Baseball

Sport Handbook - Spring 2026

Section 1: Rules

A. All contests under the jurisdiction of the RIIL shall be played according to the National Federation of State High School Association Rules, except for any special rulings adopted by the RIIL and listed in this handbook below.

B. The RIIL strongly recommends head coaches/officials obtain a copy of the most recent NFHS Rulebook.

Section 2: Mandatory Coaches Certification & Continuing Education

A. ALL Coaches must be appointed by their School Administration and upload their valid certificates to the Coaches' Certification website below. A coach is any adult with access to student-athletes through an education-based athletic program.
   a. Including, but not limited to: Volunteer Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Head Coaches.

B. Coaching Requirements: Article 13

C. Coaching Out of Season Rules: Article 7, Section 8

D. Rules on Recruitment: Article 3, Section 11

E. Sportsmanship Expectations for Coaches: Article 12, Section 3

Section 3: Medical Coverage/Emergency Action Plans

A. Medical Coverage should be provided by the host school, be in attendance and on duty for the duration of all interscholastic scrimmages and games during the regular season and all tournament round games. The medical personnel must introduce themself to both coaches and referee prior to the start of the game.
   a. Pre-Game Safety Checklist

B. Schools are responsible for providing Medical Coverage for their team throughout the playoffs, including the Semis and Finals/Championships.

C. Home team medical coverage shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting school provides its own medical coverage.

D. Levels of Medical Coverage:

Medical Professional Legal Limitations
A. Education/Schooling/Training & Licensure *B. Scope of Practice* *C. Able to Return to Play*
Medical Doctors-MD/DO or Advanced Practice Provider-NP/PA
A. Advanced degree (Medical School/Successfully passed the licensing board, and RI Licensed) B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play – Yes
Athletic Trainer (RI Licensed)
A. Minimum Bachelor's Degree (Successfully pass the BOC exam, and RI licensed B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Assessment of injury, referral for further diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES
Physical Therapist (RI Licensed)
A. Degree varies from BS, MS to DPT (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed.) B. Preventative Care, Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO
Physical Therapist w/ Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) credential (RI Licensed)
A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the OCS exam, and RI licensed) B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On the field coverage - not qualified, no emergency training incorporated into initial certification or required to be annually updated. C. Can they Return to Play – NO (During a Game/Contest), Yes (In Clinical Setting)
Physical Therapists w/ Sports Certified Specialist (SCS) credential (RI Licensed)
A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the SCS exam, and RI licensed) B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On-the-field coverage – Qualified C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES
EMT - Basic, Intermediate & Paramedic
A. Successfully complete the EMT program, pass the board exam, and RI licensed) B. Emergency care C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? - NO, per RI EMS laws/regulations/protocols
School Nurse (RN)
A. Successful completion of a nursing program (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed) B. Emergency care, referral for further treatment/diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO

E. The judgment of the medical person will be final with regard to the medical condition of a player. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice under any circumstance.
F. An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practice protocols as required by RI General Laws must be developed and in place at every high school.
    a. When possible, an athletic trainer should be present at all practices and games. An athletic trainer is a key component in any strategy to minimize injury risk and optimize safety for all participants.
    b. *Rationale*: An effective emergency action plan (EAP) must be in place as a prompt and appropriate response to any emergency situation that can save a life. The EAP should be designed and practiced to address all teams (freshman, junior varsity, and varsity) and all practice and game sites.

Section 4: General Regulations for all Sports

A. Heat Acclimatization: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 3
B. Definition of a Game/Scrimmage: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 2
C. Coaching Out of Season Rules: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 8
D. Use of Equipment During the Summer: RIIL R&R Article 6, Section 13
E. Sportsmanship Expectations for Coaches, Student-Athletes, & Spectators: RIIL R&R Art. 12, Sect. 3
F. Loyalty to Home School: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 7
G. National Events: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 11
H. Penalties for Ejections: RIIL R&R Article 6, Section 7
I. Protest Procedure: RIIL R&R Article 5

Section 5: Sport Advisory Committee

A. Each Sport Advisory Committee is comprised of Member School Administrators, Athletic Directors, Coaches, Officials, and other relevant individuals who work with and report to the RIIL on all matters concerning their sport.

