



***USA*Volleyball**

## **GIRLS CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL**

**The following manual contains information regarding the National Qualifiers, the Girls Junior National Championships (11-13s & 14-17s), and Girls 18s National Championships**

**Revised: October 2023  
2023/2024 Season**

USA Volleyball reserves the right to adjust or alter the procedures and policies outlined in the Championship manuals for the 2023/2024 season. To ensure that proper safety measures are taken for all participants and staff, USA Volleyball will adhere to all required local and national guidelines, safety protocols and restrictions.

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# INTRODUCTION

## USA VOLLEYBALL AND THE CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

USA Volleyball (USAV), recognized by the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee as the National Governing Body for volleyball, holds several national championships annually, including the USA Volleyball Girls Junior National Championships (GJNC) and the 18s Girls Junior National Championships (18sGJNC) (collectively referred to as GJNCs). The USA Volleyball Girls Junior National Qualifiers (NQ) are one avenue for Teams to gain entry into those championships.

The GJNCs provides competition by age classifications in various divisions of the Championships. Teams must qualify to play at the GJNCs for all Divisions (except the Patriot Divisions) through one of two main paths; one is the NQ process and the other is the Region Bid process. In the case of the Patriot Divisions, a Team may simply enter the Tournament through the established means.

A Team can earn a Bid to the GJNCs by finishing in a Bid award position at a NQ, through the At-Large Bid process, through a Region Bid process, or through the Region reallocation process.

## PURPOSE OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL

The NQs are licensed by USAV and must operate within parameters set by USAV. Those parts of the NQs that impact play, and thus entry into the GJNCs, must adhere to standards set out in this Girls Championship Manual (GCM).

The primary purpose of this GCM is to publish the standards established by USAV for the GJNCs and the NQs. The secondary purpose is to explain the process of qualifying to play at the GJNCs.

The GCM is intended to be a resource to those hosting one of the NQs and to those organizations whose Teams attend the GJNCs and the NQs.

## CHANGING THE CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL

The GCM is a USAV corporate document. Only the USAV Events Department may authorize changes, deletions, and additions to this GCM and to the qualifying process itself.

Suggestions to change the GCM and the qualifying process can come from the USAV Junior Assembly (JA), USAV Commissions, USAV Events Department (Events Department), the National Qualifier Directors (QD) or the USAV Regional Volleyball Association Assembly (RVAA). Suggested changes must be submitted to USA Volleyball no later than July 1<sup>st</sup> to follow a review process in order to be approved; changes that have monetary or legal significance may require a review by the QDs. Once a suggested change is approved, the implementation may take up to two full seasons.

The Events Department annually updates the GCM and distributes an electronic copy of the updated version to each QD for review. The Events Department will post the updated GCM on the USAV website, no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**18sGJNC:** An 18's National Championship that takes place in the spring with the 18 Open, 18 National, 18 USA, 18 Liberty 18 American, 18 Freedom and 18 Patriot Divisions.

**American Division:** The fifth-Tier division for 13's – 18's, and the second Tier for 12s of the GJNCs where Teams must obtain a Bid to participate.

**Bid:** A Bid is an invitation to a Team to play in the GJNCs either through a NQ or a Region Bid process. To use the Bid, a Team must meet all entry deadlines and other requirements set by both their USAV Region and the USAV national office.

**At-Large Bid:** A GJNC Bid awarded in the Open or USA Division upon the completion of the Qualifier Season (both National and Regional) by the GJNC Seeding Committee based on performance during that season, in relation to other non-qualified Teams in that age group.

**Reallocation Bid:** A National, USA, American, or Freedom Division Bid to the GJNCs that is unused and is returned for reallocation to a Region. Reallocation is performed by the USAV Events Department.

**Trickle-Down Bid:** A GJNC Bid awarded at a NQ to a Team finishing lower than a usual Bid award position. This happens in some situations when a higher finishing Team has previously accepted a GJNC Bid from another NQ or a Region process or a Bid is declined from the National, Liberty, American, Freedom or USA Divisions. Note: 18 Open Bids may not be declined.

**Club:** An organization/group of one or more teams of different ages and abilities playing together under the same umbrella organization.

**GCM:** Girls Championship Manual

**Event:** Multiple Tournaments or activities associated within the same title, Sanction and host organization.

**Freedom Division:** The sixth-tier division for 14's – 18's of the GJNCs where Teams must obtain a Bid to participate.

**Frozen Player:** A player who is restricted from participating on the roster of another Team. The specifics of the "Frozen Player" are numerous and can vary between the 18sGJNC and the GJNC. (Please see [Frozen Player Rule](#)).

**GJNC:** Girls Junior National Championship 11-13s and 14-17s

**JA:** Junior Assembly of USA Volleyball

**Liberty Division:** The fourth-tier division for 13's – 18's of the GJNCs where Teams must obtain a Bid to participate.

**Match:** A head-to-head competition between two (2) Teams within a specified round of a Tournament. While typically two (2) sets out of three (3), some Matches may also involve an automatic three (3) sets, or simply one (1) set (used in Tie breaking situations).

**Qualifying Match:** A Match that "qualifies" a Team for the GJNCs.

**Seeding Match:** A non-elimination Match meant to place or "seed" Teams into the next round of play.

**National Division:** The second-Tier division for 13's – 18's, and the top Tier for the 11s and 12s of the GJNCs where Teams must obtain a Bid to participate.

**NQ:** National Qualifier Event

**Open Division:** The top Tier division for the 13's – 18's of the GJNCs where Teams must obtain a Bid to participate.

**Patriot Division:** A non-qualifying division for 13's – 18's of the GJNCs where Teams may gain access to the Tournament by simply entering the Event through the established process in the GCM.

**Playing Surface:** Area deemed as "playable" by the 2023 – 2025 USAV Indoor Rules Book for that court.

**Region:** One of 40 established member organizations of USAV governing a specific geographical area.

**Round of play:** A specified segment of a Tournament (typically a pool or playoff bracket). Tie breaker competition is NOT considered a round of play.

**Sanction:** Recognition and coverage of a given Event, and/or Tournament within an Event, by either a Region of USAV or the National Office.

