

VICTORIAN SUMMER
BASEBALL LEAGUE SENIOR
AND MASTERS PLAYING
CONDITIONS 2025/2026

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1 Governance

These Summer League Playing Conditions are made as Regulations pursuant to Rule 34.1 of the Baseball Victoria Constitution Rules (“Rules”). A recommendation for amendment to these Summer League Playing Conditions must be supported when required by the majority of the Victorian Summer Baseball League Pennant Committee, in accordance with Baseball Victoria By-Law 5.

At all times rules contained in these documents take precedence over any contradiction with the Official Rules. Whilst every effort to ensure these Local Playing Rules and Conditions are correct, due to the complexity of the Official Rules there may be some omissions within these Local Playing Rules and Conditions of rules which obviously, either for practical, commercial or the professional nature of Major League Baseball, do not apply. Baseball Victoria reserves the right to apply interpretations to these rules in situations where they require clarification.

All Baseball Victoria registered players, coaches, officials and parents of registered players remain bound by the rules of Baseball Victoria, including these playing conditions, Baseball Victoria By-laws, policies and procedures and Codes of Conduct.

2 Definitions and Interpretations

In these Playing Conditions, unless contrary intention appears:

“Active Lineup” means the nine (9) players currently occupying defensive positions on the field for a team at any given time, including the designated hitter (DH) if used. It does not include players on the bench, those who have been substituted out, or any eligible but inactive players.

“Association” means Baseball Victoria Incorporated (ABN 78 603 120 057)

“Board” means the Board of Directors of the Association

“Club” means an Incorporated Club responsible for the administration of a baseball Club participating in a League

“Defunct Club” means a Club that has been declared ‘defunct’ by the Association

“Defunct League” means a League that has been declared ‘defunct’ by the Association because it has not administered a League for ‘three (3) consecutive seasons’.

“Division” means a competition comprising Regular Season games and Play-offs between baseball clubs that are members of the Association.

“Recessed Club” means a club that has been declared ‘recessed’ by the Association.

“Recessed League” means a League organised by the Association that has been declared ‘recessed’ by the Association because it has not administered a competition for a period of ‘two (2) consecutive seasons’ after the last competition administered by the Association.

“Summer League Committee” means the “Victorian Summer Baseball League Pennant Committee” (VSBLPC) appointed by the Association responsible for the development of these Playing Conditions.

“Competition Coordinator” means the person appointed by the Association for the management of the Summer League via the interpretation and implementation of these Playing Conditions.

“Regular Season” means games played to determine if a team qualifies for the Play-offs

“Round” is defined as the collection of matches scheduled across a single weekend, specifically encompassing games played on both Saturday and Sunday. Any matches held on weekdays, outside of this weekend period, are classified as part of a separate round

“Play-offs” means games played to determine the winner of the Season.

“VSBL” means the Victorian Summer Baseball League

“VSWBL” means the Victorian Summer Women’s Baseball League

“VSJBL” means the Victorian Summer Junior Baseball League

In these Playing Conditions a reference to a **“Rule of Baseball”** shall mean a reference to the **“Official Rules of Baseball”** as defined in By-Law 4a.

In these Playing Conditions a reference to a **“By-Law”** shall mean a reference to the By-Laws of the Association

3 Scheduling and Venues

Team Nominations for Divisions

- **Deadline:** Clubs must nominate teams for the VSBL divisions they are qualified to enter by **31 July** prior to the scheduled commencement of the Regular Season.
- **Late Nominations:** The **Competition Coordinator** may consider nominations received after the deadline at their discretion.
- **No club** may enter **more than 1 team** in each of the **Premier 1 and Premier 1** reserves divisions.

Clubs with More Than Four Teams

- **Second Field Confirmation:** If a club has more than **four teams**, they must confirm access to and availability of a second field (as per By-Law 12) with **Baseball Victoria** by **31 July**. If a second diamond is unavailable, the competition coordinator retains the authority to schedule games accordingly.

Fixture Creation and Approval

- **Regular Season Fixtures:** The **Competition Coordinator** will determine the fixture for the Regular Season for all VSBL Senior divisions
 - **Premier 1**
 - **Premier 1 reserves**
 - **Premier 2**
 - **Premier 2 reserves**
 - **State league**
 - **Regional competitions**
 - **Masters**

Publication of Fixtures

- **Online Publication:** The approved VSBL Fixtures will be published on the **Baseball Victoria Website**.
- **Fixture Amendments:** The **Competition Coordinator** may amend the fixture as necessary during the Regular Season.

Notification of Fixture Changes

- If the **Competition Coordinator** amends the fixture:
 - **Online Update:** The online fixture will be updated.
 - **Notifications: Presidents and Secretaries** of affected clubs and officials will be notified as soon as possible.

- **Website Updates:** All fixture changes will be posted on the **Baseball Victoria Website** as a list of changes.
- **Memorandum Communication:** Changes will also be communicated via the **Baseball Victoria Memorandum**, which is sent each **Thursday** (or another agreed-upon day each week).

Alterations to Fixtured Games

- **Mutual Agreement:** For fixtured games to be altered, **both clubs must mutually agree in writing.**
- **Approval Process:** After agreement, the proposed changes must be submitted to the **Competition Coordinator** for approval.

Default Day of play and Time

Saturday

- **Premier 1, Premier 2 – 4:00pm**
- **Premier 1 Reserves, Premier 2 Reserves – 1:30pm**

Sunday

- **State League 2 & 4, Regional – 1:30pm**
- **State League 1 & 3, Regional – 4:00pm**

Monday

- **Masters – 6:15pm**

Tuesday

- **Premier 1 Midweek – 6:15pm**

Thursday

- **Premier 2 Midweek – 6:15pm**

Season Duration

- **Regular Season Start:** The Summer League regular season fixture will commence **no earlier than the last weekend of September.**
- **Play-offs Conclusion:** The Summer League play-offs will conclude **by the end of March.**
- **For Premier 1 and Premier 2,** the regular season will consist **of a minimum of 22 games**
- **For all other senior divisions,** the regular season will consist of a **minimum of 18 games**
- The Competition Coordinator may alter the number of games if required due to extenuating circumstances.

Christmas/New Year Schedule Blackout

- **Game Restrictions:** Summer League competitions shall **not fixture any games later in the year than December 23.**
- **Blackout Period:** The blackout period will consist of a **minimum of 3 weeks** subject to the discretion of the Competition Coordinator.

Extreme Weather

Extreme Weather

For all games affected by extreme weather, rain or heat, refer to By-Law 24.

- **Lightening:**
 - Those associated with Baseball Victoria and its activities should note that the risk of injury from lightning is real, especially for people playing outdoor sports such as baseball.
 - On game day, the Umpires have the responsibility to decide when it is safe to play baseball, giving consideration to the risk of injury from lightning.
 - During practice, the Club Coach is responsible for deciding when it is safe to be practicing. In the absence of the Club Coach, the highest ranking present member of the Club Committee is responsible.
 - Players, officials and guests must take shelter in the club rooms or their cars while play is suspended. The dugouts do not provide appropriate protection.
 - Play must not be resumed until it is safe to do in the opinion of the Umpires (on game day) or the Club Coach (during practice).
 - Delays to play caused by lightning risk will be considered to be a weather delay in deciding the outcome of a game.

Rescheduling of Games

Regular season games incomplete or not played due to adverse weather, forfeit, or other unsuitable playing conditions will not be rescheduled.

Melbourne Aces and National Championships

From time to time, Baseball Victoria or the Competition Coordinator may require fixture changes to avoid clashes with the Melbourne Aces or National Championships. Changes will be communicated via the Baseball Victoria website and directly to the affected Presidents, Secretaries, and Officials.

Umpires and Scorers

Umpires are the appointed officials for the game. It is their responsibility to ensure the game is conducted in a fair manner that complies with all rules and regulations.

If no official Umpire is appointed or if the appointed Umpire is late, the HOME team must supply the Plate Umpire and the AWAY team must supply a Base Umpire. The team/s will be fined, as per Schedule 1, should they not provide an umpire.

