

Hilliard Baseball Association Umpire Program



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Getting Started

Eligibility: The HBA Umpire Program is open to anyone age 12 or older who resides in the City of Hilliard or within the Hilliard City School District boundaries. Umpires must have at least 2 years of baseball playing experience. Plate Umpires must be at least 15 years old; others will start as Field Umpires and may work their way up if desired.

Field vs. Plate Umpire:

- A Field Umpire calls outs at the bases and is required for all games.
- A Plate Umpire calls balls, strikes, and manages the game behind the batter.
- The 7/8 age group uses coach-pitch rules and does not require a plate umpire—you'll be the only umpire for these games.
- All other age groups (9/10 and above) have both a field and plate umpire. New umpires typically start with the 9/10 age group.

Training: All new umpires must attend a training/orientation. Field Umpires transitioning to Plate Umpires will need to attend an additional training session. If at any time, you feel you need additional training or support, please reach out to the umpire coordinator.

Pay: Pay is based on experience (number of games worked):

Field Umpires:

\$25 per game (Games 1–14)

\$30 per game (Game 15+)

Plate Umpires:

\$40 per game (Games 1–14)

\$45 per game (Games 15–28)

\$50 per game (Game 29+)

Certified Umpires:

Class 3: \$60

Class 2: \$65

Class 1: \$70

Additional Pay:

\$5 for tournament games

\$5 for upper divisions (13/14, 15/16, 17/18)

ArbiterSports: We use ArbiterSports (www.arbiter.io) for scheduling, assignments, and payments. You'll be added after attending training.

Game Assignments: Accepting/Declining Games: You will receive an email for each assignment through Arbiter Sports. If not accepted within 2–3 days, it may be reassigned. It is okay to decline games. How often you want to umpire is up to you and your schedule. Failing to respond to assignments may cause you to not receive game assignments. Not showing up for your assigned game also puts you at risk of no receiving future game assignments. Two no-shows will result in your removal from the roster for that season.

Communication: Regular communication with your umpire coordinator is important. If your availability to umpire changes, it is okay—but please communicate. If you need to take a season off, it is okay—but please communicate. Besides accepting and showing up for games, communication is the only way your umpire knows that you are actively engaged in the program and still want to umpire.

Open Games: Occasionally, games will be available on short notice and will be offered by email. They are assigned as “first come, first serve.” Text (703) 728-9099 or email arichardson1978@gmail.com immediately if interested.

Equipment: All umpires receive a blue umpire shirt. Field Umpires receive an indicator. Plate Umpires also receive a brush, bag and protective gear.

Phones: Phones are allowed but must not be used during play. Use only between innings and discreetly by the fence.

Weather: Canceled games will be updated in Arbiter. You may also check the Hilliard website's rainout line or contact the Umpire Coordinator. You will be paid if a game is canceled within an hour of start time.

HBA Rules: Umpires should review the HBA rules for each age group they are assigned. A condensed reference sheet has been provided. The full rules are available at www.hilliardbaseball.com and should be reviewed closely (excluding 5/6 year olds). Umpires age 13 or younger may also exclude the Pony Rules (ages 13–18).

The Basics

Umpires are authority figures. From the moment you arrive, you must look and act the part.

Appearance: Wear your provided umpire shirt. Pants or shorts should be a solid color (no shorter than mid-thigh). Look professional—respect is tied to appearance.

Act professional:

- Know the rules. Take steps to learn more, as needed. There are many resources available online.
- Take charge, respectfully, of course. Be pleasant and polite, but firm and confident on the field.
- Take your time on calls. Pause-read-react. There is nothing to be gained by rushing.
- Make your calls loud with strong signals so everyone knows what your call is.
- Don't hesitate. The best way to avoid confrontations is to be in the correct position to make the right call, and to "sell" close plays with confident verbal and hand signals.
- Always make calls with clear, firm decisiveness and confidence.
- If approached, don't argue; listen but be firm. If you are sure you made the right call, say so, and move on with the game. If you are not sure, listen, use your best judgment, make the call, and move on.
- Don't be afraid to confer with your partner (if available) if you are not sure about something. This does happen and is perfectly acceptable.
- It is important to not set the precedent that you will change your calls, upon request.
- Even professionals make mistakes. Treat each call as a new one. Never to "even things up" if you feel you made the wrong call.
- Smile and be nice – it goes a long way toward making things run smoothly.
- Always watch the BALL, and you will likely not miss an important play.
- Don't let comments bother you. Parents and coaches may make comments like "that looked close" and the like, but they are not meant to undermine your authority—ignore them during the game. The time to not ignore them is for prevention of direct, mean-spirited, or repeatedly disruptive comments or attacks. At minimum, this should be reported to your umpire coordinator after the game.

- There is no profanity and no smoking. This applies to players, coaches and parents. If there is an issue, you can speak with the coach directly or reach out to me if you prefer. Do not approach the parent. If it is a parent causing issues, start with the coach. The coach is responsible for his or her team's players.
- Never hover around a particular dugout, or mingle too closely with players and spectators, as this will cause problems. You don't want it to look like you favor one team or the other.

Before the game

- Get to the game on time. Show up early (at least 15 minutes).

Confer with your partner. (You will not have a partner for the 7/8 age group.)

- Hold a pre-game meeting with both coaches. The attending coach is considered the head coach.
- Go over the ground rules at the plate conference: things like where dead-ball territory is, strike zone, etc.
- Make sure the plate umpire gets game balls.
- Make sure the proper bat is being used (USA bat).
- Start on time.

During the game

- Help keep the game moving. Plate umpires should hustle the players into position and back to the dugout, including warming up pitchers.
- Stay near the plate during warm-ups, but out of the way near the backstop.
- Keep warm-up pitches to no more than 8 for a new pitcher, 5 for a returning one.
- Let the catcher get in position first, then you set up.
- Keep equipment off the field. This means bats, balls, buckets, catcher's gear, etc. If you see it on the field during play, wait until the play finishes.
- Pitchers should not wear sunglasses unless prescription.
- Keep the players in the dugouts when they are not on the field. The dugouts are for players and coaches.
- There is a 2 hour hard stop for regular games (7/8 age games usually are much shorter). No new inning begins after 1 hour and 45 minutes. Read the HBA rules for more details about this.

After the game

- Plate umpires should return the baseballs to the coach who provided them.
- Report any issues to the Umpire Coordinator.
- Currently, Field Reports are not required in Arbiter.
- Pay will be released within a week after the game (usually 1-3 days).

Next Steps after Training/Orientation

1. Complete Your Concussion Certification. Ohio law requires all officials to complete concussion recognition training. A free 30-minute online course is available at <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>. Email your completion certificate to the Umpire Coordinator. Certification is valid for three years.
2. Set up ArbiterSports. You will receive an email with an invite to ArbiterSports. Once received, log in promptly and set up your profile and enter your availability.
3. Complete the HBA Umpire Rules Assessment which can be found at www.HBAumpires.com or at the following QR Code:



HBA Assessment