

Baltimore Chesed League - 2026 Rules

League Mission

Through team camaraderie and an exciting league format, the Baltimore Chesed League aims to provide Jewish boys in our community with opportunities to engage in meaningful “chesed-focused” activities, encourage the development of positive middos, and ultimately, help build caring, empathic, and “mentchlich” individuals.

The What

Season

- The 2026 BCL Season will run for 6 weeks
- "Games" will occur on the weeks of February 8, 15, 22, and March 1, 8, and 15.

Team Format

- There are 26 teams
- Each team has 6/7 boys and two coaches

The Who

Eligible players

- Any boy within our community in Grades 5-8.

Coaches

- Coaches have been selected carefully and their involvement is crucial to team success. Coaches are expected to:
 - Drive/lead at least one “assigned activity” per week (about 1.5 hour commitment per week. See below.)
(“Assigned activities” and “self-directed activities” will be explained later in this document.)
 - Communicate with players/parents on pickup/drop-off logistics for "assigned activities"

- Provide leadership and education on how to perform chesed appropriately (i.e. don't run or push, smile and be polite, etc.)
- If appropriate, ensure the kids have a "game plan" before going on an activity
- Ensure that the boys are behaving in a "mentschlich" manner with each other and with those they interact with on the activities
- Compile information regarding the different "self-directed activities" the boys on their team complete, provide the league with a brief recap of the experiences over the week, and share pictures from the "assigned activity" with the league committee
- Remind the kids to perform the "self-directed activities" on their own time

Please note that a coach should feel free to request support from the different parents of the players on his team.

The league will conduct a pre-season meeting for all coaches to review logistics and answer any questions.

The How

Assigned and Self-directed Activities

- To participate in a weekly game, boys are required to complete the assigned activities as well as a specific number of self-directed activities
- Each week, the league will send an email with the details for that week's assigned activity for each team.
 - An "assigned activity" is defined as something that will generally require the boys to be driven somewhere and will also require coach supervision/guidance.
 - Sample activities could include:
 - Visiting a nursing home or assisted living facility
 - Helping package food for Ahavas Yisrael
 - Baking desserts for Bikur Cholim
 - Helping to pick up trash in a local neighborhood in support of CHAI
 - Most assigned activities occur on Sunday afternoons. However, there are a few activities that will be on different days/times.
If an assigned activity does not fit with a team's availability, the team's coach **must** inform the league committee immediately. (Note, there is no guarantee that the league will be able to accommodate a scheduling conflict.)
 - Please also note, because our intention is to create a variety of opportunities for each team throughout the season, there will be times that a team may not be assigned a desired activity. However, teams are always expected to follow through with their assigned activity.
- The email will also list some suggested "self-directed activities."
 - A "self-directed activity" is defined as something that boys are encouraged to do on their own. It does not require supervision and they are not assigned.
 - Sample self-directed activities could include:
 - Helping to put away siddurim in shul at the end of davening

- Helping to clean up at the end of father/son learning or at the end of a kiddush
 - Helping to set up a kiddush
 - Helping a neighbor shovel their walk
 - Visiting an elderly neighbor on Shabbos afternoon
- Teams are encouraged (although not required) to think of potential self-directed activities that are not already on the list that they would like to perform.

Scoring/Winning

- Teams will earn a win each week by attaining **20 points**- (*Potentially, every team can 'win' each week!*)
 - If a team completes its "assigned activity," the team may earn up to 15 points. 10 points will be awarded just for participating in the "assigned activity," and up to an additional 5 bonus points can be earned, based on the feedback we receive from the organization they helped, for a potential total of 15 points.
 - At least 3 team members **are required** to be present at the activity for the team to receive points
 - Teams may complete as many weekly "self-directed activities" as they wish. For every self-directed activity, the team earns *1 point for every team member involved in the activity* for a maximum of 7 points for each 'self-directed' activity (7 team members.) (For example, if a team decides to shovel a neighbor's driveway, if 1 team member does this, the team earns 1 point. If 3 team members do it, the team earns 3 points. And so on and so forth.)
 - On that note, one boy may choose to complete multiple self-directed activities in one week, earning multiple points for the team.
 - As an illustration, here is what a sample week can look like:
 - 'Assigned' activity with 7 teammates- 10 points
 - Positive feedback from assigned activity - 5 bonus points
 - 1 'self-directed' activity by 7 teammates- 7 points
 - Total- 22 points (which is more than the 20-point threshold) = **WIN!**
 - Points do not carry over from week to week. At the beginning of each game/week, every team starts again with zero points.
 - **Note** – Teams are not competing against each other. They are only striving to attain a goal that can be accomplished by each individual team. All 26 teams can win one week; all 26 teams can lose one week.

Tracking of completed activities

- Each Monday, a league committee member will communicate with coaches to ensure that the assigned activities AND the appropriate amount of self-directed activities were completed. (It will be incumbent upon the coaches to collect the 'self-directed' activities the kids and confirm how many were performed.)
- The league will follow up with the organizations that were involved to confirm that a) the kids did indeed perform the activity and b) gather any relevant feedback

- Following the review, the league will post results on the league website.

Incentives

Prizes

- Teams will be eligible to win prizes based on their weekly performance:
 - If a team wins weeks 1, 2, and 3 they are eligible for the mid-season prize
 - If a team wins weeks 4, 5, and 6, they are eligible to attend the final banquet at Suburban Orthodox

Sweatshirt

- All players will receive a BCL sweatshirt for participating in the league
- While not required, players are strongly encouraged to wear their sweatshirts while out on an activity (to help build the team/camaraderie element of the league and promote the league to others who will ideally look to participate in the future.)