

# MSBA Umpire Manual 2025





# 2025 MSBA Umpire Manual

Dear Umpires,

Welcome to the 2025 baseball season!

Whether you're returning to the field or joining the MSBA Umpire Program for the first time, we are excited to have you as part of our team. Your role as an official is essential to delivering a fair, fun, and positive baseball experience for all players, coaches, and families in our community.

This year's manual includes the latest information on rules, policies, certification requirements, and expectations to help you feel confident and supported throughout the season. As always, we encourage you to take pride in your work, continue building your skills, and support one another both on and off the field.

We are proud of the professionalism, maturity, and leadership that our umpires demonstrate every game. Your commitment to the game—and to each other—sets MSBA apart and contributes to a respectful, learning-focused environment at every level of play.

Thank you for being part of our program. Let's make 2025 our best season yet.

Yours in baseball,

Adam De Caire  
Umpire-In-Chief  
MSBA

Courtney Sheehan  
Umpire Scheduler  
MSBA



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## **Section 1: General Administration**

### **Contact Information**

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### **Responsibilities of the Umpire-In-Chief**

Accountable to the MSBA Board of Directors, the Umpire-In-Chief is responsible for the overall administration of the program. This includes the following elements:

- Intake of new umpires
- Certification
- Program spending
- Protests/Forfeits
- Umpire equipment
- Opportunities for umpire development
- Questions concerning rules / interpretations
- Reports (Ejections)
- Feedback or concerns related to coaches, players, teams, umpires, or facilities
- Equipment

### **Responsibilities of the Umpire Scheduler**



**NEW for 2025, Courtney Sheehan has joined our program, and has responsibility for the following areas:**

- Game Assignments
- Schedule changes
- Reporting rainouts/cancelled games
- Payroll



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## **Section 2: Certification Requirements**

The Mississauga Southwest Baseball Association (MSBA) will only assign umpires who have a valid annual certification issued by Baseball Ontario. Each umpire in the province must recertify every season.



In 2025, the Ontario Baseball Association certification for umpires requires the following components:

Level 1 and 2:

- Attendance of an in-person clinic
- Completion of online modules
- For umpires 18 years and older – Completion of Baseball Ontario's volunteer screening requirements.

Level 3

- Completion of online modules
- For umpires 18 years and older – Completion of Baseball Ontario's volunteer screening requirements.

To complete these components, umpires must have an account on Baseball Ontario's OnDeck platform, which can be accessed here: <https://ondeck.baseballontario.com/>

Umpires are required to be 13 years of age at the time of registering in OnDeck. If you are under 13 and interested in umpiring, please contact the Umpire-In-Chief directly.

### **Levels of Umpire Certification**

The level 1 program is for first and second year umpires (levels 1.1 and 1.2).

The level 2 program is for third, fourth, and fifth year umpires (levels 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3). Each of these levels requires clinic attendance every season.

The level 3 program is for umpires in their 6th year of umpiring and beyond, who must attend a clinic only every 3 seasons, but must write and pass an online exam in the other 2 years.

**Failure to complete certification will result in ineligibility for assignment to games.**



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## **Section 2: Uniform and Equipment Standards**

Umpires will require the following equipment:

- ☐ Equipment bag
- ☐ Shin guards (*to be worn underneath pants*)
- ☐ Chest protector (*to be worn underneath jersey*)
- ☐ Mask with throat protector
- ☐ Ball bag
- ☐ Indicator
- ☐ Brush



MSBA has a *limited number of equipment sets* available to loan out to new umpires for the 2025 season. Any equipment available to be loaned out must be returned at the completion of the season, at a date set by the Umpire-In-Chief.

Each umpire is responsible to purchase a proper uniform:

- ☐ A black umpire jersey (with a red or black short sleeve undershirt), **AND**
- ☐ Grey pants with a black belt, **AND**
- ☐ A black hat (worn with the black jersey), **AND**
- ☐ Protective cup (plate umpire required; base umpire optional)
- ☐ Black umpire shoes or black running shoes (cleats are not permitted)(Proper umpire plate shoes are recommended for higher ages of baseball)

All umpires are **required** to match jersey colours with their partner(s). If umpires are only purchasing one shirt, black is the recommended colour.

