

**EAST RIDGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
TRAVELING BASEBALL HANDBOOK**



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PURPOSE

In an effort to be transparent, this guide is designed to assist you in gaining a better understanding of the East Ridge Athletic Association (ERAA) Traveling Baseball Program. If you have questions after reviewing it, contact any of the ERAA Baseball Board of Directors (ERAA Baseball Board). Their contact information is listed on the ERAA web site (www.eraamn.com) under the "Baseball" tab.

MISSION AND PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Our mission is to support athletes that live within the East Ridge High School boundary in developing advanced baseball and teamwork skills, and provide the opportunity to compete with other players of similar abilities.

Our objectives are to provide an organized program for youth in the community that will:

- Promote physical fitness, stamina and agility
- Develop self-confidence
- Develop respect for others, teamwork and pride in team and community
- Teach the fundamentals of baseball
- Foster good sportsmanship in victory and defeat
- Play in a physically and emotionally safe and healthy environment
- Build character and set priorities in our lives
- Allow as many players as possible to have an opportunity to participate and develop
- Allow everyone to have fun and enjoy the game

In addition, the ERAA Baseball Board's primary responsibilities are to provide:

- Fair tryouts
- Fair team selection process
- Positive coaching principles
- Responsive, timely and relevant communication with parents
- Easy registration
- Competitive program fees
- Alignment with ERAA varsity coaches and programs
- Web content that is customer service focused
- Financial investments that will build a stronger baseball community

GENERAL INFORMATION

Commitment and Attendance

Traveling baseball requires a significant time commitment from players, coaches and parents from April through July. Every player's presence is important and expected. Unless excused by the head coach, every player is expected to attend all practices, league games and tournament games.

Excused absences will be granted for school and religious events; however, it is expected that the head coach be notified in advance of such events.

We expect baseball to be the sport of season. Absences due to participation in other sports will be considered unexcused and may result in reduction of playing time. Ultimately, decisions regarding reduction in playing time are made by the coaches of each particular team.

Commitment from our parents is as important as that from the players. In order for our association to be a success and for our children to maximize their joy of playing traveling baseball, we need your help in a variety of ways to include but not limited to coaching, helping out at practices and keeping a team scorebook. In addition, all parents are required to volunteer at ERAA-hosted tournaments (see "Volunteer Commitment" below for more details).

Registration

ERAA provides online registration at www.eraamn.com. If registering for 9/10u, your player must be at least 9 years old by May 1 of a playing year. Any 3rd grade or 9-year-old player that registers to play 9/10u but is not eligible will be contacted and their registration fees will be refunded.

Tryouts

While no child is guaranteed a spot on a team or at a specific level, we do try to field as many teams as possible. Players will be assigned based on past performance, independent evaluations and coaches' assessments. Numerical scoring is used to measure baseball attributes.

Note that head coach's and assistant coach's scores of their own player are removed and that player's score then becomes an average score of the other two coaches/assistant coaches to prevent coaches from being able to score their own child.

Efforts are made to obtain information about players' past performance if a player is new to ERAA Traveling Baseball. If information is not available, the ERAA Baseball Board has established policies to ensure that a reasonable score will be assigned to the player. ERAA Baseball pledges to create a fair tryout process where all questions and concerns are addressed promptly.

Teams are formed at the "A", "AA" and "AAA" levels in all age groups, depending on participation and abilities. ERAA Baseball strongly recommends that any baseball player who is not assigned to an ERAA Traveling Baseball team play in-house baseball. Info regarding ERAA's in-house baseball program can be found at www.eraamn.com. Players who are not assigned to one of the ERAA Traveling Baseball teams may also want to consider Woodbury Athletic Association or Cottage Grove Athletic Association traveling baseball programs.

Fees

At registration, a non-refundable fee is charged to each family. This fee is approximately equal to the cost of the team's expenses for participation in tryouts, league games, umpires,

equipment, field usage, field maintenance and improvement, a basic indoor training package and association administration/support; however, this is not the full cost of these activities, as ERAA Baseball fundraising helps defray these administrative costs for families.

