 and will increase by \$15.00 each time thereafter. Repeat offenders may also be subject to suspension or expulsion.

An average grace period (which must be approved by the League President) of three weeks from Opening Day is allowed for teams with uniforms on order that have not been received. The grace period shall apply to new player joining the team during the season.

### SHOES:

Metal spikes, plastic and rubber cleats are approved for DFW ABA games. Any player found to be wearing deliberately sharpened spikes would be subject to ejection and possible suspension from the league. No metal spikes are allowed on any artificial turf fields. No cleats (metal, plastic, or rubber) will be allowed on the mound of a turf field. Players must abide by the rules concerning each field. There is a field/shoe requirement document available to review. **If a player is found to be wearing metal spikes on a field that prohibits metal spikes, the player will be called "out" for their next plate appearance and must change shoes. If the player refuses to change shoes he will be ejected and his vacated spot in the line-up will be called an out unless the team has an eligible substitute. The ejected player will also be suspended for the next game on the next scheduled date their team plays per the ejection rule. If the player is not in the batting order the next batter to have a plate appearance will be declared an out.**

### **HELMETS:**

All batters must wear a protective helmet that has at least one ear flap facing the pitcher. Players will not be allowed to run the bases without a helmet. All catchers must wear a protective helmet while playing their position. No catcher will be allowed to assume that position without protective headgear. The umpires will enforce this rule. There are no exceptions, waivers, or special circumstances.

**Players not wearing a protective helmet will not be allowed to continue in the game until they have corrected the issue.** If they are presently in the batting order, their removal will be governed under the rules for Offensive Substitution. If their removal occurs when their team has not eligible substitutes, the game will be forfeited.

### **PLAYING THE GAME**

#### **SCHEDULE:**

The schedule is made after the second manager's meeting, after teams have paid their fees. All fees must be paid so the League President can complete the schedule for the season. Most of the time the League President will be able to post the first two weeks of the schedule shortly after the second manager's meeting. Once the League President confirms all teams that are playing and paid, he will continue posting more of the schedule on the web site until the full schedule is posted. At times the schedule may be delayed due to field conflicts or issues that may prevent a complete schedule. The League President wants to post the full schedule as quickly as possible. All players should be informed of the possibility of the full schedule being delayed.

The schedule issued by the League President is the official schedule. Managers may not cancel, postpone, request or otherwise reschedule games by themselves. The League President must make all adjustments to the schedule. The League President cannot possibly accommodate all special requests for particular times and play dates for every team but the schedule will be balanced so that every team has approximately the same number of "home" games as "visitor" games; so that no team plays any other team too much (for example: Team "A" plays Team "B" five times but only plays team "C" 2 times) and the schedule will take into account teams that have been assigned to particular fields.

Schedule changes, if necessary, are made and posted on the web site. All schedule changes are official when published or updated. In most cases, these changes are listed at least 5 days in advance so your players can be notified. As a manager, you should make sure your contact information stays current with your League President.

**Canceled games** are games taken off the schedule because a team has dropped out of the league, or a team has declared it is unable to field a team for a game and is forfeiting it. These games are not rescheduled. **Postponed games** are games postponed due to rain, field conditions, etc. The DFW ABA makes every attempt to reschedule these games, however, rescheduling is not guaranteed.

### **GAME TIMES AND TIME LIMITS:**

In the DFW ABA, time limits on games are necessary for many reasons. As with any recreational activity, it may be important for family members to plan and time their activities. Additionally, field use usually requires that "game time slots" be booked well in advance. Other teams may be waiting for their time slot on a field to begin. Coaches and other field officials may need to restrict the actual hours a field is in use. Although the DFW ABA recognizes that the clock does traditionally not govern baseball, practical consideration makes the following necessary.

