



LIBERTY LACROSSE ASSOCIATION

Ethics and Rules Policy

Last Updated: 2025-02-26

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Change Log

| Date | Change Description |
|------------|---|
| 2024-02-26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added face offs to 1-2 per league vote |
| 2024-04-12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated 1-2 rules to clarify offsides should be enforced, but not penalized. 4 players (2 offense and 2 defense) should stay on the defensive zone and play is 4v4 in the offensive zone. |
| 2024-04-04 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated the Mercy Rule for 5/6 and 7/8 to eliminate the three-pass rule.• Counts for ball movement were added to rules modifications and points of emphasis for all levels. |
| 2024-03-20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Game rules re-ordered to group modifications and clarifications by age group.• Added pass rule from quick reference sheets to rule modifications section.• Added face off rules for K through 4th grade from quick reference sheets to point of emphasis section. |

Overview

The Liberty Lacrosse Association (LLA) has chartered a Ethics and Rules Committee to develop and maintain the following Ethics and Rules Policy to ensure a fair and equitable playing environment for all member programs.

This policy has been developed to address the following key areas:

Code of Conduct: A standard code of conduct that outlines the expected behavior of all players, coaches, officials, families, and others involved in the league.

League Rules: A standard set of rules governing league operations and conduct of member programs.

On-Field Rules: A codified set of on-field rules aligned to current USA Lacrosse and NFHS.

Rule Clarifications and Points of Emphasis: Discussion of specific rules to clarify or emphasize specific points to reduce confusion for coaches, players, and officials.

The Ethics and Rules Committee is comprised of the following members for the 2024 season:

- Bryan Inagaki - Avon Grove Lacrosse
- Jay Molnar - Wilmington Wings Lacrosse
- Bob Massaro - Coatesville Lacrosse
- Ryan Bracalenti - Oxford Lacrosse

Code of Conduct

All LLA member organizations will be required to adhere to the Code of Conduct. Adhering to the Code of Conduct includes the following:

- Annual agreement by all member organizations to adhere to the Code of Conduct no later than the last board meeting prior to the start of the spring season. The attestation must be completed by each organization's designated LLA representative.
- Inclusion and verification of the Code of Conduct into the registration process for all organizations and verification of agreement of their coaches and member families.
- Posting the LLA Code of Conduct to member organization websites and promotion of the Code of Conduct to all member families at the beginning of the spring season.

The Code of Conduct comprises four sections:

Member Organizations

- Create a positive atmosphere for the development of all players at all levels.
- Maintain the values of good sportsmanship and fair play within your organization.
- Strive to align teams to maintain competitive play with all other LLA member programs.

Coaches

- Treat all coaches, players, parents/guardians, and officials with respect at all times.
- Refrain from disrespectful, bullying, or harassing language, acts, or behaviors toward any official, player, or parent/guardian.
- Demonstrate and teach good sportsmanship, fair play, and focus on developing your players, not winning.
- Protect your players at all times and remove players at any point if a situation is unsafe.
- Teach the rules and skills required for your players to be successful in the sport.

Families

- Treat all coaches, players, parents/guardians, and officials with respect at all times.
- Refrain from disrespectful, bullying, or harassing language, acts, or behaviors toward any official, player, or parent/guardian.
- Remember that members of the opposing team are children that deserve caring attention and encouragement from adults.
- Respect the actions and decisions of coaches and do not coach from the sidelines.
- Respect the actions and officials of officials during games and allow coaches to manage
- Understand that the mission of LLA is to develop players and that a win at all costs attitude is detrimental to the experience and development of our players.

Players

- Treat all coaches, players, parents/guardians, and officials with respect at all times.
- Refrain from disrespectful, bullying, or harassing language, acts, or behaviors toward any official, player, or parent/guardian.

- Demonstrate good sportsmanship, fair play, and focus on fun and participation, not winning.
- Be on time for all practices and games.
- Be a positive role model to other players. Learn from players that are better than you and help teach those with less experience.
- Follow the directions of your coaches at all times.

The LLA maintains a zero tolerance policy for disrespectful, bullying, or harassing language or actions from any coach, player, or family member. Any issues reported by any member organization, coach, family member, player, or official will be immediately reviewed by the LLA board and offending individual(s) or programs may be subject to disciplinary actions

LLA Rules

1. Code of Conduct

- 1.1. Member programs, their program leaders, coaches, families, and players must adhere to the code of conduct at all times.

2. Member Program Insurance

- 2.1. Member programs will maintain insurance that includes medical and liability coverage for all players, coaches, and program leaders.
- 2.2. Member programs must submit their certificates of insurance annually to the Ethics and Rules Committee prior before being allowed to take part in any league contests.