In the winter, players are required to be fitted for uniforms at a time publicized by the ERAA Baseball Board. At this time, each family will pay a second fee plus the cost of any uniform extras and spirit wear purchased for the players or family. All fees are used solely to run the baseball program. ERAA is a nonprofit and all funds are used to grow the organization and further support its mission.

Prior to the beginning of the season, families will make a final payment for the remainder of the team's budget, including tournaments, instruction, added indoor training and other expenses identified by the head coach. This payment will vary significantly by team. The ERAA Baseball Board helps defray some of these costs by hosting tournaments that require no entry fees for ERAA Baseball teams.

Two state tournaments are included in the base budget of each team.

Head coaches are strongly encouraged to make all discretionary budget decisions after consultation with team parents.

Sample Base Team Budget -- \$5,400 (\$450 per player)

Uniforms	\$1,600
League costs	\$1,000
Tournaments	\$1,600
Pre-season training	\$ 360
ERAA fees	\$ 300
Fields/equipment/baseballs/admin costs	\$ 540

This sample budget is provided for informational purposes only. Fees can be higher than illustrated above. Families should speak to their head coach about discretionary expenses for their team.

To offset expenses ERAA Baseball Board looks for corporate sponsorships. If a team is interested in individual sponsors, a request must be submitted and approved by the ERAA Baseball Board before teams reach out to potential sponsors. ERAA Baseball also schedules an annual fundraiser for teams to use to raise money to defray costs for families.

Head coaches are responsible for the budget and expenditures. Parents are not authorized to make purchases on behalf of an ERAA Baseball team.

Refund Policy

The initial registration fee is non-refundable in the event that the player is placed on a team. If the player is not placed on a team, ERAA will reimburse all except the tryout fee. Once a player has been placed on a team, there will be no refunds. All other refund requests should be submitted to the Director and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Volunteer Commitment

The family of each child is required to work a minimum of four hours per player at one of the ERAA-hosted baseball tournaments. All concession stand volunteers must be at least 16 years old. If someone is unable to work their scheduled shift, it is their responsibility to find a replacement. Any family that does not fulfill their commitment will be required to make a payment of \$200 per player to ERAA Baseball.

Exception: One head coach per team does not need to fulfill this requirement due to the high number of volunteer hours they volunteer as a head coach throughout the season. In addition, effective as of the 2020/2021 season, up to three assistant coaches per team are required to volunteer a reduced number of two hours at an ERAA-hosted baseball tournament (compared to the regular four-hour requirement). This is also in recognition of the high number of volunteer hours volunteered throughout the season by our assistant coaches. Lastly, ERAA Baseball Board members do not need to fulfill this requirement as they are already scheduled to work tournaments and other sponsored events throughout the year.

If your shift is canceled or rescheduled due to inclement weather, you will still be expected to complete the four-hour volunteer requirement at a future date.

Volunteer sign-up will be posted on the ERAA website under the DIBS tab once shifts are determined.

Games and Practices

Optional practices begin indoors in February. Required practices begin at the release of fields by the cities of Woodbury and Cottage Grove, typically in the middle of April. No team or parent in ERAA Baseball is permitted to use school or city fields for official or unofficial practice prior to their openings by the cities.

Teams are assigned fields that they may use for practice and league games at the start of the season. ERAA Baseball makes every effort to share the field as fairly as possible; however, with three other baseball associations sharing in field use, space is at a premium and teams must use their fields wisely.

League play begins in May and continues through early July, with approximately 16 weekday league games, plus three to five regular season tournaments played on weekends. The schedule for games, number of tournaments and whether or not one tournament is played out of town are decisions made at the discretion of the head coach. Post-season tournament play is by invitation-only and depends upon success in qualifying tournaments during the season. Some wild cards spots in state tournaments are made available in some age groups.

Guidelines are in accordance to the baseball league selected for that year. Check league website for details.