Typical DFW ABA games consist of 7 innings or 2 ½ hours whichever comes first. (In some situations, the time limit may be adjusted). No new inning may begin after the 2 ½ hour mark of a scheduled 7 inning game or after the 2 hour mark of a 7 inning game (depending on the time limit scheduled). In a 2.5 hour time limit game, if any team is winning by 6 runs or more no new inning may start after 2 hours and 20 minutes. For a 2 hour time limit game, no new inning may start after one hour and 50 minutes. Any inning started before the time limit mark must be completed. If the time limit has elapsed before a regulation game (see Official Baseball Rules 4.10c) then the game shall be considered a regulation game. **Extra innings may be played to break ties within the time limit, with no new inning to begin after the time limit has been reached.** The umpires will announce the official start time. **IT IS THE MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITY AT THE HOME PLATE MEETING PRIOR TO THE GAME TO DETERMINE OFFICIAL START TIME FROM THE UMPIRES, AND TO AGREE ON WHO IS HOLDING THE OFFICIAL CLOCK.** If there is a tie game and the time limit has not been reached, we will be utilizing the runner on 2nd rule. The runner placed on second base at the start of each half-inning shall be the player (or a substitute for such player) in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter. By way of example, if the number five hitter in the batting order is due to lead off the tenth inning, the number four player in the batting order (or a pinch runner for such player) shall begin the inning on second base. However, if the player in the batting order immediately preceding that half-inning's leadoff hitter is a declared non-runner, the runner placed on second base at the start of that half-inning may be the player preceding the non-runner in the batting order. Any runner or batter removed from the game for a substitute shall be ineligible to return to the game, (unless using the starter re-entry rule). Any game (except playoffs and championship games) ending in a tie after the time limit has been reached will remain a tie in the standings. A game suspended (see Official Baseball Rules for definition) for any other reason may be completed at a later date if it has a bearing on the final standings.

If a game starts late due to field conditions, the clock is considered to have started at the scheduled time for that game. Bases are considered to be field conditions. Umpires are paid from the scheduled start time. A typical schedule will have a small amount of time between the beginning of the first game and the start of the next scheduled game on that field. Approximately ten minutes before the game start time, managers and umpires should meet at home plate for exchange of line ups and discussion of ground rules.

A forfeited game occurs when one team is unable to field enough players (8) at game time. **There is a 15-minute grace period with one run being assessed at game time against the team at risk of forfeiting.** If the game does become a forfeit **the forfeiting team** is responsible for paying both umpires. (See rules under umpires).

### **DUGOUT – HOME & VISITOR:**

Home team is assigned the first baseline dugout. Visiting team is assigned the third baseline dugout. This rule may be modified by mutual agreement of both managers.

### **EIGHT PLAYER START RULE:**

A team may start and complete a game with 8 players without penalty of forfeit. If any or both teams start with 8 players, both teams pay the umpires as if it were a regular game. Teams with only 8 players teams do not accept an out each time the 9th spot in the order comes to bat. When the ninth player arrives, he may be added into the line-up only in the 9<sup>th</sup> position and may bat when that position comes up. He may also take his position defensively when he arrives but must wait until the current batter has completed his at bat. If a team starts a game with 9 players and has no more substitutes and a player vacates their spot in the line-up, the vacant spot in the line-up will be recorded as and out the first time through the line-up. After the first time it will not be declared as an out. The game is declared a forfeit if there are less than 8 players under the 8-man start rule.

Given the fact that everyone has come to play baseball, eight players will be enough to start and finish the game. Because both teams are playing, both teams are still responsible for paying their share of the umpire fees. The team starting with eight players is not liable for payment of all umpire fees. **THE GAME SHALL BE CONSIDERED AN OFFICIAL**

**GAME AND THEREFORE PAYMENT OF THE UMPIRES IS TO BE MADE BY BOTH TEAMS AS IF THEY EACH HAD NINE OR MORE PLAYERS TO STAR THE GAME.**

**IF NINE PLAYERS ARE AVAILABLE TO START THE GAME, THE TEAM MUST START WITH ALL NINE PLAYERS AND ARE NOT PERMITTED TO “HOLD ONE BACK”.**

**LINE UP CARDS:**

Each team is required to provide a lineup card to the home plate umpire and to the opposing manager before the start of the game. The lineup card must list the player’s first initial and last name and their jersey number. An incomplete lineup card invalidates a protest. It must also include the names of any substitutes expected to be available for that game. This, however, is not cause for forfeit of a game. If the lineup is incomplete, it must be completed before the game starts. Umpires and opposing managers should not accept incomplete lineup cards. **If a line-up card is not complete at the plate conference with a last name and first initial the opposing team will be awarded one run at that time. And then one run each inning beginning the top half of each inning until a complete line-up is given to the opposing team.** Any player arriving late and not listed on the lineup card **cannot play** in that game. A player in the game who is not listed on the lineup card will be removed from the game per Major League Rules. As a precaution it is best to list all eligible players on your lineup card including those players that are expected to arrive late or not at all.

Although managers are eligible to play, they must be listed as a starter or substitute like any other player.

