

CONNECTICUT MEN'S SENIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE ("CNMSBL")

2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS

***STANDARD MAJOR LEAGUE RULES AND MSBL NATIONAL RULES APPLY, EXCEPT AS MODIFIED BY**

CNMSBL

PLAYERS

1. Each player in CNMSBL is to review and maintain access to the current league rules and MSBL National rules. Team managers should make team members aware of league rules, and to assist in enforcement. Being uninformed of league rules and policy will carry absolutely no weight in arbitrating disputes. The CNMSBL Board of Directors will be the sole determining authority for league disputes. Refer to the following link for MSBL national rules. <http://www.msblnational.com/Rules.html>
2. League Player eligibility is as follows:
 - a. Signed / executed waiver on file for current season:
 - i. for liability purposes, players **cannot take the field** without an executed waiver on file. Managers are responsible for insuring that their players have signed and submitted waivers.
 - ii. If a team challenges the registration of a player and the player is not registered or signed a waiver, the team will forfeit the game. If this occurs during the play-offs the team is also eliminated.
 - b. Photocopy of current driver's license on file
 - c. League player dues / fees are paid
 - d. For the 25+ Division: Players must turn at least 25 during the current year.
 - e. All new players must turn at least 35 during **the current year**. New teams to the league will be allowed 1 player that turns 34 in the current calendar year.
3. Each team is required to pay and register at least fifteen (15) players, with current signed / executed waiver forms for each year a player participates in CNMSBL. New first year teams may be given an exception to this rule.
 - a. Team Payments to CNMSBL:
 - i. Payments must be made to the league on time so as to meet MSBL deadlines.
 - ii. Team Administration and Insurance fee must be received by the February league meeting. Any team failing to meet this deadline will be charged a late fee of \$100. Furthermore, the insured (normally their park and rec company) will be notified of the termination of insurance as of March 1 of the current season.
 - iii. It is important for all teams to keep their mandatory fees up to date. It is also understood that completing a final roster prior to game 1 is very difficult. Any team that fails to pay for at least 15 players or have delinquent fees paid by the Thursday 12:00PM prior to their opening game will forfeit week 1 and all games until fees are brought up. Additionally they will be fined \$100. The board may elect to work with new teams provided they discuss their situation with the board prior to the deadline.
 - iv. You are encouraged to use the online waiver system prior to the deadline date. After that, a paper waiver for new players must be sent to the president or shown to the opposing manager prior to the game being played. The registration fee can be submitted after the game is completed..
 - v. Any team with outstanding fees that have not been paid or statistics have not been entered the league web site, 2 weeks prior to the start of the play-offs are automatically disqualified from the play-offs.
 - vi. If checks are returned due to insufficient funds, payment must be made by close of business the following Friday, otherwise the team will be suspended from league play and forfeit games until his waiver is submitted, and his financial obligation is fully paid to CNMSBL.
 - vii. Any player who plays without having first submitted his waiver and fully paid his CNMSBL dues will be deemed ineligible and the team he played for will forfeit any game played.
 - viii. Final date for player roster change is that point in the season where 60% of the scheduled games remain. The exact date to be determined each year as schedule is set and placed in the regular monthly meeting minutes. New players are not allowed to play until MSBL eligibility is met and opposing managers are notified. Exceptions may be considered, and require authorization of the Board of Directors.
 - b. Player movement from one team to another is subject to league Board of Directors review and approval:
 - i. Teams are subject to lose two (2) players per year to other CNMSBL teams, provided the movement is during the off-season.
 - ii. Players must notify the league and manager, in writing, of their intention to move - those who do so first will be the first allowed to move freely.
 - iii. After losing two players, teams have the right to refuse additional players from transferring:
 - iv. Players not wishing to remain with their original team under this rule must sit out one season.
 - v. Teams must not use this rule to invoke revenge on players who may wish to move on.
 - vi. Players should use common courtesy and properly inform their original team and the league, as soon as possible, of their intentions to play elsewhere. Acceptable forms of notification are a letter and/or an email. It is advisable for managers to confirm receipt so as to avoid any question of a player's intent to play elsewhere.
 - vii. Players who owe their previous team money will not be allowed to play in the CNMSBL until their account is reconciled.
 - viii. Players may not change teams during a season unless they receive a release from their current team and approval of the league Board of directors.