Uniforms

ERAA Baseball uniform entails:

- Home and away jerseys
- Baseball pants

- Baseball socks
- Fitted baseball hat
- Belt

The ERAA Baseball Board has adopted the following guidelines for uniforms:

- In games, teams can only wear the official uniform of ERAA Baseball
- Uniforms should only include numbers for identification, not names
- If your team would like to purchase apparel outside of what is provided by our approved vendors, a request must be submitted and approved by the ERAA Baseball Board first
- No family shall be required to purchase any spirit wear that has not been approved by the ERAA Baseball Board as necessary for competition or training

Equipment

Each player must provide their own bat, glove, baseball cleats and personal protective equipment (except catcher's equipment). Parents are responsible for providing any additional safety equipment that they choose to use. Properly fitted, correctly sized equipment is very important to a player's success, especially gloves and shoes.

ERAA Baseball will supply all catcher's gear, practice and game balls and other equipment necessary and helpful for games and practices.

Bats

ERAA Baseball does not provide bats for players as part of the team's equipment bag. Bats need to be fitted to the individual player. It is very difficult to anticipate the combination of lengths and weights that any given team would need so a large and very expensive inventory would have to be maintained. At this level of competition, most players prefer their own bat. However, head coaches are given discretion to use their judgment to encourage the use of several team bats at age groups where bat standards change from year to year. Parents should consult coaches and/or specific league rules (www.mbl.bz or www.myas.org/baseball/) before purchasing bats.

Umpires

All umpires are sanctioned by the State of Minnesota and provided to us by certified umpiring associations. Generally, the younger the age group the lesser the experience of the umpires.

While our expectations of the quality of umpiring may be high, we must always exercise patience, understanding, good sportsmanship and respect for their efforts. Our umpires are also developing their skills and judgment and cannot be expected to be mistake-free. The character of our players, coaches, fans and community will be gauged by the message the umpires carry out into the baseball community statewide. The ERAA Baseball Board retains the right to prohibit family members and friends from attending ERAA games if they repeatedly fail to show proper respect to umpires.

Additional guidelines will be followed based on league guidelines. League policies prevail.

Evaluation Forms/Suggestions

Parents and players will be asked to complete an evaluation at the end of each season on their experience with the ERAA Baseball Program and its coaches. This request will be sent out via email to those on the ERAA Baseball email distribution list. This is an excellent opportunity to express your opinions and to help us make improvements. Contents of evaluations are confidential and are only viewed by ERAA Baseball Board members.

GENERAL POLICIES

Playing Time

ERAA Baseball expects that playing time will be distributed fairly among all players who attend practices and games, demonstrate good sportsmanship, make a strong effort to improve as a baseball player and otherwise exhibit the qualities expected of an ERAA baseball player. Head coaches are permitted to use their discretion regarding playing times within individual games and tournaments, with an expectation that players will be treated fairly as the season progresses. This is NOT a requirement of equally-divided playing time; coaches are expected to be fair, not perfect.

Head coaches are permitted to assign players to specific infield and outfield positions, or use more varied rotation plans. They are also permitted to use different strategies for league games vs. tournament games. All players who want to pitch should be given an opportunity during the season, understanding that head coaches will consider the safety and probable success of the player when choosing the situation.

Players will improve more quickly if they get more opportunities to apply their hitting skills in games. Therefore, coaches are expected to rotate their batting orders during the league season to give all players different locations in the lineup. This will not always result in an even allocation of plate appearances during league games, but coaches in 9/10u-13u should avoid situations where two players have a vastly different number of plate appearances by the end of league play. During tournaments, coaches are permitted to create fixed batting orders, even if this results in an uneven number of plate appearances between teammates.

For a given game, the minimum playing time is:

- 9-13 year olds will play three defensive innings per game. The starting lineup will provide an opportunity for every player to have a place in the batting order at these levels. As coach discretion and game situations warrant, players will have both infield and outfield opportunities during the game.
- 14-15 year olds will play two innings defensively. Some game situations (e.g., 10-run rule) or player discipline may prevent this from happening in a specific game, but coaches should seek opportunities to balance bench time during the season, although coaches will be given broader discretion with lineups at U15AAA. Note: If a player is in the lineup as a designated hitter (DH), they may not receive any defensive playing time for that game. Preference is to do continuous batting at 14u.

