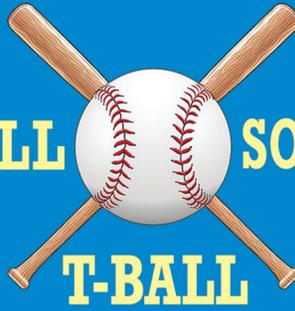


FALMOUTH LITTLE LEAGUE

BASEBALL SOFTBALL



T-BALL

www.falmouthlittleleague.net • 15 Foreside Road, Falmouth, ME 04105 • 314-480-2657

Falmouth Little League Covid-19 Safety Plan

Community youth sports activities require unique consideration during the COVID-19 pandemic. After reviewing the COVID-19 Prevention Checklist for Community Sports provided by the State of Maine, and after carefully studying and discussing the multiple challenges to effective prevention strategies presented by playing games on baseball and softball diamonds, the Board of Directors for Falmouth Little League has resolved to cancel all baseball, softball and t-ball programs for children 8 years-old and younger, and modify the way we will play on in the older divisions.

We acknowledge our right and responsibility to exercise our judgment and cancel play at any time if players and/or coaches show symptoms or test positive for COVID-19, if our safety guidelines are not being met, and if the rate of infections in Cumberland County rises dramatically and unexpectedly.

T-Ball (Ages 4-6) – Cancelled

AA Baseball (Ages 7-8) – Cancelled

AA Softball – (Ages 7-8) Cancelled

AAA Baseball – (Ages 9-11) Regular season cancelled. Possible sandlot games would begin on Smith Field not before July 6th.

The 18 players in AAA will not divide formally into teams. Instead, Falmouth Little League will offer the possibility of practices and/or sandlot games twice a week according to rules described in a new program created by Little League International. <https://www.littleleague.org/play-little-league/sandlot-fun-days/>

AAA and Majors Softball – (Ages 9-12) Regular season cancelled. Possible sandlot games would begin on Little Legion Field not before July 6th.

The 18 players in softball will not divide formally into teams. Our Majors softball team does not have the option of playing teams from other towns. Instead, we will offer the possibility of combining AAA and Majors players for practices and/or sandlot games twice a week according to rules described in a new program created by Little League International. <https://www.littleleague.org/play-little-league/sandlot-fun-days/>

Majors Baseball – Regular season with 4 teams of 10 players. Teams will hold practices twice a week on either Grubb Field or Smith Field beginning June 8th and play all games on Grubb Field from July 6th until no later than August 15th. No games will be played against teams from other towns. Falmouth baseball players in our Majors division will only share a baseball field with the same group of 40 players this summer.

Games will be played Monday through Thursday from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Grubb Field. Fridays will be reserved for makeup games.

Juniors Baseball (Ages 13-15) – Regular season cancelled. The 26 boys in our Juniors program will practice on Big Legion Field beginning June 9th and will play Sandlot games amongst themselves throughout the summer at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday evenings.

Return To Safe Play

Falmouth Little League's Board of Directors has consulted the COVID-19 Prevention Checklist for Community Sports provided by the State of Maine and the Little League International guidelines for return to safe play. We adopt the following new rules and procedures fully expecting to make necessary adjustments, with input from parents, coaches, and players, as we go forward with practices and games. In our Majors division, before actual games begin, each team will participate in at least one practice game, during which coaches will take the time to stop play and thoroughly review all social distancing and equipment sanitizing requirements with the players and the spectators.

Fields and Facilities

- 1) No more than 50 players, coaches, and spectators shall occupy the playing field, the area immediately behind the home plate backstop fence, and the area outside the fences along the right and left field sidelines.
- 2) Additional spectators whose numbers would exceed the 50-person limit shall be required to remain behind the outfield fence.
- 3) The outfield fence shall be considered a separate area and no more than 50 spectators may be in that area at the same time.
- 4) Coaches and/or FLL Board members will keep track of attendance at all games.
- 5) A playing field will be used only one time per day for either a practice or a game. Players and their families will never be arriving at the fields for a game when other teams are already playing on that field or departing.
- 6) To further prevent crowding, games and practices will be scheduled so that no more than two of the four baseball and softball fields at the Little Legion Complex will be used at the same time.
- 7) Signs will be posted prominently indicating no one should attend or participate in a practice or a game if they currently have symptoms or have been in contact with anyone with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the last 14 days.
- 8) Signs will be posted to designate areas reserved for players and coaches.
- 9) Dugouts will be off limits to teams during practices and games. Expanded dugouts will be established along the right-field and left-field sideline fences from the dugout gate to the outfield corner. 10 stalls will be clearly delineated and numbered in the 10 foot spaces between fence posts. Each player will be assigned a stall for every practice and game. A player's equipment bag and water bottle must remain in his or her designated stall at all times.
- 10) When a player is not in the field in a defensive position, and not on base, at bat, or on deck, he or she must be positioned in the designated stall at a safe, 6-foot distance from teammates in neighboring stalls.
- 10) Before every practice or game, coaches will collect all bats from the players' stalls and store them safely in the caged on-deck area of each dugout. During practices and games, the on-deck hitter will be the only one allowed to enter the dugout area.
- 11) Coaches must disinfect the dugouts and expanded dugout areas before and after every game and practice. Spray sanitizer will be supplied by Falmouth Little League.
- 12) The Snack Shack building will remain locked and closed for the entire season, including the bathroom.
- 13) Portable restroom facilities will be rented as required. Coaches will be responsible for leaving sanitizing wipes at the entrance to the portable restroom and for removing them after each game or practice. An ample supply of sanitizing wipes will be stored in the equipment shed at each field.
- 14) The announcers booth above the storage sheds at each field will be closed and off limits to players and spectators for the entire season.
- 15) Parents must remain in their cars during practices or else drop off and pick up. Carpooling with children of different families is not recommended.