B. Baseball Sport Advisory Committee Membership:

Committee Role	Member	School & Position
Sport Director	Terry Lynch	South Kingstown Athletic Director
PCOA Representative	Tom Barbieri	Cranston East Principal
Co-Director (RIIAAA)	Dino Campopiano	Pawtucket Athletic Director
Athletic Director	Bob Morris	Times2
Athletic Director	Ed Laskowski	Blackstone Valley Prep
Athletic Director	Ken Rix	Warwick
Coach	Anthony Parrillo	Ponaganset
Coach	Rob Malo	Cranston West
Coach	Theo Murray	Tolman
Coach	Richard Grenier	West Warwick
Official	John Leeds	

C. The 2024-25 and 2025-26 Alignment received the following endorsements & approvals:

a. Sport Committee Approval: 06/24/24
b. Survey of all Member Schools: 06/28/24
c. RIIAAA E-Board Approval: 08/14/24
d. PCOA Approval: 08/19/24

Section 6: Regular Season:

A. Important Dates:

School Year	2025-26
Season	Spring of 2026
Sport	**Baseball**
Pitchers & Catchers	Monday, March 9, 2026
Start Date	Monday, March 16, 2026
Games Can Begin	Thursday, March 26, 2026
Week #1 Begins On	Monday, March 30, 2026
Week #2 Begins On	Monday, April 6, 2026
Week #3 Begins On	Monday, April 13, 2026
Week #4 Begins On	Monday, April 20, 2026
Week #5 Begins On	Monday, April 27, 2026
Week #6 Begins On	Monday, May 4, 2026
Week #7 Begins On	Monday, May 11, 2026
Week #8 Begins On	Monday, May 18, 2026
Last Day of the Regular Season	~~Tuesday, May 19, 2026~~ Extended to Wednesday, May 20th
RIIL Championships Concluded By	Wednesday, June 10, 2026

B. Postseason:

a. Single Elimination Preliminary Games: Friday, May 22nd

b. Pool Play (all at home sites):

i. Winner's Bracket 1st Round: Tuesday, May 26th

ii. Winner's Bracket 2nd Round: Thursday, May 28th

1. Loser's Bracket 1st Round: Thursday, May 28th

iii. Loser's Bracket 2nd Round: Friday, May 29th

iv. Pool Championship Game: Sunday, May 31st

1. Pool IF Championship Game: Monday, June 1st

c. Championship 3-Game Series: Thursday, June 4th to Tuesday, June 9th at RI College

C. Divisions:

State Championship Division (Div.1)	Division 2	Division 3
17 Teams	**14 Teams**	**15 Teams**
Barrington	Burrillville	Central Falls/Blackstone Valley Co-op
Bishop Hendricken	Central	Classical
Coventry	Chariho	Davies
Cranston East	East Greenwich	Exeter-West Greenwich
Cranston West	Johnston	Hope
Cumberland	Middletown	Juanita Sanchez
East Providence	Narragansett	Mt. Pleasant
LaSalle	North Providence	North Smithfield
Lincoln	Ponaganset	Paul Cuffee/St.Pats Co-op
Moses Brown	Prout	Providence Country Day
Mt. Hope	Rogers	Scituate
North Kingstown	St. Raphael	Times2
Pilgrim	Toll Gate	Tiverton
Portsmouth	West Warwick	Pawtucket Co-op
Smithfield		Woonsocket
South Kingstown		
Westerly		

D. Game Cap: 22 Regular Season Games prior to the start of the playoffs

E. Baseball teams can schedule up to 3 games vs. a single opponent

F. Score Reporting for all Regular Season and Postseason League Games: In accordance with Article 6, Section 14, all contest scores are to be reported on-line on the RIIL Website. Coaches obtain access to the system through their Athletic Director.

G. It shall be the responsibility of school officials/administrators/supervisors to provide a safe and secure environment for the teams and officials by ensuring the playing field and sidelines are continuously cleared of **everyone** except certified & appointed coaches, team managers/scorers, student-athletes, medical personnel, and school designated personnel. Media are allowed with prior permission of the host school.

