



**Boston Baseball Association**  
**2026 Season Rulebook**

Updated April 20, 2026

## **Player Registration and Player Eligibility**

In order to be eligible to participate in league play, players must follow two steps. First, they need to complete the online registration form. Second, they must ensure that their name appears on the current season Team Active Roster, which can be found on the public pages of the BBA website. Additionally, players are required to make the necessary payment on the league site. It's important to note that the online registration includes a Liability Waiver. Every player must sign the Liability Waiver prior to participating in any BBA games and events.

If a player's name is not listed on a current season team roster, they will not be allowed to play in any League-sanctioned events. There are no exceptions to this rule. Any team found to be violating this rule will forfeit the game in which the illegal player participated. If a team is found to be in violation for a second time, they will forfeit all of their remaining games and will not receive any refund of Registration Fees.

## **Age Eligibility**

Players must be 28 years old or older to participate in the BBA and must turn 28 by the end of the calendar year of the current season or tournament. Players who participated in all BBA 2025 league and tournament play in will receive a waiver and are permitted to participate in the BBA 2026 season.

## **Fees, Waivers & Roster Matters**

Each roster must include a minimum of 18 players, not counting the manager. All players must have their fees paid in full on the website before participating in any BBA games. Rosters, with players' complete addresses and dates of birth, must be entered into 400Hitter. Players are not permitted to participate in league or tournament play unless they have completed the online waiver form.

League fees are assessed on a per-player basis, and all players are required to register and pay the player fee on the league website, [BBABOSTON.COM](http://BBABOSTON.COM)

Payment of league fees does not guarantee a specific amount of playing time or games. Playing time is at the discretion of the MANAGER.

All league payments are nonrefundable. If a player is unable to participate before the season begins due to injury, they may receive a credit applicable to the following year's season. However, if a registered and active player can no longer participate in league play once the season has begun, no refund or credit will be issued.

The dates for submitting final rosters, all league forms, and designated player fees will be established each season by the President and the leadership team. It is the responsibility of the team manager to ensure that all items are provided to the President. Failure to submit any of these items may result in a team and/or individual players being prohibited from participating in BBA league and tournament play until all submissions have been received and approved by the President.

Once the league or tournaments begin, no changes to a team's roster will be permitted without the 1.) submission of all league forms and designated league payments and 2.) review and approval by the President and leadership team. Managers may request to add new players to their rosters up to the midway point of the season. Newly added players must fulfill the same playoff eligibility requirements outlined further below. The President will verify the accuracy of the rosters, league forms, and receipt of all league payments, and will communicate the compliance status of all teams to the league managers via email, text, or phone call prior to the start of the season.

*Adding new players after the midway point will not be considered except in the case of injury, on a case-by-case basis. Players may be selected from the Sandlot league.*

No player may switch teams without the consent of the involved managers, the BBA President, and the leadership team.

A. If a player wishes to be released from their current team and continue playing in the BBA, they will be assigned to the last-place team. If that team does not require the player, they will be assigned to the next team up in the standings. This process will continue until the player is picked up by a team.

B. If a player wants to leave their existing team to form a new team, they may do so with the consent of the BBA President and leadership team. No other players may be taken from an existing team without the approval of that team's manager, the BBA President, and the leadership team. Managers or players are prohibited from recruiting players from other teams. Any manager or player found to be recruiting from other teams will face immediate suspension at the discretion of the leadership team.

## **Injured List Waivers**

If a rostered player endures an injury during the season and is unable to play, the MANAGER is responsible for notifying the President and leadership team of the player's injury and may request an injury waiver to support the player's playoff eligibility. Within one week of learning about the injury, the MANAGER may request the waiver for consideration and should communicate to the President and leadership team 1.) the type of injury

sustained, 2.) the estimated timeline for the player's return to play, and 3.) the projected number of games remaining on the team's schedule upon the player's estimated return. Once the player is cleared to return to play, the MANAGER must immediately communicate the player's clearance to the President and leadership team. The President and leadership team will then communicate to the manager the number of game appearances that player must fulfill to qualify for playoff eligibility. The number of appearances will be up to 10 games or up to the maximum number of games remaining on the team's schedule upon the player's return. If the player does not fulfill the updated playoff eligibility requirement, the player will not be eligible for the playoffs.

## **Uniforms**

All teams are required to wear complete baseball uniforms when participating in BBA games, which must include matching jerseys of the same color and different numbers, baseball pants, and hats of the same color. Uniforms must be purchased directly from Be Clutch Sportswear. Jeans, shorts, and other non-baseball attire are not allowed.