Safely Managing Equipment, Practices, and Games

1) Coaches, players, and parents should self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to field. Anyone exhibiting symptoms may not attend or participate in a practice or a game.

Symptoms included cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, fever or feeling feverish, known close contact with a person who has been lab-confirmed to have COVID-19.

2) Player equipment shall not be shared. Each player should provide his own helmet, fielder's glove, catcher's gear, batting gloves and baseball bat. Falmouth Little League will provide a bat, helmet, and/or glove for the entire season to all players who lack any or all pieces of equipment.

3) In our Majors division, three sets of catcher's gear will be provided to each team for the season. Catcher's equipment must never be shared during a game. Teams will be restricted to fielding a maximum of three different catcher's in each game.

For Sandlot games, at least four sets of catcher's gear will be provided by Falmouth Little League.

4) Coaches will be responsible for disinfecting catcher's gear after each game. Coaches may decide to designate three catchers for the entire season and allow each catcher to manage his own set of catcher's gear for the season.

5) Players will be encouraged to keep a personal bottle of hand sanitizer in their equipment bags. Hand sanitizer will be considered necessary baseball equipment this year.

6) All players must use hand sanitizer when entering the facility. Coaches must personally ensure that pitchers and catchers use hand sanitizer before and after each inning in the field. Other players will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer between innings as a habit.

7) All baseballs and softballs will be sterilized frequently following Little league guidelines.

8) No handshakes or fistbumps among players coaches after a game. No spitting. No sunflower seeds.

9) Face masks should not be worn on the field during play. Players may wear face masks while "sitting on the bench" in their assigned stalls in the expanded dugout area, as well as before and after a game or practice.

10) Players may choose to wear a glove on their throwing hands.

11) Every coach must use a face mask when coming into close contact to another coach or player.

12) All players and coaches must wear face masks during team meetings where 6 foot social distancing is impractical.

13) Practices will be managed in small groups of 4 or 5 players in rotation through various drills: infield, outfield, batting cage practice, pitching, etc.

14) During games the dugouts will be used only for the batter who is on-deck.

15) Umpires will not call balls and strikes from behind home plate. One umpire will call the game from behind the pitcher's mound, with a face mask available for when he may need to come into extended close contact with a player or coach while explaining a ruling.

16) In general, coaches will be responsible for ensuring that social distancing is maintained between players as much as possible. This means additional spacing between players while playing catch, changing drills so that players remain spaced out, and no congregating of players while waiting to bat.

17) Players must bring their own water or other beverage to consume during and after practice. No shared drinking fountains, portable hydration stations, or coolers may be used.

Spectators

- 1) Spectators may position themselves behind the homeplate backstop fence and along the outfield fence while maintaining the required social distancing and complying with Maine's 50-person limit for social gatherings in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Reopening Plan. Coaches will be responsible for limiting the number of spectators behind the homeplate backstop fence.
- 2) Spectators may not watch games or practices from the sideline fences between the dugout gate and the outfield corner, or anywhere near the expanded dugout areas for players and coaches.
- 3) Spectators must wear face masks when they do not maintain 6 feet of separation from other spectators.
- 4) If coaches or league officials judge that spectators are not following social distancing safety guidelines sufficiently, play will be suspended until they comply.
- 5) If too many spectators attempt to attend games, coaches will be asked to devise a sign up sheet to limit the total number of spectators in the separate outfield area to no more than 50.
- 6) Whenever possible, spectators should allow a player or a coach to retrieve a foul ball or home run ball.

Reference

Little League Guidelines

1) Best Practices - General guidance:

<https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/general-guidance/>

2) On field Guidance:

<https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/on-field-guidance/>

3) Game operation and umpire guidance:

<https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/on-field-guidance/>

4) Facility, Fan and Administrative guidance:

<https://www.littleleague.org/player-safety/coronavirus-update/season-resumption-guide/best-practices/organizing-playing-watching-games/facility-fan-and-administrative-guidance/>

Maine COVID-19 Prevention Check List for Community Sports

<https://www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov.decd/files/inline-files/COVID%20Checklist%20for%20ME%20Phase%202%20Community%20Sports.pdf>

Falmouth Little League Board of Directors

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Joe Porter – VP Majors, Equipment Manager

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David Hanson – VP T-Ball

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