Managers should notify the home plate umpire and the opposing team of all offensive substitutions and pitching changes when they are made. If a change is not announced, the game may be stopped upon question and both benches notified of the change. Refer to Official Baseball Rules, section 3.08.

**OFFENSIVE LINE UP:**

A team may elect to bat any number of players with a minimum of 9. (Exception: 8 Man Start rule). They may add players to the bottom of the order at any time. A player may vacate his spot in the batting order at any time unless there are available substitutes. The vacated spot will be declared an out the first time it is vacated. All remaining at bats for the vacated spot will not be penalized. (Exception: Playoffs; a team must finish the game with no less than the largest number of batters at any given time in the line-up. The penalty will be an out in the vacant spot in the order.)

**A/B BATTER OPTION:**

A team may declare at the time that lineups are exchanged prior to the start of play that any batting order position (i.e. 8, 9, 10, etc.) can be occupied by two (2) players in each such batting position. That is, 8A/8B, 9, 10A/10B, 11, etc. The first time that position 8 gets an at bat, 8A would hit and the next time this slot hits, 8B would be up. Then 8A hits the third time this spot in the order comes up, and so on, alternating between these two players throughout the game. Once a team declares the use of this A/B system, it must continue using it for the remainder of the game. If due to injury or absence of one of the alternating hitters, the player present may hit in the A/B slot without penalty. Playoffs and championship games if one of the hitters cannot bat it will be declared an out. Hitters in the A/B position may be pinch hit for, just as any other player. The substitute player must be substituted for one of the A/B positions.

**BATTING ORDER & OFFENSIVE STARTER RE-ENTRY RULE:**

A starter in the batting order may be removed and a substitute may bat in that player’s place at any point during a game so long as the starter has had one plate appearance. The starter may return to bat again, **but only in the original spot in the batting order, and only after the replacement has had at least one plate appearance.** The substitute may not bat again once removed from the batting order. Please remember, only the starter may re-enter during the course of the game. Any other player re-entering the order will be treated as batting out of order under Official Baseball Rule 6.07.

The starter and substitutes are locked into the same spot in the order and cannot bat anywhere else. They become ineligible to bat in any other position in the batting order. The starter and substitutes are considered “in the game” and may not be used as pinch runners as they have already been “used”. A pinch runner (as opposed to a courtesy

runner) must be someone who has not been in the batting order and will be dealt with under the offensive lineup rule (i.e. that player must have one plate appearance before the starter re-enters). As a reference see Official Baseball Rules 6.07.

A starter (not designated as a non-runner) who is replaced by a pinch runner while on base is removed from the batting order. Once that runner or another legal substitute **has one plate** appearance the starter may re-enter. A pinch runner who does not hit at least once in the spot in the order where the player they are running for batted, shall be considered “out of the game” and may not re-enter.

#### **COURTESY RUNNER / NON RUNNERS:**

In the 18+ teams may have 3 players designated as a non-runner. One of the runners must be the catcher of record. In the 25+ and 35+four players per game may have another player run for them in the event they reach base. Two non-runners must be indicated on the line-up card and teams may use a courtesy runner for the pitcher and catcher anytime. The 40+, 50+, 55+ & 60+ have special non-runner rules designated in their league supplemental rules.

The replacement runner will be the **last recorded out** – (not necessarily the last batted out.) If the change is made, it must be at the furthest base the player reaches on that play. The courtesy runner must enter the game **before the next pitch**, or the use of the non-runner rule is forfeited. In the event a non-runner is awarded first base and there is no other action involved in the play, he may retire to the dugout without touching first base and the correct runner may obtain the base. Any improper use of a courtesy runner including the use of the wrong replacement shall result in the non-runner being scored as an out and the runner will be removed from the base. If there is a runner on base and he is “in the hole” to bat, he may be replaced with the next correct non-runner so he may get prepared to bat. **Teams can use a runner for the catcher at any time with two outs for any league at any time and it must be the last recorded out at the time he is being replaced.**

#### **NO COLLISION / SLIDE RULE:**

The DFW ABA has a No Collision / Slide Rule as follows:

The intent of this rule is to ensure the safety of the defensive player. This is a safety as well as an interference rule. Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule.

- A. The runner must slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases.
  - I. **EXCEPTION**—a runner need not slide directly into a base as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making deliberate contact or altering the play of the fielder. **This does not mean if the runner “peels” out to avoid collision he is conceding the out and still has the right to the base.**
  - II. “On the ground” means either a head-first slide or slide with one leg and buttock on the ground.
  - III. “Directly into a base” means the runner’s entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.
  - IV. **Example 1**—if a runner goes into a base standing up and does not make contact or alter a play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.
  