The BBA President and Leadership team will have the final authority on what is considered appropriate baseball attire. If a team is found to be non-compliant, the team manager will receive a written warning for players who are not in full uniform, and those players will not be allowed to participate in any BBA games until they are compliant with uniform requirements.

## **Equipment**

All batters, runners and catchers must wear protective helmets, no exceptions. All teams are required to use the official BBA League-designated baseballs, as provided to each manager at the start of each season. The Home team is responsible for providing BBA League-designated baseballs for each game.

Baseball spikes may have either metal or rubber cleats. For all games played on turf fields, the use of metal cleats is strictly prohibited.

Position players wearing metal cleats on turf fields:

If a position player is caught wearing metal spikes while batting on a turf field, that player will be ruled an automatic out for that at-bat. If the cleats are not changed by the next half inning, that player will be ejected from the game and will also serve a one-game suspension.

Pitchers wearing metal cleats on turf fields:

If a pitcher is caught using metal spikes while on the rubber of a turf field, regardless of whether the mound has dirt, that pitcher will be removed from

the game and will not be allowed to pitch again for the remainder of that game.

The BBA is a **WOOD BAT ONLY** league. Only MLB-style, wood bats are allowed. Wood composite bats are allowed but must meet the BBCOR (Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution) standard and be properly marked with the BBCOR logo (ex. Baum Bats).

## **Schedule, Postponing a game and Forfeits**

1. Schedule: At the beginning of each season, teams must communicate any scheduling constraints, conflicts, or other team scheduling issues to the league office before the start of the season. This information is used to create the Season Schedule. The league makes its best efforts to accommodate team constraints. However, teams are expected to fulfill their schedule obligations without exception. If a team is unable to field a team for a game, they will suffer a forfeit.

2. Postponing a Game: The league may occasionally postpone games for various reasons, including but not limited to weather, field availability, and other unforeseen events or acts of nature that may prevent games from occurring. Once the schedule is posted on the league website, a team will forfeit their game if they are unable to field a team as scheduled.

The number of games played depends on field availability, weather conditions, and other unforeseen events or acts of nature that may prevent scheduled games from occurring. A regular season cutoff date will be established to ensure the postseason commences on schedule. If games cannot be rescheduled prior to playoffs, players will have had to appear in 50% of the games played, or rounded down. The eligibility of pitchers will be based on the number of games played.

*For example, if a team has played 19 games, a pitcher would only need to pitch 19 innings to be considered eligible for the playoffs. This ensures that pitchers have a fair opportunity to meet the eligibility criteria based on the number of games played by their team. Position players would need to appear in 9 games out of 19.*

## **Forfeits**

A forfeit will be declared a loss and negative two (-2) points will be assessed to the forfeiting team in the following circumstances:

- (i) If a team does not show up for a scheduled league game;
- (ii) If a team does not have a minimum of eight (8) or more rostered players at the start of the game;

- (iii) If a team is left with only seven (7) or fewer rostered players due to player ejection(s) or a player leaving the playing surface for reasons other than injury;
- (iv) If a forfeit occurs for any reason other than those mentioned above, such as player injury, the forfeiting team will receive a forfeit loss, but no point penalty will be imposed.

A team becomes ineligible for the playoffs if they forfeit two or more games during the season.

In the event of a forfeit, the winning team has the option to credit each member on their active roster with one game and any pitcher with four innings (with a limit of once per season per team). The winning team will be awarded 2 points in the standings for the win, and the forfeiture will have not count for any runs scored or runs against for the winning team. This will require updating the 400hitter. However, if the game is forfeited before the first pitch, the losing team will be unable to credit any member of their active roster with a game. If play has commenced, players appearing for the losing team will receive playoff credit.

Forfeited games will not be rescheduled.

**Exclusions:** Players who were serving a suspension or who were otherwise ineligible for the forfeited game at the time of the forfeiture decision 1) will not receive game credit toward their playoff eligibility requirement if they are on the winning team, and 2) the forfeited game will not count as a game served toward their suspension if they are on the forfeiting team.

The forfeiting team becomes responsible for paying the full umpire fees for both umpires.

## **Game Length**

All games will consist of 7 innings. In the event of darkness, light failure, curfew, weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances, a game will be considered complete if at least 4 innings have been played or if the home team has the lead after 3.5 complete innings.

If a game is tied after the 7 innings, additional innings will be played, subject to the curfew mentioned below.