Suspensions

ERAA Baseball Board reserves the right to suspend any coach, player or parent who violates

the ERAA Code of Conduct (see "Behavior and Code of Conduct" below for details). Suspensions will be documented by the ERAA Baseball Board. A coach or umpire may suspend any coach, player or parent who acts in an unsportsmanlike manner, as described in the "Behavior" section below. Subsequent violations may result in the coach, player or parent being removed from the ERAA Baseball Program. All violations must be reported to the ERAA Baseball Board for proper action.

Player Removal

Once a team is selected, a coach cannot release a team member solely because of lack of skills. A player may be released for the following specific reasons:

- Frequent, flagrant disregard of the player's responsibilities
- Continued play in such a manner as to endanger others and/or self
- Displaying an uncaring attitude, which results in not applying oneself, thus hurting the team's competitive potential
- Failure to work within a team environment (placing self-interest before the teams)
- Repeated unsportsmanlike behavior

Before requesting the removal of a player, the coach must discuss the situation with the ERAA Baseball Director and the player's parent(s) and attempt to correct the situation. The discussion should include an objective description of the behavior and of the intended discipline. If this fails to correct the situation the coach must then notify the ERAA Baseball Director, who must approve any further action. The ERAA Baseball Director must then notify the ERAA Baseball Board in writing of the action taken within 48 hours of its occurrence.

Coach Selection

Anyone who desires to be a head coach must fill out an application online and sign up for an interview. The ERAA Baseball Director, with the consent of the ERAA Baseball Board, is responsible for selecting provisional coaches prior to and during the age-group tryouts. When necessary, an interview process will be used by the ERAA Baseball Board to aid in the selection of provisional coaches.

Selection as a provisional coach does not guarantee that the coach's child will be selected for a given team. All coaching candidates are informed during their interview that their status as coach (if selected) will be provisional subject to their child qualifying for that team via the tryout/evaluation process. If the player qualifies for a different team, or no team, the provisional coach will be excused, and a new coach will be selected from the parent/coach applicants of the players who qualified/were chosen for the team. At times, a team may be created without a head coach being assigned at tryouts. A coach will be named for that team as soon as possible.

Primary selection criteria include past baseball coaching and playing experience, personal coaching and human development philosophies, organizational skills, strong moral and ethical characteristics, support of the ERAA Baseball Program and ERAA policies/procedures and the applicant's commitment to devote several hundred hours to the program during the season.

Coaches' responsibilities begin in September with team selection, tournament selection, tournament entry, ERAA meetings and league meetings. They end in August with equipment check-in, season reviews, recommendations/feedback and performance evaluations.

While it is important that a traveling team head coach have expertise in the sport, it is just as important for the coach to have the welfare of the individual players and the players' character and confidence development foremost in mind. Even a person of integrity, sincerity and high idealism needs other qualifications, such as but not limited to the ability to remain even-tempered under pressure, the ability to discover ways to impart their knowledge to each individual player and the ability to understand children, to relate to them and to be sensitive to their developmental requirements.

Head coaches have discretion to select assistant coaches for teams, subject to the review of the ERAA Baseball Director. ERAA Baseball does not believe that paid assistant coaches are required for any team, and strongly encourages head coaches to involve other parents in coaching. If no parent is willing to serve as a head coach, the ERAA Baseball Board may hire a coach for a team. In addition, the ERAA Baseball Board reserves the right to hire head coaches for U15AAA and U15AA, as needed.

Coach Removal

Removal of a coach is a very serious situation and must be dealt with in a fair and open manner. Coaches may be removed for the following reasons:

- Failure to perform duties
- Conduct is detrimental to the player, team, organization and/or parents
- Abusive behavior, whether physical or psychological, towards players, parents, opposing players, coaches, spectators, umpires, volunteers or league officials

Any coach removed from league or tournament games will automatically receive a two-game suspension from ERAA Baseball. A suspension means that a coach cannot attend the game as neither a coach nor a spectator and may not participate in practices prior to completion of the second game. If a coach is removed a second time during the season, they will receive a minimum two-game suspension AND will meet before a review committee. The review committee will decide on the coach's continued involvement in the ERAA Baseball Program.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, the head coach will determine if there will be a practice. At games, the home team's head coach is responsible for determining whether the game will start. At a tournament, the site director will make this decision. Once play begins in any game, the umpire is responsible for determining whether play should be halted.