3. Member Dues

- 3.1. All member programs must submit their dues by March 1 of the current season. If dues are not received on time, programs will not have their teams included in the schedule and will lose any preference to field or blackout dates.

4. Coach Eligibility

- 4.1. Member programs will verify and maintain all required background checks for coaches as required by the State of Pennsylvania, State of Delaware, or State of Maryland.
- 4.2. Coaches will be required to complete concussion, AED, and CPR familiarization or certification training prior to the start of the season.
- 4.3. Member programs will provide a roster of all coaches prior to the beginning of the season with attestation that all background checks and training requirements have been properly completed.
- 4.4. Member programs must notify the Ethics and Rules Committee of any coaches added throughout the season and provide verification of background checks prior to the coach being allowed at any LLA contest.

5. Player Eligibility

- 5.1. Only players currently enrolled in a member program are eligible to play in a league contest.
- 5.2. Players may only play for one member program during any year.

6. Grade Eligibility

- 6.1. Players must be in the grade(s) designated for the division in which they are playing. Players may not play in a grade division above or below their level.
- 6.2. Players that take part in any high school team regardless of age are ineligible to play in the LLA.

7. Geographic Eligibility

- 7.1. Each member program is designated a geographic area from which it may recruit players. These geographic areas are defined by the LLA Executive Board and available in Appendix A.
- 7.2. During registration, member programs must confirm and maintain a player's geographic eligibility by confirming their school district, zip code, or other geographic basic condition that confirms their geographic eligibility.

- 7.3. Geographic boundaries apply to all teams where competition occurs between member programs. This rule does not apply to in-house or other general programs.
- 7.4. Member programs are prohibited from any recruitment activities that would encourage players to register with a program outside their designated boundary. Broad advertising such as social media that cannot be strictly defined should be restricted as best as possible to the designated boundary.
- 7.5. Member programs are prohibited from recruiting players from an area served by a non-LLA recreational lacrosse program (i.e. SEPYLA).
- 7.6. Member programs may recruit players if they live in an area that is not served by a youth lacrosse program that is adjacent to their program.
- 7.7. Member programs may recruit across boundaries for camps, clinics, or other general training programs.
- 7.8. At the request of the LLA Executive Committee, programs are required to provide their full program roster including player name, mailing address, and public school district.
- 7.9. Exceptions
 - 7.9.1. Member programs may petition for exceptions to player eligibility rules, but should only be done in extenuating circumstances.
 - 7.9.2. Any exceptions must be approved by the LLA Board and impacted member programs if related to geographic boundaries.

8. Team Levels and Rosters

- 8.1. Players will be rostered to only one team, and each team will be designated at one of the skill levels defined by the league.
- 8.2. Member programs must maintain rosters of all teams and must submit those rosters to the LLA Executive Committee upon request.
- 8.3. Member programs are required to field a team at the top level for each division if they can field at least two teams in an age group. If only a single team can be fielded and the member program does not want to enter that team in the top tier division, the full team roster, including player names, years of play, and any non-LLA lacrosse club affiliation must be provided.
- 8.4. Member programs may submit for an exception to Rule 8.3 in the event they have a significant skill shortage in a specific age group. In the event of an exception request, the full team roster including player names, years of play, and any non-LLA lacrosse club affiliation must be provided.
- 8.5. In the event of a shortage of players, a member program may temporarily substitute players from another team within its program from the same age division and from an equal or lower level team.
- 8.6. If a player substitutes three times on a higher level team, that player must be permanently rostered on the higher level team and will no longer be eligible to play on the lower level team.
- 8.7. Players are prohibited from substituting on a team below their level. If the lack of players would prevent a game from being played, players can substituted from a

higher level team, but the team with the substitution will forfeit the game automatically.

8.8. Goalies are exempt from roster restrictions during the regular season and may play as needed for teams within their age division if a goalie for that team is not available.

8.9. Substitutions between teams are only allowed during the regular season. Substitutions during the postseason are prohibited.

9. On-Field Rules

9.1. Member program coaches, players, and families will adhere to the on-field rules at all times during league contests.

9.2. Modification of on-field rules is not allowed during league contests.

9.3. Member programs may request modifications to on-field rules at the conclusion of each season.

10. Reporting Violations

10.1. Any potential violation of the rules may be reported by a member program representative at any time throughout the year. Violations must be reported via the rules violation report [here](#).

11. Adjudicating Violations

11.1. Any reported violations will be immediately forwarded to the Rules Committee and Executive Committee for review within 2 business days of submission.