Both teams must supply a scorer, who must be seated together behind the back net. Should a team not provide a scorer, or the scorer is late, the offending club will be fined as per Schedule 1.

Any breach to this rule must be noted on the Match report sheet prior to being received by the Competition Coordinator.

4 Ground Conditions

Minimum Standards of grounds

The host club of all Summer League games is to provide grounds and ground equipment that meets the following minimum requirements:

- Premier 1 and Reserves, Premier 2 and Reserves must meet all requirements stated in the Rules of Baseball - 2.01, 2.02, 2.03, 2.04, 2.05

DIVISION	FULLY ENCLOSED	SEMI ENCLOSED	MOUND	COVERED DUGOUT	COVERED SCORERS	CLUB ROOMS
Premier 1 & Premier 1 Reserves		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Premier 2 & Premier 2 Reserves						
Other Senior		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Additional requirements

All other Senior Divisions, the following exceptions can be made to Rules of Baseball - 2.01, 2.02, 2.03, 2.04, 2.05:

The playing area shall be enclosed, if possible. On all grounds that are not enclosed, a net at least 30 feet wide by 9 feet high shall be located directly behind the plate at the distance specified in By-law 12 (Passed Ball Line).

Each dugout/bench shall also be fronted by protective netting, covered with a roof where possible and have seating. Lines shall be marked parallel with the respective base lines at the Passed Ball Line distance specified in By-law 12. Other distances must be approved by Baseball Victoria. Conditions to be established by the Managers with the Umpire before the game.

Applicable to Premier 1, Premier 1 Reserves, Premier 2 and Premier 2 Reserves only: A secured mat covering the front of the pitching mound may be used but cannot extend further than 45cm from the front of the pitching rubber.

If a home run fence is not provided, home run limits shall be defined by locating witches' hats; no discs or metal plates permitted. The minimum home run limits are noted within By-Law 12. Other distances must be approved by Baseball Victoria.

All benches/dugouts constructed within a permanent baseball field require protection or screening to protect players from the field of play and weather. Any breaches of 20 to be reported on the match sheet and supplied to BV.

Lighting Standards

See Baseball Victoria By-Laws 12(c) for lighting standards.

5 Eligibility and Participation

Registration of players

All players must be registered as per By-Law 29

Non – National Players Regulations

5.1 Definition of a Non-National Player

- A player will be considered **non-national** if they are not one of the following:
 - **An Australian Citizen or Australian Permanent Resident.**
 - **A New Zealand Citizen**
 - Have not continuously resided in Australia for the nine (9) months immediately prior to the commencement of the season in which a Club wishes to register them as a player
 - Under the **age of 18** at the start of the **current season**

5.2 Club Responsibilities

- **Immigration and Contractual Matters:**
 - Baseball Victoria is not responsible for:
 - Ensuring a non-national player's entry into Australia, including visa requirements or permissions.
 - Any obligations or expectations agreed upon in contractual arrangements between the Club and the player. This is solely the Club's responsibility.

5.3 Non-National Player Registration Requirements

- **Nomination of non-nationals:**
 - Clubs **must**:
 - The Club **must** properly identify and declare all non-national players during the registration process to the competitions coordinator.
 - Any non-national player registered after the **15th of November** **cannot** participate in the following divisions:
 - **VSBL Premier 1 division**
 - **VSBL Premier 2 division**

5.4 Non-National Change of Status

Clubs may request a 'non-national' player be granted permanent 'national' status if the playing in question meets **one of** the following:

- Has continuously resided in Australia for the nine (9) months immediately prior to the commencement of the season in which a Club wishes to register them as a player.
- **VSBL Participation:** Has competed in at least **6 games** in **each** of the **last 3 consecutive VSBL seasons**.

- **Recognised Interstate League participation:** Has competed in at least **1 game** in the **last 5 consecutive seasons** of any recognised amateur baseball competitions within Australia. The following leagues are recognised:
 - Any summer league within the jurisdiction of Baseball NSW
 - Any summer league within the jurisdiction of Baseball QLD
 - Any summer league within the jurisdiction of Baseball SA
 - Any summer league within the jurisdiction of Baseball WA
 - Any summer league within the jurisdiction of Baseball ACT
- **Interstate + VSBL combination:** Alternatively, a player will also qualify if they have participated in consecutive summer seasons as follows:
 - Participated in **4 consecutive seasons** in any recognised interstate league, followed by at least **6 games** in the **next consecutive VSBL season**; or
 - Participated in **3 consecutive seasons** in any recognised interstate league, followed by at least **6 games** in each of the **next 2 consecutive VSBL season**.
- Has at any time participated in a **Victorian Summer Junior Baseball League (VSJBL)** regular season game (Big League is excluded).

5.4.1 Approval of change of status

The nomination for a change of status must be submitted to the **Competition Coordinator** and approved **before the player is eligible to play as a 'national'**.

- If the player participates in a game prior to receiving written approval from the Competition Coordinator, then they shall be deemed a 'non-national' player, and are not eligible to have this status changed until completion of the current season (inclusive of play-offs).

5.5 Recognition of National Status in Separate Leagues

If a player becomes officially recognized as a national in one league, that recognition only applies to that league. It does not carry over to any other leagues, and the player must meet separate requirements if they want to be recognized in a different league.

5.6 Monitoring and Evidence Requirements

- **Verification:**
 - The **Competition Coordinator** has the authority to:
 - Investigate any player suspected of being a non-national but not declared by their Club.
 - Request evidence, such as proof of residency or citizenship status, which Clubs are required to provide promptly.
 - Evidence may include:
 - Passport copies
 - Residency permits
 - Visa documentation
 - Other supporting materials deemed necessary by the Competition Coordinator

5.7 Penalties for Non-Compliance

- Clubs that fail to comply with the non-national player regulations will face:
 - **Forfeiture of any game** in which the violation occurred.
 - Fines for fielding an “Illegal Player,” as outlined in **Schedule 1**.

5.8 Clearance and Free Agent Rules

- **Clearance Requirements:**
 - All non-national players are subject to the **clearance provisions** outlined in the Playing Conditions.

Two or more teams from the same club in the same divisions

Clubs are required to nominate a core group of seven (7) players to the Competition Coordinator and nominate which team the core group will play. The core group of seven players and the team in which they play will be classed as “Team A”. The players in the core group will not be allowed to alternate between the teams during the Regular Season and Play-offs (i.e. they can only play for the one team within that division).

For every third and subsequent team a club enters, a further seven (7) core players are required to be submitted to the Competition Coordinator. The remaining players that are not in the core group can alternate between the two teams for the duration of the Regular Season.

Two games / One round

5.9 Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions

In a Premier 1 or Premier 2 division game no more than **two** players from a **prior lower division game** are allowed to **enter** the game at any point **earlier than the end of the second innings**, including the start.

5.10 For all other divisions

- Any player who participates in any other division’s game can only participate in another game later that round provided the player
 - does not enter the game prior to the end of the second innings
 - The player is participating in a higher division’s game than the initial division played in earlier.
- In these divisions, three (3) players may enter the game at any point earlier than the second innings, including the start.

5.11 Special provisions for Two games/One round participation

Additionally, a player cannot pitch in two games in one round within a league.

Participation in each game shall count as a game played for each section for finals eligibility.

Contravention of this Playing Condition 5.4 shall result in forfeiture of the second game. The Competition Coordinator shall impose a “Forfeiture” fine on the offending club as per Schedule 1.

5.12 Juniors playing seniors

A junior player is eligible to participate in any VSBL division once they have reached the age of 14 years.

A Junior playing in Seniors participates under the rules of that competition except in the following instances:

- The pitching restrictions prescribed in the By-law 18 applies to juniors pitching in all senior competitions.
- The restrictions prescribed in By-law 18 applies to juniors who have pitched or caught in a junior game on the same day.

Contravention of this Playing Condition shall result in “Forfeiture” of the game. The Competition Coordinator shall impose a “Forfeiture” fine on the offending club as per Schedule 1.

