

2019 ABR Umpire “Standards”

(current as of 18 February 2019)

- **Pre-Season Training** – Umpires will receive a welcome email from the ABR Umpire in Chief (UIC)/ABR Umpire Scheduler in January for the Spring season with an invitation to an upcoming ABR Umpire Training Clinic. Information will include: the process for obtaining National Umpire Association (NUA) Certification through the Babe Ruth League website (and game and certificate requirements in order to be reimbursed for the registration fee by ABR); the current pay schedule for games; and the steps for new and rookie umpires to submit a tax form W-9.
- Once NUA certified, umpires will receive the Babe Ruth rules book in the mail. In March ABR will publish “local rules” on line. All umpires must spend time studying these documents to be familiar with game/local rules.
- All umpires (youth and adult; rookies, new, and returning) will attend the ABR Umpire Training Clinic (orientation session) which lasts for approximately 2 ½ to 3 hours. This is usually held in early February and is usually held at Yorktown High School. At the meeting, or soon thereafter, additional information will be provided to include: plans for distributing protective equipment; requirements for umpire uniforms as spelled out in the ABR Umpire Uniform Policy letter; plans for pre-season training; process for obtaining adult background checks; and an updated ABR Umpire “Standards.”
- New for Spring 2019 is a planned “cage session” during which plate umpire mechanics will be taught, and umpires will practice these mechanics using a pitching machine, catcher, and batter. Training should last for approximately 45 minutes to one hour and is anticipated to be indoors sometime in late February or early to mid-March. All new and rookie umpires will be scheduled to attend. Other slots will be filled by returning umpires. This will be a great training opportunity!
- New and rookie umpires will participate in an On-Field Training Clinic, typically at the AAA American level, on Opening Day, which is typically the first week of April. Training is under the supervision of experienced ABR umpires. This will be the first “paid” event for new and rookie umpires and will last for approximately two hours.
- After this, new and rookie umpires will be scheduled their first games! Congratulations!
- **Equipment** – ABR will provide loaner protective plate umpire equipment if an umpire doesn’t have his/her own. Equipment will be returned after the season ends and must be returned before the final pay check will be issued. The umpire equipment “bag” will include: a mask with dangling throat protector, a chest protector, shin guards, an indicator, a brush, and a ball bag. New and rookie umpires will be given a navy-blue umpire hat to use and keep. All umpires will provide his/her own protective cup/holder (as required), (sun)glasses, sunscreen, hand towel (as desired), and drinks.

(UP FRONT – Returning umpires may continue to use the official umpire powder blue shirt that they already have if they are in good condition. Returning umpires are not required to buy new uniforms. However, if he/she are buying something new, such as an official umpire shirt or official umpire pants or an official umpire hat, it is highly encouraged that he/she buy uniforms as spelled out in the ABR Umpire Uniform Policy letter.)