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- ix. A player who leaves mid season, without release, must sit out for the remainder of the season before being allowed to play for an existing CNMSBL team
 - x. Team managers must keep an accurate account of all games/innings played, plate appearances and innings pitched for the purpose of tracking player playoff eligibility.
- c. Teams are required to enter individual game statistics onto the CNMSBL.org website used to verify / determine Playoff eligibility. All stats must be entered on the league web site by Friday following the games in order to be counted toward play-off eligibility. If you can't get the web updated by the following Friday, you must submit a copy of your scorebook to the board to get a 1 week grace period.

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d. RULES

4. In limited cases, the Board of directors reserves the right to override rules to act in the best interest of the league in areas that are not already addressed.
5. For definition purposes the term "game" is defined to include: Batting practice and/or fielding warm-ups on the field of play which also includes benches, dugouts, and foul territory one-half hour prior to game time and until an individual player leaves the field of play at the end of the second game. The time between doubleheaders will be included as game time so long as the players are in the general vicinity to the field of play.
6. The length of games will be 7 innings or 9 innings as reflected in the league schedule posted on the CNMSBL web site.
7. Games are to be played as scheduled. It is recommended that the first game of a doubleheader be scheduled to start at 10:00 a.m., yet shall start no later than 1:00 p.m. Game start times can be scheduled earlier at the discretion of the home team., but no earlier than 9:00 a.m. Exceptions can be made due to field availability with prior agreement between teams. Any change in starting time should be made at least one week in advance of the scheduled date, and the visiting team and league are to be notified by that time so players and umpires can be properly informed. If it cannot be agreed upon between the teams, the Board of directors will then determine the schedule change.
8. Unless by prior agreement between the teams and the umpire, managers are required to field a team when so instructed by the umpire. Otherwise, the team that does not take the field is subject to a forfeit.
9. Every attempt should be made by all teams to avoid rainouts. Games called due to inclement weather or inadequate field conditions are ultimately under the authority of the home team manager until a game has started. **This rule is not intended to get around a potential game forfeit.** The visiting manager **and the umpires** are to be notified as early as possible (minimum of 2 hours, i.e. 8 am for a 10 am start) to eliminate wasted travel time / expense and umpire fees. Once a game is started, the umpire has the sole authority to call a game.
10. Any team forfeiting two games during the regular season faces potential disciplinary action after review from the Board of directors - including expulsion from any post season play and/or expulsion from the league without any refund to the expelled team. If a team is excluded from post-season play, the teams with the next best records would move up in playoff seed as applicable.
11. Free Defensive Substitutions
 - a. **Defensive** players may come in and out of the field at the manager's discretion.
 - b. A pitcher removed from the mound can return to resume pitching one additional time provided the player remains in the field defensively and can not return until 3 consecutive outs are recorded.
 - c. If a pitcher is removed from the mound a second time, that player cannot return to the mound to pitch a third time.
12. Batting order:
 - a. The following rules are in addition to MSBL rules for batting order plus may override MSBL rules.
 - b. Should add 8 player minimum verbage.
 - c. If there are then fewer than 9 players in the line-up, and there is a bench-player who has been removed from the line-up, he can re-enter at the bottom of the line-up to maintain 9 batters in the order.
 - d. If a team has only 10 uniformed players ready to play, the team has the option to bat 9 or 10 players. Note: if both teams have >10 players ready to play, they have to bat at least 10.
 - e. Anytime a team is only batting 9 players, the opposing team has the option of also batting 9.
 - f. For the 35+ division regular season games. If a player is injured or has to leave and there are no additional bench players (or player previously removed from line-up) the line-up will compress and no out assed in that position. Subsequent injuries or players leaving will resort to MSBL national rules. Ejections will follow the MSBL national rules for a vacated batting position. MSBL rule: an out is assessed in the vacated position the next time around in the line-up. After that, the line-up is compressed.