5.13 Participation in Masters division

The minimum age to participate in a masters division is prescribed below

- **Masters 38 division 1 and Masters division 2**
 - Minimum age of 38 years
- **Masters 45**
 - Minimum age of 45 years

Additionally, a maximum of two (2) players per team of a minimum age of 43 shall be permitted to participate in Masters 45. No written permission is needed for these players to participate.

6 Game Regulations and Format

6.1 Game Start

Games will start at the times stated in the fixture or Playing Conditions, provided the Umpire deems the field fit for play.

To call a game due to conditions, the Umpire must be present at the scheduled start time.

The Competition Coordinator can call a game before play begins due to conditions or weather.

Baseball Rules 4.04 and 4.05 apply.

A game begins when the Umpire enters the field as per Baseball Rule 4.03(e). Improper conduct may be reported up to one hour after the match.

6.2 Game duration

The duration of Seniors divisions regular season games are as follows:

6.3 Premier 1 & 2 division:

- **Weekend game**
 - Games will consist of **9 innings** with a **3-hour time limit**.
 - If the time limit is reached, no new full inning can start, but the current inning will be completed.
 - A game is considered **legal** if at least **5 innings** are played.
- **Mid week game**
 - Games will consist of **9 innings** but have a **2-hour time limit**.
 - **The 5-minute rule** applies.
 - A game is **legal** if at least **5 innings** or **65 minutes of play** have occurred

6.4 Masters division:

- Games shall be **7 innings** or **1 ¾ hours**,
- **The 5 minute rule** applies
- A game is considered legal if at least **4 innings** or **65 minutes of play** have occurred.

6.5 All Other divisions:

- These games consist of **7 innings** with a **2-hour time limit**.
- **The 5-minute rule** applies.
- A game is considered legal if at least **4 innings** or **65 minutes of play** have occurred.

6.6 Late Start and Forfeiture

Where a team has less than seven players present at the scheduled start time for a game, the commencement of the game shall be deferred for a maximum of ten (10) minutes.

If sufficient players arrive for the team to field seven players within ten minutes from the scheduled start time, play will commence immediately and may continue whenever there are at least seven players. The Umpire shall record the late start and the team that caused the late start on the Match Report Sheet. The Competition Coordinator shall impose a "Late Start" fine on the defaulting team, as per Schedule 1.

If, at ten (10) minutes after the scheduled start time, the defaulting team is unable to field seven (7) players, the opposing team shall be awarded a win for the game by forfeit. The Umpire shall record the win as a forfeit to the opposing team on the Match "Forfeiture" fine on the defaulting team, as per Schedule 1, and a score of 0-9. The cost of umpire fees will be paid by the defaulting club.

If neither team is able to field seven players within ten minutes from the scheduled start time, both teams will be awarded a loss and the score of 0-9. The Umpire shall record the losses on the Match Report Sheet. The Competition Coordinator shall impose a "Forfeiture" fine on both teams. The cost of the umpire fees shall be shared between the defaulting teams.

When a game is forfeited the names of the players in attendance from the defaulting team(s) must be recorded in the Match Report Sheet. The non-defaulting team must record a minimum of seven players and a maximum of nine, of the players in attendance.

Players recorded on the Match Report Sheet under this Playing Condition may not play in another game in that round, except under the Two Games/One Round Rule as stipulated in these Playing Conditions.

Where a team forfeits after midnight two days prior to their scheduled match, the Competition Coordinator shall impose a "Forfeiture of Game" fine on the defaulting team, as outlined in Schedule 1.

All forfeits must be in writing.

6.7 Ending of a game

6.8 Five-Minute Rule

If, at the completion of an even inning, there are more than five minutes before the scheduled completion time, a further complete inning shall be played.

- **Home Team At-Bat**

If it is five minutes before the scheduled time of completion and the home team is at bat:

- Ahead: The game ceases immediately.
- Tied or Behind: The game continues until the winning run is scored or the side is retired.
- If five minutes or less remains at the completion of a completed inning, the game shall end.
- If the home team cannot tie or win due to a maximum number of runs per inning rule, the game ceases immediately.

- If the visiting team has batted in the top of an inning but the home team has not yet batted, and time expires:
 - The game may revert to the last completed inning for a fair result unless the home team is already ahead (in which case the score at the time may stand).

6.9 Extra Innings Procedure

When Extra Innings Begin

- Extra innings are implemented if the game remains tied after completing:
 - **9 innings** for scheduled 9-inning games **and time remains**, or
 - **7 innings** for scheduled 7-inning games, **and time remains**.
- The **visiting team** hitting in the **top of the inning** and the **home team** hitting in the **bottom of the inning** will remain in effect until **a winner is determined**.

Starting Each Extra Inning

Player Positions:

- Each team starts the 10th or 8th inning (and any subsequent necessary extra innings) with **players on first and second base** and **no outs**.

Runner Placement:

- **Second Base:** The second-last batter from the preceding inning.
- **First Base:** The last batter from the preceding inning.

Example:

- ***If the #5 hitter is up next to bat:***
 - *The #3 hitter is placed on **second base**.*
 - *The #4 hitter is placed on **first base**.*

Pinch Runner Rules

Teams may use pinch runners at the start of an inning, but:

- Pinch runners replace the existing batters/players permanently for the rest of the game.

Runner Statistics

Plate Appearance (PA) and Time at Bat (AB):

- Runners starting on **first** or **second base** in a tie-breaker inning are **not credited** with PA or AB.

Unearned Runs:

- Any run scored by players initially placed on first or second base is always recorded as **unearned**.

6.10 Mercy Rule

For Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions

- If after **five (5) innings**, (four and a half innings if the home team is ahead), if one team has a **lead of fifteen (15) runs or more**, the **manager of the team** with the least runs **may concede** the victory to the opponent. If **the visiting team** has a **lead of fifteen (15)** or more respectively, the **home team must bat in its half of the inning**.
- If a team is **leading by ten (10) runs** or more after **seven (7) completed innings** in a game scheduled for **nine (9) innings** (including games with a time limit), the game shall be '**Called**'.
- If the **home team is or becomes ten (10) or more runs** ahead in a game scheduled for **nine (9) innings** (including games with a time limit), the bottom half of the seventh (7th) innings and subsequent innings shall not be played or completed.
- If a game is ended under this Playing Condition, the game ending provisions of Rules of Baseball 5.08 and 7.01 apply.

For all other divisions

- If a team is leading by ten (10) runs or more after five (5) completed innings in a game scheduled for seven (7) innings (including games with a time limit), the game shall be '**Called**'.
- If the home team is or becomes ten (10) or more runs ahead in a game scheduled for seven (7) innings (including games with a time limit), the bottom half of the fifth (5th) innings and subsequent innings shall not be played or completed.
- If a game is ended under this Playing Condition, the game ending provisions of Rules of Baseball 5.08 and 7.01 apply.

6.11 Pre-Match Warm-Up

Away Team Warm-Up

The Away team may use the diamond for a maximum of 7 minutes, 20 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.

Home Team Warm-Up

The Home team may use the diamond for a maximum of 7 minutes, 12 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.

Vacating the Diamond

5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time, the diamond must be vacated. Coaches from both teams will meet with the Umpires at home plate to determine ground rules, playing conditions, and exchange team line-ups.

Warm Up Pitches

Limits on Warm Up Pitches – Unless a pitcher enters a game to replace a pitcher who has been injured or ejected, they shall be permitted a maximum of 90 seconds including a minimum of five (5) warm up pitches. This same time limit shall apply to pitchers warming up prior to the start of each inning. Should either team take longer than 90 seconds to make the changeover between innings, penalties will be invoked as per:

- On the first occasion, the team Manager will be given a warning by the Plate Umpire.
- Any further transgressions shall result in a called strike (if it is the batting team that offends) or a called ball (if it is the pitching team which offends).

The 90 second time limit commences immediately the third out of the previous inning is completed.