During the regular season, no inning may start 2 hours and 45 minutes after the first pitch of the game. Depending on field availability and scheduling, this time limit will be assessed by the League Commissioner and any changes to the time limit will be communicated to the managers prior to the game and the

managers will discuss these time limits with the umpires prior to first pitch.

(a) If both teams agree, and there are no other teams waiting to use the field, games can be played beyond the curfew, provided there is no risk of darkness and with the consent of the umpire.

- A ghost runner will be placed at second base for the start of extra innings. The ghost runner must be the player who recorded the last batted out the previous inning, or that player's replacement.
- The ghost runner rule will apply only to the regular season; no ghost runners will be used in the postseason.

(b) The Mercy Rule will be in effect, declaring a game as final if a team maintains a 15-run lead after 4 innings, 12-run lead after 5 innings, or a 10-run lead after 6 innings. However, please note that this rule does not apply during the playoffs.

(c) All playoff games in the league will be played to completion. If a playoff game is shortened due to weather conditions, darkness, light failure, or curfew, it will be continued before the next scheduled game. Managers are expected to make their best efforts to keep the lineup intact when the game resumes.

(d) Pre-Game Warmups/Infield-Outfield:

Teams taking infield/outfield before a game should be respectful of the opposing team. Infield/outfield will begin 30 minutes before game time, with the home team going first for 10 minutes starting at the half hour mark, followed by the away team for 10 minutes starting 15 minutes before game time. All teams must be off the field 5 minutes before game time.

- There is absolutely **\*\*no hitting baseballs into backstops or any fences\*\*** at any field. This will not be permitted under any circumstances.

## Called Games

Games that are called due to inclement weather conditions, darkness, light failure, or curfew will be considered complete if the following conditions are met:

(a) At least four (4) innings have been completed.

(b) The home team has scored more runs in three (3) or three and a fraction (3+) half innings than the visiting team has scored in four (4) completed half innings.

(c) If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth inning to tie the score.

(d) If a regular season game is called while an inning is in progress after it has already met the requirements to be considered a completed regulation game, for reasons including but not limited to inclement weather, darkness, light failure, curfew, or other unforeseen circumstances, the official final score of the game shall revert to the score of the last fully completed inning. This rule ensures fairness and consistency, acknowledging the efforts of both teams up to the last inning that was completed in its entirety.

### **Suspended Games – Playoffs Only**

If a playoff game is suspended while an inning is in progress after it has already met the requirements to be considered a regulation game but before it is completed, the game is classified as a "Suspended Game."

The game will be rescheduled to resume at the point where the game was suspended and will be finished through a minimum of seven innings. This distinction ensures the playoff outcomes are determined by a full seven innings of play. Managers are expected to make their best efforts to keep the lineup intact when the game resumes.

### **Incomplete Games – Regular Season Only**

If a game is called before the conditions for a complete game are met (see definition above), then the game will be rescheduled. The score will revert back to 0-0 and the game will begin from the first inning. Attendance for playoff eligibility will not be counted for an incomplete game that needs to be rescheduled. Umpires will be paid a full fee for the incomplete game, and then full payment will be due for the umpires who are scheduled to officiate the rescheduled game.

### **Rainout/Poor Field Condition Notification**

(a) The manager of the home team must inform the League President, the opposing manager, and the umpire assignor(s) for the field, and the league office of any game cancellation due to field conditions at least 90 minutes before the scheduled game time.

(b) If the designated home team is playing at a field where the away team holds the permit, the designated home team still has the responsibility of coordinating the cancellation or postponement planning.

(c) Teams will have a two-week window to schedule a makeup game. After the two-week period, the League reserves the right to schedule the game at its discretion.

(d) If a postponement is necessary once the teams are at the field, the following

procedure must be followed: 1. The manager of the home team decides if the game should start. 2. Once the game has started, the umpires have the authority to call off the game due to inclement weather or poor field conditions.

(e) For night games in Boston, cancellations must be made by 4:30 PM on the day of the game. Failure to do so will result in the home team being charged the full permit fee. Fields such as Trum Field, Victory Field, Breed Field, and World Series Park are managed separately and the league is notified directly whether these fields are playable or if games must be postponed.

## **Starting a game, Mercy rule, Time limits and Time outs**

**Line-Up Card / Team Roster:** Prior to the start of each game, team managers must identify themselves to the Home Plate umpire. They are also required to submit their line-up cards to the Home Plate umpire and opposing manager, listing the full names and jersey numbers of all players in their lineup, including bench players. It is important to note that a player's name must appear on the official line-up card submitted to the umpires before the start of the game in order to be eligible to play. Players requiring a courtesy runner must be designated as such on the line-up card.