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- **Uniforms** –Uniform guidance is spelled out in the ABR Umpire Uniform Policy letter. Read the letter closely. The key to success is to figure out what needs to be purchased and to get that done immediately! ABR provides a generous \$50 stipend for rookie umpires which will be paid upon presentation of receipts for purchased items after meeting game requirements. Umpires will provide his/her own: official umpire pants (must be dark charcoal grey colored), official umpire powder blue shirt (the standard is powder blue, with no accent stripe down the side, with a powder blue collar, and with white and navy-blue piping on the edge of the collar and on the end of the sleeves), black belt, black shoes, black socks, a navy-blue or black t-shirt, and any needed cold weather gear. Umpires will use the issued navy-blue umpire hat and will buy their own replacement hat if a new hat is needed.
- **Equipment/Uniform Wear Requirements** – At all levels of play, umpire uniforms and equipment must be clean and must look professional. Right after a game, clean all equipment, launder uniforms as needed, and hang up the uniform. Keep everything together so that items won't become lost or forgotten when departing for the field.
- Umpire chest protectors will be worn under the official umpire powder blue shirt or umpire jacket, with the shirt tucked in. If an umpire uses a “blocker,” then the blocker will not be worn under the tucked in official umpire powder blue shirt. Umpire shin guards will be worn under the official umpire pants.
- If it is cold, umpires can wear an official umpire jacket or they can wear a dark (black, dark blue, dark colored) long sleeved shirt or jacket under his/her official umpire powder blue shirt. Umpire teams should wear the same color. An exception could be if one umpire has the official umpire jacket (navy-blue) and the other umpire wears a dark shirt or jacket under his/her official umpire powder blue umpire shirt. This is acceptable. Umpires may wear black gloves if it is cold and may wear a plain dark “beanie cap” under his/her umpire hat. Ensure there are no inappropriate logos, lettering, or team information on these clothing items.
- If the temperature is expected to be over 90 degrees Fahrenheit during the game, it is acceptable for youth umpires assigned to the bases position to wear dark-colored, plain, professional-looking short pants, with a black belt, with black socks, with black shoes, and with his/her official umpire powder blue shirt tucked in. These youth umpires should have his/her official umpire pants with them in case they need to swap to “take the plate.” When behind the plate, all umpires shall wear official umpire pants.
- While the official umpire powder blue shirt described above and in the uniform letter is the “standard,” umpire teams may wear other official umpire shirts of a different color if the colors match or are coordinated. If an umpire is working a game “solo,” then any official umpire shirt color may be worn but he/she should have the official umpire powder blue shirt available in case an umpire partner is assigned to the game at the last minute.
- **The ABR Umpire Scheduler and Game Assignments** – Ensure the scheduler knows your availability well in advance. Be PROACTIVE – read your emails and send emails in a timely manner; involve parents as needed; if ANY conflicts come up, or the potential for a conflict is pending, especially after a game has been assigned, umpires MUST immediately get in contact with the

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scheduler. Except in the case of extreme illness or significant unforeseen circumstances, it is NOT acceptable to “give back” assigned games or fail to show up to the assigned game. If there are any issues, the umpire MUST get in contact with the scheduler or the UIC immediately.

- **Prior to the Game** – Umpires shall call the Arlington Weather Line one hour before game time. Typically, if the game is “still on” within an hour of first pitch, and you have left your house for the field, you will normally be paid even if the game is subsequently cancelled due to weather. Confirm this with the scheduler.
- Clean your uniform and equipment; bring all your umpire equipment with you in case you need to “take the plate” at the last minute; arrive at the field at least 10 to 15 minutes early and find your partner, usually off of the field and behind home plate; bring water, sunscreen, and a hand towel as needed; and discuss important issues with your partner.
- The plate umpire holds the plate conference at home plate with his/her umpire partner and both coaches at 5 to 10 minutes prior to the start of the game. Confirm “all players are properly equipped” and “all equipment conforms.” Discuss all other topics as covered in the ABR Umpire Training Clinic with an emphasis on sportsmanship.
- **During the Game** – Do a great job; communicate with coaches and your umpire partner; exercise great game management; keep the game going; enforce the rules; keep things safe; be respectful to everyone; handle problems; take notes if needed; DO NOT play with your phone; keep your hands out of your pockets; monitor the weather; watch the clock for “no new inning” and “drop dead” times; and have fun!
- **After the Game** – Plan to be available for approximately 10 minutes after the game so the two umpires can discuss the game with each other; share techniques; talk about things during the game that went well and those things that need to be improved upon; take note of any rules issues you want to look into (and then do so when you get home or soon thereafter, so you can improve your umpire knowledge); send a short email to the scheduler about game status (i.e. “complete with no issues and both umpires were there – no problems”); if there are ANY issues at all (injury; issue with coaches, fans or players; major mistake that impacted the game; etc.), send a short email to the ABR UIC. Keep a log of your games and track when you have been paid by ABR.
- **Questions, Comments, Issues or Clarifications** – At any time, umpires can contact the ABR Umpire in Chief, Harry Devens, at abrumpire@gmail.com. During reasonable hours umpires can call the UIC at 703-609-0659. Umpires can also contact the ABR Umpire Scheduler, Beth Jones, at abrumpirescheduler@gmail.com. During reasonable hours umpires can call the Scheduler at 703-307-7114. It is highly recommended that umpires load these email addresses and phone numbers into his/her phones. As well, it is highly recommended to add the Arlington County Weather Line phone number (703-228-4715) and the Arlington County Rover phone number (571-238-0265) to his/her phones. **(END.)**