The active pitcher will be permitted to warm up prior to taking the mound by throwing in foul territory but beyond the 1st and 3rd base areas toward the outfield.

Umpires should use discretion to prevent conflict when applying this rule.

6.12 Number of participants eligible to sit on the bench

Bench Participant Limits

- Maximum of **24 participants** allowed on the bench during a game, including:
 - **Managers, coaches, and players** in the starting line-up.
- Excludes bat boys/girls who are **13 years or younger** (must wear a 2-eared helmet at all times).

Eligibility to occupy the bench

Participants must:

- Wear their **team's uniform** or **acceptable attire** as outlined in 8.3 of these Playing Conditions.

Executives, Non-Coaching Team Managers, and Trainers:

- May enter the bench area to perform their duties but must leave once their tasks are complete.
- They do not need to wear the team uniform or be listed on the line-up sheet.

Player Substitutions

- Players **not on the line-up sheet** can be substituted into the game if:
 - The manager informs the umpire that the substitute is not listed on the line up sheet.
 - The manager notifies the umpire of a player to be removed from the line-up sheet, with the player then required to be removed from the bench area for the remainder of the game, unless subsequently substituted into the game.

Violations

- If a participant violates these rules, the umpire will:
 - The umpire shall order the offender from the bench area.
 - The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

- Non-playing participants removed to the clubhouse may only return during inning breaks for role-related duties and must have umpire permission.

6.13 Extended Line-Up – Up to 14 Batters

This rule does not apply to Premier 1 and Reserves, Premier 2 and Reserves divisions

A team may play with an extended line-up of up to 14 players, including a DH.

Masters divisions may play with an extended line up of unlimited players, including a DH.

To invoke the extended line-up, all players must be nominated on the line-up card submitted to the umpire before the game begins. All batters in the extended line-up must take their allotted at-bats in the order as per the line-up card. If a player does not take their at-bat, they are removed from the game and from the batting line-up and can no longer participate in the game. All other subsequent batters will move to the next batting position.

If a DH is being used, the Pitcher can bat for themselves and take the position in the batting order of a player removed from the game. The former DH can stay in the game and continue to bat in the same position he has occupied in the order. If a team has invoked the extended line up rule, players nominated on the extended line up can change fielding positions at any time during the game. There are no requirements for a player to play in the field at any time during the game.

6.14 Interchange rule

This rule is only applicable to Masters divisions.

Players may be substituted and re-enter provided that the replacement player completed one innings in the field, and one turn at bat if the team is not batting all available players, before being substituted.

6.15 Courtesy Fielders and Blanks

- Courtesy fielders are not allowed in Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions.
- Courtesy fielders are allowed in all other divisions.
- Courtesy fielders shall not be listed on the line-up sheet and cannot take the place of a blank in the batting line-up.
- Blanks count as an out only in Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions.

6.16 Visits to the Pitcher by a Coach or Manager

- **Visits Rule**

Rule of Baseball 5.10(L) applies to all senior regular season and play-off games, with the following exception:

A coach may make one visit to the pitcher in any one (1) inning. A second trip to the same pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal from the position of pitcher for the remainder of the game, but the player may otherwise remain in the game

6.17 3 Batter Minimum

Rule of Baseball 5.10(g) does not apply to any VSBL competitions.

6.18 Time Wasting

Umpires must take necessary actions to prevent wasting of time and deliberate time wasting as per Rule of Baseball 7.03. The umpire may "call" a game in extreme cases and "forfeit" the offending team. All incidents will be recorded on the Match Report Sheet for consideration of action by the Competition Coordinator.

6.19 Run Rule

This rule does not apply to Premier 1 and Reserves, Premier 2 and Reserves divisions

For all regular season games the scoring of the 7th run will end the innings: only 7 runs may be counted in any innings.

6.20 Speed up rule

This rule applies to all VSBL competitions. Its use in games is **compulsory for Premier 1 and Premier 2 games with a 2-hour time limit** but **optional for all other Senior divisions**.

A Substitute Runner (SR) shall be used for both the pitcher and catcher when they reach base. The SR must be a bench player or a player who has already been substituted out of the game. If the team has only nine players available, the SR shall be the player who was most recently retired (made out). The current Designated Hitter (DH) is not permitted to act as the SR.

If there is none or one out it is optional to use a substitute runner for the pitcher or catcher when they reach base. If there is two out, then it is mandatory that the pitcher and catcher be replaced with a substitute runner when they reach base. If after reaching base the pitcher or catcher is not to continue in the role as the pitcher or catcher, then the substitution is to be advised to the umpire and that a substitute runner is not required

6.21 Substitute runner for Masters

The following rule only applies to Master divisions

A runner who replaces a player who is injured or unable to run will not be permitted to steal bases. A Substitute runner may be used in any game provided the opposing team manager and Umpire are advised before the game. Any substitute runner replacing the Pitcher or Catcher may only steal on the last out

The substitute runner must be the following:

- The first Substitute runner must be the batter, (or substitute batter), immediately preceding the batter who leads off the inning.
- The second substitute runner must be the batter, (or substitute batter) preceding the first substitute runner used
- The third and subsequent runner must be the batter, (or substitute batter) preceding the second and subsequent runner used.

6.22 Designated Pitcher Rule

The following rule only applies to Premier 1 & 2 divisions

Clubs are to nominate their two (2) top pitchers to the Competition Coordinator for approval. These players cannot be utilised as a Designated Pitcher throughout the season.

A designated pitcher must be:

- Australian (not a 'non-national'), as per playing condition 5.2
- Under the age of 30 years old at the start of the season
- Not considered one of the top two (2) pitchers within the Club

The DP is required to be the starting pitcher and only pitch in the Reserves game and then must start the Firsts game on the same day in a position other than pitcher. The use of the DP must be declared to the Umpire before the start of both games.

In the Reserves game, a DH must be used for the DP.

If the DP plays in the Reserves game in a position other than as a pitcher, the DP becomes a normal player and may not participate in the Firsts game on the same day except by the provisions of the Playing Conditions 5.4.

Any DP used in the Reserves game shall be marked as "DP" on the Line- up Sheet and the Match Report Sheet and all pitchers used in the Firsts game shall be marked as "P". Umpires and Team Managers shall ensure correct recording.

Umpires shall administer the DP Playing Conditions in both games on the same day. An Umpire may direct that a DP not to participate in either game if the player is in contravention of these Playing Conditions.

The penalty for contravention of the DP Playing Conditions is "Forfeiture" of the game in which such contravention took place. The Competition Manager shall impose a "Forfeiture" fine on the offending club, as per Schedule 1.

Participation in each game shall count as a game played for each section for eligibility for Play-offs.

Clubs must apply in writing to the Competition Coordinator to change their approved pitchers by stating their extenuating circumstances.

6.23 Designated fielder for pitcher

The Designated fielder for pitcher rule is not available in any divisions Play-offs.

Position players other than the catcher may be removed from the game in order to prepare to re-enter the game as the pitcher.

A player removed from a game under this rule may only return as the pitcher during the current fielding inning in which they were removed, or they must begin the next fielding inning as the pitcher.

Any player that re-enters a game must pitch to at least one complete batter, unless:

1. The Pitcher sustains an injury, or
2. The umpire-in-chief calls the game for any reason, or
3. After pitching to at least one hitter they are eligible to be moved to any other fielding position.

Only one player at any time may be removed from the game under this rule.

Any player removed from a game under this rule will remain in the batting order and take their turn at bat as it occurs and continue to accrue defensive outs.

A substitute player (one who enters the game to allow a player to leave the game to prepare to pitch) will not be entered into the scorebook. (Similar to speed up rule)

A substitute player will not have a turn at bat and will not accrue defensive outs while playing as the substitute for a player removed to prepare to pitch. A substitute entered under this rule, plays defence only in the position of the removed fielder.

Once the pitcher re-enters the game, his substitute remains eligible to enter the game.

The manager must notify both the scorers and the umpire at the start of, or during, the team's defensive half of the inning when a player is being removed from the game with the intention of re-entering as the pitcher the following defensive inning.