H. Home teams shall set a date/time for all contests.

   a. If there is a conflict in the date/time of the contest with the visiting team(s) and mutual agreement cannot be reached, the visiting school Principal/Athletic Director shall submit ***a***

written request to the RIIL to review the circumstances of the disagreement and render a decision. **This must be done prior to the submission of the Home Confirmation Schedule.**

b. Once the Home Confirmation Schedule is submitted, *changes will not be allowed unless there are extenuating circumstances*.

F. Postponement of Regular Season Varsity Games after the confirmation deadline:
   a. Where unusual circumstances prevail or where weather conditions are unfavorable, a game may be postponed by mutual consent of the Principals and/or Athletic Directors
   b. Postponed games shall be rescheduled to the next day when the teams, facility, and officials are available.
      i. Includes weekends and/or school vacations.
      ii. League games must take precedent over non-league games or lesser events
      iii. Rescheduled games must be within all other guidelines contained in this handbook and the RIIL Rules & Regulations.
   c. Additional Officials Fees for Games Changed within Two Weeks of original date/time: Article 6, Section 5

G. Practice Limitations:
   a. Preseason Practice Limitations are also located in Heat Acclimatization: Article 7, Section 3
   b. Scrimmages allowed after 5 days of practice
   c. Games allowed after 10 days of practice

Section 7: Postseason Qualification & Format:

A. League Games Required to Qualify for the Postseason: 18 league games
B. Teams will be ranked according to their RPI in all league games
C. Format:
   a. Postseason will be a straight bracket with no reseeding.
   b. Top-12 Teams qualify for the playoffs in each division
   c. Single Elimination in Preliminary Round
      i. Top four seeds will receive a bye
      ii. Games: 5 v. 12, 6 v. 11, 7 v. 10, 8 v. 9
   d. Semifinal Round will be double-elimination in two 4-team pods
      i. Pod A Seeds: 1, 4, (5/12 winner), (8/9 winner)
      ii. Pod B Seeds: 2, 3, (6/11 winner), (7/10 winner)
         1. In all double-elimination playoff games the Home teams will be the team with fewer losses. If both teams have the same number of losses, the Home team will be the higher (better) seeded team
      iii. Three Game Series in the Finals for the team advancing from each of the two pods.
   e. Championship Series:

i. Home team for games 1 & 3 will be the higher seeded team (closest to the #1 seed).

E. Postseason Tiebreaker

a. Playoff Seeding will the determined by a team's RPI as calculated on the RIIL website.

b. RPI Tiebreaker:

1) Head-to-Head result(s) in League Games between the tied teams
2) Winning Percentage in all League Games vs teams in your division
3) Total Wins in all League Games vs teams in a higher division
4) Highest-rated win in Division (according to the final RPI standings)
5) Next-highest-rated win (exhaust all possibilities)
6) Coin Toss

Section 8: RIIL Rules & Regulations Specific to Baseball

A. **Rosters** shall be completed via the RIIL website and made available to the public no later than 10 days after the start of practice. Rosters must be updated when students are added/removed from the team. Rosters must include: full name, grade, and jersey number.

B. **Uniforms**:

a. Schools shall consult the NFHS Rulebook for specific regulations pertaining to uniforms

C. **RI Interscholastic Injury Fund**:

a. The Injury Fund is a non-profit organization separate from the RIIL.

i. Additional information can be found at: http://www.injuryfund.org/

b. The purpose of the nonprofit Injury Fund is to establish, raise, maintain and distribute funds to the athletic departments of high schools participating in the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. Distributions will be made to assist athletes, coaches or officials injured in sanctioned interscholastic competitions and practices with their medical expenses that exceed the amount paid by the injured party's primary, required medical insurance. Any and all financial assistance rendered by the RI Injury Fund to RIIL Member Schools shall be given purely on a voluntary basis and in such amounts and in such manner as the Board of Directors in its sole discretion shall determine.

c. Non-League competitions scheduled to spread awareness of and benefit the Injury Fund are allowed by RIIL Rules in addition to any stated game caps contained herein.

d. Students, Coaches, and Officials whose teams participate in an Injury Fund event in a given sport are covered by the Injury Fund

e. **Injury Fund Format:** Teams will schedule one regulation Volleyball game in the pre-season to provide schools the opportunity to participate. Double or triple headers at a single location are preferred.