- B. Contact with a fielder is legal and interference shall not be called if the runner:
  - I. Makes a legal slide directly to the base, or
  - II. Is on the ground at the time of contact and the fielder moves directly down the line between the two bases to attempt a play.
  - III. Makes a legal slide and makes contact with a defensive player who is on or over, but not beyond, the base
  - IV. **Example 2**—when the base runner slides beyond the base, but does not (1) make contact with, or (2) alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.

- C. Actions by a runner are **illegal** and interference shall be called if:
- I. The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder.
  - II. The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide and either makes contact with or alters the play of a fielder.
  - III. The runner's raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder's knee when in a standing position.
  - IV. The runner goes beyond the base and either makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder. ("Beyond the base" means any part of the offensive player's body makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder beyond the base).
  - V. The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg.
  - VI. The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

**PENALTY for (C) I-VI:**

1. **With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.**
2. **With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.**
3. **If the runner's slide or collision is flagrant, the runner may be ejected from the game based on the umpire's judgment.**

**Note:** The objective of this rule is to penalize the offensive team for deliberate, unwarranted unsportsmanlike action by the runner for the purpose of crashing into the fielder, rather than trying to reach the base. Obviously this is an umpire's judgment play.

It is the judgment of the umpire whether a collision/slide intentionally violates this rule. This includes using elbows or lowering a shoulder in an attempt to cause a fielder to drop a held ball. The umpires may, at any time, eject a player who makes contact with another player with the intent to cause injury. The DFW ABA would like to remind all managers and player that a player may not block the base path or a base without possession of the ball. For example, a catcher may not block the plate without the ball. The right of way belongs to the runner. Most catchers should know to offer the runner part of the plate to make them slide inside or out.

**DEFENSIVE LINE UP:**

All teams have the option to substitute freely on the field in any defensive position except for the pitcher. A pitcher may leave the mound for another position on the field or on the bench but may return only once to their position as pitcher. Violating this pitcher's rule does not constitute a forfeit, although the pitcher must leave the mound immediately. **Free substitution on the field does not affect the batting order.** Defensive positions need not be listed on the lineup card except for the pitcher. The DFW ABA will not enforce the MLB shift rule.

**INJURY SUBSTITUTION (All Leagues):**

If a team is unable to continue the game due to the injury of a player, then in order to prevent a forfeit a previously used player not currently in the batting order may take the place of the injured player's place in the order. This switch in the hitting order is contrary to the aforementioned Re-entry Rule and may only be used for an injury, where continuing to play, **per the umpire's sole discretion and judgment**, would further affect the injury. **This is not an ejection and hence rules governing ejection do not apply.** If a team has only nine batters in uniform at the game at the time of the injury, then the game shall continue and may be completed under the eight man start rule. Once a player is removed under this Injury Substitution Rule, they may not re-enter the game under any circumstances, even if they appear to be "recovered".

**RUN RULE (Mercy Rule):**

There is a 10-run rule that takes effect at the completion of the 5<sup>th</sup> or any ensuing inning of a 7-inning game. If the home team is ahead by 10 runs after 3 ½ innings, the game is complete.

### **PRACTICE GAMES:**

In the event of a forfeited game, umpires (because they are being paid at that time) may work a scrimmage game as long as there are enough players to field two complete teams. The game must be played as if it were a regular game. It is not a game to tryout inexperienced catchers. Umpires have the right to refuse to call the game especially if they feel they are subject to injury.

### **DOUBLE HEADERS:**

Double headers in all leagues are 7 innings. The second game of a double header should start approximately 20-30 minutes after the completion of the first game. If the first game of a double header is forfeited, the second game should begin 2 ½ hours from the scheduled start of the first game. If both teams and the umpires are willing to start early they may. **A forfeited first game does not equate to the second game being forfeited.** See forfeited games under Umpires in this rule book for clarification

### **RAINOUTS / COMPLETED / SUSPENDED GAMES:**

A game shall be considered a complete game under the Official Rules of Baseball. (Exception: For 7 inning games an official game is four innings or 3 ½ innings if the home team is leading There shall be no suspended games in the DFWABA. For any game considered a suspended game under the Official Rules of Baseball for any reason (weather, light malfunction, etc), the score shall revert back to the score of the last completed inning unless the home team has taken the lead during the incomplete inning. If the home team ties the game in the incomplete inning and was leading in the last complete inning, they shall be the winner. **If a team is winning by 10 runs or more after any completed inning or inning where the home team is ahead prior to an official game they shall be declared the winner.** There will be no suspended games in the DFW ABA.