Failure to notify the Umpire and scorers of the use of this rule when making the change will result in the player concerned being ineligible to re-enter the game additionally if the pitcher does not enter the game, then he is deemed to have been removed from the game and a substitute must occur.

6.24 Non-National Player Limit and Penalties

Only applicable to VSBL Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions

- **Maximum Number of Non-National Players in a game:**
 - A club may have no more than **two (2)** non-national players in its **active lineup** at any time, defined as the nine players currently participating on the field, including the designated hitter (DH) during any regular season or play-off game.
- **Designation of a Non-National Player:**
 - Any non-national player listed on the lineup card and match sheet **must** be identified with a designation of **“NN”** placed after their name.
- **Protests:**
 - If a club exceeds the limit of two (2) non-national players in their active line up during a game, the **opposing club** has the right to protest the game.
- **Penalty for Violation:**
 - If it is verified that alleged club included more than two non-national players in their active lineup:
 - The game will be declared **forfeit**, and the reason for forfeiture shall be 'Illegal player' as per Schedule 1.
 - If a non-national player **has not** been identified correctly on the lineup card or match sheet, they will be considered an 'illegal player' as per Schedule 1.

6.25 Pitching restrictions for non-nationals during regular season

Only applicable to VSBL Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions

Before 1st of November (before mid-week rounds start) Non-nationals may only pitch a total of 21 defensive outs in any one round.

After the 1st of November (after mid-week rounds start) Non-nationals may only pitch a total of 21 defensive outs across any two **consecutive** rounds of the Premier 1 and Premier 2 divisions.

This restriction applies across each team's collective import pitchers who pitch in Premier 1 or Premier 2 divisions: not an individual pitcher. In the case of a final play being made where more than one out is recorded (therefore puts the pitcher over the 21 outs) this will not be considered as a breach.

- **Penalty for Violation:** Penalty for breaching this playing condition will be the non-national player being declared an 'illegal player' as per Schedule 1 in the game that the breach has occurred.

6.26 Masters division pitching restrictions

The following rule only applies to Master divisions

No player may pitch for more than a total of four (4) innings in any game. One pitch in any innings will constitute an innings pitched.

The minimum age for a player to be allowed to pitch in Masters 38 divisions is 40 years of age.

There is no minimum age requirement to pitch in Masters 45 divisions.

6.27 Match Report Sheet and Scores

Match Report Sheets are the official record for each game played. The sheet records information including the scores, names of the umpires and players and details of importance. It is the responsibility of the umpire to ensure all details are accurate and complete.

Assistance is to be provided by the scorers and the team coaches or managers. Match Report Sheets are to be completed by the Scorers, then checked and signed to acknowledge accuracy by signing where indicated on the card by the Team Managers and Umpires.

Names of Players / Managers / Umpires (including Club / Volunteer Umpires) must be completed, and legible on the Match Report Sheet.

The home team must ensure that the Match Report Sheet is received by the Competition Coordinator within 48 hours from the end of the game.

Failure to submit the match sheet by these deadlines will result in a fine as per Schedule 1.

Club Officials must submit the Match Report Sheet with completed Umpire adjudicated MVP votes for all Senior, Women's and Master's divisions games electronically to:

seniorscores@baseballvictoria.com.au

The home club must enter the scores electronically by 8pm of the day the match was scheduled. For games that finish after 8pm the scores must be uploaded by 1 hour after the competition of the game. The home club will be fined, as per Schedule 1, should the scores not be received.

6.28 Statistical sheet for Premier 1 and 2

Official Club Scorers are to complete player/pitcher statistics for Premier League 1 and 2. These are to seniorscores@baseballvictoria.com.au within 24 hours of the completion of the game. The Victorian Summer Baseball League Statistics Form is available on the Baseball Victoria website and must be signed by both scorers prior to submission.

Failure to submit the statistical sheet within the time frame will result in a a fine as per Schedule 1.

7 VSBL Play-Off Rules

7.1 Scheduling of play-off games

The Competition Coordinator is responsible for scheduling Play-Off games, and their published schedule is final. Higher divisions will be prioritized when determining the venue for Play-off games.

If a higher division of a club is scheduled for a Play-off game at the club's venue and a lower division is also scheduled on the same day, the following applies:

- If the club has an alternative diamond that meets the minimum standards in Table 20.1, the Competition Coordinator may schedule the lower divisions' Play-off game there.
- If the second-ranked team has a diamond that meets the minimum standards, the Competition Coordinator may schedule the lower divisions' game at their venue.
- If neither of the above options is available, the lower division's Play-off game will be scheduled at a neutral venue.

Due to time constraints, only timed Play-off games may be scheduled back-to-back with another regular season or Play-off game at the same venue, at the discretion of the Competition Coordinator. Play-off games that are incomplete or not played due to adverse weather may be rescheduled at the discretion of the Competition Coordinator.

7.2 Play-off Eligibility

7.3 Two or more teams from the same club in the same divisions

Play-off eligibility rule for the two teams are as follows:

A player may only participate in a play-off game for which team they have played more games for. If there is an equal number of games played for Team A and Team B, the club may choose the team in which the player participates with for the duration of the play-offs. The player may participate only with the chosen team during the play-off series and not with any other team in that division.

If both Team A & Team B make the play-offs, then all players outside the core groups must choose which team they will play in and remain in that team for the remainder of the play-offs series, as long as they have played enough games to qualify for play-offs.

The core group players may only play for Team A in the play-offs and must have played enough games to qualify for play-offs.

If only Team B makes play-offs, all players can play in Team B, except the players in the Team A core group, and if they have played enough games to qualify for play-offs.

7.4 Participation in play-offs

To be eligible to participate in a **Play-off series for a division**, a player must have competed in a **minimum number of competition rounds** for the club **across any division** during the **Regular Season** as per following:

- **Premier League 1 and 2 divisions** – 6 rounds
- **All other divisions including Masters**– 4 rounds

Note: Rounds played in Masters divisions **only** count towards the eligibility of the Masters division and not any other VSBL division.

Rounds played in the Women's or Junior leagues **do not** count towards finals eligibility for any VSBL seniors or Masters divisions.

7.5 Division Eligibility for Play-Off Series:

A player's eligibility for a **particular division in a Play-off series** depends on the **number of Regular Season weekend games** they've played throughout the current VSBL season.

A player's eligibility in the Play-offs is determined by the division in which they have participated in the **most weekend Regular Season games**; this will be **the lowest division** they can compete in.

7.6 Equal Participation Across Two Divisions:

If a player has played **exactly half** of their games in two different divisions, they can choose to participate in either division's competition.

7.7 Two games/one Round rule for play-offs

Only applies to VSBL senior divisions

Participants of one division's final game cannot participate from any point in a game later that **play-off round**.

Players may only participate in one play-off game per round of play-offs.

Exemption: Any player may participate in a Premier 1 or Premier 2 play-off game without breaching the above rule provided they have satisfied the requirements set out in '7.2.2 Participation in play-offs)

7.8 Run Rule

This rule does not apply to Premier 1 and Reserves, Premier 2 and Reserves divisions

For all play-off season games the scoring of the 7th run will end the innings: only 7 runs may be counted in any innings.

Pitching restrictions for non-nationals during play-offs

For VSBL Premier 1 divisions

During play-offs Non-nationals may only pitch a total of 27 defensive outs across any two **consecutive** rounds of the Premier 1 divisions.

For VSBL Premier 2

During play-offs Non-nationals may only pitch a total of 36 defensive outs per finals series (3 games) of the Premier 2 division.

This restriction applies across each team's collective import pitchers who pitch in Premier 1 or Premier 2 divisions: not an individual pitcher. In the case of a final play being made where more than one out is recorded (therefore puts the pitcher over the 21 outs) this will not be considered as a breach.

- **Penalty for Violation:** Penalty for breaching this playing condition will be the non-national player being declared an **'illegal player'** as per Schedule 1 in the game that the breach has occurred.