**Start Time:** A 15-minute grace period is allowed if the minimum number of players required to play an official game are not present by the scheduled start time. However, if the 15-minute grace period expires without the required number of players, the game will be ruled a forfeit.

**Eight Batter Rule:** For an official game, teams must have a minimum of 8 batters. In the case where a team has only 8 batters, the ninth batter slot in the batting order will result in an automatic out each time it appears.

**Time Limits:** Except for post-season and championship games, all games are subject to a time limit. No new inning shall be started if 2 hours and 45 minutes have elapsed. Ties are permitted for regular season games only; no ties are permitted for post-season games.

**Reporting Final Scores:** The winning manager is required to report the final scores immediately after each game. Managers should send the score in the managers' group chat on WhatsApp.

- (a) Accompanying the score should be a picture of the scorebook for both the winning and losing team.
- (b) Stats from the game must be entered into 400Hitter no later than 48 hours after the game's completion. Failure to do so may result in the loss of playoff eligibility for all players involved in that game.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the winning manager to write the game summary on 400Hitter. However, if the winning team does not provide a summary, the losing team has the option to enter one.

**Time Outs:** Each manager is entitled to one free trip to the mound per inning. However, if a second trip is made during the same inning, the current pitcher must be removed from the mound.

### **Moving games**

The BBA does not allow non-weather game moves.

### **Umpire Fees**

Umpire fees are \$95 per game per team.

### **Payment Conditions**

(a) Home team is responsible for paying the home plate umpire, the away team shall pay the base umpire.

(b) Umpire fees are to be paid IN CASH prior to the start of the game. The league reimburses managers for the umpire fees.

(c) If there is only one umpire who shows up for a game, they are to be paid 1 1/2 fee (\$150 for 7 innings). Teams should notify the Umpire-In-Chief and the league commissioner if only one umpire shows up.

(d) Once an umpire shows up at the field within 60 minutes of game time, they must be paid, even if the game is called before a single pitch is thrown.

(e) If the game is postponed by rain or field conditions within 60 minutes of game time, each umpire is due a 1/2 fee.

(f) Umpires are due fees for forfeits. Please see the rule above on forfeits for the schedule of fees due.

(g) In the event a playoff game is suspended and requires up to 4 full innings to complete, the umpires shall be paid \$15 per inning needed. If more than 4 innings are needed, a full fee will be paid to each umpire.

### **Lineups and Courtesy Runners**

Managers have the option to designate two (2) courtesy runners for each game. Prior to the first pitch, managers must inform both the Home Plate Umpire and the opposing manager about the name and number of any player who will be using a courtesy runner during the game. Once a player is designated as having a courtesy runner, they must be replaced by a courtesy runner for the entire game. The courtesy runner will be the player who made the "last batted out." A "batted out" refers to a player who made an out while at the plate (excluding a runner forced at second base). If there is no previous batted out available to act

as a courtesy runner, such as in the first inning, the manager shall use the last batter in their lineup. There is also a mandatory catcher speed-up rule, which requires the catcher to be replaced by a courtesy runner when there are two outs.

Each team must have a minimum of 9 (nine) batters in their lineup, but they can choose to have additional players listed as Extra Hitters from their official roster. Once the lineup has been expanded, it cannot be reduced without incurring an automatic out. Teams can add batters to the end of their lineup at any time during the game, as long as these players have not yet been part of the batting lineup. Managers may also choose to use the A/B alternating batters scheme.

### **Alternating batters**

An A/B batting system can be used for any batting position desired. The “A” hitter bats during the first time through the lineup, and the “B” hitter bats the second time through the order, continuing in alternating fashion until the game is complete. Once a team declares the use of this A/B system, it must continue using it for the remainder of the game in the batting slots for which it was designated. Hitters in an A/B position may be pinch hit for, just as any other player. A/B slots may only be added on the initial lineup card. Additional batters can be added to the lineup as A/ B or single hitters.

### **Designated Hitter**

A team may use one (1) Designated Hitter to hit for a pitcher consistent with Major League Baseball rules. Alternatively, a team may use one (1) Designated Hitter to hit in the place of ANY positioned player (not just a pitcher). The Designated Hitter is lost if the pitcher/designated position player switches positions.