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13. Courtesy Runners:
 - a. The following rules are in addition to the MSBL rules regarding courtesy runners.
 - b. A player who reaches base and has been declared as having a courtesy runner must use that runner or lose it for the rest of the game. A manager cannot then name another player to use that courtesy runner in the future.
 - c. If in the first inning a courtesy runner is needed, and no outs have been recorded, then the last batter in the order shall be the courtesy runner.
 - d. If the need arises for an additional courtesy runner as requested by a team manager, an additional courtesy runner may be granted, but only at the discretion of the opposing team manager.
 - e. Pitchers and catchers may be skipped as courtesy runners per decision of their manager.
 - f. Pitchers are not granted the same courtesy as catchers. Unless declared as one of the two batters having courtesy runners at the beginning of the game, pitchers must run for themselves.
 - g. When there are two outs and the catcher is on base, he will then be asked one time per occurrence if he wants a courtesy runner. If he refuses the runner, he will continue on the bases until he scores or there are 3 outs. Once a pitch is thrown, any catcher remaining on base must complete the inning on the bases.
 - h. For the 25+ division: In the event a player becomes injured during a game, the opposing team manager can allow the team to use an additional courtesy runner. If the opposing manager does not grant an additional courtesy runner, and a bench player is available, a pinch runner must be used. The bench player must then take subsequent turns in the batting order for the injured player throughout the remainder of the game. If there are no remaining bench players available, a courtesy runner is used, the injured player is removed from the line-up and all players lower in the batting order move up one spot.
 - i. For the 35+ division: If a team requires more than 2 courtesy runners, the additional courtesy runners will not be able to steal. The courtesy runner follows the same rules as the first 2 courtesy runners. In addition, they can only advance on a pass ball if it passes the circle (some fields it would be imaginary) around home plate. If the runner attempts to steal, he must return to the base once the pitch is completed if the batter fails to put the ball in play. If the courtesy runner is put out (attempting to steal, picked-off, ect.) he is out. If the player is injured and will no longer be able to bat: If a bench player is available, a pinch runner must be used. If there are no remaining bench players available, a courtesy runner is used, the injured player is removed from the line-up and all players lower in the batting order move up one spot
14. Every effort should be made by both teams to maintain a quick pace to each game. Warm-up pitches are limited to eight (8) for a new pitcher and six (6) pitches between innings. In the event of injury, there is no pitch limit to the pitcher warming up.
15. For 35+: When a pitcher hits a 3rd batter, the opposing coach now has the discretion to allow the pitcher to stay in the game or to be removed as a pitcher. If a 4th batter is hit by the same pitcher, he will then automatically be removed as a pitcher. 25+: The pitcher must be removed as a pitcher after hitting a 3rd batter.
16. Mercy Rule: a game shall be called official and complete if a team is leading by:
 - a. ten (10) runs after five (5) complete innings
 - b. fifteen (15) runs after four (4) complete innings
 - c. refer to Playoffs rules for Mercy rules in post-season games
17. Equipment.
 - a. Regarding helmets/head gear: MSBL national rules apply except, base coaches are encouraged to wear helmets (ear flaps are optional).
 - i. Base coaches not wearing helmets do so at their own risk.
 - b. Only wood bats and wood composite bats are allowed.
18. For 2015 the league voted to adopt the major league rule that the pitcher does not have to throw pitches for an intentional walk. From National rules as well: Only one is allowed per game.
19. For 2017 the league voted to adopt the new major league rule that the pitcher does not have to throw pitches for an intentional walk. From National rules as well: Only one is allowed per game.
20. The home team is responsible for providing new baseballs for regular season games in the quantities required (refer to Playoffs rules for team requirements on supplying new baseballs):
 - a. A minimum of 3 new baseballs are required at the start of each game. Additional balls are added as needed.
 - b. Teams should purchase a minimum number of baseballs based upon their home schedule and playoffs
 - c. Purchases of baseballs is through CNMSBL
 - d. Only CNMSBL approved baseballs are permitted

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CONDUCT

21. NEGATIVE, BELLIGERENT, and/or SLANDEROUS BEHAVIOR IS UNACCEPTABLE, and WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Inappropriate behavior may result in suspension or expulsion from the league, without refund after Board review and vote.
22. Players are to STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE RULES OF THE VARIOUS FIELDS, and to BE RESPECTFUL OF LOCAL RULES. Teams and/or players not following field rules and guidelines are subject to disciplinary action by the Board, up to and including expulsion, without refund.
23. FIGHTING OR AGGRESSIVE PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH AN UMPIRE OR AMONG PLAYERS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Players expelled from a game for either violation are subject to automatic suspension as set forth in these rules or possible expulsion from the league after the vote of the Board, without refund. THE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PURPOSEFUL INTENT TO DO BODILY HARM TO A PLAYER DURING A GAME (as defined) WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION, pending a decision by the Board of directors.

24. COLLISION RULE

The MSBL rules committee is concerned about possible unnecessary and violent collisions that may occur with the catcher at home plate, and with infielders at all bases. The intent of this rule is to encourage base runners and defensive players to avoid such collisions whenever possible.