In all cases, unless you receive a call from your team's head coach, you should appear at the site of the game or practice as scheduled. Weather conditions can vary widely even over short distances, so our policy is to make the decision at the field site.

Games and practices will be suspended when lightning is visible. If parents are unable to be present during an event, be sure that your child knows another parent who will be present and with whom they can take shelter if bad weather threatens.

Blood Policy

A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from

participating in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment cannot be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual will have to leave the game. The length of time considered reasonable shall be in the umpire's judgment. Once the bleeding has stopped, the player or coach may re-enter the game. If there is a substantial amount of blood on the uniform, it must be changed before that individual may participate again.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

ERAA Baseball mandates that all players, coaches and parents participating in an ERAA youth sport activity (to include but not limited to practices and games) should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or a controlled substance. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player or coach, while participating in an ERAA youth activity, to consume a beverage containing alcohol, or use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any controlled substance. Once a violation has been brought to the ERAA Baseball Board's attention and a decision has been made, the player or coach will be informed of their ineligibility by a written letter from the ERAA Baseball Director.

- First violation: Upon notification by the ERAA Baseball Board, the player or coach shall lose eligibility for the next two consecutive games or two weeks of a sport season in which the player or coach is participating, whichever is greater. No exception is permitted.
- Second violation: The player or coach shall lose eligibility in the ERAA Baseball Program for that sport season. No exception is permitted.
- Accumulative penalties: Penalties shall be accumulative beginning with and continuing throughout the player's or coach's participation in any and all ERAA activities.

Tobacco Policy

ERAA Baseball does not permit the use of tobacco by players under the legal tobacco age. It shall be a violation of this policy for a player participating in the ERAA Baseball Program to use tobacco. Once a violation has been brought to the ERAA Baseball Board's attention, the player will be informed of their ineligibility. Ineligibilities will be the same as for the drug and alcohol policy. ERAA Baseball mandates that coaches refrain from the use of tobacco in any form during a youth sport activity (including but not limited to practices and games).

Equipment Abuse

Under no circumstances will the abuse of equipment be tolerated, regardless of whether that equipment is owned by the player, a city, ERAA or another host baseball association. Umpires and coaches are instructed that each instance of equipment abuse will result in that player sitting on the bench for the remainder of the game. At the umpire's or coach's discretion, one warning may be given. Players' families will be responsible for costs associated with any damage caused to ERAA equipment due to negligence or intentional abuse. Failure to do so will result in denial of any further sport participation in any ERAA program by the player or any other member of their family until payment has been made.

BEHAVIOR AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The highest standards of sportsmanship will be expected from the players, parents, coaches, umpires and spectators. Conduct that will not be tolerated includes verbal abuse, tantrum-like acts, profanity, physical aggression on or off the field and acts intended to cheat the spirit of the rules or to intimidate the umpires. Umpires will use their discretion whether to issue a warning or to immediately eject the violator (coach, player or spectator) from the game. Coaches are responsible for reporting all incidents to the ERAA Baseball Board. Subsequent violations may result in suspension from play and/or attendance.

In games, the head coach represents the ERAA Baseball Program and shall be the only person communicating with the umpires. One of the objectives of the baseball program is to teach respect for the officials and the proper procedure for dealing with any problems with the umpires. Unless playing in the field, at bat, on base, on deck or coaching, all players shall remain in the bench area out of the field of play or designated practice area. It is mandatory that each batter, on deck player, runner, player in a coach's box or person on the field wear a batting helmet that meets the NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) standards. Go to www.nocsae.org for further details.

Players will treat their coaches, parents, teammates, the umpires and the opposition with respect. After each game, the participants will line up and shake hands. To assist with the orderly coaching of players, spectators are restricted to the areas that are "out of play" and away from the benches.

If a parent or player has a problem with the performance of a player, coach or umpire, they should direct their concerns to one of the team's coaches.

Players' responsibilities and rights

Players should take pride in themselves, their team and in their community. They must follow the directions of the coaches and must be willing to accept constructive criticism.

