



Gardner Youth Baseball & Softball League
P.O. Box 762
Gardner, MA 01440

COVID-19 Plan & Guidelines

To: All Players / Parents / Spectators / League Officials
From: GYBSL Board of Directors
Subject: 2020 Season – Baseball & Softball COVID-19 Plan & Guidelines

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to the GYBSL community regarding the way in which league activities will be conducted during the 2020 Baseball and Softball season. Please carefully read the information below regarding our potential season start dates, as well as guidelines and restrictions that have been put in place to safe guard our community during the 2020 season.

Guidelines and restrictions identified herein have been provided by the State of Massachusetts, the City of Gardner, and Babe Ruth Baseball League (our Governing affiliation).

COVID-19 Plan Organizer: Matthew J. Sargent – President, GYBSL
Organizer Contact Info: 518-441-6165 | msargent@gmail.com

2020 SEASON TIMELINE (PROJECTED)

Practices / Evaluations: June 15th at the earliest – Start of Phase 2
Games: July 6th at the earliest – Start of Phase 3
End of Season: August 30th at the earliest

All dates are subject to change based on the State of Massachusetts phased re-opening plan dates.

GAME & PRACTICE LOCATIONS

PRACTICE LOCATIONS: Practices will be held at GYBSL's Mechanic Street Field to the maximum extent possible. When not possible due to schedule restrictions, practices may take place at the GHS softball fields.

GAME LOCATIONS: All home games at all levels will take place at GYBSL's Mechanic Street Field to the maximum extent possible. Softball home games may be played at Jackson Field. Away games at the Minor and Major levels will be held outside of Gardner at surrounding area towns and cities. All Rookie and Tball Level games will be held in Gardner (No travel).

2020 PARTICIPANT GUIDELINES

MINIMUM GUIDELINES: (Please note that additional guidelines may be required by the City and State once the phase 2 and 3 guidelines have been announced)

1. No handshaking/celebrations: Players and coaches are to refrain from handshakes, high fives, fist/elbow bumps, chest bumps, group celebrations, etc.



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2. Only two (2) players MAXIMUM in the dugout at one time, while also following 6' social distancing guidelines at all times. Remaining players & coaches will be positioned down the left & right field lines (off playing field & outside of fence). Players will be seated or stand no less than 6' apart.
 - a. GYBSL will be marking designated locations for each player to stand or sit.
 - b. Each team must always have at least one (1) Coach or volunteer to watch over players in this area for the Major and Minor levels.
 - c. At the Rookie and Tball Level we will be requiring each player's parent to assist in keeping their player at their designated dugout position.
3. Players should limit any sharing of playing equipment, bats, gloves, fielder's mask, catcher's gear, helmets, water bottles etc. Baseballs and Softballs should be cleaned whenever possible and an adequate supply should be on hand.
 - a. Players shall always leave their personal equipment at their designated dugout position, when not in use.
 - b. Players are not to touch or use any other player's equipment.
 - c. At the Major & Minor Levels all players are required to have their own personal glove, helmet, and bat. The only shared equipment will be Catchers gear (to be sanitized prior to changing players).
 - d. At the TBall & Rookie Levels all players are required to have their own personal glove. A bat and helmet will be assigned to each player at the start of each Tball & Rookie game, for use during that game. Assigned bats & helmets will be returned to the coach at the end of the game and cleaned prior to the next teams use. *GYBSL strongly encourages all players to purchase their own bat and helmet for this year; however, this is not a requirement.*
4. **Face Coverings:** Participants may remove face coverings while participating in practice and drills, provided they maintain at least 6' of distance from all other persons present. Face coverings should otherwise be worn by coaches, volunteers, other staff, officials, spectators in accordance with MA guidelines.
 - a. A player may choose to wear additional PPE. They may do so as long as it does not compromise their safety or the safety of other players.
 - b. Please be advised that for the Baseball and Softball teams that travel, requirements for face coverings may differ at other surrounding towns.
5. Cleaning supplies, as well as hand sanitizer, should be available in the dugout area.
6. Parents are to have backup supplies in the player's equipment bag for use when needed and their own marked water bottle or sports drink. No team or dugout coolers are permitted.
7. Cleaning and sanitation of common areas between games or activities will be performed. Each team will be responsible to clean out and wipe down dugout or other field areas that they were in prior to leaving the playing field.
8. Limit the number of fans to one (1) spectator per player attending games/practices at the field.
 - a. May be adjusted to 2 fans with Gardner BOH approval, once additional State guidance has been provided for phase 2 and 3 guidelines.
9. Allow for 30 minute gaps in between games to help limit the number of people at the park at one time.
10. Fans attending games must follow 6' social distancing guidelines at all times. GYBSL will be using painted markings to identify areas where spectators can stand or set up chairs. We ask that you follow the markings, as spectator involvement in this plan is extremely important. If spectators do not follow the guidelines we will be required to shut down.
11. Any player, or person not feeling well, should not attend games or practices.
12. Proper signage will be posted at the field regarding guidelines provided by local and state health officials.
13. Pregame conference will be limited to one (1) Coach per team and one (1) Umpire. Social distancing of 6' is required.