- a. When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who clearly is in possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:
 1. Whether the collision by the runner was avoidable (could the runner have reached the base without colliding) or unavoidable (the runner's path to the base was blocked) or
 2. Whether the runner actually was attempting to reach the base (plate) or attempting to dislodge the ball from the fielder. PENALTY—If the runner, a) could have avoided the collision and reached the base, or b) attempted to dislodge the ball, the runner shall be declared out even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.
 3. If the fielder blocks the path of the base runner to the base (plate), the runner may make contact or slide into, a fielder as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to reach the base or plate.
 4. If the collision by the runner was flagrant, the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball shall be declared dead.
- b. If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called. The runner is safe and an immediate dead ball shall be called.
 1. If the base runner collides flagrantly, the runner shall be declared safe on the obstruction, but will be ejected from the contest. The ball is dead

25. DECOY RULE

Any fielder may use a decoy only if it serves a strategic purpose. For example, if a fielder, who sees a man attempting to steal second base during a hit and run, looks upward into the sky and says that he's got the pop-up when in fact the ball has been hit on ground is a legal decoy as it may cause the runner to retreat to first base and prevent him from advancing.

However, if a fielder fakes a tag, forcing a player to slide, when there is no strategic purpose or apparent play, the runner will be ruled safe and all runners will advance one base.

This is entirely an umpire judgment decision and not a rule that may be protested.

26. FORCE PLAY SLIDE RULE

The intent of the force-play-slide 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. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs.

- a. On any force play, the runner must slide on the ground and in a direct line between the two bases. 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 contact or altering the play of the fielder. (1) "On the ground" means either a head-first slide or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground. (2) "Directly into a base" means the runner's entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.(3) If a runner goes into a base standing up and does not make contact or alter the 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:(1) Makes a legal slide directly to the base, or (2) 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. (3) Makes a legal slide and makes contact with a defensive player who is on or over, but not beyond, the base. (4) When the base runner slides beyond the base, but does not (a) make contact with, or (b) alter the play of the defensive player, interference shall not be called.

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- c. Actions by a runner are illegal and interference shall be called if: (1) The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder; (2) The runner uses a rolling, cross-body or pop-up slide and either makes contact with or alters the play of a fielder; (3) The runner's raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder's knee when in a standing position; (4) The runner goes beyond the base and either makes contact with or alters the play of the fielder; (a) 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. (5) The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg; (6) The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

PENALTY:

(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 shall be ejected from the contest.

(4) If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double-play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.

27. If an umpire detects a pitcher intentionally throwing at a batter, the pitcher will be ejected from the game

28. CODE of CONDUCT – Players and managers must abide by the current CNMSBL rules and MSBL national rule:

- a. Managers and players are expected/encouraged to file complaints/incident reports to the Board of directors
- b. The appropriate procedure for filing a complaint must be followed
- c. The Board of directors will formally respond to each reported incident
- d. Offenders are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, without refund
- e. Repeated incidents are subject to more severe sanctions, as determined by the Board.

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UMPIRES

29. Umpiring costs are to be shared equally each week by both teams (see below for playoffs).
30. If a rainout is declared with teams and umpires present prior to the first pitch being thrown, a travel fee will be paid to each umpire, as determined by the local umpiring board.
31. In the event of a forfeit, or a rainout after a first game is started, umpires are due one game fee. Similarly, if a second game is started or forfeited, then they are to be paid for the second game as well.
32. **DO NOT VERBALLY OR PHYSICALLY ABUSE ANY UMPIRE.** Our league specifically supports our umpires as an integral and important partner in the success of our league. **NO UMPIRE SHALL BE VERBALLY OR PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER A GAME.** This includes safe refuge from the field of play to the parking area, which includes exiting the parking area.
 - a. Players are encouraged to interact in a positive manner conducive to collegiality with our umpires..
 - b. Verbal assault is considered a minor infraction and is subject to the penalties of minor infractions.
 - c. Physical assault on an umpire will be considered a **major** infraction and is subject to the penalties governing major infractions. (refer to section on Infractions/Penalties).
 - d. An ejected player must leave the area of the field, and the premises, as defined by the Umpire.
 - e. An umpire's ruling of the above is final, and will be reported to the league