11.2. The Rules Committee will be responsible for conducting investigations into any reported violations and may include discussions or interviews with member programs and their coaches.

11.3. The Rules Committee will provide an initial findings report to the LLA Board, which will include validation of whether a violation of league rules occurred.

11.4. The LLA Board will determine any sanctions to be levied based on the Rules Committee findings based on a vote. Each member program will receive one vote. A sanction notice will then be issued to the member program.

11.5. In the event of a tie, the LLA President will be the deciding factor. If the LLA President is a representative of either club involved in the incident, the Vice President will be the deciding vote.

12. Violations

12.1. Any member programs, their coaches, players, or families found to be in violation of any league rules may be subject to the following:

12.1.1. Loss of player eligibility for the remainder of the season.

12.1.2. Loss of eligibility for member team(s) to take part in post-season play.

12.1.3. Loss of eligibility for member program players to take part in the LLA All-Star game.

12.1.4. Loss of eligibility of coach(es) for the remainder of the season or ban from coaching during LLA contests in the future.

12.1.5. Removal of the member program from the LLA in the event of repeated violations over multiple seasons or multiple violations committed in a single season.

13. Violation Appeal

- 13.1. After a violation is confirmed and sanctions determined, member programs may submit an appeal within 5 business days of a sanction notice.

On-Field Rules

The LLA has adopted the USA Lacrosse Boys' rules for all age groups with the exception of specific modifications noted. **No modifications of these rules is permitted at any time during an LLA contest.**

Rule Modifications

Game Clock - All Levels

All levels will utilize a running clock. The game clock will be as follows:

- K through 2nd - 2 x 12' halves, 4' half
- 3rd and 4th - 2 x 20' halves, 4' half
- 5th through 8th Grade - 4 x 12' quarters, 5' half

Mercy Rule - 1st and 2nd Grade Only

After a goal differential of 5 goals is reached, the mercy rule is in effect.

- Trailing teams will receive the ball at the top of the offensive zone after any goals by the leading team.
- Leading teams must complete a minimum of at least 3 passes before attempting a shot on goal. If the ball is dropped prior to reaching 3 passes, the count is reset and an additional 3 passes must be completed.

Goalies - 1st and 2nd Grade Only

Teams may field a goalie at their discretion. Games will be allowed with one team having a goalie and the other not.

- If a goalie is used, a regulation, 6'x6' net should be used for both teams.

Goalie Equipment - K through 4th Grade Only

Goalies are required to wear a helmet, throat protector, goalie specific chest protector, groin protection, and mouthguard. Elbow pads, shin guards, and pants are recommended, but not required.

Substitutions - 1st through 4th Grade

Coaches may request a substitution during a stoppage of play, but it is not required. On-the-fly substitutions are allowed.

Pass Rule - 1st through 4th Grade Only

There must be one attempted pass between two players in the offensive zone before a shot can be attempted. Teams must follow the spirit of the rule and passes must be an attempt to move the ball and not a short/quick pass designed to circumvent the rule.

Mercy Rule - 5th through 8th Grade Only

After a goal differential of 5 goals is reached, the mercy rule is in effect.

- Trailing teams will receive the ball at the top of the offensive zone after any goals by the leading team.
- The counts to move the ball to the offensive zone or into the box will be waived for the trailing team. The 4-second count for the goalies will still apply.

Overtime - 5th through 8th Only

Games tied at the end of regulation will progress to a 4' stop time, sudden victory period. The first team to score wins the game.

- Regular Season: If the game is tied at the end of the 4' overtime period, the game ends in a tie.
- Playoffs: Overtime periods will continue with a 1' break between periods until there is a winner.

Rule Clarifications and Points of Emphasis

Eye Black - All Levels

Emphasis has been made by USA Lacrosse and NFHS that eye black should follow the rule limiting eye black to a single stroke with no words, numbers, logos, or symbols. Violating this rule is a one-minute, non-releasable personal foul for illegal equipment.

Fouling Out - All Levels

Fouls for each player will be tracked, and players that receive 3 **personal** fouls or 5 minutes of **personal** foul time will be removed from the game. This rule applies at levels where penalties are not served.

Ejection for Targeting - All Levels

Any player that intentionally takes aim at the head/neck of an opponent will be immediately removed from the game.

- This includes using the crown of the helmet (spearing), either on offense or defense, that targets the head or neck of an opponent.
- The offending team will receive a 3-minute penalty in 5th through 8th grade.