### **Where to purchase uniforms and equipment**



The following retailers in our region carry umpire equipment and uniforms. Given supply chain issues, you may wish to call before visiting to check on stock and sizing:

- [Home Run Sports](#), Unit 15 1911 Dundas Street East, Mississauga. 905-232-1048
- [Corbets Source for Sports](#), 450 South Service Road West, Oakville. 905-337-9381
- [T. Litzen Sports](#), 433 Ofield Rd S, Dundas. 905-628-3344



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## **Section 3: Scheduling of Games Policies**



Our program uses the **Assignr** scheduling platform.

For new umpires, you will receive an email inviting you to create your account prior to the start of the season. Assignr can be accessed online through your computer. There is also a mobile app that is recommended.



### **Availability**

Umpires must keep their availability calendar within the Assignr program up to date! Umpires are only assigned games on dates they are marked as available, which means there should be very few declines of assigned games.

### **Receiving and Accepting Assignments**

The Umpire Scheduler will create the initial schedule of assignments, based on umpire availability. All assignments should be accepted within 48 hours of being received. Umpires may also decline assignments, however keeping an up-to-date availability calendar will prevent this from being necessary. Because of the significant number of games to be assigned by MSBA, umpires who repeatedly decline assignments on days they have marked AVAILABLE may face removal from future assignments.

### **Requesting Games**

Throughout the season, games will be published that can be requested by umpires through Assignr. (Note: requested games do not become your game until assigned). Requests will try to be accommodated as much as possible. If an umpire requests an assignment and does not get that assignment, it simply means that multiple umpires have requested the same game, and the Umpire-In-Chief is attempting to meet as many requests as possible.

If an umpire does not show up to an assignment, they will be subject to a fine of \$25.00. On the second (or any subsequent offences), the umpire will be subject to losing future assignments or be removed from the MSBA umpire roster. If an umpire arrives late to a game, they will surrender half of the game fee. These discretionary decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Umpire-In-Chief.

Umpires will be notified by the Umpire Scheduler at least one hour before game-time if their game has been cancelled for any reason (weather, forfeit, etc.). If the umpires do not receive any notification from the Umpire-In-Chief, the expectation is that the game is



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being played. Umpires should never expect that the second game of a doubleheader is cancelled because the first game was cancelled. Please refer to the payment policies section for payment expectations in these cases.



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## Section 4: Payment Policies



New in 2025, MSBA is in the process of investigating options for direct deposit or e-transfer payment to umpires. Until that process is confirmed, the following payment methods will apply:

- ❖ For all regular season MSBA games, umpires will be paid by cheque on a monthly basis throughout the season. Cheques will be available for pick-up at the snack-bar of the Tom Chater Clubhouse around the second week of each month, for the previous month's games. Umpires will be notified once cheques are available for pick-up. Valid I.D. will be required for cheque pick-up.
- ❖ Tournaments games are paid in cash.

For all MSBA games (exhibition, regular season, tournament, and playoff games), umpires will be paid their full game fee *unless* they are notified 1 hour (or more) before the scheduled start time of the game. In cases of rainouts, forfeits, field issues, lighting issues, weather issues, or any other event, umpires will still receive the full game fee, unless otherwise advised by the Umpire-in-Chief. Umpires who officiate a game alone are entitled to **both** game fees (double pay).

- ❖ For MSBA Exhibition Games, umpires will be paid in cash at the diamond. The game fee will match the current list of pay rates. It is the responsibility of the MSBA team to cover umpiring costs for exhibition games. Umpires are to be paid before they take the field.

The Umpire-In-Chief shall have final discretion on all matters relating to umpire game fees.





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## **Section 5: Expectations of Umpires**

Umpires with the MSBA Umpire Program are expected to maintain integrity, impartiality, and professionalism on and off the field, acting as role models for players, coaches, and spectators.

Umpires are not to drink alcohol or use tobacco and/or drugs while in uniform.

