**POLICY**: **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

**EFFECTIVE:** December 11, 2014

**PURPOSE**: To help ensure the safety of the children participating in Warwick Little League and the integrity of the League, and to comply with the official rules and regulations of Little League Baseball® (LLB), Warwick Little League will annually conduct a nationwide criminal history background check and sex offender registry (SOR) check on all League volunteers and/or personnel who must annually submit the Little League Official Volunteer Application.

**BACKGROUND**:

1. LLB Regulation I(c)8 requires that all League volunteers, directors or hired personnel who provide regular service to the League and/or who have repetitive access to, or contact with, players and teams to annually submit to the League President or his designee a fully completed and signed Little League Official Volunteer Application and a copy of a government-issued photo ID, usually a driver’s license. The applicant’s Social Security number is required.
2. Individuals subject to this requirement include, but may not be limited to, the following volunteers and personnel:
	1. Elected members of the League’s Board of Directors
	2. Team managers (head coaches) and assistant coaches
	3. Adults who regularly assist with team practices, but who may not be “official” coaches
	4. “Team Moms,” “Team Dads,” or adults who regularly assist with team administration
	5. Umpires, including paid umpires
	6. Adults not already named in this list who regularly help to maintain the League’s fields, grounds, equipment or property and, as a result, have repetitive access to, or contact with, teams or players
	7. Contractors and subcontractors who have repetitive contact with players and teams, e.g., photographers, uniform suppliers, etc.
	8. Coaches or instructors engaged by the League to perform League-sponsored training of players, i.e., to conduct or instruct at League-organized clinics or individual skills training, and who thereby have repetitive contact with players
3. LLB Regulation I(c)9 requires that the League conduct, at a minimum, a nationwide sex offender registry check on all individuals described in LLB Regulation I(c)8, as listed above, such as the registry available free from the US Department of Justice at its newly renamed Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website found at [www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov).
4. Warwick Little League, wishing to subscribe to the best practice encouraged by Little League®, shall conduct for all individuals described in LLB Regulation I(c)8, as listed above, a nationwide criminal history background check and nationwide sex offender registry check using First Advantage Screening Solutions (hereafter First Advantage®), an official partner with Little League®, available at <https://ca.fadv.com/CA/welcome.do?LLinternational>, or an equivalent agency, service or database.
5. The League President, or his designee, shall retain on file the Little League Official Volunteer Applications, photo IDs and background check results of each screened individual for at least the duration of the current calendar year, plus the following calendar year.