Indirect Head Contact - All Levels

The change to NFHS rule 5-4-2 allowing for the option for indirect contact resulting in a 1-minute non-releasable penalty **will not** be followed. Any follow through that results in contact to the head/neck is a 2-minute non-releasable penalty.

Properly Worn Equipment - All Levels

Specifically for helmets, chinstraps must be worn under the chin, and any play resulting in a helmet coming off will result in play being suspended immediately. The player shall leave the field until after the next dead ball following the resumption of play.

Face Offs - 1st and 2nd Grade Only

Face offs will occur at the start of every half.

Face Offs - 3rd and 4th Grade Only

Face offs will occur after each goal and at the start of every half. Two players from each team must be behind goal line extended until possession is gained. One player from each team will be on each sideline and can attempt to pick up a loose ground ball, but cannot initiate body contact with a face off player in a defenseless position while battling for the ball.

Counts for Ball Movement - 1st through 4th Grade Only

- Goalies must leave the crease or pass the ball within 4 seconds.
- There is no count to move the ball to the offensive side.

Counts for Ball Movement - 5th through 8th Grade Only

- Standard counts apply for goalies in the crease (4 seconds), movement to the offensive side (20 seconds) and into the box (10 seconds).

Body Contact - 5th through 8th Grade

Full body contact that falls within the rules is allowed for 5th through 8th grade. Take-out body checks are not allowed and are considered an illegal body check and will be penalized.

Penalty Administration - 5th through 8th Grade

All personal fouls are non-releasable and full time must be served even if a goal is scored. Technical fouls will be released after a goal.

One-Handed Checks - 5th through 8th Grade

One-handed checks are allowed in 5th through 8th grade to allow for proper player development. Slashing penalties will be called as necessary.

For more information about 2024 rules, changes, and points of emphasis, please refer to the [USA Lacrosse 2024 Boys' Lacrosse Youth Guidebook](#)

Rules Quick Reference Cards

1st and 2nd Grade

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| FIELD SIZE | L: 60-70 yds W: 35-45 yds (Cross Field) | CROSSE LENGTHS | FP: 37-42" GK: 37-54" |
| PLAYERS | 1 GK (Optional) 6 Field | GOAL SIZE | 6' x 6' (Goalies) or flip goal where no goalie |
| FIELD PLAYER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup | GOALKEEPER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, throat protector, chest protector designed for lacrosse, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup |
| LENGTH | 2 x 12' Running, 4' Half | OVERTIME | None |
| TIMEOUTS | None. Officials Only | COUNTS | 4-sec GK only; no advance |
| FACEOFFS | FO to start each half 1 FO, 1 GK, 2 behind each GLE, 1 wing at sideline | SUBSTITUTION | During dead-ball or on-the-fly |
| SCRUM | Extended w/3 or more players, use A/P | FOULING OUT | Personals = 3x or 5-min |
| ADVANCING | Not Used | STALLING | Not used |
| OFFSIDES | > 4 players in off half > 5 players in def half No penalty - instruct extra player to go back to defensive zone | 3-YARD RULE | All LEGAL holds, pushes & checks must be on a player w/possession or within 3 yds of loose ball |
| ALLOWABLE BODY CONTACT (4.15) | Legal Holds Legal Pushes Boxing Out Riding Incidental | CHECKING WITH CROSSE (4.16) | Lift/poke bottom hand or head of stick below check area, OR downward check initiated below BOTH players' shoulders; no one-handed |
| ILLEGAL BODY CHECKS | Defenseless, possible ejection | CHECKS TO HEAD/NECK | Possible ejection |
| INTENTIONAL TARGETING | Ejection for head/neck/defenseless | EJECTION PENALTY | Player - Leave Coach - Leave |

Pass Rule: There must be one attempted pass between two players in the offensive zone before a shot can be attempted. Teams must follow the spirit of the rule and passes must be an attempt to move the ball and not a short/quick pass designed to circumvent the rule.

Mercy Rule: After a goal differential of 5 goals is reached, the mercy rule is in effect.

- Trailing teams will receive the ball at the top of the offensive zone after any goals by the leading team.
- Leading teams must complete a minimum of at least 3 passes before attempting a shot on goal. If the ball is dropped prior to reaching 3 passes, the count is reset and an additional 3 passes must be completed.

