



T-BALL LOCAL LEAGUE RULES

Updated February 19, 2024

GOVERNING AUTHORITY

The Burke County Recreation Department's (A Division) T-Ball League will be governed by the current rules and regulations of the Diamond Youth Baseball and MLB Baseball, with the exceptions found in this manual.

AGE REQUIREMENTS

- A. The Age Control Date is prior to April 30th of the current year.
- B. The age division for T-Ball is four (4), five (5), and six (6) year olds.
- C. A participant is allowed to compete in one age division only. All participants are required to play in their correct age division.

FIELD SPECIFICATIONS

- A. Distance between bases shall be **Fifty feet (50')**.
- B. Pitching Rubber is at thirty six feet (36') from home plate with twelve feet (12') diameter circle around the rubber.
- C. There will be ten foot (10') arch from home plate that the ball will need to cross, or it will be a foul ball.

GAMES AND AWARDS

- A. The T-ball league does not have an established winner, as game scores are not kept up with.
- B. All participants will be awarded participation trophies.

COACH'S APPLICATION, BACKGROUND CHECK AND CERTIFICATION

- A. All coaches must complete a coach's application form and submit it to the Recreation Department for approval.
- B. In order to ensure the safety of our participants, all coaches are subjected to a background check. Each coach must complete a consent to background check form. The Burke County Sheriff's Department will conduct a background check on each coach. If the background check is approved (see Background Check

policy of the BCRD for further details), a coach will then be considered in the coach's application process.

- C. The Recreation Department will provide at least one certification opportunity for all coaches and assistant coaches. The certification fee will be paid by the Recreation Department for all coaches and assistant coaches in attendance. Coaches not attending will be responsible for attending a certification program elsewhere, prior to the beginning of the season. The Recreation Department will not reimburse the fee. It is mandatory that all coaches be certified.
- D. No one is allowed on the field or in the dugout with the children until they have been approved through the above-mentioned process.
- E. Coaches and any approved personnel must be attired in the Recreation Department issued uniform for all games.

PLAYER EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

- A. Shoes are mandatory for play in youth baseball games. Rubber-molded, cleated shoes are approved for use. Smooth and soft-soled athletic shoes, including tennis or basketball shoes are acceptable. Steel spikes are prohibited.
- B. Team uniforms will be issued by the Recreation Department. Players must be in uniform to play (uniform consists of jersey and pants).
 - (a). Managers, coaches, and/or team scorers who are in the dugout or on the field, must be attired in the designated Recreation Department coach's shirts and must be certified.
- C. Team caps will be issued by the Recreation Department and are the only hats that may be worn by the players; however, it is not mandatory that the hats be worn.
- D. Helmets with face mask and chin straps must be worn by batters, baserunners and on deck participants.
- E. The child playing in the pitching position is required to wear a protective mask.
- F. The official bat shall be round, and made of wood, metal, or other material acceptable for batting. Approved tee ball bats are 26" and shorter. See www.usabat.com for more detailed information.
- G. Gloves should be worn by participants when playing in the field.

LENGTH OF GAMES

- A. The teams should play at least two (2) innings with all players batting during the inning. If enough time, a third (3) inning can be played, but the game shall not last more than one hour. Game times are to be strictly adhered to. If the game begins late, the children must be off the field at least five minutes before the scheduled time of the next game.

GAME RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. The choice of first or last at bat (home-visitors designation) shall be determined by the game schedule.
- B. All players present at the game will bat in each inning. If a player is late, they will be added to the bottom of the batting order.
- C. All players will play in the field each inning.
- D. The coach will tee the ball for each batter. The batter will be given three (3) swings to hit the ball and then they must hit off a Tee. The purpose of the T-ball league is to teach hand-eye coordination and the proper stance and techniques for hitting a ball.
- E. If a child is put out, they will have to return to the dugout area; however, there may be as many outs in an inning as there are children. This will encourage the children in the field to learn how to properly field the ball. It will also teach the children that when they are out that they do not get to remain on base.
- F. Only certified coaches are allowed on the field during a game. Coaches may not interfere with the play but can encourage a child to catch the ball and teach them where to throw it.
- G. There is not a winner or loser in a T-ball game. Runs are not kept up with. Please encourage the parents not to keep up with the runs as well. Remind them that **Everyone Is A Winner!**
- H. If a batter slings his bat, the coach should warn him/her that if they sling the bat again, they will be out.
- I. The player in the pitcher's position must wear a fielder's mask and must be outside of the line drawn between the home plate and the pitcher's mound. It is preferable that the child in the pitcher's position be as far back as the pitching rubber.
- J. A child must wear a batting helmet (with face mask and chin strap), at all times, when on the on-deck box, at bat, while base running, or returning to the dugout.

PRACTICES

- A. Coaches may not hold their first practice until after the specific date assigned by the Recreation Department. Any team found in violation of this policy will be subject to game forfeiture(s) determined by the number of practices held before the said date.
- B. It is preferred that practices be limited to one (1) hour but a maximum of one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes is allowed. All practices **must be completed by 9:00 pm**. Remember that the children have homework and other school requirements.