**Second Warm Up Period:** Start of receiving Team's warm-up.

**Seeding:** The order in which teams are ranked to begin a Tournament.

**Seeding Committee:** A committee designated by the USAV Events Department consisting of 4-7 USAV members in good standing. Seeding Committee members are responsible for Seeding of all divisions at the GJNCs, Open Divisions of NQs (if requested by QD) and selection of At-Large Bids for GJNCs.

**Team:** A minimum of six (6) rostered players up to fifteen (15) players and no more than five (5) staff members, including the required head coach position.

**Tie:** When two (2) or more teams end pool play with identical Match records.

**Tie Break:** Method by which a Ties after pool play has concluded, are given a ranked order of finish to either advance to the next round of play or be placed into a competitive Tie breaking Match or series of Matches.

**Tournament:** Competition of a specific group of teams (i.e., Girls 16's Open Tournament) that could also be known as a "Championship."

**USA Division:** The third-Tier division for 12s – 18's of the GJNCs where Teams must obtain a Bid to participate.

**USAV:** USA Volleyball

## CHANGES/EDITS TO CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL FOR 2024 SEASON

- **Page 6 & 7** – Age Definition updates
- **Page 9** – Bids awarded at National Qualifiers falling below certain thresholds
- **Page 11** – At-Large applications will now need to be formally submitted
- **Page 16** – Updates to the Rules of Play
- **Page 16** – Update to include portable music players as prohibited items during warmups and play
- **Page 18 & 19** – 5<sup>th</sup> place trickle down bracket procedures
- **Page 21** – Clarification on seeding during tie-breaker brackets
- **Page 21** – Procedure when teams are not present for tie-breakers
- **Page 23** – Last Day Forfeits – teams who do not need to play for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> will now tie for 3<sup>rd</sup> and penalty wording added for teams who do not ref their last match
- **Page 25** – Changes to penalties for Player Missing from Official Roster
- **Page 29** – SafeSport wording updated
- **Page 31 & 32** – Clarification and simplification of Foreign Player & Foreign Team Participation
- **Page 34** – Protest related to a judgement decision may result in a penalty (red Card) being assessed to the coach





***USA******Volleyball.***

## **CHAPTER 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION**

# USA VOLLEYBALL JUNIOR PLAYER AGE DEFINITION

## For use during the 2023-2024 Season

Once a player participates (including but not limited to practicing, training, attending workouts and/or competing) in a club or varsity program for any university, college, community college, or junior college, he/she is ineligible to take part in any regional and national programming, which includes but is not limited to national JNC qualifying and championship events.

The Age Definition Policy was most recently revised by the USA Volleyball Board of Directors on June 30, 2020.

The classification cut-off date of July 1 was reviewed by the USAV Junior Assembly and the USA Regional Volleyball Association Assembly prior and research justified the new cut-off date of July 1.

To determine the correct age division, please find the Month of Birth in the left column and then the year of birth in the same row. The heading of the column matching the Year of Birth is the correct age bracket.

	18 & Under <sup>1</sup>	18 & Under <sup>2</sup>	17 & Under	16 & Under	15 & Under <sup>3</sup>	14 & Under <sup>4</sup>	13 & Under <sup>5</sup>	12 & Under	11 & Under	10 & Under	9 & Under	8 & Under
July	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Aug	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Sept	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Oct	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nov	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Dec	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Jan	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Feb	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mar	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Apr	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
May	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
June	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

<sup>1</sup> Players who were born on or after July 1, 2004 and a high school student in the twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) grade or below during some part of the current academic year are eligible to compete in 18 & under.

<sup>2</sup> **Female Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2005, (who are defined as 18 & under by the USAV Age Definition) and are in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade for the current academic year are waived to compete in 17 & under. (This age waiver is based on recruiting concerns for 11<sup>th</sup> grade girls previously required to participate in girls 18's qualifiers and the 18's GJNC.)

<sup>3</sup> **Male Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2009 OR players who were born on or after July 1, 2008 (15 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) grade during the current academic year are eligible to play in the 14 & Under division. This exception is based on the net height difference of 7'4 1/8" to 7'11 5/8" between the 14 and Under Division to the 15 and Under Division.

<sup>4</sup> **Male Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2009 (14 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the seventh grade (7<sup>th</sup>) during the current academic year are eligible for a Region approved waiver to compete in the boys 13's age group.

<sup>5</sup> **Male Only** - Players who were born on or after July 1, 2010 (13 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the sixth grade (6<sup>th</sup>) during the current academic year are eligible for a Region approved waiver to compete in the boys 12's age group.

**Note:** These age definitions are used by domestic club programs and are NOT the same as the age definitions for the International and Domestic NDTP programs for 2024.

## ***Age Exceptions for 2024***

- An AGE WAIVER will be granted to players who were born on or after July 1, 2005, (who are defined as 18 & under by the USAV Age Definition) and are in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade for the current academic year. These athletes will be eligible to compete in the 17 & under age division with proof of age and grade sent to the USAV Events Department. For example: A 17 year old player who is considered by the Age Definition to compete on an 18s Team and is still in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade for the current academic year, may compete on their 17s Team in a qualifying division for GJNC with a waiver.

## **GJNC DIVISIONS OF PLAY OPEN, NATIONAL, USA, LIBERTY, AMERICAN, FREEDOM & PATRIOT**

There are seven (7) major divisions of play at GJNCs – Open Divisions, National Divisions, USA Divisions, Liberty Divisions, American Divisions, Freedom Divisions, and the Patriot Divisions.

The goal of the GJNCs **Open Divisions** is to identify, through competition, the best team in each GJNCs age group from among teams (see chart below) that have earned Bids. The NQ Open Divisions are designed to select those teams.

- To participate in an Open Division at the GJNCs, a team must earn a Bid from participating in an NQ Open Division – either winning the Bid outright at an NQ or being selected for an At-Large Bid after competing in an NQ Open Division (see [Open At-Large Bids](#)).

The goal of the GJNCs **National, USA, Liberty, American and Freedom** is to showcase Region Teams and provide the opportunity for more teams to participate at the GJNCs.