Players' responsibilities include:

- Have pride and confidence in yourself, your teammates, and your coaches
- Be attentive and work hard in practice and games; make your best effort to perform the tasks as directed by the coaches
- Be a competitor, perform up to your full ability, and contribute to team unity
- Compliment teammates and let the coaches handle criticism
- Show respect toward your coaches, teammates and parents
- Show respect toward opposing players, coaches, umpires and spectators
- Don't argue umpire calls during games
- Don't let personal success or failures affect your ability to compete for success of your team during practices or games
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and proper behavior
- Don't use foul or inappropriate language while representing ERAA Baseball
- Remember that baseball is a game and keep it in perspective with family, school and/or church activities and responsibilities
- Maintain a responsible attitude toward your health; be aware of, and adhere to, the

- ERAA policies on drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Wear your uniform correctly – jersey clean and tucked in, spikes on ten minutes prior to start of game, belt on, hat on straight and clean pants
- Remind your parents that you need to be at practices and games on time
- Inform the coach whenever you will miss or be late for a practice or a game
- Keep cell phones turned off during practices and games
- Remember to bring all your equipment to and from all games and practices
- Keep your personal and team equipment clean and in good repair
- Pick up your trash and dispose of it in trash containers after all games and practices
- Obey all curfew rules set by your coaches

Players' rights include:

- To participate at a level that matches your maturity and ability
- To play as a child, not as an adult
- To participate in a safe, healthy environment
- To be treated fairly, with dignity and with respect by teammates, coaches and parents
- To have fun in sports
- To have an equal opportunity to develop your abilities and strive for success
- To have good coaching; to be taught the fundamentals and strong character development

Players' Code of Conduct

As an ERAA Baseball player, you agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines listed below:

- Compete to the best of my abilities - every pitch, every game!
- Control what I can at every practice and game - ENERGY, ATTITUDE, DESIRE TO IMPROVE
- Come prepared both physically and mentally to every practice and game
- Hustle to every position when taking or leaving the field of play
- Treat my coaches, teammates, family members, umpires and opponents with respect at all times
- Not let my own personal successes or failures affect my ability to compete for the success of my team during practice and/or competition
- Not, at any time, use foul or inappropriate language while representing ERAA Baseball; this includes away from team functions as well
- Umpires decisions are non-debatable; I will not argue umpires calls during games; if I am ejected for any reason, I will accept any further consequences from my coach or the ERAA Baseball Board
- Arrive at the field for team practices a minimum of 10 minutes prior to the start
- Arrive at the field to any game one hour prior to start time; if for ANY reason this is a problem, players/parents must communicate to his coach 24 hours in advance whenever possible
- If I am late to any practice or game, I will accept any further consequences from my coaches

- Cell phones will be turned OFF during practice and games
- Refrain from posting negative comments about ERAA on social media
- My uniform will be worn correctly: jersey tucked in, spikes on 10 minutes prior to start of any outdoor event (and the entirety thereof), belt on and hat on straight
- Obey all curfew rules set by my coaches

ERAA will not be responsible for returning or pro-rating any tournament, travel, or training fees lost because of a player not adhering to conduct listed above. ERAA Baseball reserves the right to make exceptions to these rules at any time, for any reason.

Coaches' Responsibilities and Rights

The coach is a teacher of baseball skills, a manager of the functions necessary to run a team and is responsible for the social, psychological and physical development of all players in their care. They are accountable to the players, parents and the ERAA Baseball Board.

