

2026 American Legion Baseball Rules Update

These rules were officially adopted by the National DEC in February 2026

1.G. Courtesy Runners. Departments may use the courtesy runner rule for their respective American Legion Baseball program during regular and post season: **New Hampshire will adopt this rule for both the regular season and State Tournaments for all levels. We will add to this rule with the following rule: Courtesy Runners will be allowed for our NH programs during the regular season and state tournaments. That runner will be the batter who made the last out in the previous inning.**

1.S. One-Way Communication. A coach may use a one-way electronic communication device to communicate with the catcher for the purpose of calling pitches. Coaches may not use electronic communication device(s) to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member while on offense. When using the electronic communication device, the coach cannot be outside the dugout/bench area. A tablet computer used for scorekeeping purposes only is permissible. **(NH will allow)**

6.D. Dual Participation. *“POINT OF EMPHASIS”* The American Legion believes team loyalty is a key ingredient for any team sport. Dual participation shall no way interfere with a player’s responsibility to his American Legion Baseball team. Once state tournament play has completely concluded and should there be open dates prior to team travel (August 3) to national regional tournaments, a player(s) may be granted permission to dual participate from the American Legion Baseball Committee chairman. Any player participating in another sanctioned baseball game/tournament during the American Legion post-season tournament dates shall be ineligible from further post-season tournament play. CLARIFICATION – Players attending military assignment, MLB-sanctioned invitation only event, player combine/evaluation of extended drills and/or game-like scenarios events, or college of enrollment orientation workouts may be granted an exception on a case-by-case basis with proper documentation. Prior written approval from the American Legion Baseball Committee chairman is required.

9.L. Minimum Active Players. Teams competing in American Legion Baseball senior national tournaments (including state tournaments) must have nine players available for participation at a national tournament at all times. Senior teams that have fewer player available from their approved roster strength are permitted to bring up players registered on their affiliated Junior American Legion Baseball team roster to the senior team to approved roster strength not to exceed a total of 18 players. CLARIFICATION – If the Senior team’s approved roster strength is 16 players, the team is allowed to only transfer enough Junior players to a roster strength of 16 players.

Any players transferred from junior team to senior team must be approved and certified by the department baseball chairman. The junior roster must be registered with the national office by June 30. Any senior team that does not have nine players will forfeit its right to participate, and the National Americanism Division – in consultation with the department baseball chairman – shall determine a suitable replacement team.

9.M. Between Inning Time Limit. Between innings, teams have 120 seconds (or 150 seconds for a relief pitcher) to be ready for the first pitch (pitcher holding the ball and touching the pitcher's plate and a batter standing in the batter's box ready to hit). The 120 second clock (or 150 second clock for a relief pitcher) shall start when all defensive players have started to leave their positions after the last out has been made and stops when the umpire calls "Play" for the first pitch of the first batter of the next half-inning. 3rd base umpire will use a stop- watch if a clock is not available. If there are unusual circumstances that prevent either team from getting on or off the field, other common -sense delays such as ceremonies or field maintenance not the fault of the teams, or an injury, the time clock is delayed until players have had an opportunity to begin to move to their positions. If the offensive team is not ready within the 120 second or 150 second clock, the umpire shall call a strike. If the defense is not ready, a ball shall be awarded to the first batter.
(NH will utilize this rule for State Tournament only.)

MLB rule changes are not automatically adopted by ALB when introduced. A transition period will be observed to analyze, discuss, and vote to adopt or deny such changes. New rules will be considered on odd numbered years.

The following MLB rules have not been adopted for regular season or tournament play.

- 18-inch Bases rule 2.03 (if used-no penalty or forfeit)
- Limit the number of throws (pick-off attempts) to 1B
- Minimum Batters Faced Requirements rule 5.10(g)
- Ohtani Rule 5.11(b). ALB rule is DH for pitchers only
- Pitcher's Clock
 - a. Pitcher Delays rule 5.07(c) will be observed but not timed
 - b. When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 12 seconds after he receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call a "Ball"
- Mound Visits
 - a. Limitation on Number of Mound Visits per Game rule 5.10(m)
 - b. ALB will continue to follow the 2 visits per inning that requires a change of pitcher rule 5.10(l)