- Teams have the following avenues to receive a Bid for a GJNCs Open, National, USA, Liberty, American or Freedom Division:
  - Earn a Bid at a NQ (Open, National (11s – 12s only) USA, Liberty and American);
  - Awarded an at-large Bid (Open, USA, and Liberty);
  - Earn a Bid through their Region’s Bid process (National, American and Freedom); or
  - Earn a Bid from their Region through the Re-allocation process (National, USA, Liberty, American and Freedom).

The goal of the GJNCs **Patriot Divisions** is to allow opportunity for teams to participate at the GJNCs without following the qualification process.

- Teams must follow the established process to participate in this division

## Age Classification, Divisions & Team Entries

	18 & Under	17 & Under	16 & Under	15 & Under	14 & Under	13 & Under	12 & Under	11 & Under
Open Division	48 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	24 Teams		
National Division	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams
USA Division	48 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	24 Teams	
Liberty Division	32 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams		
American Division	64 Teams	64 Teams	64 Teams	64 Teams	64 Teams	64 Teams	64 Teams	
Freedom Division	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams	48 Teams			
Patriot Division	24* Teams	48* Teams	48* Teams	48* Teams	48* Teams	48 Teams		

\*Patriot Divisions will have a soft cap of the number listed above, but may accept additional Teams in a Tournament, in multiples of 4 Teams, dependent on available court space.

## NATIONAL QUALIFIER PROCESS

The primary purpose of the NQs is to select, through Tournament competition, Open, USA, Liberty, American and some National (11s and 12s) in various age divisions to compete at the GJNCs. Teams may qualify for a Bid outside the NQ process for the National, USA, Liberty, American and Freedom Divisions.

The secondary purposes for the NQs are to:

- Promote inter-Regional play.
- Provide a high level of competition for Teams at different levels within each age division.
- Showcase junior talent for college recruiters and National Team Development programs.
- Promote the growth and development of volleyball in a particular geographic area.
- Provide a training ground for officials.

NQs are geographically assigned to cover a large portion of the United States to the extent that most Teams can attend at least one NQ within 8 hours drive.

Currently, there are 13 NQs for 11s-17's: Big South (Atlanta), Salt Lake City Showdown (Salt Lake City), Sunshine Volleyball Classic (Orlando), Far Western (Reno), Mideast (St. Louis & Indianapolis), Lone Star (Dallas), Music City Volleyball Championships (New Orleans), Northeast (Philadelphia & Baltimore), Northern Lights (Minneapolis), Pacific Northwest (Spokane), Show Me (Kansas City), Red Rock Rave (Las Vegas), and Windy City (Chicago).

Currently there are 16 NQs for 18's: Girls Winter Volleyball Championships (Chicago), KC MLK 18's (Kansas City), Northern Lights 18's (Minneapolis), AVC Dallas (Dallas), Ohio Valley (Columbus), Music City Volleyball Championships (New Orleans), Florida Girls 18s National Qualifier (Orlando), Southeast (Atlanta), Boston Volleyball Festival (Boston), Sierra National Qualifier (Reno), Southern California 18's (Anaheim), Salt Lake City Showdown (Salt Lake), Lone Star (Houston), Pacific Northwest (Spokane), Mideast (Indianapolis), and Northeast (Philadelphia).

## USAV'S ROLE IN NATIONAL QUALIFIER EVENTS

The NQs are Sanctioned by the USAV National Office which develops, standardizes, evaluates, and oversees the qualification process for the GJNCs through the USAV Events Department.

USAV and the Events Department monitor the qualifying process each season, and, with their various committees:

- Approve formats and flow charts for the NQ divisions

- Determine the process by which Teams are accepted or denied entry into a NQ division
- Approve each NQ competition schedule grid
- Approve systems to seed the NQ Open Divisions
- Review and recommend improvements for NQ operations
- Establish and verify individual eligibility requirements for all participants in both Bid and non-Bid divisions

## DIVISIONS & SIZE OF FIELD AT NQ EVENTS

The USAV Events Department, with input from the QDs of each of the NQs, determines the maximum number of Teams a NQ may host in each Open, National (11s and 12s), USA, Liberty and American Division. Currently, a NQ may host a maximum of 48 Teams in each Open Division and 128 Teams in each National (11s and 12s only), USA, Liberty and American Division. On a case-by-case basis, the USAV Director of Events may grant a waiver for a NQ division to exceed these numbers, except that no waivers will be granted for the NQ Open Divisions.

NQs are permitted to host competition in age divisions that do not currently have a Junior National Championship (i.e., 10 & Under or “Select” divisions). The NQs shall not institute these additional divisions without the approval of the USAV Director of Events.

## GJNCS BIDS AWARDED BY A NATIONAL QUALIFIER

USAV allows each NQ to award a certain number of Bids to the top finishing Teams in Open, National (11s and 12s only), USA, Liberty and American Divisions. The number of Bids a NQ has to award is pre-determined according to the number of Teams entered in the NQ division on the NQs deadline date or the date the division’s Seeding is finalized; whichever number is larger (see the chart below). However, if a division drops 2 thresholds by the time of play, the number of bids will be dropped by 1. If a division drops 3 thresholds by the time of play, the number of bids will be dropped by 2.

OPEN: 18’s		OPEN: 13’s		OPEN: 14’s - 17’s		NATIONAL: 11s - 12s	
Number of Teams	Number of Bids	Number of Teams	Number of Bids	Number of Teams	Number of Bids	Number of Teams	Number of Bids
< 8	0	< 6	0	< 8	0	< 8	0
8 - 11	1	6 - 11	1	8 - 15	1	8 - 128	1
12 - 15	2	12 - 48	2	16 - 23	2		
16 - 48	3			24 - 48	3		

USA: 13’s - 18’s		USA: 12s		LIBERTY: 13’s - 18s		AMERICAN: 12s - 18’s	
Number of Teams	Number of Bids	Number of Teams	Number of Bids	Number of Teams	Number of Bids	Number of Teams	Number of Bids
< 8	0	< 8	0	< 8	0	< 8	0
8 - 15	1	8 - 11	1	8 - 15	1	8 - 128	1
16 - 23	2	12 - 48	2	16 - 128	2		
24 - 128	3						

The total number of Bids distributed among the NQs to award in a GJNCs division is determined by the number of Teams permitted to play in the division at the GJNCs. Some Open Bids may be reserved for the At-Large Bid selection, National, Freedom, and a number of American Bids are awarded through the Region Bid process.