The League President should make every effort to notify teams, managers, and players in the event a game may be canceled. If a game has been canceled, postponed, or potentially moved to another field the League President will send a message using Twitter. He may also notify everyone with the web site. If a scheduled game has not been postponed, canceled or moved, both teams must be at the field, dressed, and ready to play. A team not prepared to play is subject to forfeit. The Eight Man Start rule does apply. If the field is unplayable, both umpires will make the decision at that time, not the managers. Umpires are to wait 30 minutes if it appears there may be favorable change in weather or field conditions.

Umpires are not accountable to the schools or cities for the condition of the field, however the DFW ABA is. Therefore, consideration should be given to the condition of the field after the game has been completed. Will it be possible to restore the field to its original condition before the next game? Teams and umpires are subject to suspension for playing on a field that effectively makes the field unplayable after the game. Decisions on playability of a field are made for the sake of the field and the league, not for the convenience of teams or umpires. Fields are a very important part of the league. **It does no good to ruin a field and lose it for the season just to play one game that could be postponed or rescheduled.**

**DO NOT HAUL DIRT OR ANY OTHER MATERIAL ON OR OFF A FIELD TO MAKE IT PLAYABLE. LOSS OF A FIELD'S USE TO THE LEAGUE DUE TO THE IMPROPER ACTIONS OF A TEAM OR TEAMS COULD RESULT IN SANCTIONS, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, SUSPENSION/EXPULSION OF THE OFFENDING PLAYERS/TEAMS, FINES, AND REIMBURSEMENT BY THE OFFENDING PLAYERS/TEAMS TO THE FIELD'S OWNER OR COACH FOR DAMAGES.**

If the field cannot be made ready with light raking, do not play on it. Do not mess up a wet or muddy field with footprints or heavy raking.

After a game is postponed at a field, please notify the League President immediately. Notice of postponed early games will enable managers of teams playing later to be notified of possible postponement of their games.

The DFW ABA will make every reasonable attempt to reschedule rained out games. This may not apply to special events and tournament play.

**CANCELED GAMES:**

Teams canceling games due to lack of players is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Teams may not cancel games because their best hitter or pitcher is unavailable for their scheduled game. Teams canceling games may be charged with a forfeit loss and fined accordingly. Canceled games will be treated as a forfeit loss and not be rescheduled. Re-scheduling in legitimate emergency situations is solely at the discretion of the League President.

**FOUL LINES:**

Depending upon the availability of equipment at some fields, foul lines may be marked or indicated with no more than foul poles and bases. It must be understood that fair or foul is even more of a judgment call for umpires under these conditions. Foul lines and batter's boxes are not required to play a baseball game, and the equipment necessary to provide them will not be provided by the DFW ABA.

**REPORTING SCORES:**

Home team keeps the "official book". The scorekeeper on the visiting team should compare books after each inning to avoid disputes on the score later in the game.

It is the responsibility of the winning team to enter the score on line after the completion of the game. The losing team should verify the score was entered correctly. If there is a discrepancy the managers should notify the League President. It is important to record the score on line as quickly as possible. Many other players, managers, and fans are interested in knowing the score of the games. The scores will also update the standings once entered. Failure to enter game scores may result in a \$10.00 fine for the first offense, \$20.00 for the second, \$30.00 for the third, and so on.

The winner of a forfeited game should notify the League President so he can enter the score as a forfeit win.

## PROTESTS, FINES & SUSPENSIONS

### PROTESTS:

For any protest to be considered, the protest must have been filed according to the Official Rules of Baseball rule 4.19. No protest will be considered unless it meets rule 4.19. If a manager wants to protest an opponent's player's eligibility before or during the game, he should request the umpire to ask the player in question for a picture ID. If the player refuses or claims he does not have one, the player shall be removed from the game immediately and may not return until valid identification has taken place. **Player eligibility protests must be protested at the game. Any ineligible players will be removed at the time of the protest. All offensive and defensive plays until the ineligible player is removed will stand. Any removed players can be replaced with eligible substitutes. If at any time a team gets below 8 players the game will be declared a forfeit.** Managers should review their team roster on a regular basis and confirm ALL players are on the roster and are eligible to play in the league. It is not the league president's responsibility to manage your roster.