**PROCEDURE**:

1. Annually, individuals meeting the requirements of LLB Regulation I(c)8, as listed above, shall fully complete, sign and submit a Little League Official Volunteer Application form (hereafter volunteer application), together with a clear copy of a government-issued photo ID, typically a driver’s license, to the Warwick Little League’s Board of Directors. These individuals shall not be allowed to assume their duties until this step is completed and until the results of the background check have been obtained and accepted by the League. This must be done annually for all individuals covered by LLB Regulation I(c)8.
2. In the case of newly elected members of the Warwick Little League Board of Directors, each must complete, sign and submit the volunteer application form, together with a clear copy of a government-issued photo ID, to the League President upon election, or as soon thereafter as possible. They may assume their duties provisionally, contingent upon the completion of the required background check by October 1, the start of the Little League fiscal year. Regular elections for the Board of Directors are conducted at the League’s annual meeting, which is held on the first Thursday evening following Labor Day each year.
3. All volunteer application forms and copies of photo IDs will be forwarded to the League Information Officer (LIO), who is designated to personally conduct the nationwide criminal history background check and nationwide sex offender registry check (hereafter background check) required by the League using First Advantage Screening Solutions and state-specific sex offender registries as described on the Little League® website, or using an equivalent agency, service or database approved by Little League® and the Warwick Little League Board of Directors.
4. The LIO will share all background check results directly with the League President.
	1. An individual whose background check produces no record of a criminal conviction or sex offense is considered to be “clear” and eligible for election or appointment to serve with the League until the conclusion of the calendar year for which the volunteer application was submitted.
	2. A background check that returns a conviction or guilty plea for any crime against or involving a minor or minors, or that returns a conviction or guilty plea for a sex crime requiring listing on a sex offender registry, shall result in the individual being barred from volunteering or participating with Warwick Little League, per LLB Regulation I(c)9. (Nevertheless, that individual’s child may participate with the League.)
		1. The LIO shall inform the President of this finding, and the President shall review the results to confirm them.
		2. The President shall inform the applicant of the findings and the LLB requirement that he/she be barred from participation.
	3. A background check that returns a conviction or guilty plea for a crime or crimes not involving a minor or minors or not requiring listing on a sex offender registry will require evaluation and ruling by the Board of Directors before that individual is deemed fit to volunteer or participate with the League.
		1. In the event of such a finding, the Board of Directors shall vest its decision-making authority in a three-member review panel comprised of the President and League Information Office (LIO) of Warwick Little League, as well as the District Administrator for Virginia District 7 Little League (hereafter the review panel).
		2. The review panel shall be assembled and shall review the background check results in question and shall determine if the individual is fit to volunteer and/or participate with the League and in what capacity. To make its decision, the review panel must reach a consensus.
		3. The President shall inform the individual of the findings of the background check and of the decision of the Board, as vested in the review panel.
	4. If requested by the applicant whose background check returned proof of a conviction or guilty plea, the President shall direct the LIO to give the applicant a copy of the background check results.
5. After receiving confirmed background check results, the League President shall present to the Board the list of individuals he/she recommends for appointment as team managers (head coaches), coaches (assistant coaches) and umpires. (LLB Regulation I(b)) Individuals must receive a majority of the votes cast by the Board in order to be approved as a team manager, coach or umpire.
	1. Individuals receiving Board approval to serve as a manager, coach or umpire will be informed of such by the LIO or the appropriate vice president of baseball, vice president of softball, divisional commissioner or umpire-in-chief.
	2. An individual denied appointment as a manager or as a coach for reasons other than criminal history or sex offender registry search results will be informed of this decision by the appropriate vice president of baseball, vice president of softball, divisional commissioner or umpire-in-chief.
6. Individuals seeking to volunteer or participate with the League in capacities other than team manager, coach or umpire, and who are subject to the background check requirements, do not require full Board approval or appointment. If they are cleared or deemed fit through the process outlined above in Step 4, a – d, they can be informed of such and proceed to begin to participate with the League. For example, when a team manager identifies a volunteer to serve as his Team Mom, her volunteer application may be processed as described herein. Assuming she is cleared or approved to volunteer, the team manager and/or applicant for Team Mom will be informed of such, and she can assume the duties of Team Mom.
7. If the League’s Board of Directors suspects that an individual’s background check results may have changed since the background check was previously conducted, the League President may request their written permission to perform another background check. Refusal to submit to a background check when requested by the League may be grounds for being barred from or dismissed from volunteering or participating with the League.
8. Background check results are not the sole determining factor the Board of Directors and League officials may or should consider when determining the fitness of any individual to serve or participate with the League. The League should consider the totality of the individual. The Board may take action to remove an individual whose personal behavior, reputation, character or presence is believed to be harmful to the League and/or detrimental to the peaceful enjoyment of the League by its participants. The Board may at any time, for any reason, by simple majority vote, bar an individual from volunteering or participating with the League, provided the basis for that decision does not rest solely on the individual’s disability, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, sexual preference or religious preference.
9. Original volunteer applications, copies of photo IDs, and background check results should be retained by the League President, or his designee, for at least the duration of year for which their volunteer application was filed and for one complete calendar year immediately following. A background check completed for the spring season will suffice for the remainder of the playing year.
10. Following the conclusion of the document retention period (current year plus one), all volunteer applications, copies of photo IDs and background check results will be shredded and disposed of. Copies, paper or electronic, will not be retained.