Coaches' responsibilities include:

- Comply with and enforce all ERAA Baseball Program policies and rules
- Know and comply with all league and tournament rules
- Adhere to the ERAA drug, alcohol, and tobacco policies
- Complete concussion training
- Recruit assistant coaches who will reflect the coaches' philosophy and follow ERAA regulations
- Treat all players in an equitable and fair manner
- Assure that all players receive playing time that is as mandated by the ERAA Baseball Board
- Teach the players to have fun and enjoy competition
- Help the players to develop a healthy, competitive attitude toward winning and losing
- Assess individual player's strengths and weaknesses and create a developmental plan to help each player improve in the areas of concern
- Encourage and compliment players, using only constructive criticism
- Communicate regularly with parents regarding schedules and expectations
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship, self-control and proper behavior
- Ensure the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of team players, assistant coaches, parents and spectators
- Attend the ERAA Baseball coaches' meetings, clinics and other appropriate meetings
- Attend league meetings and functions, as needed
- Arrange to have an alternate attend any required functions (e.g., coaches' meetings, etc.) that they are unable to attend
- Attend a minimum of 90% of their team's practices and games
- Care for the equipment that is issued to them; if any equipment is lost or damaged, coaches should report the problem to the ERAA Baseball Board
- Return all issued equipment in good, clean condition
- Attend any coaches' clinic arranged by the ERAA Baseball Board
- Conduct a preseason parents meeting; at this meeting, the coach should set the

tone and expectations for the season, distribute the team schedule, roster and team rules

- Conduct a mid-season player meeting, including evaluations of each player
- Arrange for team photographs
- Schedule field time for practices, league games using league procedures and any make-up games with opposing coaches
- Report any problems with fields to the ERAA Baseball Board
- Recruit parent volunteers, a team manager, a communication coordinator and a social director, as necessary
- Complete Player Profiles and return to the ERAA Baseball Director

Coaches' rights include:

- To be treated with respect by players, parents, volunteers, umpires, league officials and the ERAA Baseball Board
- To be made fully aware of the rules and policies under which they must function
- To have access to necessary safety equipment and practice fields
- To expect full cooperation from parents when they are asked to assist

Coaches' Code of Conduct

As an ERAA Baseball coach, you agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines listed below:

- Lead by example by demonstrating fairness, respect and self-control
- Be responsible for my words and actions
- Not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- Not encourage my child, any other child, or any other person, to engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- Place the emotional and physical wellbeing of my players ahead of a personal desire to win
- Do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players
- Remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults
- Not engage in any behavior, which would endanger the health, safety or wellbeing of any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- Not encourage my child, any other child or any other person, to engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety or wellbeing of any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- I will not engage in the use of profanity
- I will not encourage my child, any other child or any other person, to engage in the use of profanity
- I will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee

- I will not encourage my child, any other child or any other person, to engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- I will not initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- I will not encourage my child, any other child or any other person, to initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee
- I will accept the decision of the umpire on the field or use acceptable means to settle a dispute via conversation with an onsite tournament director

Parents' Responsibilities and Rights

Your child's participation in the ERAA Baseball Program will require a significant contribution of your time and effort. Parents can contribute many things to support their child, team and the program.

Parents' responsibilities include:

- Let your child know you love them win or lose, whether they play well or not
- Compliment and encourage your child - let the coaches handle coaching and criticism
- Coordinate your efforts to help your child's development with the recommendations of the coaches
- Support your coaches and remember that they are responsible for many children in addition to yours
- Don't compare your child to other players; be honest with yourself and your child about their abilities
- Regard each player on the team as your own
- Keep negative comments to yourself; express concerns only to the coach privately and in a straightforward, fair and objective manner
- Teach your child to have fun and enjoy competition; help them develop a healthy, competitive attitude toward winning and losing
- Ensure the good sportsmanship and proper behavior of your child and your guests
- Get your child to and from practices and games on time
- Provide a copy of your child's birth certificate to the head coach at the first parent/coach pre-season meeting
- Volunteer to assist the coach whenever possible
- Volunteer your time and talents to make your team's tournament a success
- Complete the post-season parent survey; feedback is important for the continual improvement of the program
- By placing your uniform order, you agree to grant permission to Nike/Gear Up Sports (GUS), its agents and employees the irrevocable and unrestricted right to reproduce the photographs and/or video images taken of your athlete and league members associated with your athlete for purposes of publication, promotion, illustrations, advertising, or trade, in any manner or in any medium; you hereby release Nike/GUS and its legal representatives for all claims and liability relating to said images or video

Parents' rights include:

