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National
Congress of
American
Indians

**NCAI Applauds Decision by Little League International to Ban
Racially Offensive Team Names and Mascots**

WASHINGTON, D.C. | The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is applauding a decision by [Little League® International](#) (the governing body of all global Little League-affiliated leagues and teams) to institute a new official policy in its 2019 Rulebook prohibiting the use of “racially insensitive, derogatory or discriminatory” team names and mascots, which NCAI has confirmed includes offensive Native “themed” names and mascots that cause significant harm to Native people.

The new rule, which applies to all Little League® International divisions under its [“Operational Policies” Code](#), reads as follows: “Little League prohibits the use of team names, mascots, nicknames or logos that are racially insensitive, derogatory or discriminatory in nature. Little League requires all chartered local league programs, volunteers as well as regular employees to comply with the policies outlined above. Disciplinary action to address violations of the policies outlined above will be determined in the sole discretion of either the Charter Committee or Little League management, as applicable.”

“We commend Little League International for taking this important step to stand on the right side of history, and we welcome the news that it is already hard at work ensuring that all of its affiliated leagues and teams promptly comply with this new edict of respect for Native people and other communities of color,” said NCAI President Jefferson Keel. “Little League International molds not just the athletic talents but also the minds of so many young people across America, so its new rule will go a long way towards fostering greater understanding of our common humanity and the diversity that makes this country great.”

Little League® International’s new rule follows on the heels of Major League Baseball’s [historic decision](#) to retire the offensive “Chief Wahoo” mascot of its Cleveland franchise in January 2018.

To learn more about the many documented harms that Native “themed” sports mascots cause Native people, please click [here](#).

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About the National Congress of American Indians:

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians is the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the country. NCAI advocates on behalf of tribal governments and communities, promoting strong tribal-federal government-to-government policies, and promoting a better understanding among the general public regarding American Indian and Alaska Native governments, people and rights. For more information, visit www.ncai.org.