



**LINCOLNSHIRE LIGHTNING
TRAVEL BASEBALL
PLAYER AND PARENT
HANDBOOK**

ALL AGE LEVELS | REQUIRED PLAYER AND PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



What we're about, what to expect, and how we'll work together.



PLAYER AND PARENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Thank you for being part of the Lincolnshire Lightning Travel Baseball program. This handbook explains what we believe, how we run the program, and what we expect of players, coaches, parents, guardians, and families across all age levels. The surest way to avoid misunderstandings later is to be clear about our approach now. Our shared goal is to create a competitive, supportive, and development-focused environment where players love the game, grow as teammates, and represent their families and community with pride.

MISSION

Our mission is to develop baseball players of high character by teaching **accountability, teamwork, discipline, sportsmanship, and respect**. Winning is an important goal, but never at the expense of integrity, player development, or the enjoyment of the game. Participation in Lincolnshire Lightning Travel Baseball is a privilege, not a right. Every player, parent, coach, and volunteer is expected to uphold the standards in this handbook.

WHAT THIS PROGRAM IS ABOUT

We are building players and people. Our north star is culture, effort, and improvement. We want every player to leave the season loving the game and believing that hard work pays off. We compete hard, and winning is fun, but we do not measure a good day by the scoreboard alone. We value the second scoreboard: quality at-bats, good decisions, hustle, how players treat teammates, and improvement against each player's previous best.

Our Code

- No lying, cheating, or stealing (except bases).
- No whining, complaining, or blaming.
- Have fun, work hard, and compete with a positive attitude.
- Be respectful, be coachable, and be a great teammate.

CORE VALUES

- Respect
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Selflessness
- Competitive Excellence
- Coachability
- Team-First Mentality

These values are more important than wins and losses.

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HOW WE COACH

- **We reward process, not just results.** We praise the decision, the effort, and the reset after a mistake — not whether the ball happened to find a glove.
- **We develop every kid individually.** Each player gets a clear “next thing” to work on and measures progress against themselves, not the kid beside them.
- **We teach simply and keep it moving.** Practices are built around lots of reps, clear coaching cues, limited standing around, and competitive finishes.
- **We keep it fun.** Players who love the game are the ones who keep playing. The long game matters more than any single practice, game, or tournament.

COACH EXPECTATIONS

Coaches are committed to creating a positive, competitive, and development-focused environment where every player can learn, grow, and enjoy the game. Coaches are expected to:

- Prioritize safety, well-being, and long-term development.
- Foster a positive, inclusive, and encouraging team environment.
- Provide age-appropriate instruction that builds skills and game understanding.
- Communicate expectations, schedules, and policies clearly.
- Make decisions based on player development and the team’s best interest.
- Model professionalism with players, families, officials, opponents, and spectators.
- Address conflicts promptly while maintaining an environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, or abusive behavior.
- Offer honest feedback focused on player growth.

PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

Playing travel baseball is a privilege. Every player is responsible for representing their team, family, and community with pride. Baseball is about developing great athletes and even better people.

Respect Everyone

- Treat teammates, coaches, opponents, and umpires with genuine kindness.
- Encourage and celebrate the success of others.
- Value everyone’s effort, regardless of the game outcome.
- Win with humility and lose with class.

Give Your Best and Learn

- Hustle and work hard during every play and practice.
- Listen carefully and stay open to new coaching ideas.
- View mistakes as opportunities to grow and improve.
- Keep a positive attitude and never give up.

Be Responsible

- Arrive on time for practices and games.
- Bring all required equipment.
- Wear the uniform properly, and take care of team equipment.
- Keep the dugout and team areas clean.

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Represent the Team Everywhere

- Make good choices.
- Be respectful in public.
- Use social media responsibly.
- Remember that actions reflect on the entire team.

Have Fun and Love the Game

- Play with enthusiasm.
- Encourage others.
- Learn from every experience.

PLAYER EXPECTATIONS**Attitude and Coachability**

- Be coachable and willing to learn.
- Maintain a positive attitude regardless of role or playing time.
- Encourage and support teammates.
- Never criticize or disrespect teammates.

Effort & Preparation

- Hustle on and off the field.
- Give your best effort at every practice and game.
- Stay mentally engaged and ready to compete.
- Arrive on time and prepared.

Sportsmanship

- Accept umpire decisions respectfully.
- Never throw equipment, use profanity, taunt opponents, or celebrate another player's mistakes.
- Resolve conflicts respectfully and never engage in fighting or retaliation.

Health & Wellness

- Stay hydrated.
- Eat appropriately to support performance.
- Notify coaches of any injury or illness immediately.
- Follow all return-to-play requirements before resuming after an injury.

PRACTICE & GAME DAY EXPECTATIONS

Players are expected to come prepared and stay engaged. Consistent attendance, punctuality, and a team-first attitude help everyone improve and contribute to team success.

- Arrive 15-20 minutes early for practices and at the designated reporting time for games.
- Bring all required equipment.
- Wear the complete team uniform on game days.
- Notify coaches as soon as possible if arriving late or absent.
- Remain with the team until dismissed.
- Assist with equipment setup and cleanup.
- Stay engaged whether on the field or in the dugout.