Bids awarded at NQs must be accepted in writing at or prior to the time of the Bid award (see [Rules for Priority of Bid Use](#) and [GJNC Bids Awarded Through a Region Process](#)). NQs will determine the timing of written declaration of a bid, this may occur as early as team registration.

**For a Team to use a Bid earned in any qualifying process, the Team must complete all entry requirements for their Region and for the GJNCs by the deadline dates provided by the USAV Events Department.** If a Team has not met all the entry requirements by the deadline date, that Team may lose its Bid and may be subject to additional Sanctions (see [Penalties for Not Using a Bid](#)).

Teams that earn and accept a Bid at a NQ will receive an email from the USAV Events Department by the Thursday following their qualification. This email will detail the requirements for entry into the GJNCs.

## ***Open Division Bids***

In the NQ Open Divisions, Bids go to the Teams that finish the competition in a Bid award position.

If one (1) or more Teams wins a Bid award position at a NQ and previously earned an Open Bid at another NQ, the Bid(s) can trickle-down to the next highest finishing Team, provided the next highest finishing Team finished no lower than eighth place or 50% of the field size, whichever is smaller, in the Tournament.

**A Team may not decline an Open Bid. By playing in the Open Division, a Team is acknowledging and confirming its participation in GJNCs if a Bid is earned.**

If a Team previously or subsequently earns a National, USA, Liberty, American or Freedom Bid either from a Region or a NQ, the Team must use the Open Bid. The [Rules for Priority of Use of a Bid](#) (see section below) determine which Team receives the National, USA, Liberty, American or Freedom.

## ***National Division Bids (11s -12s Only)***

At a NQ, both a National Division and an American Division will be offered for the 12s age division and a National Division will be offered to the 11s age division.

- Each NQ will receive one (1) National Bid to award, provided they have a minimum of eight (8) Teams registered in the division. A Team must accept or reject a National Bid in writing upon earning the Bid. If rejected, the Bid will trickle-down to the next eligible, highest finishing Team, provided that Team finished no lower than eighth place in the Tournament (see [GJNC Bids Awarded Through a Region](#)).
- Should the 12 National Division fail to receive the minimum number of eight (8) registered Teams, the 12 National and 12 USA Divisions will be combined and will be called the National Division.
  - In order for the combined National Division to retain one (1) National Bid and one (1) USA Bid, the division must have a minimum of sixteen (16) registered Teams.
  - If the combined National Division has less than sixteen (16) registered Teams, the NQ will award only one (1) National Bid.
- Should the 11 National Division fail to receive the minimum number of eight (8) registered Teams, a waiver may be granted by the USAV Director of Events provided a minimum of six (6) Teams are registered. If there are less than six (6) Teams registered, the division may be canceled or played without a Bid being awarded and the one (1) 11 National Bid will be placed in the Region reallocation process.

## ***USA Division Bids***

At a NQ, the USA Division has up to three (3) Bids in the 13 's-18 's age groups & up to two (2) Bids in the 12s age group. A USA Division must have at least eight (8) Teams to be able to award a Bid in that respective Tournament. A Team must accept or reject a USA Bid in writing upon earning the Bid. If rejected, the Bid(s) can trickle-down to the next highest finishing Team, provided the next highest finishing Team finished no lower than eighth place or 50% of

the field size, whichever is smaller, in the Tournament. The [Rules for Priority of Use of a Bid](#) (see section below) determine which Team receives the USA Division Bids.

### ***Liberty Division Bids***

At a NQ, the Liberty Division has up to two (2) Bids in the 13's – 18's age groups. A Liberty Division must have at least eight (8) Teams to be able to award a Bid in that respective Tournament. A Team must accept or reject a Liberty Bid in writing upon earning the Bid. If rejected, the Bid(s) can be trickle-down to the next highest finishing Team, provided the next highest finishing Team finished no lower than eighth place or 50% of the field size, whichever is smaller, in the Tournament. The [Rules for Priority of Use of a Bid](#) (see section below) determine which Team receives the Liberty Division Bids.

### ***American Division Bids***

At a NQ, the American Division has one (1) Bid. An American Division must have at least eight (8) Teams to be able to award a Bid in that respective Tournament. A Team must accept or reject an American Bid in writing upon earning the Bid. If rejected, the Bid will trickle-down to the next eligible, highest finishing Team, provided that Team finished no lower than eighth place in the Tournament (see [GJNC Bids Awarded Through a Region](#)). The Rules for Priority of Use of a Bid (see section below) determine which Team receives the American Division Bids.

## **AT-LARGE BIDS AWARDED THROUGH USA VOLLEYBALL**

The USAV Events Department, with the assistance of its Seeding Committee, awards some GJNC Open, USA and Liberty Bids as At-Large Bids. Teams must formally apply to be considered for an At-Large Bid provided that the Team:

- Has played in at least one NQ in the same GJNC Division age group for which the Team is applying (Open, USA or Liberty);
- Teams must have at least one finish in the top 50% of an event in the division they want to be considered At-Large for;
- Is registered for GJNCs in the GJNCs Event registration system;
- Submits accurate and up-to-date electronic results in the GJNCs Event registration system no later than the end of business on the Tuesday after the finish of the last NQ offering their age group. **ALL TEAM RESULTS NEED TO BE ENTERED.**
- Complies with both their Region's and USAV's GJNCs deadline dates and meets the requirements listed above.

The USAV Events Department will announce the Teams being awarded the GJNCs At-Large Bids no later than the second Tuesday after the last NQ. The Events Department will notify Teams awarded an At-Large Bid by email, sent to the Coach and Club Director at the email addresses provided in the GJNCs Event registration system.

For full criteria on how At-Large Bids are awarded, as well as how to apply for an At-Large Bid, please see the GJNC Pre-Tournament Manual on the GJNC website.