When notifying the League President of a protest, do not expect him to handle the problem right away. Generally, in protests, emotions are running high, and the DFW ABA concern is for a fair, dispassionate hearing of the protest, not a resolution within one hour of the protest being filed. Notify the League President by email that you have filed a protest, then sit down and write out the play or decision you are protesting, the circumstances, obtain some supporting viewpoints, and allow your League President time to investigate the protest. This involves talking with umpires, the opposing manager, yourself, and perhaps other witnesses as well.

Remember, according to the Official Rules of Baseball, RULE 4.19: **"NO PROTEST SHALL BE PERMITTED ON JUDGMENT DECISIONS BY THE UMPIRE. IN ALL PROTESTED GAMES, THE DECISION OF THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT IS FINAL. EVEN IF IT IS HELD THAT THE PROTESTED DECISION VIOLATED THE RULES, NO REPLAY OF THE GAME SHALL BE ORDERED UNLESS, IN THE OPINION OF THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT, THE VIOLATION ADVERSELY AFFECTED THE PROTESTING TEAMS CHANCES OF WINNING THE GAME"**.

### **PROTEST FEE:**

A \$100.00 cash protest fee is to accompany the written protest. This fee will be returned to the protesting team if the decision is ruled in their favor. The protesting team shall forfeit the fee if the protest is denied.

### FINES AND PENALTIES:

Fines and/or penalties may be levied against teams, managers, or players that have committed ruled infractions. All fines (and penalties) are to be paid 72 hours prior to the next scheduled start time of the next game. If the fine is not received, the manager or player involved is immediately ineligible to play the next game. If a team fine is in effect, the game is forfeited. If fines are not paid 72 hours prior to the next scheduled start time of the next scheduled game of the following week, managers, players, and/or teams are subject to further league action. All penalties will begin with the next scheduled game. Rainouts and cancellations are not counted towards fulfillment of the penalty (i.e. if the next scheduled game results in a rain out, cancellation, or postponement, the penalty carries forward to the next scheduled game and so on until it has been fully served.). The following list, which is neither an exclusive nor all-inclusive list, shall govern infractions not already covered:

1. Alcohol/Drugs: Any player violating league rules concerning alcohol may receive a three game suspension; a second violation may result in that player's expulsion from the league for that season.
2. Fighting: Any player involved in fighting, physical or verbal abuse, including but not limited to physical threats, racial epithets, foul or abusive language, toward another player or manager, may receive up to a three game suspension, possible season expulsion from the DFW ABA.
3. Verbal abuse or physical contact with an umpire: Minimum of a three game suspension, season expulsion and/or permanent expulsion from the DFW ABA.
4. Field Neglect: \$25.00 fine minimum plus the assessment of any and all costs associated with the neglect.
5. Preparedness: (not having batting helmets or catcher's gear, etc.): \$10.00 fine
6. Game Balls: teams not having 3 league approved baseballs for each game may be fined \$6.00 per missing ball.
7. Player Ejection: Any player ejected from a game must sit out the next scheduled game on a future date. If the next scheduled game is cancelled or rained out the suspension will continue until a game

has started. If the suspended game begins and not completed, the suspension will be served. A player ejected three times in a season may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the DFW ABA.

8. Manager Ejection: Any manager ejected from a game is not required to sit out the next scheduled game. But a manager ejected from a game three times is subject to suspension and expulsion from the league. This is in place so a manager can involve himself in a situation to intervene his players actions. Depending on the manager's actions, he still may have to be penalized for his handling of the situation.
9. Managers may also be suspended or expelled for ordering pitchers to throw at opposing batters.

Throwing equipment to express displeasure at an umpire's call may result in a warning or an immediate ejection from the umpire.

**The DFW ABA reserves the right to impose additional penalties, including but not limited to, fines, suspensions, or expulsion of players and managers based upon the seriousness of the rules violation.**

#### **EJECTIONS:**

A game in which a player ejection prevents a team from placing 8 defensive players on the field shall be declared a forfeit at the time they need to take the field. The team will have a 5-minute grace period to produce the eligible player.

### **ALL STAR GAMES, PLAYOFFS & TOURNAMENTS**

#### **ALL STAR GAMES:**

Each existing league may or may not have an All-Star Game. Depending on the number of teams in each league, some may be combined. The League President will determine if there will be an All-Star Game and schedule the All-Star Games for each league. All players and coaches will wear their regular season uniform.