7.9 Supply of Match balls for play-off games

Baseballs for play-offs will be supplied by Baseball Victoria for Men's Premier 1 and Premier 2. For other divisions, the visiting team must provide 2 new balls of the same brand to the home team. The home team must provide the umpire with 4 new balls of the same brand.

7.10 Play-off Series formats

7.11 Premier 1 division

Format: Top 8 teams' double elimination series. All games will be **9 innings** with **no time limit**. If the game is tied at the end of **9 completed innings – tie-breaker rules will be applied** and the game may continue until a decisive result is reached

Seeding: Each team's ladder position will determine their seed in the finals bracket (e.g., the team in 1st place will be the 1st seed, the team in 5th place will be the 5th seed).

Game Schedule:

The finals series will be played across 7 days beginning on the first Saturday after the conclusion of the regular season.

For the championship series the winner of the winner's bracket will begin a best of 3 series starting 1-0. The fixturing of games will be at the discretion of the competition coordinator.

7.12 Premier 2 division

Format: Top 4 best-of-three game series. All games shall be **9 innings** with **no time limit**. If the game is tied at the end of **9 completed innings – tie-breaker rules will be applied** and the game may continue until a decisive result is reached

Game Schedule:

Week 1: Semi Finals

- **Series 1: 1st vs 4th.**
- **Series 2: 2nd vs 3rd.**

Week 2: Grand Final

- Winner of **Series 1** vs Winner of **Series 2**

Day of play for each game of a series

- **Game 1:** Midweek
- **Game 2:** Saturday
- **Game 3:** Sunday (if required)

Home Team Designation:

- The team with the **best overall record** at the end of the regular season will be the home team for **Game 1** and **Game 2**.
- The other qualifying team will be the home team for **Game 3**, if necessary.

7.13 For all other divisions excluding Masters

Format: 3-week Page play-off system.

- **Premier 1 Reserves** and **Premier 2 reserves** game length is **7 innings** with **no time limit**. If the game is tied at the end of a completed innings – tie-breaker rules will be applied and the game may continue until a decisive result is reached
- **All other divisions** play **7 innings** with a **2-hour time limit** with the **5 minute rule**. If the game is tied at the end of a completed innings with 10 minutes or less remaining in the allotted time limit – tie-breaker rules will be applied and the game may continue until a decisive result is reached

Game schedule

Played across 3 weeks starting the week after the conclusion of the regular season.

- Week 1: Game 1: 1st vs 2nd and Game 2: 3rd vs 4th
- Week 2: Game 3: Loser of Game 1 vs Winner of Game 2 .
- Week 3: Game 4: Winner of Game 1 vs Winner of Game 3

Home Team Designation:

- Where possible, play-off games shall be scheduled at the highest ranked team's home venue

7.14 Masters 38 and 45 divisions

Format: Single elimination System

- Games will be **7 innings** or **1 ¾ hour time limit** with **5-minute rule**

Game Schedule'

Week 1: Semi Finals

- **Series 1: 1st vs 4th.**
- **Series 2: 2nd vs 3rd.**

Week 2: Grand Final

- Winner of **Series 1** vs Winner of **Series 2**

Home Team Designation:

Where possible, play-off games shall be scheduled at the highest ranked team's home venue

8 Equipment and Uniforms

8.1 Baseballs

For games, Clubs must provide at least four match balls, in good condition, meeting the following requirements:

- Must meet the specifications defined in Rule of Baseball 3.01
- Be white in colour
- Have a premium leather covering
- Be of the same brand and model

Adequate replacement balls must be available to replace lost or damaged match balls during a game.

The Main Umpire shall adjudge whether the baseballs supplied are of suitable quality and meet the requirements stated in this Playing Condition.

8.2 Baseball Bats

For all divisions of the VSBL, only wood, wood composite and wood laminate baseball bats shall be used. All baseball bats must conform to the Rule of Baseball 3.02.

8.3 Uniform Guidelines and Requirements

Player Uniform Requirements

- **Premier League 1, Premier 1 Reserves, Premier League 2, Premier 2 Reserves:**
 - All players must wear the registered club uniform in all games.
- **All Other Senior Divisions:**
 - At least **seven players** must wear the registered club uniform.
 - Remaining players must wear attire that is as close as possible to the registered club uniform.

Reporting Deficiencies

- Any uniform deficiencies must be reported by the umpires on the Match Report Sheet.

Jackets and Cold Weather Rules

- **Pitchers:**
 - May not bat while wearing a jacket.
 - After reaching base, they may put on their club uniform jacket if it is readily available with the base coach.
- **Outfielders**
 - At the umpire's discretion may wear a jacket during play in cold weather.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

- A fine or penalty will be imposed by the Competition Coordinator as per **Schedule 1** for any breach of uniform conditions.

9 Safety Protocols

9.1 Blood rule and Concussion policy

An Umpire shall immediately direct a player to leave the playing field if the player is bleeding or has blood on any part of the uniform or body. The player's name and the time that the player is directed to leave the playing field shall be marked in the scorebook.

If a substitute player is available in the team, they may bat in place of the injured person if required during the 10-minute period. If no substitute player is available, the batting order progresses to the next batter and no blank recorded. After the 10 minutes elapse and no substitute available, and the player has not returned, the blank is recorded in that batting position.

If, ten minutes after the player was directed to leave the field, the player has been unable to stop the bleeding and/or remove or cover the affected uniform area, the player must be replaced in the normal substitution manner.

Any player with a suspected concussion based on the Baseball Victoria Concussion Policy will be replaced via normal substitution manner and not allowed to return to game.

10 Disputes and Appeals

In the event of any dispute or protest, other than judgement decisions which, in accordance with Rule of Baseball 7.04 cannot be disputed, clubs may appeal to the Competition Coordinator in the following manner:

- The Manager must lodge a notice of the protest with the Umpire at the time of objection. The Umpire shall be given the opportunity to consider the point of protest raised by the Manager.
- Should the Manager decide to continue the protest, the Umpire must be advised, and the scorers shall endorse both scorebooks with the precise game situation at the time.
- Details of the protest must be lodged in writing and be in the hands of the Competition Coordinator within forty-eight (48) hours of completion of the game, accompanied by a fifty (\$50.00) dollar fee. The protest shall state the reason that the protest is being entered and include the relevant reference to the Rules of the Association, Rules of Baseball or By-Laws or Playing Conditions.

The VSBLPC shall hear the protest as soon as practicable following receipt of a properly lodged appeal. If the VSBLPC considers that the protest is not frivolous, the Competition Coordinator shall return the fifty (**\$50.00**) dollar fee to the protesting club.

The VSBLPC ruling on the protest, including any arrangements for a re-completion of a game, shall be final with no right of appeal so as not to further interrupt the remainder of the competition.

11 Code of Conduct

11.1 Yellow Card rule

This rule may be invoked for offences committed of a minor nature including, but not limited to:

- Dissent
- Minor obscenities
- Misconduct

If, in the opinion of the Umpire, an offence has occurred as provided for in this Playing Condition, the Umpire must show a Yellow Card to the offender and both the offender, and the team manager must be informed of the nature of the offence.

A person who receives two Yellow Cards in the same game shall be ejected from the game after the second offence but will not be required to attend a Tribunal hearing.

At the conclusion of the game, the Umpire is to record and note the details of the offence that led to the issue of the Yellow Card on the match sheet. Place YC next to the players name.

The Competition Coordinator shall maintain a register of Yellow Card offences.

The first and second Yellow Card offences during a competition season shall incur no Rule penalty. If two (2) yellow cards are issued to the same person on the same day, refer Rule 27c.

Any player that incurs a third Yellow Card, and any subsequent Yellow Card, during a Rule season, shall be suspended from participating in the next scheduled game of the competition in which the last Yellow Card was received, as well as all games in other grades and divisions prior to the next scheduled game.

A person suspended under this Playing Condition will be notified by the Competition Rule Coordinator via their club.

When a person incurs a Yellow Card suspension in the last game of the Regular Season or a Play-off game, the matter will be referred to the Tribunal. The Tribunal shall determine the timing of the suspension.

