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## **Umpire Expectations *for Managers and Coaches***

### **Introduction**

Just like playing or coaching, participating in the DYBA Umpire Program is a learning experience. Most umpires are young members of our community who are passionate about baseball and softball. Many also play in the league or at the high school level, and are often only two to three years older than the players they officiate. Umpiring may also be their first paying job.

With this in mind, it is especially important to treat all DYBA umpires with respect—regardless of their age, experience or ability. To an umpire, respect often means saying or doing nothing even if you believe a mistake has been made. Seemingly discrete signs of disrespect can be noticed and damaging to an umpire's self-esteem and credibility. Rolling your eyes, making "subtle" indirect comments, hand gestures, or allowing any of these things to take place amongst your players, fellow coaches or fans is completely unacceptable.

The umpire is the highest authority on the field at all times. Treat him or her in this way and others will follow suit. Appreciate the umpire who hustles, acts professionally, and cares about their work. In the end, you will find that the (relatively few) "bad" calls balance themselves out—they go both ways!

### **Your Responsibilities**

Managers are responsible for their assistant coaches, players and fans. You must set the example. An umpire can and will approach you to ask that you address issues with anyone on your side of the field. Do so immediately and clearly, leaving no room for ambiguity. If you need to sit a player for an inning or the duration of the game, do so. If you feel it is necessary to ask someone to leave entirely, do so.

Attend the pre-game meeting and introduce yourself to the umpire(s) by name. Never publicly disagree with an umpire's decision, regardless of the outcome, or ask them to reverse a call. Hustle players off the field when called out. Help move the game along between innings and plays. Take a proactive approach when possible, catching potential problems early. Always keep safety in mind: bad weather or conditions, loose baseballs or equipment, spectators on the field, and the umpire's well-being are all things to watch out for.

### **The Rule**

According to the DYBA Rulebook, the only time you may approach an umpire is to discuss a rules interpretation question between innings, provided both managers agree to be present. No judgment calls will ever be discussed. Treat the meeting as an educational opportunity for both sides, but be careful not to appear condescending. Never say or imply that the umpire was "wrong." Use these meetings with extreme caution and only in rare circumstances. After all, the call has already been made.



### When and How

None of this is to suggest that umpires are perfect or immune to criticism. But there is a time and a place. This year, we are introducing the position of Umpire Supervisor to ensure umpires are meeting and exceeding our expectations for conduct and effort. Supervisors and their assistants will also work with umpires on the field to help improve the accuracy of their calls, positioning and safety. Regardless, mistakes will still be made. An umpire will never be “punished” for missing a call so long as the effort and hustle are present. To make these things clear, each has also agreed to the Umpire Code of Conduct clearly outlining what is expected of them during the season.

When you do have feedback, submit it to Michael at [umpires@dyba.com](mailto:umpires@dyba.com) only. My first priority is always safety issues, followed by ensuring effort and professionalism. Upon receiving feedback, I will promptly work with the supervisors to determine our next step, if any. Often, this is for us to simply observe the umpire at work. Incidents are usually isolated. Positive feedback is also (greatly!) appreciated, and can result in bonuses or promotions.

### More Information

To learn more about the umpire program, visit [DYBA.com](http://DYBA.com) and select the Umpires tab. You will find that we set high standards for our umpires and invest many hours to ensure they have a successful experience in the program. Many find they walk away with increased confidence, decision-making skills, time management abilities and the satisfaction of working hard for something they enjoy. I appreciate your assistance in ensuring this program continues to epitomize DYBA's philosophies in a positive, constructive way.

Feel free to contact any of the program leadership with additional questions. Until then, we will see you on the fields!

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