Being chosen to the All-Star Game is an honor, and the players will be made to feel as such. Individual All Star commemorative awards will be given to each player selected to be on the team. An MVP award will be given to the Most Valuable Player for each game (one MVP per game), which is determined by the announcer and scorekeeper.

Players and managers are chosen for the game based on their place in the standings as of a pre-determined "All Star cut off date". The League President will establish this date prior to the season. Managers of the first-place teams in their division (or first and second place if there is only one division) will be the managers of their respective All Star teams. Players are allotted based on a weighted scale. Teams higher up in the standings are allowed to select more players than those farther down in the standings. Players from each team should be selected in a fair manner. Each team or team manager is responsible for selecting their all-stars. Teams may choose their own method of selecting their all-stars. Many teams take a vote using a ballot from all the players to make it fair.

Equipment for the games is to be provided by each All-Star manager. The DFW ABA will provide baseballs and umpire fees for the All-Star Game.

All players and managers on the All-Star rosters are to be in full team uniform for the game.

Attendance by all league players and managers is strongly encouraged to show league support. Additionally, all family members of the All Stars will be encouraged to attend. This is a family-oriented league, and their attendance is important for the league's cohesiveness.

#### **LEAGUE PLAYOFFS:**

Every league within the DFW ABA will have a post season playoff format to determine a league champion. All DFW ABA rules apply with the exception that games cannot end in a tie. The mercy rule is still in effect for all playoff games. Game 3 of a championship series will not have a time limit.

**Teams provide umpire fees and baseballs for all rounds of the playoffs and championship games.**

## **FINAL STANDINGS, PLAYOFF TEAMS, PLAYOFF FORMAT & AWARDS:**

The number of teams eligible for the playoffs will be determined usually within the first few weeks of the season. The number of teams eligible will be determined depending on the total number of teams in the league. If a team does not have a minimum of 8 players on their roster by the playoff eligibility date, they will be ineligible to compete in the playoffs. Seeding will be adjusted to allow the next best team into the playoffs. As a general rule of thumb, a minimum of 50% of the total number of teams will be eligible for the spring season. The League President will make the decision and communicate it to the managers. This is not always the case in the fall season due to a potential shorter season.

In the spring season the playoffs are best of three series unless otherwise stated. In the fall season playoffs are single elimination. Teams will be seeded according to their place in the standings. Standings are based off winning percentage. Higher seeded teams will play the lower seeded teams in the first round of the playoffs. (Example: Seed 8 will play seed 1, seed 7 will play seed 2, seed 6 will play seed 3, and seed 5 will play seed 4.) Second round seeding is by regular season percentage. Higher seeded teams are the home team throughout the playoffs.

Awards will be given for the following:

### **SPRING SEASON:**

Over-all Champion: Team Award and individual awards

Division Winner: Team Award

### **FALL SEASON:**

Over-all Champion: Individual awards

There will be 18 Individual Awards will be given to the manager for their team. The manager may have the option to purchase more awards.

### **TIEBREAKER SYSTEM:**

All division winners and playoff teams will be decided based on winning percentage. The winning percentage is determined by dividing a team's total wins by their total number of games played. For example, a team that is 18-3 has a winning percentage of .857 while a team that is 17-2 has a winning percentage of .895. Therefore, the 17-2 team would be the division champ. Ties will be counted as a ½ win and a ½ loss. As an example, a team that is 15-3 for winning percentage purposes, while 16-3-1 is 16 ½ -3 ½. The winning percentage for the former is .833 while the latter is .825 giving the title to the former team at 16-3-1. There will be times when the winning percentages end up equal. In those instances, the tie will be broken using the following system (without exception):

Two teams:

1. Head to head: Who beat whom when they played each other
2. Fewest runs allowed, head to head: Tigers beat Braves 4-3; Braves beat Tigers, 10-2. Braves win by virtue of allowing 6 runs to the Tigers.
3. Winning percentage within the division.
4. Run differential, head to head: as in #2 above, Tigers won by 1 run, Braves won by 8 runs, Braves win.
5. Fewest runs allowed per game average: take the total runs allowed for each team, and divide that figure by the total games played. The team with the lowest average runs allowed per game wins.