Umpires are expected to arrive at the diamond **at least 30 minutes** before the scheduled start time and to begin the pre-game plate meeting promptly 5 minutes before the scheduled start time. As part of this process, umpires should notify the home manager when they have arrived to the park, to prevent the manager from calling the Umpire Scheduler out of concern.

It is expected that each umpire will possess an understanding the rules, mechanics, and positioning appropriate for their level of certification.

Specific rules for certain leagues will be shared with the MSBA umpire roster (curfews, mercy rules, etc.).

If any umpires have concerns throughout the season on any matter, they should not hesitate to contact the Umpire-in-Chief.

Be consistent, confident, and professional, and do not be intimidated by players, coaches, or fans. Be sure to sell your calls - be clear, loud, and confident and **take your time**. Call lots of strikes and outs, and have fun!

### **Reporting Ejections**

If you are involved with the ejection of any personnel from a game you officiate, please complete [THIS ONLINE EJECTION REPORT](#), and then call or text the Umpire-In-Chief to make the UIC aware of the ejection and the report. You may wish to bookmark this link on your smartphone for remote use.



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## 2025 UMPIRE RATES

Level	Pay
Rookie Ball (A/AAA)	\$30.00
10U (HL/AA/AAA)	\$35.00
11U (HL/AA/AAA)	\$35.00
12U (HL/AA/AAA)	\$40.00
13U (HL/AA/AAA)	\$40.00
15U (HL/AA/AAA)	\$55.00
16U AAA (7-innings)	\$65.00
18U (A/AA)	\$65.00
18U AAA/ 22U AAA (9-innings)	\$75.00
22U AA (7-innings)	\$65.00
22U AAA (9-innings)	\$75.00



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## RULES

Given the diversity of baseball we officiate (age, skill level, tournament vs. regular season...) there are a number of rule sets that interact for different games. A few points:

- Don't let this intimidate you.
- Don't feel like you need to memorize all of this material.
- Use this document as a guide.

Click on the links to access the full rules documents.

### [Official Rules of Baseball](#)

This is the foundation for all baseball, and these rules are used unless there is specific content below that amends these rules (usually for age or amateur purposes).

### [C.O.B.A. Gold Book Rules](#)

COBA is the Central Ontario Baseball Association, and MSBA is a member of COBA. These are the rules that amend the official rules to make the game more appropriate for various age and skill levels. **Use these rules as your guide for regular season rep and select games, for things like time limits, treatment of balks, and other age specific changes. These apply to regular season Rep and Select Games.**

### [Baseball Ontario Rules](#)

These are also rules that modify the official rules of baseball, similar to the COBA rules. In almost all cases, these rules and COBA rules are the same, so you can rely on the gold book rules above. **These rules take precedence for Rep tournament play over the COBA Gold Book Rules. These rules also take precedence in relation to pitch-count rules.**

### [MBLL House League](#)

- These rules apply to the MBLL 15U and 18U

### **House League Rules**

Below are some of our age-specific house league rules. So for house leagues games, you use the official rules of baseball, plus these rules. These rules are included below.

- Rookie Ball House League (Below)
- 11U House League (Below)
- 13U House League (Below)

### **Tournament Rules**

MSBA may issue tournament specific rules.



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## Rookie Ball MSBA House League Rules 2025

MSBA Rookie Ball adheres to the Baseball Ontario rules with the follow exceptions:

