

San Carlos Little League Conduct & Discipline Policy

Purpose and Commitment

San Carlos Little League (SCLL) is committed to providing a safe, positive and respectful environment that nurtures youth development and reflects the values of our community. Participation in SCLL is a privilege—not a right—and depends upon adherence to this Conduct & Discipline Policy.

This policy draws from best practices across other Little Leagues and aims to:

- Set clear behavioral expectations
- Protect the emotional and physical safety of all participants
- Provide a fair but decisive discipline system
- Empower coaches, umpires and the Board to maintain proper standards

Applicability

This policy applies to all players, parents/guardians, spectators, coaches, managers, volunteers, umpires and board members.

It covers conduct:

- At all SCLL facilities, practices, games, team events and meetings
- While traveling to or from activities
- On digital platforms (email, text, social media, messaging apps) when the communication involves SCLL participants or activities

Expected Conduct

All participants must:

1. Demonstrate respect for players, opponents, coaches, umpires, volunteers, and spectators
2. Model sportsmanship in words, behavior, and attitude
3. Maintain appropriate communication, verbally and online
4. Follow the rules and requests of umpires, coaches and board members

5. Prioritize safety and contribute to a positive, inclusive environment

Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct is strictly prohibited. These behaviors are not subject to standard progressive discipline and may result in immediate removal, suspension or expulsion regardless of prior history.

A. Violence or Threats

- Physical assault or attempted assault
- Threatening language or actions
- Throwing objects in anger
- Destroying property

B. Abusive or Disrespectful Behavior

- Verbal abuse, insults, profanity, yelling, taunting, name-calling
- Discriminatory, hateful, or sexually inappropriate language
- Aggressive confrontation with umpires, coaches, players, volunteers, or spectators

C. Harassment, Bullying, or Intimidation

- Bullying in any form (verbal, social, digital)
- Harassment, stalking, or persistent unwanted behavior
- Cyberbullying, including messages targeting SCLL participants

D. Substance Use & Facility Safety Violations

- Use of alcohol, drugs, vaping devices, or tobacco at SCLL games, practices or fields (including in stands)
- Being under the influence at SCLL games, practices or fields (including in stands)
- Possession of weapons
- Violating facility safety rules (e.g., restricted areas, field access rules, unsafe behavior)

E. Cheating

Cheating is defined as any intentional action that provides an unfair advantage including but not limited to:

- Using ineligible players
- Intentionally falsifying scores, statistics, or records
- Deliberately violating playing time rules
- Using illegal equipment or altering equipment
- Stealing signs, providing or receiving unauthorized instructions, or assistance
- Encouraging players to deceive umpires or opposing teams

F. Interference with Game Officials

- Confronting, arguing with, or verbally attacking umpires
- Entering the field or dugout without permission
- Disrupting game operations

Any violation in these categories may result in immediate removal from the premises and disciplinary action up to and including permanent removal from the league. It is in the discretion of the umpire, should a manager refuse to leave the premises or continue to cause a disturbance, or if the situation warrants in their judgment a cessation of play, that the game be forfeited and the offending manager's team will be given the loss.

Discipline Process

SCLL aims to employ a progressive discipline framework, while providing the Board full authority to impose stronger consequences at any point based on the severity of the behavior.

A. Possible Disciplinary Actions

Depending on circumstances, consequences may include:

- Verbal warning

- Written warning
- Immediate removal from the facility
- Suspension from one or more games or practices
- Suspension from coaching duties or volunteer roles
- Prohibition from attending practices or games for a defined period
- Season-long suspension
- Permanent removal from SCLL

Note that these disciplinary actions apply to all players, parents/guardians, spectators, coaches, managers, volunteers, umpires and board members.

B. Principles of Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline is intended to address general, non-egregious behavioral issues, such as:

- Mildly inappropriate sideline behavior
- Repeated but non-threatening disagreements with officials
- Failure to follow conduct expectations despite warnings

In such cases, discipline typically escalates based on:

- Severity of the conduct
- Impact on players, teams and game operations
- Whether prior warnings have been issued

C. Immediate Removal

Umpires, managers, coaches and board members have the authority to remove any individual from the premises if:

- They violate zero-tolerance categories
- Their behavior is disrupting the game
- Their presence poses risk to players, officials, or spectators

Refusal to leave will result in further sanctions and may trigger involvement of law enforcement.

Player-Specific Discipline

Player discipline will be age-appropriate and developmentally grounded. Options include:

- Coaching intervention or verbal correction
- Temporary removal from play
- Suspension from practices or games
- Loss of team privileges
- Removal from the team or league in severe cases

Coach & Manager Discipline

Coaches and managers are held to an elevated standard and may face:

- Removal from a game
- Suspension from coaching duties
- Mandatory meeting with the Coaching Coordinator or Player Agent
- Loss of coaching eligibility for the season or future seasons
- Removal from the league for serious misconduct

Any abuse toward umpires is considered a major violation and will likely result in suspension.

Reporting & Review Procedures

A. Reporting

Reports may be submitted by:

- Umpires
- Coaches or managers
- Board members
- Parents or guardians

- Players (through a trusted adult)

Reports should be directed to the League President, Safety Officer, or designated Disciplinary Committee. All issues should be immediately reported to the League President, Safety Officer or Disciplinary Committee so that it can be reviewed and acted upon, if necessary.

B. Review

The Disciplinary Committee will:

- Review all reported incidents
- Gather statements or testimony as needed
- Determine consequences based on policy and best practices
- Communicate findings promptly

The Disciplinary Committee will convene within seven (7) days of receiving the report to review the concern and initiate the process. Depending upon the severity of the report, the Committee will aim to complete its process as soon as practicable. The committee will report its findings and recommended punishment at the next duly convened board meeting for board approval or modification (assuming there has been enough time to complete the report). In situations requiring more urgent adjudication the committee will refer its findings to the executive committee for review and approval. A 2/3 vote of the Board or Disciplinary Committee will be required for discipline.

C. Appeals

Unless otherwise restricted by the nature of the misconduct (e.g., violent or threatening behavior), individuals may appeal in writing within five (5) days of receiving the disciplinary decision. The Board's decision on appeal is final.

Annual Acknowledgment

All players, parents/guardians, coaches, managers, umpires, volunteers and board members must sign an annual acknowledgment agreeing to follow this Conduct & Discipline Policy.

Participation in SCLL is contingent upon this acknowledgment.

Authority to Amend

The SCLL Board of Directors may amend this policy at any time and will notify families of any updates.