



# ***Bucks County Legends***

## ***Player Handbook***

***2018-2019 Season***

*General Information*

*Rules and Code of Conduct*

*Team/Player Agreement*

## **Welcome,**

Congratulations on being selected to join the 2018-2019 Bucks County Legends travel baseball organization. The Legends baseball organization is designed for players that are prepared for a higher level of competition, a greater commitment to practice, a focus on individual development and development as a TEAM! We look forward to a competitive season and to being part of your player development. Competitive baseball can be a challenging, demanding, and enjoyable sport. It is our goal to build competitive baseball teams, while providing an enjoyable environment for players to further develop their baseball skills, knowledge of the game, teamwork, while also focusing on the essential elements of character building and ethics in sports. Hopefully, along the way they will make a few new friends.

Travel baseball organizations require a greater commitment than recreational baseball. The Legends organization is much more competitive and intense than the typical travel baseball organization, and requires an even greater level of commitment from everyone: players, parents, and coaches. To clearly define expectations, we have developed this Player Handbook.

Both the player and parents/guardians shall read and become familiar with the information contained in this Handbook. You will be expected to adhere to the expectations of the Coaches, the Team and the Organization. You will be held accountable if you fail to do so.

### ***The Legends Board of Directors and Coaches***

Upon reviewing and understanding this document, both player and parent shall sign, date and return the Team/Player Agreement (last page) to Eileen Sperling. In addition to the signed Team/Player Agreement you must also submit the following:

- Good Copy of your Birth Certificate *(if the Legends don't have one on file)*
- Completed Emergency Information Form
- Waiver & Release of Liability Form
- First player fee installment *(Saturday Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> Workout)*

***\*\*\* Bucks County Legends reserves the right to amend this Handbook at any time with or without prior notice to players and parents \*\*\****

## Coaches Mission

The Bucks County Legends travel baseball coaches are committed to teaching players the skills needed both on and off the field to succeed at the next level. Focus is placed on teaching fundamental skills, while teaching players to be a student of the game. Heavy emphasis will be placed on defining what a championship culture looks and acts like on and off the field.

## Goals

- To promote and organize the game of baseball through quality and competitive experiences.
- To develop a player's baseball knowledge and skills, while promoting discipline, education, health, confidence and self-esteem.
- To encourage the spirit of fair play, sportsmanship and team.
- Align our fundamentals with both High School and Collegiate programs, and generally accepted academic standards.
- To prepare athletes to play baseball at an elite level.
- To prepare our players for play at the High School and Collegiate level and provide college exposure.

## Values

- **LEADERSHIP** – Taking charge of situations under pressure. Paying the price in sweat, effort and sacrifice. Showing the way through good example.
- **SPORTSMANSHIP** – Showing enthusiasm, spirit and courage all the time. Taking advice and criticism in an effort to improve. Being humble and gracious both on and off the field. Respecting your opponent in both victory and defeat.
- **COMPETITIVE** – Possessing a deep determination and desire to win. Having pride in yourself and never give up. Getting up one more time than you are knocked down. Being tougher than your opponent.
- **INTENSITY** – Hustling all the time, wanting to be #1. Always giving maximum effort.
- **DEDICATION** – Being well conditioned through proper training and diet. Making every practice and working hard. Learning and practicing skills to reduce mental errors. Discipline yourself to follow team rules and guidelines.
- **LOYALTY** – Thinking in term of “WE” instead of “I”. Sacrificing for the good of the team. Respecting the Legends Organization, coaches and teammates.

## Dedication to Academics

The Legends Organization would like ALL players to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA (C+ to A+) to participate in team activities. GPA's less than 3.0 will follow a prescribed improvement plan as developed by the coaching staff, in conjunction with the player and his family. Copies of your report cards must be handed in immediately at the end of each marking period to your team coaching staff.

## Player Fees & Equipment

Players fees are designed to cover team and organizational costs only. The costs include tournament entry fees, outdoor field maintenance, indoor winter workouts, practice shirts, organization insurance, team training equipment and supplies, custom player uniform package and other miscellaneous operating costs. Player fees shall be paid in installments, in accordance with the following schedule. Should a player leave or be removed from the organization prior to the end of the season, they will not be entitled to a refund of fees paid.

Payments will be due on the following dates:

- 1<sup>st</sup> installment: **November 10<sup>th</sup> 2018**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> installment: **January 26<sup>th</sup> 2019**
- Final Payment: **February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019**

The exact amounts are designated on the Winter Workout Schedule sheet that was handed out. If payment arrangements are needed please contact Eileen Sperling at [buckscountylegends@gmail.com](mailto:buckscountylegends@gmail.com)

## Fundraising

Travel baseball can be an expensive experience. In order to keep our fees as low as possible (3) three mandatory organization fundraisers for all teams and players to pay for additional tournaments and to support team-building activities. Any additional fundraising will be up to each individual team's discretion.

