



A Plan for Socially Distant Little League Games

Mercer Island Little League
2020

Notes



- The following plan assumes that the statewide stay-at-home order is lifted, but we must continue to practice social distancing and limit large gatherings
 - District 9 has distributed a “restart checklist” that lays out the ground rules for restarting in more detail
- The plan is focused on minimizing risk of transmission while still allowing for competition. It prioritizes games over practice.
- The plan focuses on the player pitch divisions (AAA, Coast & Majors)
 - These divisions have the oldest kids, who have the fewest remaining Little League seasons
 - The oldest kids are also the most likely to be able to follow new rules and adhere to the new protocols for social distancing



Rosters & Participation



Participants at Each Game

Children: 20 total

- 10 players on home team
- 10 players on away team

Adults: 9 total

- Home team manager (1)
- Home team bench coach (1)
- Away team manager (1)
- Away team bench coach (1)
- Umpire (1)
- Scorekeeper (1)
- Video (1)
- Spectator Management (1)
- Safety coordinator (1)



Adult Roles (on field or in dugout)

- Team managers (1 each for home and away teams)
 - Acts as third base coach when team is batting
 - Stationed outside dugout while team is in the field
 - Wears mask and gloves at all times
- Bench coach (1 each for home and away teams)
 - Bench coach stays in dugout for the duration of the game except to retrieve and wipe down bats
 - Bench assists manager in communicating batting order and defensive lineups to players
 - Bench coach also enforces social distancing with players while on “the bench”
 - Wears mask and gloves at all times
 - Maintain separate game balls for home and away team. Rely on the bench coach to feed new balls into the game as needed, wipe down balls between innings, etc.
- Umpire (1)
 - Wears mask and gloves at all times
 - Open question as to whether this role is filled by Umpires Northwest or is a volunteer role filled by parents or other MI community members



Adult Roles (not on the field)

- Scorekeeper (1)
 - One designated scorekeeper for each game. Score is kept on Gamechanger for parents to follow along (in person from the outfield or from home)
 - Stationed behind fence behind home plate (possibly on grass mound under the tree) or in the bleachers for the team in the field
 - Plays music between innings, walkup music and player announcements before each at bat
 - Wears mask at all times
- Video (1) (exploring possibility)
 - One videographer designated for each game
 - Stationed behind fence behind home plate (6 feet from scorekeeper)
 - Live streams game, provides commentary as willing
 - Wears mask at all times



Adult Roles (not on the field, continued)

- Spectator Management (1)
 - One adult stationed near parking lot before and after game to guide traffic for drop offs and pickups (traffic control)
 - During game, responsible for enforcing social distancing amongst spectators (some in outfield and some in cars in parking lot)
 - Wears mask at all times
- Safety coordinator (1)
 - One adult designated to educate and enforce social distancing among players
 - Conducts temperature checks and screening questions when players and adult participants arrive (not necessary for spectators)
 - Also reminds players, coaches, and umpire about proper protocol with bats and balls
 - Wears mask at all times

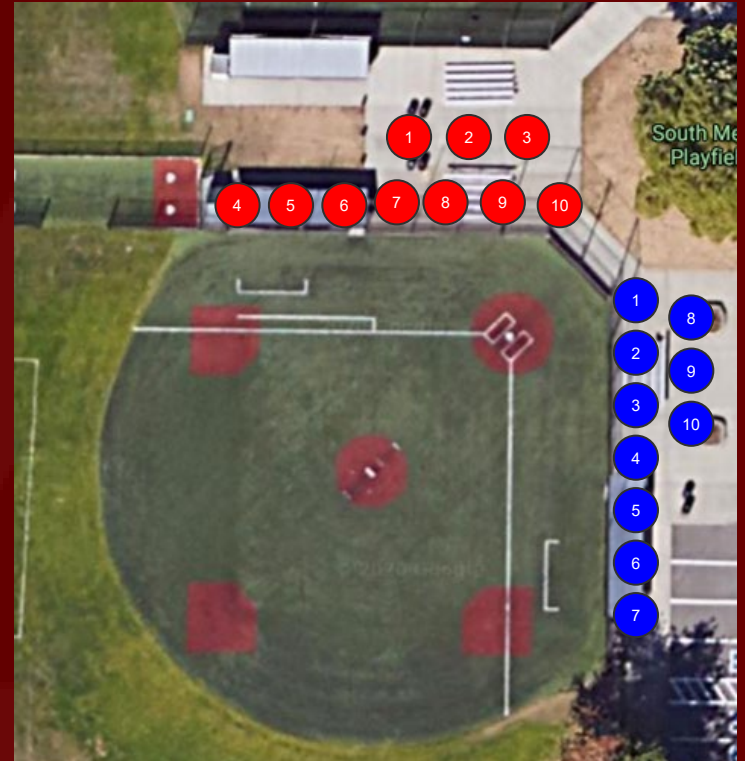


Playing the Game While Minimizing Contact

Player Spacing



- Players are assigned spots in the dugout or on the bleachers so that they are least 6 feet apart
- Players hang their bags and keep their equipment at these dedicated stations
- Players are to stay at their assigned spots when on the bench or waiting their turn to bat





Player Flow

- Players enter the field through dugout gate
- Players exit the field around the fences in right and left field, returning to their designated spot.