- Games will start promptly at 6:15pm. No new inning after 7:45. Dead ball at 8:00pm. If the game ends at 8:00pm with an inning in progress, the score reverts back to the score at the last completed inning. Teams should attempt to arrive at least 30 minutes early to properly warm-up and practice before games. The home team prepares the field for the game
- Batters will receive a maximum of 5 hittable pitches to put the ball in play. The final hittable pitch may be fouled an unlimited number of times. If the batter swings at a bad pitch, it counts as one of the 5 hittable pitches.
- A team may score a maximum of 5 runs per inning.
- The defensive team will be allowed 1 coach on the field to assist fielders with positioning. This coach must be positioned on the outfield grass. The offensive coach is responsible for pitching the ball. He may instruct the batter, but not the runners. In the event the pitching Coach instructs a runner, a warning will be issued. Upon the 2nd infraction, the hitter will be out. It is not a requirement to have a defensive coach on the field, and teams are encouraged to transition towards an independent defense.
- It is the responsibility of the head coach to ensure that all players play an equal amount of time in the outfield and infield throughout the year.
- Players must not play the same position for more than two innings per game. The league may request records from the coaches to confirm that this rule is being adhered too. As this is not an 'in-game' rule it is not the responsibility of the umpire to enforce.
- In such instance that rule 5 or 6 (which together with rules 7, 8 and 26 shall be identified as the "Fair Play Rules") is/are not being adhered too, if a convenor is on site, should be brought to the convenors attention as soon as possible and corrected accordingly. If no convenor is on site, the opposing coach may, at their own discretion, identify the infraction and allow the offending team to correct the error. However, it is not the responsibility of the opposing coach to confront the offending team. Any violation of this rule should be reported to the league either at time of the infraction (if convenor is on site) or immediately after the game.
- Violation of these rules may result in a warning, forfeit of the game or other punitive action as deemed reasonable by the league.
- Catchers must be positioned out of the way of the pitched ball and behind the batter so a batted ball has very little chance of hitting him/her. If the catcher is wearing a cup, and can catch without slowing the game down, he/she may assume the proper catching position. Coach's discretion.



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- Fielders may not call “time” to stop a play. The ball must be returned to the pitcher. Runners may not advance once a throw to a pitcher has been attempted. If a runner has begun to advance before the ball has been thrown to the pitcher, he may continue to advance at his own peril.
- In the event of an overthrow at 1st base, the runners will be permitted to advance to 2nd base at their own risk. For example: the ball is hit and while the runner is advancing to 1st, the ball is overthrown. The runner may continue to try and advance to 2nd. If the defense team tags him before he reaches the base, the runner is out. He cannot advance to the next base under any circumstances
- In the interest of maintaining the speed of the game, the catcher will keep the pitched balls until the batter is out or the coach runs out of balls. At which point all 5 balls will be returned to the pitching coach.

### Scores/Standings/Forfeits/Rain-outs/Cancellations and Playoffs

- Scores are to be reported within 24 hrs of the completion of the game through the method identified by the convenor(s)
- Teams will be awarded points as follows:
  - Win = 2 pts
  - Tie = 1 pt
  - Loss = 0 pts
  - Forfeit = 0 pts
- Standings will be based on points
- If two or more teams have the same number of points, the standings order will be determined by the following tie-breakers:
  - Team with highest winning percentage
  - Team with greatest run differential (total runs scored less total runs allowed)
  - Team with greatest runs scored
  - Team with least runs allowed
  - Coin toss
- Standings will be used to assign seeding positions for playoffs (if applicable)
- A forfeit will occur if:
  - a team does not show up for a scheduled game; or
  - a team is unable to field a minimum of 7 players within 15 minutes of the start time of the game.
  - If neither team shows up or is unable to field enough players, the game will be considered forfeited by both teams.



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- In the case of rain, all teams are expected to attend a scheduled game unless the game is cancelled by the league prior to the start time. The league will only cancel games prior to game time if the field is closed by the city.
- If it is raining and the league has not cancelled the game, prior to the start of the game it is the responsibility of the convenor on site to determine whether the game will continue or not. If a convenor is not present at the start of the game, the home team coach will make the decision.
- Once the game has begun, it is up to the umpire to determine continuation of any game.
- In the case of a rainout or league cancelled game, the game may be rescheduled for a later date (such as a practice time of the home team). If the game cannot be rescheduled, the rain out game will not count in the standings. The home team must notify the league within 24 hours if a game is cancelled.
- Playoffs may be held over a two day (three if necessary) period beginning Friday evening.
- Playoff format will be determined based on the number of teams in the league/division.
- If the playoff format requires seeded teams, the standings determined by the regular season games will be used to seed teams accordingly.
- The Fair Play rules will be strictly adhered too in all playoff games and may be enforced with independent monitoring.
- Baseball Ontario Rookie Ball Rules:  
<http://www.baseballontario.com/Umpires/news/rules.aspx?TopMenuID=10002>

### Umpires and calls on the field.

- Only the umpire may make a call. Coaches, under no circumstances are to overrule, ignore or make a call, even if the opposing coach agrees.



