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LITTLE LEAGUE® CANCELS 2020 WORLD SERIES AND REGION TOURNAMENTS

April 30, 2020

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Due to the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Little League International has made the difficult and disappointing decision to cancel its World Series and Region Tournaments for first time in organization history; commits approximately \$1.2 million in support to local leagues 2020 MLB Little League Classic Presented by GEICO Also Canceled; Event Will Return in 2021

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After a thorough assessment of the impact the devastating COVID-19 pandemic has had on 6,500 community-based Little League® programs in 84 countries and based upon the direction of governmental and public health authorities, and in consultation with medical professionals and our

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Board of Directors, Little League International has made the difficult and disappointing decision to cancel its seven World Series tournaments and their respective regional qualifying events.

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“This is a heartbreaking decision for everyone at Little League International, but more so for those millions of Little Leaguers who have dreamt of one day playing in one of our seven World Series events,” said Stephen D. Keener, Little League President and CEO. “After exhausting all possible options, we came to the conclusion that because of the significant public health uncertainty that will still exist several months from now, and with direction from Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine, as well as senior public health officials and government leaders from locations where our other six World Series are held, as well as the their qualifying regional tournaments, it will not be possible to proceed with our tournaments as we’ve hosted them for nearly 75 years.”



STEPHEN D. KEENER
PRESIDENT & CEO, LITTLE LEAGUE® INTERNATIONAL

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Tournaments, including:

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- The inability to play qualifying tournaments in many of our U.S. and International regions, coupled with direction from federal officials regarding the complexity of international travel restrictions and immigration requirements.

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- An indication from teams from around the globe that they will be unable to participate or travel to these tournaments.

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- The testing and mitigation protocols that would need to be in place at these significant public events should an individual participating or attending an event be diagnosed with COVID-19.

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The cancellation includes the 82 regional qualifying tournaments and their respective seven World Series events:

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- Little League Baseball – South Williamsport, Pa.
- Little League Softball® – Greenville, N.C.
- Intermediate (50/70) Baseball – Livermore, Calif.
- Junior League Baseball – Taylor, Mich.
- Junior League Softball – Kirkland, Wash.
- Senior League Baseball – Easley, S.C.
- Senior League Softball –Sussex County, Del.

As 2021 was originally supposed to be the playing of the 75th Little League Baseball World Series, that celebration will now take place in 2022. More information about World Series locations and future dates can be found at [LittleLeague.org \(https://www.littleleague.org/news/dates-announced-for-next-three-years-of-little-league-world-series-events/\)](https://www.littleleague.org/news/dates-announced-for-next-three-years-of-little-league-world-series-events/).

As a result of this decision, the 2020 MLB Little League Classic presented by GEICO, originally scheduled for August 23 between the Boston Red Sox and Baltimore Orioles, has also been canceled. Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association have already committed to returning to Williamsport for the 2021 MLB Little League Classic next August.

[\(https://www.littleleague.org/\)](https://www.littleleague.org/) Delivering this news comes with a very heavy heart. We have never had to cancel our World Series tournaments, but, right now, as our world comes together, we must do everything we can to help stem the spread of this deadly virus,” said Hugh E. Tanner, Little League International Board of Directors Chairman. “While we take this pause from the World Series and Regional Tournaments this summer, we are committed to working with our volunteers and staff to continue to provide an unparalleled youth sports experience to all children and be back stronger than ever in 2021.”

To assist the local Little League programs as they continue to assess their local operations, Little League International will be crediting all chartered programs with the affiliation fees paid for their chartered teams in 2020, which totals approximately \$1.2 million in support to local leagues. These funds will be credited through Little League’s Data Center and be available for local leagues to use on current balances, future affiliation and insurance fees, tournament enrollment, and other Little League-related expenses.



As each state and community will have different guidance for [resuming organized youth sports](#), Little League International strongly encourages volunteers to [conflict with their local and state health officials](#) that it is safe to do so before resuming Little League activities. [May 11th release, playing arm exercises](#) [https://www.littleleague.org/newsroom/2020/05/11/playing-arm-exercises-05112020.html?utm_source=referral&utm_content=v2](#) opportunities could include not only regular season activities, but opportunities for local district, and, perhaps, state all-star tournament play to provide players, especially those moving up to a new age division in 2021, a tournament experience, if possible and safe.

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