Three or more teams:

1. Head to head: Same as above, if all teams beat each other, go to:
2. Fewest runs allowed amongst each other. Tigers beat Braves 3-1, Braves beat Rangers 4-3, and Rangers beat Tigers 4-0. Tigers allowed 5 runs, Braves allowed 6, and the Rangers allowed 4. Rangers are the winner.
3. If these leave two or more teams, steps 3-5 above (in the two team scenario) will be performed to determine the winner.

In computing runs allowed, forfeit losses are treated as 9-0 losses for 9 inning games and 7-0 losses for 7 inning games. This is the only time a forfeit loss score is treated this way.

#### **DROPPED TEAMS:**

On occasion a team may have to be dropped from league play, due to either league suspension or the inability to field a team. Teams dropped during the season are subject to loss of player fees and forfeit bond. After notification to the League President that a team has dropped from the league, that team's next scheduled date's game(s) is a forfeit loss. All their remaining games are cancelled and their record becomes frozen after recording the forfeit loss.

#### **TOURNAMENTS:**

Any and all tournaments are a completely separate event from league play and each has their own entry fee and format.

Any DFW ABA team or player may participate and attend any tournaments. Each tournament may have special rules and formats different from the DFW ABA. Managers should make sure they understand these rules prior to beginning play.

### **MANAGING TIPS**

#### **ORGANIZATION:**

The following tips are set forth in an attempt to assist you and help make the task of managing simpler and easier.

#### **WORKING WITH THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT:**

1. Keep in touch with your League President. If you don't receive emails or communication from them fairly consistently, contact them and make sure you are on the contact list.
2. Immediately notify your League President if you change your address, phone, or email address.
3. If you are unable to attend your game that week, let the League President know that your coach is in charge. Leave all the equipment and copies of rules and rosters with your coach.

### **MANAGING YOUR TEAM:**

1. Keep in touch with your players. Use your coach and another player on the team to help with making phone calls during the week. This helps alleviate some of the time commitment involved.
2. Use email, text messaging, and social media to communicate with your players
3. Email your players each week and demand a response if they will be able to make the game that week.
4. Use a binder or folder to keep all your player contact information, lineup cards, schedules, rules, and other important information.
5. Read, or let your player read pertinent items concerning rules, league information, all-star games and other league information. This will help make them feel more part of the league and keep them informed. You may want to consider putting together a league web site.
6. After each game and after your players have cleaned up the field and policed for trash, let them know of the next game time and location. This will minimize phone calls and alert you to who may be absent.
7. Try to keep all players “in the game” at all times. When players are not in the batting order and/or the defensive line up, their edge tends to wear off. Don’t let players sit down too long before getting them back into the game, offensively or defensively.
8. Collect all team fees up front, with or without a sponsor. Try to avoid “installment plans” or “pay as you go” methods. This is risky and causes you administrative hassles that you don’t need. We strongly suggest that even if you have a sponsor that you charge your players a team fee. Experience has shown that when a player is relieved of a financial commitment, their participation and commitment to the team becomes suspect. If your sponsor is willing and able to cover all the team’s regular season costs, we suggest you save some money for tournament travel costs or other expenses.
9. Get all players to help with cleaning up. If you consistently let certain players leave without lending a hand, you’ll soon have all players “slipping away” and you’ll be left with all the field maintenance clean up. If everyone pitches in, the job will be easier and faster.

Using these guidelines, you should find managing a much easier task and give you more time to address the game itself.

### **PRACTICING:**

You and your team may want to hold preseason practices or practices between games. While the League President may have negotiated for the use of certain fields for games, **this consent does not necessarily extend to mid-week or preseason practices.**

When practicing on any field please respect the field and rules governing the field. The DFW ABA does not want to get a bad reputation of not taking care of the fields. Please do not soft toss into the fences, warm up in front of the dugouts, or anything else that may damage the field. Be sure to clean up after the practice.

### **SPONSORSHIP & TEAM FINANCES:**

There are at least four different methods for financing your team:

1. You can obtain a sponsor that will help you provide your team with baseballs, uniforms, equipment and umpire expenses.
2. If you cannot find a sponsor, you can figure a team fee that is equal for each player and collect from them.
3. You can obtain a partial sponsor and deduct the amount a sponsor gives you from the budget for your team and charge the players the difference.
4. Pay for the team fee yourself and have your players pay you.

Individual players may also obtain individual sponsorship for their team fee. You could have a number of sponsors, one for each player if you wish, with everyone in the same uniform but wearing the sponsor’s name instead of their own on the back of the team jersey. Be creative in this regard.