



Menlo Atherton Little League

Conflict Resolution Process

2014

Conflict Resolution Process

Occasionally, conflicts arise among participants in Little League. The Board cares very much that conflicts be resolved quickly, objectively, and equitably with the very first consideration being given to the welfare of the kids. Therefore, the Board has adopted the following Conflict Resolution Process. It is designed for, and should be followed by, all adult participants in the league if a conflict arises.

1. Anyone who disapproves of the actions or attitudes of a coach, parent, player, umpire or spectator should bring it to their attention quickly in a courteous and positive manner. When approached promptly and with sensitivity to another's feelings and frame of reference, many problems quickly become non-issues and a higher level of cooperation and understanding is achieved. Initially, adult volunteers should be approached discreetly and privately, and the dialogue kept on a person-to-person level.
2. Disagreements that cannot be resolved in the above manner should be brought to the attention of the appropriate division Commissioner. It is the responsibility of division Commissioners to listen to all sides objectively and impartially, to respect each person's privacy in the matter, and to take action that s/he feels most appropriate.
 - All coach-related issues handled by a Commissioner will be reported to the Coach Coordinator.
 - If a Board or Conflict Resolution Committee member is involved in the conflict, he/she shall be recused as an arbiter in the Conflict Resolution Process.
3. Conflicts that cannot be resolved by the appropriate division Commissioner, or conflicts involving the Commissioner, should be brought to the attention of the Coach Coordinator and/or Player Agent, depending upon the issue. Any issue that involves a coach should be directed to the Coach Coordinator, while any issue pertaining to players or parents should be directed to the appropriate Player Agent.

The Coach Coordinator and/or Player Agent will then work with the division Commissioner to bring the issue to the attention of the Conflict Resolution Committee.

4. The Conflict Resolution Committee is a Board subcommittee used to investigate and maintain a history of league conflicts. The Committee will investigate the issue, document its findings (complaints should be submitted in writing when possible; Committee meeting minutes should be taken), and make a recommendation to the Board regarding any disciplinary action to be taken.
 - Depending on the behavior, the Conflict Resolution Committee, at its discretion, can call an immediate meeting of the full Board, can suspend the member until the next scheduled full Board meeting, or can follow up with the member without full Board involvement.

The Conflict Resolution Committee is made up of the following Board members:

- President
 - Vice President
 - Coaching Coordinator
 - PCA Coordinator
 - Player Agent Minors
 - Player Agent Majors
 - Applicable Commissioner
5. When an issue must be brought to the Board by the Conflict Resolution Committee, in most cases it shall be done via a disciplinary meeting that will take place during the next scheduled Board meeting. At the disciplinary portion of the meeting, the Board:
- Will re-state charges for the record via the report submitted by the Conflict Resolution Committee.
 - Will give the accused opportunity to respond.
 - Could decide to take no further action.
 - Could decide to draft a warning or letter of reprimand.
 - Could decide on some other punishment, or to revoke all or part of the person's participation privileges for a specific period of time, but not longer than the remainder of the season.

All Board decisions will be binding and the matter will be considered resolved following its vote. Any punishment must be approved by two-thirds vote of the Board (or a percentage listed in the approved Constitution).

Clarifications

Disciplining a coach should not be confused with NOT RE-APPOINTING a coach to a specific position, such as manager or assistant coach. If the league President chooses not to re-appoint a person at the beginning of a new season, it is at the President's sole discretion to do so.

Any action connected with Little League activities that is perceived as illegal, immoral, or unethical should be reported immediately to the Board of Directors via the President or Vice President rather than the Conflict Resolution Committee. The Board, or a subcommittee thereof, will be called to order on an emergency basis to deal with the complaint.

Unacceptable Behavior and Consequences

The League expects all participants (coaches, parents, players, umpires, and spectators) to exhibit acceptable behavior both on and off the field while on the property of any local park used by the League or while participating in League-sanctioned activities. It is imperative that all coaches understand the types of actions that could result in a game forfeiture, game suspensions, game ejection, probation, and/or removal from League activities.

What follows is a list of actions that will not be tolerated and will result in immediate disciplinary action subject to the above-described process. This does not represent the complete list of actions against which the league may take disciplinary action.

Coaches:

- Criminal activity
- Physical assault
- Coaching Under the Influence (CUI)
- Disregard for national/local rules

Coaches and Parents:

- Abusive language, chiding, and excessive haranguing
- Yelling at/arguing with umpires or other coaches
- Disruptive behavior

Players:

- Abusive language, chiding, and excessive haranguing
- Yelling at/arguing with/berating umpires, coaches, teammates, or opposing team
- Throwing of any equipment, especially helmets and bats

Participants involved in situations of the above type will be subject to disciplinary action as dictated by the League Board of Directors via the Conflict Resolution Process outlined above. However, in serious cases, the Board of Directors and Conflict Resolution Committee reserves the right to set the punishment according to the seriousness of the offense up to expulsion for the season.

Umpire's Role:

Each umpire has the authority to issue warnings and/or exact an immediate ejection from the playing field of any player, coach, manager, or spectator for objecting to umpire decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language.

Managers, coaches, and players ejected from a game shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in the game, even as a spectator. Parents and other spectators can be asked to leave the field if they are considered disruptive or abusive. Failure of parents to leave the field when asked by the lead umpire may result in a forfeit of the team they support.