

ABR UMPIRE COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES CURRENT FOR SPRING 2022 (current as of 15 February 2022)

The **VISION** for ABR Umpires is to focus on having fun, doing your job as an umpire, and being safe; the below umpire considerations, roles, and responsibilities are well thought out and coordinated, and should maximize your potential for success to conduct safe and healthy baseball games for all – be attentive and focus on your roles; all new and Rookie umpires should read this document and will practice this during on-field training; all other umpires should read this document and reach out to the ABR Umpire in Chief if there are any questions or issues to discuss

UMPIRE PREPARATIONS BEFORE YOUR GAME

- A. Ensure you have a COVID-19 mask to bring with you to the field
- B. Stay in close contact with the Umpire in Chief (UIC) and the Umpire Scheduler (USch) if there are any issues or concerns; make sure to work out any issues well in advance; watch your email closely for any updates to these protocols
- C. Practice safe social distancing and preventative measures
- D. Be aware of Virginia's COVID-19 "Considerations for Recreational Sports; Youth Sports Gameplan" at: [Considerations for Recreational Sports - Coronavirus \(virginia.gov\)](https://www.virginia.gov/health/COVID-19/considerations-for-recreational-sports-coronavirus) (as of 15 Feb 2022)

"Outdoors: Playing outdoor sports is generally safer than indoors. Unvaccinated athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators should strongly consider wearing masks, especially if close contact is likely to occur. Fully vaccinated people might also consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor spaces if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised.

1. All eligible participants should be vaccinated against COVID-19; vaccination is the most effective way to reduce risk of transmission of COVID-19
2. All participants and spectators should maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance to the extent possible; exercise and activities like cheering and shouting increase respiration and can increase the risk of transmitting COVID-19 and may benefit from additional distancing (e.g., 10 feet); sports that can be modified to increase the distance between participants in practice or in play are encouraged
3. Disinfect shared items between each use, to the extent practicable
4. Wash cloth masks after each use
5. To improve physical distancing, limit occupancy in training facilities and locker rooms by staggering training sessions and pre-game preparation
6. Limit carpooling when traveling for competition or to practices; when group transportation is required, reduce vehicle occupancy to allow for the greatest distance possible between persons not of the same household and require individuals to wear a mask while being transported
7. Establish policies for pre- and post-game activities that discourage close contact between players, coaches, and families not of the same household, including when participants are sharing living facilities
8. Consider screening testing, especially for school-sponsored sports"

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BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR HOUSE FOR YOUR UMPIRE GAME ASSIGNMENT

A. Know your own health situation; if you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you are ill in any way, do not work a game and notify the UIC or USch ASAP

AT THE FIELD AND PREPARING TO START THE GAME

A. Strive to maintain safe spacing; this may not always be possible due to incidental contact, such as calling a close play, but always strive to quickly return to safe spacing as soon as you can after the play

B. Umpires are expected to use outstanding judgment regarding when to wear COVID-19 masks while performing their umpire duties

C. For the Pregame Conference, maintain safe spacing; emphasize that COVID-19 protocols are the responsibility of the managers, coaches, players and fans; umpires are responsible for their own adherence to protocols; if umpires see lapses by others, umpires may make a comment on the spot or bring it to the attention of the manager; it is not acceptable for anyone to intentionally ignore protocols; cover these items:

1. Umpires may handle baseballs but should minimize contact with other player equipment (bats or catcher's equipment)

2. If the coaches prefer, the team on defense may be the only ones to touch the baseballs used by the defense; defensive team must be ready with additional baseballs and should consider cleaning the baseballs during and between innings; consider assigning a primary person for this; defensive team will retrieve all foul ball baseballs to the max extent possible; on deck batters or base coaches should not routinely retrieve baseballs

3. Team on offense will be the only ones to touch baseball bats after use; consider assigning a primary person for this; consider cleaning equipment between use

4. During the house season, umpires will not keep track of the lineup, will not need line up cards, and will not track substitutes or courtesy runners

5. Remind everyone to respect umpire protocols and distancing; at a minimum, there will be no spitting or eating of sunflower seeds and the such anywhere on or near the baseball field/dugouts/sitting areas; do not share equipment or drinks and the such

BIG PICTURE FOR ABR COVID-19 UMPIRE CONSIDERATIONS

A. Maintain social distancing; do not spit or eat sunflower seeds and the such; do not share drinks or food; HUSTLE when needed; just do your best and be safe

B. BASE UMPIRE, from A, B, or C positions, utilizes normal umpire mechanics; for new or Rookie umpires, these mechanics will be covered during on-field training

