

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the following document contains additional rules and recommendations that will be in force for the 2020 season.

New RSSA rules in response to the Covid 19 pandemic

Adopted by RSSA Board on May 6, 2020

Revision Date: 7/26/2020

IMPORTANT: We will be enforcing these safety measures so that we can get back on the fields as soon as possible in the safest way for all of our players and officials. We will be ejecting any player or guest who refuses to follow these safety rules for the good of everyone else in the park.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these new procedures as we work together to maintain the highest health and safety standards.

RSSA's primary concern is the health and welfare of players, officials and their families.

Social Contact before, during and after games:

- There will be a "no-contact, no-handshake policy" to be observed at every level of the organization until further notice. This includes all physical contact and extends to customary game-related activities and post-game handshakes between members of opposing teams. Instead, staff, players and coaches should verbally communicate "good game," without shaking hands, high-fiving or fist-bumping.
- Players will be expected to maintain social distancing (6 feet of distance) before and after the game (as well as during the game as much as possible).
- Spectators will also be required to maintain social distancing during the game.
- Managers will be responsible for keeping any sick players or players in quarantine away from the fields.
- **There will be no official/sanctioned gathering following the games. This includes the practice of gathering at the pavilion for post game beverages as well as Thursday lunches.**
- Pregame batting practice will be left to player discretion. However, for those choosing to participate social distancing must be maintained at all times.

Dugout:

- No food (including seeds!) will be allowed on the field or in the dugout. Also, NO SPITTING PLEASE!
- Keep 6 feet of distance in and out of dugout. Players will be required to separate and in most cases be in and out of the dugout on the outside of the field fences to maintain space.
- Players will NOT be allowed to spread out on the field of play because of the inherent danger of being hit by a foul ball.
- When leaving the dugout at the end of the game each team will need to clean up the dugout and get rid of trash, especially empty drinking containers.
- Managers will use a disinfectant in the dugout area (bench, bat racks, etc.) prior to each game.

The Game:

- It will be mandatory for catchers and umpires to maintain 6 feet of separation from the batter and each other.
- The use of a face mask or face covering while in the dugout during the game (while encouraged) is left to player discretion.
- The on deck batter or a player assigned by the offensive team will wear gloves and be responsible for picking up the bat after it is used. Pick up the bat by the barrel, not the handle.
- Each team will provide and use their own new and back up ball. The pitcher will take both balls with him to the bench area at the completion of each half inning.
- Pitchers will disinfect the game balls by wiping them down while his team is on offense.
- The use of batting or protective gloves on both hands while batting and playing the field is recommended but is left to player discretion.

NOTE: The following rule does not apply to the D League. An alternate version of this rule is in use for that league and is documented in the D League Rules document that is posted on the D League web page.

- To avoid contact and maintain distancing, we will be adopting the Canadian “run through” rule at 2nd and 3rd base as follows:
 - ∅ Every play at those bases will be a force play with the runner able to “run through” the base (just like 1st base). It is the runner’s responsibility to observe where the defensive player is setting up and to run to the opposite side of the base (2nd and 3rd base) maintaining an *approximate* distance of 6 feet from the defensive player. If an honest effort is made to run away from the defensive player, a runner shall not be called out for being closer than 6 feet.
 - ∅ The runner’s foot must hit the ground on or beyond the imaginary line before the ball is caught in order to be safe.
 - ∅ If the runner interferes with the defensive player by not running wide of the base, that runner shall be called out and the play is dead at that point. No further advancement of other runners is allowed.
 - § Exception to the above rule: if the runner interferes with a throw when the defensive player has a **legitimate** chance of throwing out another runner, that second runner shall also be called out. This is a judgment call and can be a difficult one. Managers may have to step in here to resolve any disputes and reach a "gentlemen's agreement".
 - ∅ If the runner chooses to attempt advancing to the next base (in case of overthrow, etc.), he must return to and tag the base before advancing.
 - § If the runner advances to the next base without returning to touch the base he just ran through, he is out.
 - § After running through a base (2nd or 3rd), if the runner makes any move towards the next base prior to returning to touch the base he just ran through he can be tagged out, just like if you turned the wrong way after running through 1st base.
 - § Also, if the runner makes a move towards the next base, stops and attempts to return to the base he just ran through, he can be forced out at the base he is attempting to return to.
 - § EXAMPLE: I am on 1st base moving to 2nd base; there is a potential play on 2nd base so I run through the base; there is an overthrow at 2nd base so I turn to go the 3rd base without going back and touching 2nd base; at this point, I am fair game to be tagged out; if I continue on to 3rd base, I am out; if I attempt to return to 2nd base the play at 2nd base is now a force play. At this point, the defense has 2 options; tag me out or throw the ball to someone covering 2nd base and force me out.
 - ∅ If a runner is returning to a base after a ball has been put in play and there is a potential play at that base (caught line drive, etc) he can and should run wide of and through the base to avoid any contact with the defensive player.
 - § For example: I am caught off of 2nd base when a line drive is caught by the shortstop. If the SS attempts to throw me out at 2nd base, I must run through and wide of the base rather than going directly to the base.
 - § This is true regardless of which base I am returning to.
 - ∅ Tagging runners between bases will still be allowed. If the runner does not want to be tagged, he can concede the out by raising his hands.

Personal hygiene:

- Most important: Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose – with a tissue, if possible – when coughing or sneezing, then properly discard the tissue in the trash.
- Avoid close contact with anyone else who is coughing or sneezing or who is otherwise sick. People who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave the park.
- Wash your hands often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.