A person may appeal to the Tribunal Chairman against the issue of a Yellow Card. Such appeals are to be lodged in writing, stating the reasons for the appeal and be in the hands of the Competition Coordinator within forty-eight hours of the game in which the Yellow Card was issued and shall be accompanied by a twenty (\$20.00) dollar fee.

If the Tribunal Chairman deems that the appeal is not frivolous, the Tribunal Chairman Rule shall instruct Competition Coordinator to refund the fee. Mere denial of the offence does not constitute grounds for an appeal and will result in the loss of the fee.

Upon receiving a properly made appeal, the Tribunal Chairman shall decide if the Rule matter should be referred to the Tribunal for resolution, such decision being final.

The Tribunal shall hear an appeal referred under this Playing Condition by convening a Rule hearing with the offender and the Umpire. The Tribunal may determine to:

- Uphold the appeal, cancel the Yellow Card and advise the Umpire
- Dismiss the appeal and confirm the Yellow Card

- Consider the offence warranted an ejection and impose a penalty
- Decide to retain or return the deposit

Decisions of the Tribunal are final and not subject to further appeal.

11.2 Ejected Persons

Any umpire in control of any game played under the auspices of the Summer League and Baseball Victoria is empowered to report any person who, in the umpire's opinion, engages in conduct detrimental to the best interests of the game of baseball. This includes any practice game to which an official has been appointed.

The ejected persons must leave the playing field immediately and cannot re-enter the playing field while the Umpire is still on the ground. Rule of Baseball 6.04 shall be enforced insofar as they are practicable in the circumstances of that particular game. Junior players may sit in the stands with their parents/guardian.

Ejected persons must not approach the Umpire after being ejected.

The reporting umpire and ejected persons shall adhere to the Reported Persons Procedures & Rule of Baseball 6.04.

11.3 Melee Rule

The Victorian Summer Baseball League (VSBL) will not tolerate the clearing of players and coaches from a bench or position of play to engage in a melee. The Pennant Committee will determine if a melee took place after reviewing a report submitted by the appointed match official. As such, any player, coach or person that leaves the bench or their designated area to engage in a melee will be penalized as per the reported persons procedures and VSBL Sanctions.

If a player is penalised and believes they are innocent, may appeal their case on an individual basis to the Tribunal Committee. If a team participates in more than one (1) melee in the same season, the above penalties will apply for each incident, in addition to losing 0.07% of their win percentage at the conclusion of the season for each additional melee participated in.

11.4 Zero Tolerance

The Summer League will enforce the concept of 'zero tolerance' in order to ensure that Coaches and Managers take a proactive role in eliminating Umpire abuse.

If, in the Umpire's opinion, a player:

- Abuses an umpire
- Displays dissent towards an umpire
- Argues judgement decisions (e.g. balls and strikes, etc.)

The umpire may immediately eject the player and the Head Coach/Manager from the game.

The ejected player shall adhere to the Reported Persons Procedures. No further penalty shall be imposed on a Head Coach/Manager who is ejected under this rule.

11.5 Prohibited Substances

A person shall be ejected from a game for smoking/vaping, consuming an alcoholic beverage or chewing/dipping of tobacco and shall be fined as per schedule 1. For the purpose of this Playing Condition, a game is deemed to commence when the umpire enters the playing field in compliance with Rule of Baseball 4.03(e). Any player, coach or official who, at or from that time, indulges in any of the activities mentioned in this Playing Condition may be reported for breach of this Playing Condition. An ejected person under this Playing Condition shall comply with the rule of baseball 6.04 for an ejected person and apart from the mandatory fine and the ejection; no further action will be taken. Costs incurred to clean the mess created by chewing tobacco or seeds at Altona will be charged back to clubs.

12 Administration

12.1 Clearance Procedures

12.2 Responsibility for Clearance Requests

- It is the responsibility of the **destination club** (the club the player intends to join) to:
 - Initiate and Complete the **Summer League Online Clearance Request** through the current membership registration system.
 - Ensure all required fields are filled accurately, and submissions are made in compliance with the timeline specified in the rules.
- The **Transfer of Players and Coaches By-law 8** governs all clearance requests, ensuring uniformity and fairness across the competition.

12.3 Restrictions on Player Approaches

- During the period from **1st December** to the end of the **Play-offs**, **clubs** are prohibited from initiating discussions or approaching players regarding clearances.
 - This restriction protects teams' integrity as they compete in critical matches during the play-offs.
 - Breaching this rule may result in penalties for the club in question.

12.4 Restrictions of player movements

Any clearance **submitted after 15th of November** will result in the **player being ineligible to participate in any VSBL play-off series** for that **current season**.

12.5 Clearance Process

The process for clearing a player is as follows:

1. **Notification:**
 - The clearance notification is lodged via the membership registration system.
2. **Response Time:**
 - The player's current club has **14 days** to accept or reject the clearance request.
3. **Immediate Clearance:**
 - If the player's current club has **no objections**, the clearance may be granted immediately.
4. **Participation Rules:**
 - The player can only participate in the Summer League with the destination club **after** the clearance has been:
 - Approved by the **current club**.
 - Processed by **Baseball Victoria**.

12.6 Appeals Process

Players who have their clearance requests **refused** may appeal under the following guidelines:

- The appeal must be submitted to the **VSBLPC (Victorian Summer Baseball League Pennant Committee)** using the official **Appeal Application Form**.
- The form must include:
 - The **refused Clearance Notification**.
 - **Detailed reasons** for the appeal, which should address and challenge the grounds for refusal.
- Appeals are reviewed by the VSBLPC, which will decide on the matter.

Second Appeal:

- If the first appeal is unsuccessful, players are allowed to lodge a **second appeal** if:
 - The new appeal is based on **significantly different reasons** from the first appeal.
 - The second appeal also requires the approval of the Chairman of the Summer League Committee or VSBLPC for its validity.

12.7 Free Agent Status

- Players who meet the following criteria are considered **free agents** and do not require clearance:
 - They have not participated in any Baseball Victoria Summer League competition or been a registered member of a club for a period of **4 years**.
 - They are not currently suspended or disqualified by the Summer League.
- Free agents can register and play with any club of their choice without requiring approval from any other club.

12.8 Non-Compliance and Penalties

- Clubs or players who breach these procedures may face:
 - **Fines** or penalties outlined in the regulations.
 - Suspension or forfeiture of games, depending on the severity of the breach.

12.9 Determining ladder and play-off positions

All Senior and masters divisions' ladder and Play-off positions shall be ranked by WIN percentage, as follows:

The win percentage of each team is calculated using the equation specified below. Teams are ranked on the ladder in descending order.

$$\text{Win Percentage} = \frac{\left(\text{Total \# of Wins} + \left(\frac{\text{Total \# of Draws}}{2} \right) \right)}{\text{Total Games Played}}$$

Where two or more teams are equally ranked with the same WIN percentage

The Ladder and “Head-to-Head” method will be used to separate them. If this fails to separate the Play-Off teams, the following method will be used:

- Head-to-Head - Where one team has an advantage in the games won against the others with the same win %, that team will be ranked the highest team.

- The fewest runs allowed in the game(s) contested by these teams will gain the highest ranking, and then the remaining teams will revert to “Head-to-Head”. If remaining teams are tied, then the tiebreaker reverts to the fewest runs allowed in the games contested by those teams method and then back “Head to Head” and so forth.
- If teams are still tied, go to the runs allowed by each of the tied teams against the highest ranked team in the competition, then the next highest team and so on.
- The team with the least runs allowed will be the higher-ranking team, and then the remaining teams will revert to “Head to Head”. If remaining teams are still tied, then the tiebreaker reverts to the fewest runs allowed in the games contested by those teams method, then back to “Head to Head” and so forth.
- The ranking of the final two teams in the above situation will be determined by the “Head-to-Head” process.

12.10 Permit Procedures

Transfer of Players and Coaches

- Players wishing to play using a permit must abide by the By-law 8 and satisfy the “**Clearance Procedures**” outlined in Clearance Procedures 11.1.