## **GJNCs BIDS AWARDED THROUGH A REGION**

Regions are allocated Bids to three Divisions at the GJNCs – National, American and Freedom. Regions have the authority to establish their own process for awarding these Bids. Bids awarded through a Region must be accepted in writing at, or prior to, the time of the Bid being awarded.

### ***National Division:***

Each Region will receive at least one (1) National Bid to award at their discretion for the 13's – 18's. As there are a total of 48 Bids to be allocated to 40 Regions, the eight (8) largest Regions based on Girls Junior registrations from the previous season will be awarded a 2<sup>nd</sup> Bid to the National Divisions at the GJNCs.

For 11s, and 12 's, the original allotment of Bids and any reallocation Bids a Region receives depends on the number of 12 and under Girls Junior registrations from the previous season, *not* on the total number of Girls Junior registrations

in the Region. Given there are 40 USAV Regions and only 36 National Bids allocated to Regions not all will receive an allocated Bid. Regions not receiving an automatic Bid will be prioritized in the process of reallocating unused Bids.

### ***American Division:***

Regions may receive up to three (3) American Bids to award at their discretion for the 12s – 18's. There are a total of 64 Bids to be allocated to GJNCs, 12 Bids for 12s-17's and 16 Bids for 18's will be awarded at NQs. The remaining American Bids will be allocated to the Regions. Bids allocated to Regions are determined through a junior girls membership benchmark that is defined in the Bid allocation chart posted on the USAV website.

The number of Bids received by a particular Region may change from year to year.

### ***Freedom Division:***

Each Region will receive at least one (1) Freedom Bid to award at their discretion for the 14's – 18's. As there are a total of 48 Bids to be allocated to 40 Regions, the eight (8) Regions with the largest membership growth based on Girls Junior registrations from the previous season will be awarded a 2<sup>nd</sup> Bid to the Freedom Divisions at the GJNCs.

### ***Reallocation Bids***

When a Bid is returned, the USAV Events Department distributes Reallocation Bids to the Regions in an order determined by the number of junior girls members (National Division), number of growth of junior girls members (Freedom Division) and the proximity of that number to certain benchmark membership numbers (American Division). When a Team earns a higher-ranking Bid, the vacated Bid will stay with the Region (see Rules for Priority of Bid Use).

## **RULES FOR PRIORITY OF BID USE**

Some Teams participate in more than one qualifying process in a season, either through their Region, by attending NQs, by applying for an At-Large Bid, or by some combination of these processes. If the Team earns more than one (1) Bid, the following rules apply as to which Bid the Team must use, and what happens to the other Bid(s).

The priority of Bid use is as follows:

1. Open
2. National
3. USA
4. Liberty
5. American
6. Freedom

When an Open Bid is the second Bid a Team earns, from either a NQ or the At-Large Bid process:

- If a Team previously accepted a USA or Liberty Bid, the Team must use the Open Bid. The USA or Liberty Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the USA or Liberty Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Bid, the Bid will go into the At-Large Bid process.
- If a Team previously accepted a National, American, or Freedom Bid, the Team must use the Open Bid. The National, American or Freedom Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Bid, the Bid will be reallocated to the next Region in line.

When a National Bid is the second Bid a Team earns:

- The Team may not decline the bid.
- If a Team earns and accepts a National Bid through a Region Bid Process and then earns a National Bid at a NQ, the NQ National Bid will supersede the Region National Bid and the Region National Bid will return to the



Region it was originally awarded from for reallocation. (This is only applicable to the 11-12s age divisions)

- If a Team previously accepted a USA or Liberty Bid, the Team must use the National Bid. The USA or Liberty Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the USA or Liberty Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this USA or Liberty Bid, it reverts to the At-Large Bid process.
- If a Team previously accepted an American or Freedom Bid, the Team must use the National Bid. The American or Freedom Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Bid, the Bid will be reallocated to the next Region in line.

When a USA Bid is the second Bid a Team earns:

- The Team may not decline the bid.
- If a Team previously accepted a National Bid from a Region, the Team must keep the National Bid. The USA Bid will trickle-down to the next eligible Team.
- If a Team accepts a reallocated USA Bid through a Region Bid process and then earns a USA Bid at a NQ, the NQ USA Bid will supersede the Region reallocated USA Bid. The vacated USA Bid will revert to the Region of origin for reallocation. If the Region is unable to allocate this USA Bid, it reverts to the At-Large Bid process.
- If a Team previously accepted a Liberty Bid, the Team must use the USA Bid. The Liberty Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the Liberty Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Liberty Bid, it reverts to the At-Large Bid process
- If a Team previously accepted an American or Freedom Bid from either an NQ or a Region, the Team must use the USA Bid. The American or Freedom Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Bid, the Bid will be reallocated to the next Region in line.

When a Liberty Bid is the second Bid a Team earns:

- The Team may not decline the bid.
- If a Team previously accepted an Open, National or USA Bid from a Region or NQ, the Team must keep that higher Bid. The Liberty Bid will trickle-down to the next eligible Team.
- If a Team accepts a reallocated Liberty Bid through a Region Bid process and then earns a Liberty Bid at a NQ, the NQ Liberty Bid will supersede the Region reallocated Liberty Bid. The vacated Liberty Bid will revert to the Region of origin for reallocation. If the Region is unable to allocate this Liberty Bid, it reverts to the At-Large Bid process.
- If a Team previously accepted an American or Freedom Bid from either an NQ or a Region, the Team must use the Liberty Bid. The American or Freedom Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Bid, the Bid will be reallocated to the next Region in line.

When an American Bid is the second Bid a Team earns:

- The Team may not decline the bid.
- If a Team earns and accepts an American Bid through a Region Bid Process and then earns an American Bid at a NQ, the NQ American Bid will supersede the Region American Bid and the Region American Bid will return to the Region it was originally awarded from for reallocation.
- If a Team that wins an American Bid and accepted an American Bid from a previous NQ, the current American Bid goes to the next eligible, highest finishing Team, provided the next highest finishing Team finished no lower than eighth place in the Tournament. The trickle-down process must be applied at the conclusion of the division's competition.
- If a Team previously accepted a Freedom Bid, the Team must use the American Bid. The Freedom Bid will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the Bid. If the Region is unable to allocate this Bid, the Bid will be reallocated to the next Region in line.