D. **Game Ball**: The official game ball shall be Wilson through the 2027-28 school year.

E. In the event a "playoff game" must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue to play, the game will be rescheduled and restarted from the exact point of the suspension of play.

F. **Playoff Warmup**: Teams must be allowed no less than 30 minutes to warm up on the field prior to the start of any playoff game unless specific warmup procedures are contained elsewhere in this handbook.

G. **Sub-Varsity**
   a. JV schedules will be scheduled at the discretion of each Athletic Director/Head Coach.
   b. Sub-varsity games will not be allowed after the final day of the varsity regular season.

H. **Score Differential Rule**: Any game (regular season or playoff) shall end when the visiting team is behind 10 or more runs after 4 ½ innings, or after the fifth inning, if either team is behind and both teams have had an equal number of times at bat.

I. Pitchers and Catchers Week:
   a. Scheduled Monday through Friday the week prior to the Official Start Date
   b. Teams may allow two (2) catchers and up to eight (8) pitchers to report one week prior to the start of the spring season. The date will be determined by the RIIL.
   c. Pre-season conditioning is for 5 days only. Date to be determined by the RIIL.
   d. Grades 9 – 12 may participate.
   e. Recommend a pre-season conditioning program developed and coordinated by a certified athletic trainer or other medical doctor
   f. All participating students must be eligible by the RIIL Rules

J. The RIIL Pitching Limitations Rule is as follows for all levels:
   a. Max Pitches 1 Day – 110
   b. Mandatory Rest:
      i. 76-110 pitches requires 3 full days of rest
         1. i.e. A pitcher accumulates 95 pitches on Monday, the mandatory rest period is Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, with the student eligible to pitch again on Friday
      ii. 51-75 = 2 days rest
      iii. 26-50 = 1 day rest
      iv. 0-25 = 0 Days rest
      v. Player reaching a max count can finish the batter.
      vi. If a pitcher reaches a day rest limit in the middle of an at bat and is removed from game after that batter, his official pitch count number will revert back to what it was at the start of the at bat.
         1. Example: If 25 or less pitches in a game doesn't require any rest for next day. Pitcher starts a batter with 23 pitches already thrown. Pitcher throws 5

pitches and ends up with 28. Pitcher is then removed from game. His official pitch count reverts back to 23 and is eligible to pitch the next day.

c. Pitch Count Violation -If a pitcher exceeds their pitch count according to the official book, then the the Head Coach will be ejected from that game at the time of the violation and be subject to an additional two game suspension to be served in the next two league games. The RIIL recommends that the home team alert the visiting team when any pitcher's pitch count gets to 100 pitches.

K. Home Book is the Official Book unless an official scorer is provided by the RIIL
   a. The RIIL recommends both coaches meet to confer what they had for a pitch count between every inning to ensure both teams' pitch counts are identical.

L. **At the conclusion of every game, coaches must post the pitch count on the RIIL website within 24 hours. The head coach will be suspended for the next league game on their schedule if the pitch count is not posted on the RIIL website within 24 hours of every game. In addition, any player(s) that pitched in a game not posted on the RIIL website within 24 hours are ineligible to pitch in the next league game on their schedule but will be allowed to play a field position.**

M. The home team will be responsible for the condition of the field. The bases, base line, foul lines, home plate, and pitcher's mound will all be prepared in strict accordance with NFHS rules.

N. Coaches in Uniform: All coaches, when on the field, must be in a team uniform or jersey with baseball pants that are the same color as the teams. Coaches not in uniform may not leave the dugout and cannot be on the field during the game, except to attend to a sick or injured player.