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14. The use of candy, chewing gum and/or sunflower seeds is not permitted by players, coaches, umpires or spectators.
15. Batting lineup changes will be limited to communicating from a distance that maintains the 6' social distancing guidelines at all times.
16. Each team will be required to keep track and report all of the players, coaches, umpires or spectator's names that are at the park for each game.

Additional Rookie & TBall Guidelines:

17. Games are going to take place on Sunday (rather than Saturday) at Salvador Field (on Mechanic Street).
18. Games will be played one after another from 8am to 3pm (each game will be 1 hour, with a half hour in-between).
19. Games may use two sets of base paths, one for runners and one for fielders (spaced approximately 6' apart).
20. At the Tball level Parents may be required to participate during the practice and games, as directed by the Coaches. Parents may need to help during fielding drills for throwing and catching with their child and may be asked to stand with their child in the field or on the base paths.

2020 PHASE 2 SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Additional State Guidelines, per COVID-19 Order No. 33, not already covered above.

1. Participants will be separated into groups of no more than 12, including coaches and staff. Larger playing areas and surfaces may be used by more than one group of 12 at one time, provided that adequate social distance and group separation can be maintained. To ensure group separation, groups must be spaced at least 20 feet apart while sharing a playing surface or field.
2. Scrimmages, organized games and tournaments are not allowed for contact sports in Phase II.
3. Referees, umpires and other officials are not required for practices and cannot be present in Phase II.
4. Participants and coaches/instructors/counselors must be kept in the same small group (cohorts) with dedicated coaches or other staff.
5. No shared food or drink may be provided during any activities for participants or spectators (e.g., concession stands or team snacks). No use of public water bubblers, fountains or bottle fillers if present on site. Participants and spectators should only drink from their own containers. Organizers will provide individual, dedicated water bottles for children if they do not have their own.
6. Participants and coaches must achieve proper hand hygiene at the beginning and end of all activities, either through handwashing with soap and water or by using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
7. All high touch surface areas will be sanitized at the end of each activity.
8. GYBSL will work to stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations by cohort (group) or put in place other protocols to limit contact between groups and with chaperones as much as possible. This also allows for more time to clean the facility between users. GYBSL will maintain a daily schedules prepared in advance.
9. GYBSL will post notice to volunteers, parents, and participants of important health information and relevant safety measures as outlined in government guidelines.
10. GYBSL will encourage volunteers, parents, and participants who test positive for COVID-19 to disclose to GYBSL for purposes of cleaning / disinfecting and contact tracing. If the GYBSL is



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notified of a positive case we will notify the Gardner Board of Health and assist the BOH as reasonably requested to advise likely contacts to isolate and self-quarantine. Testing of other volunteers, parents, and participants may be recommended consistent with guidance and / or at the request of the BOH.

11. If any individual develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the activity, they should promptly inform organizers and must be removed from the activity and instructed to return home.
12. GYBSL will conduct frequent disinfecting of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces.

2020 PHASE 3 SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Additional State Guidelines, to be added once phase 3 information becomes available.