PLAYING TIME & POSITIONS

Lincolnshire Lightning is a competitive developmental program. Player development remains the highest priority, but game competition requires coaches to make decisions that provide individual growth opportunities and the best chance for team success.

During practices, players may rotate through a variety of positions to build a broader understanding of the game. Game playing time and defensive assignments are earned based on effort, attitude, preparation, development readiness, and demonstrated performance.

Players are not guaranteed equal playing time or innings at every position during games. Coaches make these decisions based on what they believe provides the greatest opportunity for development and team success. Coaches are willing to discuss what a player can do to continue improving and earn additional opportunities.

Every player can expect to sit out at least one defensive inning each game. Time on the bench is part of the learning process — an opportunity to observe the game, increase baseball IQ, encourage teammates, and stay ready to contribute.

What this means for families: If you are looking for guaranteed time at premium positions or maximum innings, this may not be the right fit. If you are looking for a development-driven program that values effort, attitude, growth, and team-first baseball, Lincolnshire Lightning is built for that.

PARENT & GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS

Parents and guardians are essential to the team culture. Young athletes learn as much from the example set by their families as they do from coaches. Families are expected to:

- **Support the Program.** During the spring and summer season, make travel baseball the athletic priority whenever reasonably possible. Multi-sport athletes are supported, but consistent attendance matters.
- **Support the Coaches.** Trust the coaching staff to teach, develop, and make game decisions. Please refrain from coaching from the stands or giving instructions during practices or games.
- **Support Your Player.** Encourage effort, attitude, and growth rather than statistics or outcomes. Allow your child to learn from challenges and mistakes without comparison to others.
- **Model Respect.** Treat coaches, teammates, opponents, umpires, tournament staff, and other families with respect.
- **Be Prepared and Communicate.** Ensure your player arrives on time, properly equipped, and ready to participate. Communicate conflicts early.
- **Create a Positive Environment.** Cheer for all players, celebrate effort, and help maintain a family-friendly atmosphere.

Coaches and program leadership volunteer countless hours to develop players and build a positive culture. Families are asked to partner with the program by showing respect, open communication, and commitment to shared values.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Open and respectful communication prevents most problems. Please contact coaches regarding player safety, illness or injury, scheduling conflicts, availability, and team logistics.

Appropriate Discussion Topics

- Player development
- Goals
- Skill improvement
- Effort
- Attitude

Topics That Are Not Appropriate

- Comparisons with other players
- Immediate emotional reactions following games
- Demands regarding playing time, batting order, or defensive assignments
- Discussion of other families' children

24-Hour Rule

- Please wait at least 24 hours after a game before discussing game-related concerns. This allows emotions to settle and promotes more productive conversations.
- Meetings with coaches should be scheduled at a mutually convenient time and should not occur immediately before, during, or after practices or games.

PARENT FAQ

How will I know how my child is doing?

We give every player a specific development focus and check in with them regularly. Families can ask any coach for a concrete, non-comparative update.

What if I disagree about playing time or position?

Coaches will not debate other players or compare children, but they will discuss what a player can do to improve and earn new opportunities. Please honor the 24-hour rule before raising a concern.

Do you care about winning?

Yes. The program competes hard, but the scoreboard does not decide whether a player had a good day or whether meaningful development happened.

What if my child is advanced — or behind?

Both are normal. Players develop at different rates, and each player deserves a real next step that fits the player in front of us.

What if my child plays other sports?

We support multi-sport athletes, but during the spring season (beginning in April), travel baseball takes priority over other sports and activities whenever scheduling conflicts arise.

Who do I talk to about development, logistics, or scheduling?

Please use the team-specific contact process for your age level.

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TOURNAMENT TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS

All expectations in this handbook remain in effect during travel tournaments. Tournament weekends are an opportunity for players and families to represent Lincolnshire Lightning on and off the field.

- Follow hotel policies and observe quiet hours.
- Arrive on time and stay with a parent, guardian, or approved adult unless participating in a team activity.
- Follow any team-specific travel rules or expectations, including coach-requested curfews.
- Represent Lincolnshire Lightning with respect at fields, hotels, restaurants, and public spaces.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Players and families are expected to represent the organization with respect and good sportsmanship on social media. Avoid negative, inappropriate, or confidential posts about teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, or team matters. Positive posts that celebrate teammates and team accomplishments are encouraged. Violations may result in disciplinary action.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE & ACCOUNTABILITY

Behavior inconsistent with the handbook and core values may result in one or more of the following consequences, depending on the situation:

- Verbal reminder or warning
- Coaching conversation
- Player reflection and corrective action
- Conversation with the player
- Conversation with the player and parent/guardian
- Temporary removal from practice or a game
- Reduced playing opportunities due to behavior or lack of effort
- Temporary suspension from team activities
- Removal from the team

Depending on the severity of the incident, coaches and program leadership may advance directly to any level of discipline. Serious misconduct including fighting, bullying, harassment, theft, substance use, or threatening behavior may cause immediate suspension or dismissal.

THANK YOU

Thank you for choosing to be part of the Lincolnshire Lightning Travel Baseball program. Success is measured not only by wins and losses, but by the character, growth, and lifelong memories we help create for players.

When coaches, players, and families embrace shared values, we build an environment where every athlete has the opportunity to develop both on and off the field.