- Have you and your child be treated fairly and with respect
- Have your child practice and play in a safe and healthy environment
- Have your child coached by effective and qualified adult leaders
- Have your child engage in practice and playing activities that increase their skills and enjoyment of the sport
- To be fully informed by the coaches with respect to schedules, team philosophies, team rules and your child's strengths and weaknesses

Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

As a parent/guardian of a child involved in an ERAA Program, you agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines listed below:

- Respect the property and equipment used at any sports facility, both home and away
- Encourage good sportsmanship through my actions, by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game or practice
- Promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire to win
- Provide support for coaches and officials working with the athletes to provide a positive experience for all
- Demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco- free environment for my child, and agree to assist by refraining from use at all ERAA events, home or away
- Remember the game is for the athletes and not for the parents
- Demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability
- Treat all players, coaches and officials with dignity and respect in language, attitude, behavior and mannerisms
- Refrain from posting negative comments about ERAA on social media
- Inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my child or the safety of others
- Inform the coach, within a reasonable period of time, of any anticipated absence from a game or practice my child might incur due to sickness, injury, vacation or any other reason
- If I fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I may be subject to disciplinary action. This action could include but is not limited to:
 - Verbal warning
 - Written warning
 - Parental game suspension
 - Parental season suspension
 - Parental banishment

These actions may not be necessarily taken in an escalated manner, and ERAA reserves the right to select and apply any penalty depending upon the situation.

I agree to support and promote the philosophy of ERAA sports: Teamwork - Effort - Skill Development - Character - Sportsmanship - Safe Environment - Humble and Thankful in Victory; Gracious and Complimentary in Defeat

ERAA RISK MANAGEMENT POLICIES

ERAA is greatly concerned about the safety of and preventing the abuse of children. As people who are interested in the wellbeing of children, ERAA believes you are entitled to know how our organization is addressing these critical issues.

ERAA will not tolerate the abuse of any child. We make an active, and we believe effective, effort to prevent child abuse in our programs. We screen our volunteer coaches by requiring that each volunteer complete a volunteer disclosure statement, which is processed through the BCA (Bureau of Criminal Apprehension) or other appropriate 'background check' agency. We will take any allegations of abuse made by children and others very seriously, and refer all allegations to local child protection authorities for investigation. We will fully cooperate in those investigations.

A nonprofit youth athletic association has the right, by statute, to request its workers, including volunteer coaches, to submit to a criminal background check performed by the State's Bureau of Criminal Apprehension or other appropriate 'background check' agency. Minnesota Statutes Section 299C.61-299C.62 establishes a procedure for a "children's service provider" to have a background check performed by the BCA or other appropriate 'background check' agency. The Act does provide that the applicant shall not be required to pay the cost of the background checks. In other words, it is an expense that the organization will have to absorb.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

When a player or parent has a question regarding the general policies or procedures of the ERAA Baseball Program, they should address their questions to the coach of their team. If a question is not answered satisfactorily and a player or parent feels the need to pursue the matter further, they may contact the ERAA Baseball Director, but should do so only after exhausting all reasonable efforts with the coach(es).

When a player or parent has a major concern about the handling of the team or an individual player, they should adhere to the "24-hour rule", which requires a player or parent to wait at least 24 hours before approaching a coach on the matter. Choose a time and place that is convenient for all parties involved (not prior to or during a game or practice) and approach the situation in an appropriate manner keeping emotions under control and discussions respectful, private and to the point. If the problem persists or cannot be resolved between the player or parent and coach within 72 hours, it should be brought to the attention of the ERAA Baseball Director. At this time, the ERAA Baseball Director will act as a mediator between the player or parent and coach. All parties involved will meet to discuss the situation and strive for a solution. The ERAA Baseball Director shall communicate in writing with the ERAA Baseball Board any mediation steps and the outcome of that mediation. If mediation still is unable to resolve the issues and all of the above steps have been followed, the ERAA Baseball Director shall inform both parties in writing within five days that the complaint has been referred to the ERAA Board of Directors. The ERAA Baseball Board will then determine resolution and their resolution will be final.

If the ERAA Board Director is the subject of the grievance, a written complaint should be submitted directly to the ERAA Executive Board.