If any player chooses to opt out of fundraising they will be required to pay their share of that mandatory fundraiser based on the team requirement. Each fundraiser opts out fee will be determined at the time of the fundraiser. (\$200 - \$300 per fundraiser)

## **Practices**

Practices are key in player development. All team practices, unless otherwise stated, are mandatory. If a player cannot attend a practice session, the player must give advanced notice of the absence or tardiness. Player participation during games can be affected by attendance.

To maximize practices, it is imperative that the player give 100% of their effort and attention to the practice. This requires the players to arrive at practice on time and ready to participate.

The following rules shall apply during all practices. These rules are subjected to modification at the coaches' discretion.

- Winter Workouts: Once supplied with practice shirts, players are to wear practice shirt and either gray, black or navy-blue shorts or sweat pants.
- Outdoor Practice: Players are to wear practice shirt and baseball pants.
- Players shall not wear current game uniforms to practice.
- Players are expected to come to practice with and maintain a positive attitude.
- Players are expected to carry their own gear with them into and out of practice.
- Players shall bring appropriate drinks to practice to remain hydrated.
- Players will hustle on and off the field.
- Players will NOT talk to ANYONE when a coach is talking to them specifically, or to a group they are in.
- There may be times when players from another Legends team will be invited to attend a team practice. These guests will be treated as team members since they are part of the Legends family.

## **Tournament & Game Information**

Legends teams will participate in numerous tournaments throughout the season. Some of these tournaments may involve travel, require overnight stays at out of town locations, and may have game play scheduled to occur on weekdays as well as weekends. The coaching staffs will develop a tentative tournament schedule prior to the start of the season, however this schedule is subject to change. In the event a tournament is cancelled, every attempt will be made to register in another one in its place.

Baseball is a team sport. As such, it is important for the entire team to attend all games. If a player is injured and unable to play, he is still expected to be at the game and support the team. Players are to notify the head coach in advance of any tournament or game that they will miss.

## Playing Time

Tournament baseball is not recreational baseball, it is a competitive environment where playing time is earned through ability, effort and attitude demonstrated at practice and games. The coaching staff will involve the players when possible, however playing time is NOT guaranteed. Players may participate in many ways, including fielding, base running or pinch hitting.

We strongly encourage our players to discuss concerns regarding their performance or playing time directly with the coaches. Parents/Guardians can also discuss questions involving individual playing time with the coaches using the following guidelines:

- Request a meeting with the coaches via email (not text message) at least 24 hours after the game/tournament in question has concluded. Coaches will not respond to any request for discussion sooner than this.
- Allow 24-48 hours for the coaching staff to review game statistics to allow for an informative discussion.
- NEVER attempt to discuss individual playing time during or immediately after a game or tournament.

## Pre-Game

The night before each game(s), the coaches will establish a curfew and “lights out” time for all players. This is to ensure that all players receive sufficient rest prior to game day. Parents/Guardians are asked to respect this curfew and ensure players adhere to it. During tournaments involving travel and overnight hotel stays, coaches will participate in enforcement.

On game day, each player should arrive to all games at the time designated by the coaches and be ready to begin warm-ups. Each player shall be attentive, ready to play, wearing the required uniform and have all required equipment always.

## During the Game

It is important to support our teammates and to learn from game time situations. The following rules shall apply during all games. These rules are subject to modification at the coaches’ discretion.

- Players are to remain in the dugout during the entire game when not playing or warming up.
- Players will only talk to team members and coaches during the game.
- If a player needs something from a non-team member they must go through the coach in the dugout.
- Players in the dugout are expected to support team members currently on the field. This includes cheering for their team and calling out important play information such as when the opposing team may be bunting or stealing bases.
- Each player should stay hydrated during the games.

- Players shall not display unsportsmanlike conduct. Such conduct may result in removal of the player from the game and in the line-up.

Family and friends are always welcome to attend games. However, during games they are expected to abide by the following rules:

- Do not attempt to coach players on the field during game play. The players must recognize that they must listen to the coaches.
- Negative conversation regarding players, other parents or the Legends organization will not be tolerated.
- Do not attempt to openly argue with calls on plays by the umpires. Umpires and tournament officials reserve the right to eject spectators for such behavior and could result in disqualification of the entire team.
- Do not attempt to talk to players in the dugout during the game. If a parent or sibling needs to talk or to give something to a player they must go through the coach in the dugout.

### **After the Game**

Players shall not leave the field until the game is over and the handshake with the opposing team has taken place. ALL trash in the dugout should be picked up. Players shall quickly gather all equipment and exit the dugout then go directly to the area designated by the coaches for a quick team meeting.

### **Between Games**

After being released by the coaches, players should rest and prepare for the next game. Stay out of the sun and eat a light healthy snack or meal if time permits. Players should also remain hydrated. If a player leaves the tournament grounds for any reason between games, he is to first notify the coaches.