C. PLATE UMPIRE, from the slot position next to the catcher and batter, utilizes normal umpire mechanics; for new or Rookie umpires, these mechanics will be covered during on-field training

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BASE UMPIRE (BU) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. PRIMARY umpire to call if a runner left early from 1B or 3B (as appropriate for level of play)

B. Shares responsibility with other umpire to call "TIME" (when appropriate), or "BALK" (if appropriate for level of play), or "TIME" (for hit by pitcher), or "FOUL" (for hit foul ball that hits the batter inside of the batter box), or "INFIELD FLY BATTER IS OUT/INFIELD FLY BATTER IS OUT IF FAIR" (if appropriate for level of play), or "RUNNER LEFT EARLY" (if appropriate for level of play); to call "YES HE DID" or "HE DID NOT" (for check swings) ONLY IF asked by the Plate Umpire; to call if a runner left early from 2B (as appropriate for level of play)

C. Has "CATCH/NO CATCH" responsibility, when in position A, for fly balls to the right field foul ball line, or when in position B or C, for fly balls to the infield that are beyond the pitcher (unless Plate Umpire calls for the call due to the fly ball being close to the foul ball line) and for fly balls to the outfield that land between the right fielder to the left fielder; mimics the rotation hand signals from the Plate Umpire (as appropriate for level of play); makes all normal "SAFE," "OUT," "THAT'S INTERFERENCE," and "THAT'S OBSTRUCTION" calls (as appropriate) at 1B, 2B, 3B, and in the infield, unless the Plate Umpire helps out at 3B; replies to appeals that are for the Base Umpire; makes all "SAFE," "OUT," "THAT'S INTERFERENCE," and "THAT'S OBSTRUCTION" calls for pickoff attempts at 1B, 2B and 3B (if appropriate for level of play) and for steal attempts to 2B and 3B (if appropriate for level of play); has touch responsibility for 1B, 2B, and 3B. has tag up responsibility for 1B and 2B; mimics the foul ball hand signal and "FOUL" call ONLY WHEN FIRST USED by the Home Plate Umpire for any foul balls down the 1B or 3B lines

PLATE UMPIRE (PU) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. ONLY umpire to call "PLAY," or "BALL," or "STRIKE"; to clean home plate when needed; to give the count to a batter, catcher or coach as appropriate or IF asked

B. PRIMARY umpire to call "YES HE DID" (for check swings) or "HE DID NOT" (for no check swing if it was a close call), or to give the count, or to indicate foul tip strikes; if playing at a level with no leads, to call if a runner left early from 2B; to call "TIME" (for batter who is OUT for having a foot completely outside of the batter's box and on the ground when a ball is hit fair or foul), or "NO CATCH" (for dropped third strike if appropriate for level of play); to use "hammer calls" for strikes to keep eyes pointed towards the field; to call "FOUL" for any hit foul balls that go down the 1B or 3B lines; to call "TIME" (for batter who is OUT for having a foot completely outside of the batter's box and on the ground when a ball is hit fair or foul)

C. Shares responsibility with other umpire to call "TIME" (when appropriate), or "BALK" (if appropriate for level of play), or "TIME" (for hit by pitcher), or "FOUL" (for hit foul ball that hits the batter inside of the batter box), or "INFIELD FLY BATTER IS OUT/BATTER IS OUT IF FAIR" (if appropriate for level of play), or "RUNNER LEFT EARLY" (if appropriate for level of play)

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D. Has "CATCH/NO CATCH" responsibility for all fly balls to the infield when the BU is in A, for all fly balls that are up to the pitcher when the BU is in B or C, for all fly balls close to either the 1B or 3B foul ball line, and, when the BU is in A, for fly balls to the outfield that land between the right fielder and the 1B foul line, and that land between the left fielder and the 3B foul line; gives the rotation hand signals to the Base Umpire (as appropriate for level of play); indicates any fair/foul ball down lines using standard hand signals; makes all normal "SAFE," "OUT," "THAT'S INTERFERENCE," and "THAT'S OBSTRUCTION" calls (as appropriate) ALWAYS for the Home Plate to include plays and squeeze steal attempts, and for 3B ONLY when supporting the Base Umpire; replies to appeals that are for the Plate Umpire; has touch responsibility for 3B (with a rotation) and Home Plate (always); has tag up responsibility for 3B; tracks warm up pitches and announces "TWO MORE" to catcher and on deck batter; keeps track of mound visits; keeps home plate clean

REMEMBER – Have fun, do your job as an umpire, and be safe; use proper social distancing, wash your hands, avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose with uncleaned hands, wear a COVID-19 mask when you should, pay attention to any illness symptoms, and if you feel ill, stay home and contact the UIC and USch