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### Field set-up:

	Pitcher's Mound	Pitchers Circle	Bases	Outfield	# of players infield	# of players outfield	Batting	defensive coaches on field*	offensive coaches on field
T-Ball	35-45 ft	n/a	55ft	min on grass before ball is hit	max 6 (includes pitch/catcher)	no min/no max	all bat	max 2 - behind the base line	2 base coaches - with additional at 2nd base if required.**
Rookie	40-45 ft (adjust to machine)	8ft diameter around pitch machine	60 ft	min on grass before ball is hit	max 6 (includes pitch/catcher)	Max 4	all bat	1 defensive coach (in outfield)	pitching machine & 2 base coaches

\*objective is to reduce the # of parents/coaches on the field by end of season to none.

\*\*objective is to reduce # of parents/coaches on the field to standard base coaches by end of season.



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## 11U MSBA House League Rules 2025

Games are based on time, not number of innings. Simply play until the ball is dead at 8:15. There is no “no new inning” rule. Unless the home team has just taken the lead, the score reverts back to the end of the last completed inning.

5 run limit per inning for all innings.

Okay to play with 6 players. Please “borrow” fielders (ideally the other team’s last 3 outs) if needed.

MSBA House League Rookieball players can be called up if needed, but call-ups cannot pitch. MSBA AA Select players can be called up only with the convenor’s consent.

Pitchers may pitch up to 2 consecutive innings; pitching in any portion of an inning counts as an inning pitched. Once removed from the mound, pitchers may not return to pitch again later in that same game. All other defensive players may be substituted without limits.

4 warm-up pitches for pitchers.

No leadoffs, no stealing, no balks. Players may not leave a base until the ball has been hit. One warning/team, after which any runner leading off shall be called out.

Pitching distance is 44 feet, bases 65 feet.

Batters are out after 3 strikes, even if the catcher drops the ball.

There are no restrictions on bat size or composition.

The strike zone is larger than described in the rule book. It includes any ball, or **portion of a ball**, that is between the armpits and the bottom of the knees, and within 1 ball width from the edge of the plate.

After every passed ball, umpires are asked to please throw a second ball directly to the pitcher (while the catcher retrieves the passed ball).

On-field coaches must wear the hats and coach’s shirts provided by the MSBA.

The infield fly rule is not used.

**As soon as a fielder has made *an attempt* to return the ball to the pitcher the runners may continue towards the base that they are *in the process of running* towards - but no further. The throw must be intended for the pitcher who must be in the general mound area, it cannot be just a random throw towards the infield. Runners advance at their own risk (the base is not “automatic”) and they can be tagged out by a fielder. A baserunner who has rounded a base and then stopped (much like a leadoff) is *not* considered to be “in the process of running” towards the next base and can’t take off after the throw has been made.**





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## 13U MSBA House League Rules 2025

Games are based on time, not number of innings. There is no “no new inning” rule. Simply play until the ball is dead at 8:15 or 10:30 (regardless of when the first pitch was thrown).

Unless the home team has just taken the lead, the score reverts back to the end of the last completed inning.

5 run limit per inning for all innings.

Okay to play with 6 players. Please “borrow” fielders (ideally the other team’s last 3 outs) if needed.

MSBA tyke house league players can be called up if needed, but call-ups cannot pitch. AA Tyke Select players can be called up only with the convenor’s consent.

Pitchers may pitch up to 2 consecutive innings; pitching in any portion of an inning counts as an inning pitched. Once removed from the mound, pitchers may not return to pitch again later in that same game. All other defensive players may be substituted without limits.

4 warm-up pitches for pitchers.

No leadoffs and, therefore, no balks. Players may steal any base after the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand.

Pitching distance is 50 feet, bases 75 feet.

The strike zone is larger than described in the rulebook. It includes any ball, or portion of a ball, that is between the armpits and the knees, and within 1 ball width from the edge of the plate.

On-field coaches must wear the hats and coach’s shirts provided by the MSBA.

There are no restrictions regarding bat size or composition.