## Tournament Travel

The intent of the Legends organization is to encourage teams to participate at a higher level of competition. As such, our 13U and 16U levels should expect to compete in several tournaments that will require travel and hotel stays. Travel expenses are the sole responsibility of the player and his family; however, the organization will try to provide fundraising opportunities to allow players to raise money to offset these extra expenses. The Legends Travel Coordinator and team coaches will assist with coordination of travel arrangements for these tournaments.

It is not uncommon for tournaments to implement a "Stay to Play" policy. In these type of tournaments, teams traveling from beyond a set distance are required to abide by established lodging rules including booking hotel rooms through contracted travel agents or at selected tournament hotels. Players will be expected to adhere to these tournament rules.

Curfew rules will still apply during tournament travel. While there will be opportunities for the players to have fun and explore new places, they still need to be ready to play at their peak. Coaches will perform periodic hall patrols in the tournament hotel after curfew. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for enforcing lights out for players staying in their room. In the event that players share a room with no parents, Coaches will perform lights out check.

## Parents Communication

Parents/Guardians are **VERY IMPORTANT** to the team's success. The coaches depend on parents support and adherence to the organizational policies. Parents shall not slander any player, coach, manager or other players parent(s) on this team or any opposing teams.

## 24 Hour Rule

Any comments or concerns that a parent may have regarding coaching decisions may be discussed with the coaching staff after a 24-hour time period. In other words, if you have a complaint, we mandate that you wait 24 hours after the incident (concern) to give you time to think about your concern and to facilitate a calm discussion of the concern. If you still want to address the issue with the coaching staff, you may then contact via email the Head Coach regarding your concerns. This rule is designed to help prevent all parties involved from saying something out of haste that may be regretted later. Should a parent have a problem with the coaching staff of the team, arrange to meet with the coaches outside of regular team activities. No Coach or Manager will entertain any discussion during practice and/or games. Parents must understand that being a member of the team in no way guarantees their child's position or playing time. While we would like to maximize playing time for all players while meeting team objectives, positions and playing time can be affected by:

- Ability demonstrated during practices and in games
- Attendance and punctuality at practices and games
- Level of cooperation and effort displayed during practices and games
- Attitude and positive participation during practices, games and other team activities.

If a player has a concern about position or playing time, we encourage them to ask the coach themselves. Teaching players to ask questions is an important part of character building. We want players to learn to speak for themselves and understand that positions and playing time are earned through practice and effort.

## **Team Codes of Conduct**

### **Players' Responsibilities**

As a team and as individual athletes, each player will get out of this season what they put into it! Growth and development is a continuing challenge. Each year we will face stronger, faster and more capable opponents. How we compete will be a measure of how we prepare as Individuals and as a Team. Coaches will have high expectations and place an emphasis on the details of the game. At times, you may be asked to make a change or approach the game differently. Learning new mechanics may feel awkward or uncomfortable at first but trust that our intention is to make you the best player that you can possibly be. Allow the coaches to help you become a stronger player on a strong team.

- I will treat my parents, coaches, teammates, opponents, property of others and game officials with the respect that I would like to be treated.
- I will practice and play to the best of my ability and respect the game of baseball.
- I will be on time (as assigned by my coach) to team events.
- I will recognize baseball as a team sport and will put the interest of the team over my own individual interests.
- I will be receptive to coaching.
- I will not criticize another teammate's play.
- I will not criticize umpires, coaches or opposing players.
- I will conduct myself in a respectful manner. Destructive or inappropriate behavior, during or after a game or practice, will not be tolerated and may result in a suspension.
- I will not attempt to deliberately injure another player(s).
- I will refrain from posting negative or derogatory comments about BCL or its volunteers on Social Media sites like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.
- I will work on improving individual skills outside of team practices.
- I will work on physical conditioning when not at a practice and recognize that simply playing baseball is not enough to become a stronger athlete.
- I will be responsible for all uniforms and equipment.
- I will wear my team uniform with pride and treat it with respect.

## Parents Responsibilities

We are a TEAM – athletes, coaches and parents. Parents need to support their child by allowing them to experience their frustrations and successes on and off the field. We want you to know that we always have the best interest of your child in mind. Our intention is to get the best out of our players collectively as a TEAM and help them grow individually. This is a process, and by the end of the year your child will have improved tremendously. How much he improves depends upon his openness to instruction, effort to be the best and how he is encouraged to grow.

- I will enforce and support the Code of Conduct for players.
- I will encourage my son to be receptive to coaching.
- I will help my child be on time for team events.
- I will set a positive example and encourage good sportsmanship at all games.
- I will support the team coaching staff and will not coach from the stands.
- I will refrain from publicly ridiculing or verbally abusing any player from either team. I will not embarrass my child(ren) or others by yelling negative comments at players, coaches or officials.
- I will refrain from publicly ridiculing or verbally abusing any coach or official.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child and the team ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I will report all injuries to a coach immediately and communicate any medical restrictions.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- I will refrain from posting negative or derogatory comments about BCL or its volunteers on Social Media sites like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.