USAV reserves the right to fill Bids as necessary to ensure a quality Event with maximum participation.

## PENALTIES

To ensure the integrity of GJNCs and to promote fair play, it may be necessary for USAV to impose penalties. USAV will convene an Event committee to review each case and impose a proper penalty(ies) if warranted.

### ***Factors That Will Be Considered for Establishing Penalties:***

- Compliancy with deadlines and requirements
- Time of notification from the start of GJNCs
- Previous club/member behavior
- Level of play (Open vs. American)
- Where Bid is earned and accepted (NQ vs. Regional)
- Severity of offense
- Age and Experience
- Region Input

### ***Penalties for Not Using a Bid***

It is disruptive to the quality of the Event when Bids are returned after being accepted. There are financial consequences, administrative challenges, and logistical delays for Teams, Region administrators and USAV personnel. Inevitably this takes opportunities away from other Teams participating in the qualification process.

A Team that does not use a GJNCs Open Bid (13's-18's) which it has earned, or a GJNCs National, USA, Liberty, American, or Freedom Bid which it has earned and accepted may be subject to the following penalties:

#### Financial Penalties

- 2 months prior to the start of GJNCs– payment of entry fee and \$1,000 fine
- If the payment is not received for the GJNCs Event Entry Fee and/or fines, the club director(s), coaches affiliated with official qualification roster will be prohibited from participating in NQs and GJNCs until the fee is paid in full. Further legal actions may be taken to ensure payment is received.

#### Suspension of Participation:

- Club Director suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Head Coach listed on the official qualification roster suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- All members listed on the official qualification roster suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Specific age group from club suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Club or specific team suspended from participation in all NQ and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- All suspensions will be published and updated on the USAV website.

#### Additional Penalties:

- USAV reserves the right to impose additional penalties as deemed necessary.
- Regions reserve the right to impose additional penalties to Teams within their Region.

## ***Penalties for Illegal Use of Bid***

If a Team is deemed ineligible or have ineligible participants (age falsification, frozen player, foreign participation, ethics/eligibility, gender competition policy, SafeSport violations etc.) the following penalties may be applied:

### Financial Penalties:

- Loss of entry fee and a \$2,500 fine.
- If the payment is not received for the GJNCs Event entry fee and/or fines, the club director(s), coaches affiliated with official qualification roster will be prohibited from participating in NQs and GJNCs until the fee is paid in full. Further legal actions may be taken to ensure payment is received.

### Suspension of Play:

- Club Director suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Head Coach listed on the official qualification roster suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- All members listed on the official qualification roster suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Specific age group from club suspended from participation in all NQs and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Club or specific team suspended from participation in all NQ and/or Regional Qualification Events and GJNCs for the remainder of the season and the following season.
- Suspended membership or probation.
- All suspensions will be published and updated on the USAV website.

### Additional Penalties:

- Revocation of bids, past awards, winnings and titles.
- USAV reserves the right to impose additional penalties as deemed necessary (see [USA Volleyball Age and Identity Falsification Policy](#))

Regions reserve the right to impose additional penalties to Teams within their Region.

## **APPEALS**

When a penalty(ies) is imposed on a club/Team/individual by USAV, they may file for an appeal. Appeals may be filed with the USAV Ethics and Eligibility Committee by sending all relevant documentation to the USAV Staff Attorney by deadlines outlined in the initial Sanction letter. All appeals shall be accompanied by a non-refundable \$100 fee made payable to USA Volleyball.

# NATIONAL QUALIFIER TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

All NQs must use competition formats approved by the USAV Events Department two weeks prior to the start of the NQ. The information in this section applies to *all* NQ Tournaments as well as the GJNCs.

## RULES OF PLAY

The rules of play are as prescribed in the USA Volleyball Rules Book. Below are recent rules changes and points of emphasis for the 2023-2024 season:

- USAV 4.3.3.1a: Uniform numbers must be clearly visible and centered side to side on the front and back of the jersey
- USAV 5.1.2.1: Judgment decisions are not subject to protest. A protest related to a judgment decision may result in a penalty (red card) being assessed to the coach.
- USAV 12.4.4 and USAV 12.4.4a: For 14-and-under age groups, the server must hit the ball within 8 seconds after the 1st referee whistles for service. If the server tosses the ball and then catches it or allows it to fall to the floor, this is considered a service tossing error, including a ball that touches the server as it falls.
- Rule 14.3: In blocking, the player may place his/her hands and arms beyond the net, provided that this action does not interfere with the opponent's play. Thus, it is not permitted to touch the ball beyond the net **before** an opponent has executed an attack hit.
- USAV 18.2.1: The default protocol is for each team to remain on their respective side of the court throughout the match, including the deciding set unless the event organizer determines there is a clear disadvantage on only one side of the court.

## ARTIFICIAL NOISE MAKERS AND PORTABLE MUSIC DEVICES

Due to their disruptive nature, artificial noise makers are prohibited at NQs and GJNCs. In addition, teams may not use portable music devices courtside, including during warmups.

## TOURNAMENT FORMATS

The Tournament format determines the number of pools in a division, the number of Teams in each pool and the sequence of play, from pool play through playoffs. A Tournament "flow chart" illustrates the sequence of the format components.

## MATCH FORMATS

The preferred Match format is pools of four (4) playing the best 2-out-of-3 sets.

- The first two (2) sets play to 25 points, rally scoring, with one (1) Team winning by two (2) points and no point cap.
- If a 3<sup>rd</sup> (deciding) set is necessary, it is played to 15, rally scoring, with one (1) Team winning by two (2) points and no point cap.
- Some pools of three (3) may play all three (3) sets to 25, regardless of whether a Team wins the first two (2). This exception depends on the number of pools of three (3) in a division.
- In a three (3)-Team pool, where three (3) sets to 25 are played instead of 2 out of 3, and the final finish in the pool is determined by Match record. Should one (1) Team wins the first two (2) sets of the Match, that Team has won the Match, but Teams will still play the 3<sup>rd</sup> set. Should there be a 3-way Tie in the pool with all three (3) Teams having a 1-1 Match record, ALL sets played will be used when determining set percentage when going to a Tie-breaker. When playing the 3<sup>rd</sup> set, there will be a coin flip between sets two (2) and three (3) to determine serve and receive.
- For division sizes of 8-16 Teams, pools comprised of more than 5 Teams may be utilized.