Player Equipment Protocol

- Players do not use dugouts, bat racks, or helmet racks
- Bats, helmets, and gloves are not shared between players
- Catchers must have their own equipment
 - League can provide gear for each game that is used by only one kid per day
 - That gear gets wiped down between games
- Players keep equipment in their own bags, not on bat racks or on the bench
- Bats are retrieved by players if out at first
- Bats are retrieved by bench coach, who wipes it down with Clorox wipe if the player reaches base safely



Additional Player Precautions

- Players able to use hand sanitizer every time they enter and exit the field
 - Sanitizer bottles are located at home and away entrance and exit points
- Bench coach wipes game balls with sanitizing wipes before putting ball back into rotation
- Manage separate game ball stashes for home and away team
 - This will require more than the usual number of game balls.



Warm ups

- Parents / kids are instructed not to show up more than 40 minutes before game time
- Warm ups begin 30 minutes before game time
 - Home team warms up on South Mercer 1
 - Away team warms up on South Mercer 2
- Each team follows same routine:
 - 5 minutes: stretch as a team, in circle spaced 6 feet apart
 - 5 minutes run as a team, with minimum 6 foot distance
 - 5 minutes throw with a partner, as a team, spaced 6 feet apart
 - 5 minutes station one:
 - manager leads half team taking grounders in the infield
 - bench coach leads other half of team hitting whiffles in the outfield
 - 5 minutes station two:
 - Groups switch and complete infield / hitting
 - 5 minutes for transitions
 - Starting pitcher and catcher for home team peel off 5 minutes early to warm up in bullpen



Post Game

- No handshake line
- Teams lineup down first and third base lines and tip caps
- Managers say a few words from the mound to acknowledge good play and sportsmanship on both sides, thank the umpires and volunteers, etc
- Players and families are asked to leave the field within 20 minutes of game concluding



Spectator Options

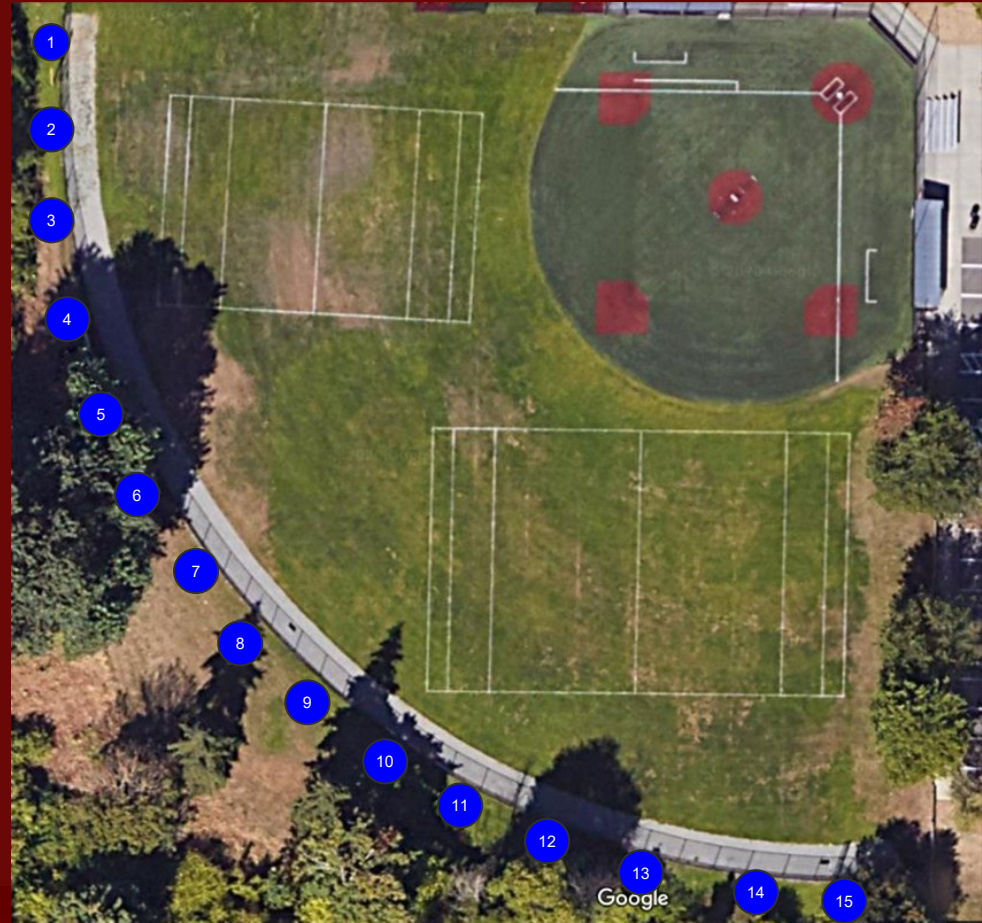
Each of these options can be deployed for the same game.

Parents would choose their preferred way of watching.



Spectator Option 1 (of 3)

- Lawn chairs can be setup just inside the outfield fence
- Cones will be placed at 150, 175, or 200 feet depending on the division. Spectators sit beyond those cones.
- Families can sit together
- Minimum 10 feet between family groups
- We can paint lines to designate appropriate distancing



Spectator Option 2 (of 3)

- Park in one of 13 parking spots (not including handicapped) in South Mercer parking lot that face field 1
- Stay in car for duration of the game
- Enforced by spectator manager
- Pickup trucks can put a lawn chair in the bed of the truck?
- Managers, coaches, umpire will park in other parking spots, thus reserving these field-facing spots for spectators.



Spectator Option 3 (of 3) based on feasibility



- Drop your kid off and pick them up, but watch from home
- Games live streamed via TBD platform
 - Facebook Live?
 - Youtube?
- Live feed supplemented with Gamechanger for balls / strikes, outs, score