PLAYOFFS

33. Playoff criteria must be established by the Board before the season begins:
 - a. postseason schedule, format and seeding will be determined prior to the start of the season by agreement of the league managers for each division.
 - b. playoff games are to be scheduled for weekends only last minute exceptions are allowed due to field availability or rain provided that both teams agree.
 - c. seeding and tie-breakers are established as follows:
 - i. winning percentage
 - ii. forfeits
 - iii. head-to-head record
 - iv. average (per game) runs allowed
 - v. coin-toss
 - d. Player playoff eligibility is maintained on the CNMSBL web site.
34. For 2024 all box scores must be entered on the league website for play-off eligibility:
35. In order for a player to be eligible for CNMSBL postseason playoffs, they must qualify as follows:
 - a. Participation in 40% of the team's regular season games played
 - b. Players must accumulate one point for each game played by their team during the regular season. Games forfeited by a team shall not count as a game played. Points shall be calculated as follows:
 - i. 1 point per plate appearance
 - ii. 1 point per complete inning pitched (e.g. 3 outs)
 - iii. 1 point per two complete defensive innings played
 - c. Active duty Military Exception:
 - i. An Active Duty military member, that were in good standing and playoff eligible in CNMSBL, will keep their playoff eligibility until no longer on active duty. This will only apply to the team they were rostered on upon last playoff eligible season. If their team moves then so will their eligibility. If their team disbands, then eligibility for another team under this board will be approved by the league board.
 - ii. An Active Duty military member, that is transferring to the area will also be granted playoff eligibility, provided they are already registered and active in another MSBL. Members not in another MSBL will be required to play a minimum of two games in order to be playoff eligible.
 - iii. Managers are required to inform the league board if this rule is going to exercised. Opposing managers can ask to see a military member's ID at the start of the game
 - d. exceptions can be made by the Board of directors for players with extenuating circumstances (e.g. injury)
36. During play-off competition, any pitcher ejected by an umpire for intentionally throwing at a batter, will be disqualified for further completion in the play-offs. The board may review this and override the disqualification
37. The board will review all forfeits prior to the start of play-offs. Any team determined to forfeit a game or games to manipulate play-off seedings will be disqualified from the play-off
38. Each team will split playoff game umpire fees.
39. Each team will supply a minimum of three (3) baseballs for each playoff game. If additional baseballs are required, both teams are to provide baseballs equally.

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40. If a playoff game is interrupted due to inclement weather, the game will resume from the point at which it was stopped at the next available opportunity (as established by the Board of directors).
41. Playoff games are not subject to Mercy rules, and must be played the scheduled number of innings.

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INFRACTIONS/PENALTIES

42. Any player ejected from a game is automatically suspended for the next game. An ejected or suspended player must leave the premises. There may be further disciplinary action as determined by the Board of directors. Both team managers and umpires are encouraged to report incidents to the board so they can properly be dealt with. If there is an ejection during game one of a play-off series, a further suspension of that player before must be decided by midnight before game 3. The board must be notified to consider further suspension.
43. Any team that can not field a team for a schedule game will forfeit the game/s scheduled. The forfeiting team will have these losses counted as games played towards player play-off qualification. The opposing team will receive a win for each game and will NOT have this game/s counted as games played toward play-off qualifications. None of the players on either team will be credited for games played for games forfeited. If umpires and players are notified and no travel occurred, then no monetary penalty will be imposed. It is important that the full schedule is played. Every game played carries importance as the goal of our league is to PLAY BALL. In addition failing to play as many games as possible has implications for postseason play and creates uncertainty and the specter of manipulation. After the scheduled start time for a game, there will be a fifteen (15) minute grace period to allow a team to field the minimum number of players. The grace period will begin at the scheduled game time. The game umpire will determine the starting time for purposes of running the time clock. In the event a team has absolute positive cell phone confirmation that its last player is in actual transit to the game and will likely arrive very soon after the grace period, then the team with the nine or more players may take the field and allow the other team with insufficient number of players to hit. If the player in transit does not arrive by the time his slot is reached in the batting order, or if the third out is made and the team with fewer than eight players has to take the field, the game is forfeited with monetary penalty. It is important that the full schedule is played. The monetary penalty for forfeiture is:
 - a. Pay a non-refundable forfeit fee to the league:
 - i. First forfeit is a \$100.00 forfeit fee
 - ii. Second forfeit is a \$150.00 forfeit fee and a Board of directors decision for the team's eligibility
 - b. Pay all umpiring fees. If the forfeiting team does not have money enough to cover both umpires then the other team will cover the remaining fee and shall be reimbursed by the forfeiting team. Remember, teams are splitting the costs for umpires each week.
44. Forfeiting teams must make arrangements for payments of penalties with the Board of Directors by the Tuesday following a forfeited game. Failure to abide by this rule may lead to further sanctions as determined by the Board of Directors.
45. All protests or complaints must be lodged to the league office by phone (or voice message) or by email by 11:59 pm on the date of the game, and followed by a written statement defining the reason for the protest / complaint prior to 11:59pm of the day before the team's next game and in no event later than 5 days after the game under protest. Failure to follow the above stated procedures will result in a dismissal of the protest or complaint.