## ***Open Division Formats***

The top four (4) to twelve (12) Teams in an Open Division play three (3) rounds of pool play, and, if necessary, a single elimination bracket to determine the overall winner of the Tournament.

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> round of pool play is known as the Gold Pools.
- If a Team in one of the top three (3) positions in an Open Division previously qualified for the GJNCs, additional Matches may be required to determine which Teams are awarded Bids via the Trickle-Down Bid process.
  - The USAV Events Department approves formats for additional trickle-down Matches prior to the start of the NQ; and,
  - The formats are announced in the Tournament information prior to the start of the NQ.

Teams in finish positions lower than the Gold Pools play two rounds of pool play followed by a single elimination bracket.

Some Teams may have an additional qualifying, crossover or Seeding Match prior to Gold Pools or playoff brackets, depending on the number of Teams in a division.

- For a field of less than 17 Teams, should large pools (more than 6 Teams) be used, one round of pool play followed by single elimination brackets is allowed.

## ***National (12s only), USA, Liberty and American Division Formats***

All Teams in 12s National, USA, Liberty or American Divisions play two (2) rounds of pool play, followed by single elimination playoff brackets.

Some Teams may have an additional qualifying, crossover or Seeding Match prior to Gold bracket or other playoff brackets, depending on the number of Teams in a division.

## ***National (11s only) Division Formats***

The 11s National Division may be contested as a two (2) or three (3)-day championship. For a two (2)-day format, one (1) round of pool play followed by playoffs is acceptable. Should the field size warrant, a challenge round after pool play may be necessary.

Divisions using a three (3)-day format should follow the 12s requirements.

## ***USA, Liberty and American Division Formats***

All Teams in National USA, Liberty or American Divisions play two (2) rounds of pool play, followed by single elimination playoff brackets.

Some Teams may have an additional qualifying, crossover or Seeding Match prior to Gold bracket or other playoff brackets, depending on the number of Teams in a division.

## ***SEEDING OF DIVISIONS***

The Seeding of divisions within a NQ may be either done by the NQ or the NQ may request that the Open divisions be done by the USAV Seeding Committee. Should the NQ choose to seed the Open Divisions, the seed order must be approved by the Committee prior to the release of the competition schedule. Alterations to these guidelines must be approved by the USAV Director of Events.

Seeding for the GJNCs is determined by Team results throughout the year as collected by USA Volleyball and entered into the official registration system using Team codes. According to these results, the top quarter of all participating Teams in a Tournament (first seeded Teams in the first round of pool play) are seeded numerically by strength. For accuracy team codes should stay the same from season to season.

## POOL PLAY SEQUENCE

Pool play sequences, listed below, are allowable for use with all respective pools in a NQ, unless another sequence is approved by the USAV Events Department:

Round	Four-Team Pools	Three-Team Pools	Five-Team Pools on 2 Courts
Match 1	1 vs. 3 (ref 2)	1 vs. 3 (ref 2)	1 vs. 5 and 2 vs. 4 (ref 3)
Match 2	2 vs. 4 (ref 1)	2 vs. 3 (ref 1)	1 vs. 4 and 2 vs. 3 (ref 5)
Match 3	1 vs. 4 (ref 3)	1 vs. 2 (ref 3)	1 Hour Break
Match 4	2 vs. 3 (ref 1)		1 vs. 3 and 4 vs. 5 (ref 2)
Match 5	3 vs. 4 (ref 2)		2 vs. 5 and 3 vs. 4 (ref 1)
Match 6	1 vs. 2 (ref 4)		1 vs. 2 and 3 vs. 5 (ref 4)

Round	Four-Team Pools Court 1	Four-Team Pools Court 2
Match 1	A 1 vs. 3 (ref B3)	A 2 vs. 4 (ref B2)
Match 2	B 1 vs. 3 (ref A3)	B 2 vs. 4 (ref A4)
Match 3	A 2 vs. 3 (ref B3)	A 1 vs. 4 (ref B4)
Match 4	B 2 vs. 3 (ref A2)	B 1 vs. 4 (ref A4)
Match 5	A 1 vs. 2 (ref B4)	A 3 vs. 4 (ref B1)
Match 6	B 3 vs. 4 (ref A1)	B 1 vs. 2 (ref A3)

A Team's final pool finish is determined by Match results. If Team(s) are Tied at the completion of pool play, Tie breaker procedures will apply (See [Procedures for Breaking Ties](#)).

## PLAYING SCHEDULES

- All pool play Matches are scheduled at least one (1) hour apart. Some pools may have play on two (2) days to complete the pool (for example, begin play one day in the evening and finish the next morning).
- The first Match of a pool must begin at its scheduled time. Within a pool, and after the first Match, a Match may begin up to 15 minutes before the scheduled starting time provided the two (2) Teams competing, the officials and the Tournament staff all agree to it, and provided that there is sufficient time for the warm-up protocol.
- Playoff brackets may not be larger than 24 Teams.
- All Teams will be scheduled for at least one (1) Match on the final day of competition.
- For NQs, trickle-down Matches are required to be played only if necessary to determine Bid awards.
  - Should the situation occur on the last day of play in the Gold Bracket that there is need for the tied 5<sup>th</sup> place teams to play off for trickle down bids, the following steps should be followed:
    - Teams that are either declining or have already won and accepted a bid in an equal or higher division will be eliminated from the trickle down matches.
    - Of the teams that are still playing for a bid, the following scenarios should be followed:

# Teams w/out Bid	# Bids Available	
4	3	Two 2 team brackets, bracket winners earn bid AND two losers play bracket of 2 for final bid
4	2	Two 2 team brackets, both bracket winners earn bids
4	1	One Bracket of 4, bracket winner earns bid
3	3	No matches played, all teams earn bids and finish 5th
3	2	Reverse Bracket of 3 based on current seeds (1v2 then loser plays 3) winner of match 1 and 2 qualifies.
3	1	Bracket of 3 based on current seeds, bracket winner qualifies (2v3 then winner plays 1)
2	2	No matches played, all teams earn bids and finish 5th
2	1	One Bracket of 2, bracket winner earns bid
1	1	No matches played, team earn bids and finishes 5 <sup>th</sup>

## COURT USE

- Events may not schedule more than 13 Matches on a court in one day, unless otherwise approved by the USAV Events Department. Tie-breaking sets do not count as scheduled Matches.
- Final Matches of the day must be scheduled to begin no later than 9:00 p.m. (with an 8:00 a.m. start) or 9:30 p.m. (with an 8:30 a.m. start).
  - For NQs Matches on day 3 of competition, Matches may not be scheduled to begin later than 3:00 p.m.
  - For NQs if a division is larger than 64 Teams, the first round of playoffs can be scheduled for the second day. Teams must still be given a minimum of 1 Match on the third day.