Permit and Clearance Guidelines

- A player or coach wishing to apply for a **Permit** must:
 - Complete the **Summer League Permit Form** (available on the Baseball Victoria website).
 - Submit the form to the **Competition Coordinator**.
- **Masters Players:**
 - Can play for separate clubs in the **Seniors** and **Masters competitions** without needing a Permit or Clearance, if their primary club does not enter a team.
 - Players must be registered at both clubs.
 - *Example:* A player competes in a Seniors competition with Club A and is also registered to play Masters for Club B.
- **Women’s Players:**
 - Can play for separate clubs in the **Seniors** and **Women’s competitions** without needing a Clearance, if their primary club does not enter a team.
 - Players must register online for a permit at the destination women’s club.
 - *Example:* A player competes in a Seniors competition with Club A and is also registered to play Women’s for Club B.
 - If the primary club has a Women’s team, players may apply for a permit to compete in a higher division at another club.
- **Coaches and Players at Non-Home Clubs:**
 - Must apply for a permit to play or coach at another club if:
 - Their registered club does not have a team in the applicable competition (not division or grade).
 - *Example:* A U14 player registered at a club without an U14 team can apply for a permit to play for another club with an U14 team.
 - The player may only compete in the specific competition stated on the permit.

- The **Permit Form** must be completed properly.
- **Interstate Permits:**
 - Permits for players or coaches from interstate are **not applicable** in Victoria and will **not be approved** by the Competition Coordinator.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

- A player participating in breach of these conditions will be deemed an **Illegal Player**.
- Penalties include:
 - Fines imposed by the **Competition Coordinator**.
 - Forfeiture of games in which the violation occurred.

12.11 Junior and Senior team requirements for participation in the VSBL

To be eligible to compete in the **Premier 1 competition** the **following year** a club must have met **the following requirements in the year they earned promotion**.

Mandatory teams' requirement for Premier 1 division

- **One team** in any of the following **VSWBL divisions**
 - Premier or Premier Reserves or State or Regional

Along with either

- **at least one team** in each of the following divisions of the VSJBL during the **current season**:
 - Little League Major
 - Senior League 70/80
 - Senior League 90

Or

- 75 Criteria points

Criteria points are earned based on teams entered in the **current season's** competition based on the following:

- Little League Major/Minor/Rookie = 18 points
- Senior League 70 & 80 = 12 points
- Senior League 90 = 10 points
- Big League = 10 points

To be eligible to compete in **Premier 2 competition** a club must have met the criteria of having a total of **at least 4 teams** within any of the divisions of the VSWBL and VSJBL.

Joint or combined teams formed between clubs, consisting of at least three players from each respective club, will count toward the clubs' mandatory team requirements. However, no criteria points will be awarded for these teams. Clubs are required to notify the competitions coordinator of joint or combined teams if they are required for consideration for meeting criteria.

12.12 Promotion and Relegation within the VSBL

To be promoted to the respective division, a club must have met the division's eligibility criteria during the year it earned the right to promotion. Any club that does not meet the respective divisions criteria will be relegated from that division the following year.

Provided a Club satisfies the requirements specified in this Playing Condition, the following Seniors teams will be promoted from Premier 2 to Premier 1

- The Firsts are the Minor Premier at the end of the Regular Season, or
- The Firsts are winner of the Grand Final or Champion Team

In the case that Minor Premier and the Champion Team is the same team, then provided the Club satisfies the requirements specified in the 'Senior and Junior Team Relegation Requirement' as set out in Playing Condition 12.4, the other team in the Grand Final will be promoted.

If a team due to be promoted does not comply with the requirements specified in the Playing Condition 12.4, no other team shall take its place.

Where two teams are eligible to be promoted from Premier 2 to Premier 1, then the bottom two teams of the overall standings will be relegated from Premier 1 to Premier 2

Where only one team is eligible to be promoted from Premier 2 to Premier 1 then the bottom team will be relegated from Premier 1 to Premier 2.

12.13 VSBLPC Jurisdiction Over Promotion and Relegation

At the end of the season, the Pennant Committee retains the right to promote or relegate teams, regardless of the stipulations outlined in these playing conditions.

12.14 Baseball Victoria and Baseball Australia Sanctioning

Where required by the Baseball Australia Sanctioning Policy, as published on the Baseball Australia website www.baseball.com.au from time to time, Clubs must seek sanction from Baseball Victoria or the Baseball Australia, as appropriate, prior to conducting an activity, event or tour, or engaging a Non-national Player.

13 Season awards

13.1 Batting Champion Criteria

Eligibility Requirements:

- The champion for **batting average**, will be the player with the **highest percentage**.
- To qualify, the player must have at least as many **total plate appearances** in regular season games as the following:
 - Scheduled games for each division × **2.7**

Special Consideration for Fewer Plate Appearances:

- If a player does not meet the required number of plate appearances but would have the highest average when the required number is added to their plate appearances (as hypothetical outs), they will still be awarded the championship.

13.2 ERA champion

The pitching champion will be the pitcher with the **lowest earned-run average (ERA)**.

- To qualify:
- The pitcher must have pitched at least as many **innings** in division games as **80% of the total number of games** scheduled for that division during that season

13.3 Club Championship

All clubs participating in the VSBL will compete for a club championship. Points will be awarded to clubs based on the total number of wins achieved by their teams in eligible VSBL competitions during the regular season. The following club championships will be awarded:

- **Seniors Club Championship:** Presented to the club with the highest total points across the senior and masters divisions.
- **Women's Club Championship:** Presented to the club with the highest total points in the women's division only.
- **Junior Club Championship:** Presented to the club with the highest total points in the junior division only.

The following grade weights for each eligible competition are below:

Seniors Weights		Women's Weights		Juniors Weights	
P1	10	P1	10	Big League	6
P2	9	P1 R	9	SL 90 State	6
P1 R	8	State	8	SL 90 Metro	5
P2 R	7	Regional	7	SL 80	4
ST 1	6			SL 70	3
ST 2	5			LL Major	2
ST 3	4				
ST 4	3				
Regional	2				
Masters	4				

The club championship calculation is defined as the following:

$$\frac{\text{Total wins}}{(\text{Total games played} / \text{Total games available})} \times \text{Grade weight}$$

14 Miscellaneous

14.1 Events and Meetings

Baseball Victoria or the VSBLPC will from time to time require compulsory attendance to meeting and events, including the following but not exclusively:

- Presidents, Secretaries and Coaches Meetings
- Annual Awards Night (once annually when conducted)
- Annual General Meeting for the Association
- Other meetings as prescribed by the Association

Clubs that do not attend the prescribed meetings and events will be fined as per Schedule 1.

15 Schedule 1

INFRINGEMENT	FINE
Late start to a game	\$50 per defaulting team
Forfeiture of game	\$200 per defaulting team including umpiring fees
Illegal player	\$50 per player and loss of game
Unregistered/Unfinancial player	\$30 per player per game
Prohibited Substances	\$200 per person and ejection
Player out of uniform	\$20 per player
Non-return of match sheet before deadline	\$30 per match report
Non-submission of scores before deadline	\$30 per team
Non-submission of stats sheet before deadline	\$30 per team
Appointed umpires non or late attendance	\$50
Club's failure to supply an umpire	\$20
Club's failure to supply a scorer	\$20
Non-attendance to a PS&C Meeting	\$50
Non-attendance at the AGM	\$100
Junior pitching and catching restrictions – 2 nd breach by a coach	\$500 and judicial appearance

Title	Date	Author	
VICTORIAN SUMMER SENIORS AND MASTERS BASEBALL LEAGUE PLAYING CONDITIONS 2025/2026	Tuesday, 2 July 2025	Jon Kennedy	2025/26 Pennant Committee
VICTORIAN SUMMER SENIORS AND MASTERS BASEBALL LEAGUE PLAYING CONDITIONS 2025/2026 V3	Monday, 18 August 2025	Jon Kennedy	2025/26 Pennant Committee