3rd and 4th Grade

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| FIELD SIZE | L: 60-70 yds W: 35-45 yds (Cross Field) | CROSSE LENGTHS | FP: 37-42" GK: 37-54" |
| PLAYERS | 1 GK 6 Field | GOAL SIZE | 6 x 6' |
| FIELD PLAYER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup | GOALKEEPER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, throat protector, chest protector designed for lacrosse, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup |
| LENGTH | 2 x 20' Running, 4' Half | OVERTIME | None |
| TIMEOUTS | None. Officials Only | COUNTS | 4-sec GK only; no advance |
| FACEOFFS | 1 FO, 1 GK, 2 behind each GLE, 1 wing at sideline | SUBSTITUTION | During dead-ball or on-the-fly |
| SCRUM | Extended w/3 or more players, use A/P | FOULING OUT | Personals = 3x or 5-min |
| ADVANCING | Not Used | STALLING | Not used |
| OFFSIDES | > 4 players in off half > 5 players in def half No penalty - instruct extra player to go back to defensive zone | 3-YARD RULE | All LEGAL holds, pushes & checks must be on a player w/possession or within 3 yds of loose ball |
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| ILLEGAL BODY CHECKS | Defenseless, possible ejection | CHECKS TO HEAD/NECK | Possible ejection |
| INTENTIONAL TARGETING | Ejection for head/neck/defenseless | EJECTION PENALTY | Player - Leave Coach - Leave |

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- Leading teams must complete a minimum of at least 3 passes before attempting a shot on goal. If the ball is dropped prior to reaching 3 passes, the count is reset and an additional 3 passes must be completed.

5th and 6th Grade

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| FIELD SIZE | Full Field | CROSSE LENGTHS | FP: 40-42" LP: 52-72" GK: 40-72" |
| PLAYERS | 1 GK 9 Field | GOAL SIZE | 6 x 6' |
| FIELD PLAYER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup | GOALKEEPER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, throat protector, chest protector designed for lacrosse, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup |
| LENGTH | 4 x 12' Running, 5' Half | OVERTIME | 4' sudden victory, tie if no winner |
| TIMEOUTS | 2 per half, 1 OT (each team) | COUNTS | GK 4 + 20s def + 10s off |
| FACEOFFS | Same as NFHS | SUBSTITUTION | Same as NFHS |
| SCRUM | N/A | FOULING OUT | Personals = 3x or 5-min |
| ADVANCING | 20s def + 10s off + over/back if after clean | STALLING | Final 2m: get it in, keep it in |
| OFFSIDES | >6 players in off half >7 players in def half | 3-YARD RULE | All LEGAL holds, pushes & checks must be on a player w/possession or within 3 yds of loose ball |
| ALLOWABLE BODY CONTACT (4.15) | 2 hands on stick below neck and above waist (see 3-yard rule) | CHECKING WITH CROSSE (4.16) | Same as NFHS |
| ILLEGAL BODY CHECKS | Defenseless 2-3 min, possible ejection | CHECKS TO HEAD/NECK | 2-3 min, possible ejection |
| INTENTIONAL TARGETING | Ejection for +3 min head/neck/defenseless | EJECTION PENALTY | 3 min player + leave 1 min player + leave |

All personal fouls are non-releasable even if a goal is scored

Mercy Rule: After a goal differential of 5 goals is reached, the mercy rule is in effect.

- Trailing teams will receive the ball at the top of the offensive zone after any goals by the leading team.
- The counts to move the ball to the offensive zone or into the box will be waived for the trailing team. The 4-second count for the goalies will still apply.

7th and 8th Grade

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| FIELD SIZE | Full Field | CROSSE LENGTHS | FP: 40-42" LP: 52-72" GK: 40-72" |
| PLAYERS | 1 GK 9 Field | GOAL SIZE | 6 x 6' |
| FIELD PLAYER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, shoulder pads, arm pads, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup | GOALKEEPER EQUIPMENT | NOCSAE helmet, mouth guard, throat protector, chest protector designed for lacrosse, gloves, shoes/cleats, protective cup |
| LENGTH | 4 x 12' Running, 5' Half | OVERTIME | 4' sudden victory, tie if no winner |
| TIMEOUTS | 2 per half, 1 OT (each team) | COUNTS | GK 4 + 20s def + 10s off |
| FACEOFFS | Same as NFHS | SUBSTITUTION | Same as NFHS |
| SCRUM | N/A | FOULING OUT | Personals = 3x or 5-min |
| ADVANCING | 20s def + 10s off + over/back if after clean | STALLING | Final 2m: get it in, keep it in |
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| ILLEGAL BODY CHECKS | Defenseless 2-3 min, possible ejection | CHECKS TO HEAD/NECK | 2-3 min, possible ejection |
| INTENTIONAL TARGETING | Ejection for +3 min head/neck/defenseless | EJECTION PENALTY | 3 min player + leave 1 min player + leave |

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