- C. It is the policy of the Burke County Recreation Department to avoid hosting youth activities on Wednesday nights whenever possible, due to church activities. Coaches may conduct practices on Wednesday nights; however, the practice cannot be considered mandatory, and a child cannot be penalized for not attending. This same policy applies to weekend and spring break practices.
- D. If you are the last one to use the field, please make sure that you take your tee and equipment with you.
- E. Before leaving the Recreation Department Complex, please make sure that all of the children on your team are with a **Responsible Adult** or that a **Recreation Department Staff Member has been notified**.
- F. Anytime that our office cancels practice or games, coaches are not allowed to practice their teams on our complex. We usually do this because of the conditions of the fields or weather and **ONLY** as a last resort. If you choose to disregard our notice, you will be suspended from coaching the next scheduled game. The only exception is if games are canceled due to a conflicting activity.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

- A. The fields and facilities at Jonathan Broxton Park are monitored by the Thor Guard Lightning Prediction and Warning System. This system is designed to predict a lightning strike within a defined geographical region.
- B. When the conditions for a lightning strike exist, the Thor Guard system will give a 15-second blast on the horn cluster that can be heard approximately 700 yards away. At the same time, a yellow strobe visible from most areas of the park will activate and stay on until the danger has passed or at least 10 minutes after the last detection of lightning. Once the potential for a lightning strike has passed, the system will activate the horns giving the all-clear signal – three, five second blasts -- and the strobe light will go off.
- C. Anytime that the strobe light is on, participants should take cover inside a building or their vehicle and are not allowed on the playing fields, playground, basketball court or outdoor areas.
- D. Anyone not following these guidelines when the Thor Guard warning is activated and remains outdoors or in an inappropriate area or shelter will do so at their own risk.
- E. If the alarm is activated during a game, officials will clear the area and ask all participants and spectators to go to their vehicles. If the system has not given an all clear within 30 minutes, the games will be called for the evening. (Refer to policies regarding completed games to determine if the game in session will be complete, rescheduled, etc.) Prior to leaving, check our Facebook Page (Burke

County Recreation Department) or look for an email from our department confirming that all activities are suspended for the evening.

- F. Check the Burke County Recreation Department's Inclement Weather Policy for more detailed information.

COACH'S RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. After team selection, it is your responsibility to inform the players of your team that you are their coach and when you will be scheduling practices.
- B. Conduct a parent's meeting. Get the parents involved. Let them set up refreshment schedules. Make sure they know that good sportsmanship is **MANDATORY**.
- C. Make sure that you fill out a coach's application as well as a consent form for a background check. The Recreation Commission has implemented policy of requiring a background check on all volunteers as a means of protecting the children who participate in our programs.
- D. No tobacco is allowed in the park (smoking, vaping, or chewing). Smokeless tobacco devices are also not permitted in the park.
- E. Coaches must notify the Recreation Department in case of injury to any player, whether the accident occurred at a game or at practice. An injured player must be cleared by the Recreation Department before he/she can play or practice. (Accident/Injury forms are supplied in your coach's manual.)
- F. Anytime that our office notifies you of a change in schedule, it is your responsibility to contact all of the children on your team.
- G. Any coach that is unable to consistently reach a child (for practices, etc.) should notify the Recreation Department immediately so that we can see if we can reach them.
- H. If you have a problem with your team equipment, need additional equipment, etc., **please contact our office before 3:30 p.m.** so the staff can have your equipment ready for you by time of practice. Do not wait until practice time to let us know. If you do, it may be the next day before your request can be filled.
- I. Before leaving the Recreation Department complex, please make sure that all of the children on your team are with a responsible adult or that a Recreation Department official has been notified.
- J. In the event of rain, the Recreation Department will inform **you** if the games or practices have been canceled. **You must then get in touch with your team.** Please make sure that we have all telephone/cell numbers and current contact information so that we can locate you. Check internet site (www.burkerec.com) or our Facebook page (Burke County Recreation Department) for up to the minute notices regarding inclement weather and cancelled games.

- K. Remember, you set the mood for the team. **Your attitude is the most important one on the field.** If you are pleasant and have a positive attitude and show good sportsmanship, so will your parents and players.
- L. Sign an inventory sheet of equipment issued to you at the beginning of the season. Make sure that all equipment is in the bag when returned at the end of the season. Equipment is to be returned immediately following your last scheduled game.
- M. See practice section about field schedule for practices.

SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. Good sportsmanship is expected and demanded of all participants, coaches and team followers.
- B. Players, coaches, and spectators are to refrain from making derogatory comments or using inflammatory actions to opposing players, coaches or teams.
- C. Anyone who touches or threatens an official or employee affiliated with the operation of an organized activity will be suspended for at least a year from all organized recreation activities and will be required to pay a \$100 reinstatement fee before they will be eligible to compete again or attend any recreation department activities.
- D. Any individual directly involved in an activity that is ejected from a game for any reason other than violence, must pay a \$25 reinstatement fee for the first offense. In the event that a second ejection occurs, the individual is suspended from any organized recreation activity for at least one year and must pay a \$100 reinstatement fee before they will be eligible to participate in any organized recreation activity.

PLAYERS AND SPECTATORS CONDUCT

- A. Any player, coach, or spectator acting in an unsportsmanlike manner or in any way that could prove detrimental to the league, will be subject to disciplinary action by the Recreation Department. If the coach cannot control the situation, the game will be awarded to the opposing team. The person or persons violating this rule shall be suspended for the following game. (Judgment shall be made by either the umpires or the Recreation staff.)
- B. Any player, coach, or spectator disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct, including abusive language, is ineligible for further participation in the game in progress, plus the next game played and may be dismissed from the league.
- C. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child attends all practices and games. Any child who misses two (2) consecutive practices or games can be benched by the coach for one game, with the approval of the Recreation

Department. Any child who continuously misses practices or games will be dismissed from the team. It is the coach's responsibility to notify the Recreation Department of any child's missed games or practices.

- D. No alcoholic products should be consumed before or during activities involving your team.
- E. No Smoking, vaping, or tobacco use allowed in our parks.
- F. No Animals allowed on the playing fields and must have a leash on while at the park.