O. Visiting Teams shall be allowed a 20 minute on-field warmup upon entering the dugout. At the conclusion of 20 minutes, the home team shall be afforded five additional minutes of on-field warmup.
   a. If the visiting team does not arrive in time to practice at the stated period, the home team may continue to use the field but must leave the field immediately when the visiting team does arrive.

P. Procedure for games tied at the end of regulation
   a. Regular season games tied at the end of regulation (7th inning) shall start with a runner on second base beginning in the 8th inning (the last batter of the last inning shall begin each inning on second base).
   b. Playoff games tied at the end of regulation (7th inning) will play straight baseball until a winner is decided. (Will **NOT** institute the runner on second as in the regular season.)

Q. The RIIL game ending procedure is as follows: To interpret NFHS Rule 4-2-Sec.1, 2, 3 & 4:
   a. If a REGULATION game (4 (four) and ½ innings if the home team is ahead or 5 (five) complete innings if the visiting team is ahead) during the REGULAR SEASON (not a state tournament playoff game) is stopped for any reason other than forfeiture and a winner

cannot be determined, the game is considered SUSPENDED and will be completed at a later date from the exact point of suspension.

b. Games that have not reached REGULATION length prior to suspension are considered NO GAME and must be replayed from the beginning.
c. All state playoff games are SUSPENDED after the first pitch regardless of the inning or score and must continue from that exact point to completion.
d. Students listed on the eligibility list the day of a game suspended by the umpires shall be eligible when the game resumes as long as they remain eligible on the reschedule date.
e. Regular Season Games tied at the end of regulation (7th inning) and suspended thereafter by officials due to darkness/weather will be considered a completed game and count as a Tie in the standings
f. An active Pitcher of record during a suspended game must adhere to the following on the date of resumption:
    i. Must be eligible to pitch on the day of resumption by RIIL Pitching Limitation Rules
    ii. Can not exceed 110 pitches during the entire game (suspended + resumption)
    iii. Mandatory rest after the date of resumption will be determined by the number of pitches thrown on the date of resumption

R. Each school must present to the visiting team coach and the umpire(s) PRINTED copies of the ground rules which apply to the field. If such copies of the ground rules are not given to the visiting coach and umpires, the umpires will make the necessary ground rules for the game, which must be complied with by both teams.
S. NFHS Rule Clarifications:
    a. Rule 1-4-4. The state of Rhode Island will allow for special occasion, commemorative or memorial patches that will be uniformly placed, not to exceed 4 square inches, to be worn on jerseys in an appropriate and dignified manner without compromising the integrity of the uniform.
    b. The RIIL will not allow for a double first base according to NFHS rule 1-2-9
    c. The RIIL will not allow for any suggested speed-up rules according to NFHS rule 2-33-1 (courtesy runner rule)
    d. Protest(s) are permitted under Article 5 rules of the RIIL. Note: (NFHS Rule 10-2-3-i)

Section 9: Officials

A. RIIL assigned official's authority extends to pre- and post- game oversight. Fighting and unsportsmanlike penalties will be within the authority of the officials at all times at the contest site.
B. Police protection, when necessary, must be provided by the home school. The home school is responsible for all crowd control measures. There is an urgent need for increasing vigilance in this matter. Schools must make every effort to ensure that players, officials, and spectators are protected. Duties of the police will be determined and outlined by the home school.
C. With the assistance of the home team supervision, it shall be the responsibility of the officials to see that designated team areas adjacent to the field of play (benches) are cleared of everyone except certified & appointed coaches, team managers, scorers, players, medical personnel, and school designated personnel.
D. The home team should provide an adult game supervisor at all home events. In particular, an adult game supervisor must be present at ice hockey, basketball, field hockey, lacrosse, baseball, softball, football, soccer, volleyball and wrestling contests. The supervisor shall not be a student nor a coach involved with the game. The supervisor shall identify himself or herself to the game officials thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the game. The supervisor shall be responsible for game administration and crowd control. They should notify police, and rink representatives to seek appropriate assistance when applicable. In the event of a problem, the Principal/Athletic Director must notify the RIIL office the next day and submit a written report detailing the incident(s).