

LITTLE LEAGUE® CONCESSIONS GUIDE SPONSORED BY LANCE®



FAQ



The Concession Manager directly impacts the financial stability and public perception of any local Little League, meaning that the person in this role must be able to generate consistent revenue and nurture goodwill with patrons and volunteers. Among the skills necessary for a person(s) to effectively organize and operate a Little League concession stand, are the ability to motivate and manage like a small business owner, while being personable and approachable. Since concession staffers are typically parents or volunteers, it is critical to have the professional and personable balance to maximize participation and fiscal accountability. Below are several common questions, answers, and recommended procedures to assist the Concession Manager in executing this local league role.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are the top responsibilities/priorities of the Concession Manager?

A: Set-up, purchasing, staff recruitment, and making an open/close policy and procedure are a few of the top priorities. The Concession Manager should also be available for questions, the overall operation of the stand during the game, and be present for any repairs of equipment that may be completed by a professional.

Q: Is the Concession Manager a member of the local league's Board of Directors?

A: Yes, the Concession Manager should be actively involved on the league's Board of Directors. It is highly recommended that the Board consider assembling a committee to assist with the required and necessary duties.

Q: Does the Concession Manager need to be a league volunteer?

A: This position is a league volunteer and member of the Board of Directors. The person in this position is to provide a report to the Board at each meeting throughout the year.

Q: When do you begin planning your annual operating budget?

A: The budget is generally presented and approved by the league Board of Directors prior to the start of the coming season.



Q: What expenses go into the annual operating budget?

A: Supplies, and food costs are the largest expenses in the budget. However, there may be incidentals, like repair or purchase of new cooking equipment, so it is best to be prepared for unforeseen expenses.

Q: Who decides what will be sold in the concession stand?

A: The menu and other items to be sold is commonly decided upon by the Concession Manager, but also be willing to take realistic suggestions from volunteers and fans. Keep it simple and ask for special items to be donated by parents or the community. Consider buying larger quantity of items in bulk when possible and accepting donated items from each team to assist in keeping costs down.

Q: Are there certain popular or specialty foods to consider on the menu?

A: Concession stands should always be well-stocked with bottled beverages, such as water and Gatorade, as well as pre-packaged snacks that have a long-shelf life, like Lance Sandwich Crackers, candy, sunflower seeds, etc. Providing unique food or beverage items is an added sale point if it is possible to market and produce on a consistent basis, regardless of staffing. Healthy food options are good examples of add-on items that are typically popular, but often have a limited market. The Concession Manager would decide, with input from other concession staff members, if it is worth purchasing, preparing, and selling specialty items on a regular basis.

Q: Is there a volunteer responsible for making purchases?

A: The Concession Manager coordinates with the league Treasurer for purchases of concession products to be sold and any equipment needs for the stand.

Q: Where does the Concessions Manager purchase items to be sold?

A: The incoming Concession Manager should be given the purchasing information from the previous Concession Manager or Treasurer. If the Concession Manager position is new to a league's Board of Directors, a list of area vendors should be compiled, and competitive contacts should be made to assemble a price list. Wherever possible, the Concession Manager should evaluate pricing to help ensure that the league is purchasing the most economical option to help the profits of the stand (e.g. bulk purchasing, etc.), as well as keep prices reasonable for fans.



Q: How are prices set?

A: Prices are usually set based on last year's costs and can also be influenced by vendor, bulk, or retail prices paid by the league to gather the products to be sold, and any inflation that may occur. Typically, a great pricing tip to follow is to price items two times what was paid for the item.

Q: How frequently should inventory be evaluated, and the concession stand/area be re-stocked?

A: Once per week, typically at the end of the last game(s) of the weekend, the full inventory should be reviewed. The items to be purchased/replaced is to be assembled by the Concession Manager onto a "shopping list." Purchases are to be made using a method pre-approved by the Board of Directors and include a complete invoice/receipt that is to be provided to the Treasurer or designated member of the Audit Committee.

Q: What are the first steps in recruiting a volunteer staff?

A: It would be helpful if a volunteer has some organizing and management experience. So, it is beneficial to identify some individuals in your community who have customer service industry experience as part of your core volunteer staff. An experienced volunteer may work with inexperienced volunteers to help staff the concession stand and garner interest.

Q: Is a concession stand procedures checklist recommended for concession volunteers?

A: An opening procedure checklist and a closing procedure checklist should be made for all concession volunteers to follow. Everyone is to have a clear understanding of what is to be done and expected. A contact phone number should be available on each of those checklists.

Q: Is there a volunteer responsible for creating the staff schedule?

A: The Concession Manager can request each player's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) takes a turn in the concession stand or he/she can delegate to another parent/volunteer to make the schedule to try to keep everyone involved. Scheduled staff are asked to arrive one (1) hour prior to the start of game(s).

Q: How do you decide how many people should work in the concession stand during a game(s)?

A: Many times, it is based on knowledge of your league and teams to estimate if there will be a larger fan base on certain days that others based on the game schedule, and of course, the weather. More sunshine usually equals more business.



Q:How are receipts to be counted?

A: Two concession volunteers are to count money at the end of each shift for verification and accuracy. Receipts should be kept and given to the league Treasurer and regularly reported to the entire Board of Directors at meetings.

Q: Is there a volunteer responsible for depositing the concession revenue in the league’s account?

A: The monies are counted at the end of the shift by at least two designated concession volunteers. The league Treasurer is responsible for taking the monies to the bank. A policy should be in place to confirm a deposit was made and to keep a game sales ledger. The formation of an Audit Committee consisting of Board members is highly recommended. This committee is responsible for reviewing all receipts and deposits.

Q: How can I make it fun to volunteer in the concession stand?

A: Schedule experienced staff with those of lesser experience to help build comradery and a fun work environment. Early in the season, “overstaff” the concession and assign small tasks to the less experienced so they can become acclimated and not overwhelmed. Before the start of the season, designate one experienced staff member to provide an “in-service” to the other veterans and hold a separate in-service to the first-season volunteers. Hold the meeting in the concession area, so people can see what you are explaining. Execute a couple of entertaining ice breakers so your staff can get to know one another, and even establish nicknames. Keep the presentation light, informative, and exciting.

Q: Does the Concession Manager and concession stand volunteers need to have a volunteer application and background check prior to working?

A: Yes. Little League International requires all leagues and districts in the United States to conduct an annual background check, including a nationwide criminal search and a search of the National Sex Offender Registry, on its volunteers prior to being appointed, which includes the Concession Manager and concession stand volunteers. When staffing the concession stand, with the responsibilities of handling money and food safety concerns, it’s important that volunteers working in the concession stand have a clean background check.