*If a team is forced to bat with only eight players for any reason during a game, they will receive an automatic out each time the ninth unoccupied slot in the batting order comes up. However, if an eligible ninth player arrives late, they can be inserted into the ninth unoccupied slot in the batting order and the automatic out will be removed.*

*In the event of a player ejection that reduces the team to eight (8) players, the team can continue to play. However, an automatic out will be recorded each time the ejected player's spot comes up in the lineup.*

### **Defensive Lineups**

With the exception of pitcher, teams are permitted to rotate any and all players defensively at any time and repeatedly without affecting the batting lineup. Pitchers are subject to normal MLB rules with the exception of the Pitcher Re-Entry Rule.

## **Pitchers**

If the starting pitcher is removed from the game, the starting pitcher may return to the pitching position only once during the remainder of the game whether they leave the playing surface or not. Only the starting pitcher may return to the pitching position; no subsequent pitchers may assume the pitching position once they are removed. The starting pitcher may not return to the mound until at least three outs have been recorded or the inning has ended after his departure.

Wearing white or gray pitching sleeves, batting gloves, wrist bands, and sunglasses are not permitted for pitchers.

Each pitcher is entitled to a maximum of eight (8) warm up pitches prior to the start of the game, and five (5) warm-up pitches at the start of each inning. The only exceptions to this rule are if the pitcher is new and did not throw at least one pitch during the previous inning, in which case he is entitled to eight (8), or an injury to the previous pitcher, in which case the new pitcher is granted a reasonable warm up period by the Home Plate umpire.

## **Playoff Eligibility**

To be eligible for the post-season, players must meet certain criteria. They must have participated in at least 50% of the regular season games (10 games) or pitched a minimum of 20 innings with the same team. To document a player's eligibility, score sheets and online stats are required. To receive credit for a game played, a player must have had a plate appearance, pinch ran, played defense for an inning, pitched a complete inning, or pitched to at least one batter if they recorded the final out of an inning. These requirements ensure fair and accurate assessment of player eligibility for the post-season.

## **Playoffs and Tiebreakers:**

Final league standings will be determined using the following point system:

- 2 points will be awarded for a win
- 1 point will be awarded for a tie
- 2 points will be deducted for a forfeit

## **Tiebreakers**

- (a) Seeding will be determined by the number of total points each team earned throughout the regular season if all regular season games are played, or by winning percentage if teams have not played the same number of games.
- (b) If teams are tied at the end of the regular season – either by point or by

winning percentage, then head-to-head results between the tied teams will become the tiebreaker.

- (c) If a tie still remains, then each team's run differential (runs scored minus runs against) will become the tiebreaker.
- (d) If still there remains a tie, then a coin flip will serve as the tiebreaker

*Games that have been previously cancelled and not rescheduled will not earn points for either team. If teams end the season with a different number of games played, the seeding will be determined based on winning percentages. If all teams have played the same number of games, the seeding will be based on the point system.*

### **Team Playoff Qualification**

- (a) A total of 6 teams will qualify for the playoffs based on their highest point total or winning percentage.
- (b) The No. 5 seed will host the No. 6 seed in a one-game playoff. The winner is then hosted by the No. 4 seed for a one-game playoff. The winner advances to the semifinals to be hosted by the No. 1 seed.
- (c) The semi-final round is a best-of-three series. The No. 1 seed will face the winner of the second play-in game. The No. 2 seed will face the No. 3 seed, and finals best-of-three format. The higher-ranked seed will be the home team for Games 1 and 3.
- (d) The finals will be a best-of-five series against the two semifinals winners. The higher-ranked seed will be the home team for Games 1, 3, and 5.

### **Dugouts**

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO OR OTHER CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED on school premises and/or at the baseball field/dugout.

Only rostered players, managers and scorekeepers are permitted in the dugout area. Violation of these rules may result in forfeit of said game. League insurance does not allow for family members, friends and pets to be present in the dugout area. Please avoid this practice at all times.

### **Player Behavior**

The BBA has established a Player Code of Conduct to uphold sportsmanship and player conduct. Infractions will be assessed by the President and leadership team and may result in penalties or disciplinary actions including suspension and up to expulsion. Managers are responsible for ensuring all rostered players comply with the Player Code of Conduct and all players are responsible for their

behavior and the behaviors of their family, friends and other supporters present for league games.

### **Ejections/Discipline**

If a player is ejected from a game, they will receive an automatic 1-game suspension. They may also face additional disciplinary measures after evaluation by the leadership team.

Please note that this rule does not apply to players who are acting in a managerial capacity. However, any ejection will be reviewed by the Leadership team for evaluation.