## WARM-UP PROTOCOL

For Junior competition, when one (1) Team has exclusive use of the court, the other Team must either be at its Team bench or out of the playing area. Warming up with balls at the Team bench or in the spectator walkways is not permitted.

**Primary Warm-up Protocol – (5-4-4):** – For all Teams in their first Match of a round of play.

- Five (5) minutes of shared court time for ball handling; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the serving Team;
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the receiving Team.
- There will be no shared hitting time.

**Secondary Warm-Up Protocol (2-4-4):** For all other Matches within the round of play.

- Two (2) minutes of shared court time for ball handling; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the serving Team; and
- Four (4) minutes of exclusive court time for the receiving Team.
- There will be no shared hitting time.

A crossover Match or Tie-breaking Match that immediately follows pool play is part of that previous single round of play; Teams follow the Secondary Warm-Up Protocol set out below.

A crossover Match, Seeding Match or qualifying Match that occurs after a scheduled break, after the conclusion of pool play, is a separate round of play; Teams in this round follow the Primary Warm-Up Protocol. If all parties agree, the warm-up time may be shortened.

# Tie Breakers to Determine Pool Finish

PROCEDURES For Breaking Ties to Determine Pool Finish For the 2023-2024 season, Playoff Tie Breaker Sets have been reinstated for all Indoor National Qualifiers and National Championships.

At the conclusion of a pool, the pool finish position of the Teams is determined by their pool match records.

If there is a tie in match record among 2 or more Teams in the pool, tie(s) are resolved using the Tie Break Rules, even in 3 team pools where all 3 sets are required to be played.

## TIE BREAK RULES

Ties in Matches are broken by the following steps:

### TWO TEAMS TIE IN MATCHES

Always broken head-to-head. No exceptions.

### THREE-OR-MORE TEAMS TIE IN MATCHES

1. Head-to-head results are used to determine pool finishes for Teams that are tied in Match Record.
  - a) A Team that beats all the other Teams with which it is tied in Match Record will finish ahead of the other Teams in the pool.
  - b) A Team that has lost to all the other Teams with which it is tied in Match Record is placed behind the other Teams in pool finish.
  - c) If there are only two Teams tied in matches after steps 1(a) and 1(b) have been applied, the head-to-head winner of those 2 Teams earns the higher pool finish.
  - d) If after applying steps 1(a), 1(b) & 1(c), Teams remain tied, then the ranking of those remaining Teams follows the procedure in step 2.
2. Set percentage is the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of breaking ties and is used to rank a pool in which Teams remain tied after applying the rules in step 1.
  - a) Teams with a higher set percentage finish ahead of Teams with a lower set percentage.
  - b) If only two Teams are tied in both match percentage and set percentage, the Team that won head-to-head receives the higher finish in the pool.
  - c) If three Teams (or more) are tied in match percentage and set percentage after applying steps 2(a) & 2(b), the tie breaking procedure followed is based on whether a Team is eliminated from advancing to the Gold at BJNC/GJNCs or earning the Qualifier Bid to BJNC/GJNCs using Steps 2(d) and 2(e).
  - d) **If no Team is eliminated from advancing to the Gold at BJNC/GJNCs or earning a Bid to BJNC/GJNCs**, pool finish among the Teams tied in Match percentage and Set percentage is determined by Point percentage. If two Teams are still tied in point percentage, the head-to-head winner finishes higher.
  - e) **If a Team would be eliminated from advancing to the Gold at BJNC/GJNCs or earning a Bid to BJNC/GJNCs**, the remaining Teams that are tied in match percentage and set percentage have Playoff Tie Breaker Set(s) played as defined in step 3.
3. Playoff Tie Breaker Sets are played if 3 or more Teams remain tied after applying steps 1 & 2. Girls National Qualifiers/Boys National Qualifiers and the BJNC/GJNCs have different protocols and are defined below.



### ***Girl's National Qualifiers and Boys National Qualifiers:***

To determine pool finish position, tied Teams are ranked by their point percentage from the pool. If 3 or more tied teams are tied in point percentage, they will be ranked for a playoff based on their initial ranking in the pool. Tie Breaker Sets, if required, are played as 1 set to 15. There may be brackets of 2, 3, or 4 Teams. Tie Breaker sets are only played for the last spot leading to a Qualifier Bid.

- a) If there is 1 pool position available for a Team to advance to play for a bid position, all Teams participate in the Tie Breaker Sets. The sequence of play offsets is structured so that the Teams with the highest point percentages have the fewest number of Tie Breaker Sets to play.
- b) If there are two pool positions available for a Team to advance to play for a bid position, the Team with the highest point percentage is ranked the highest and receives one of the advancing positions. remaining Teams participate in the Tie Breaker Sets. The sequence of playoff sets is structured so that the Teams with the highest point percentages have the fewest number of Tie Breaker Sets to play.
- c) If there are three pool positions available for a Team to advance to play for a bid, the two Teams with the highest point percentages each receive one of the advancing spots. The remaining Teams participate in the Tie Breaker Sets. The sequence of play offsets are structured so that the Teams with the highest point percentages have the fewest number of Tie Breaker Sets to play.

Following the rules set out above, it is possible for one or more tied Teams to advance without having to play in a Tie Breaker Set, as only the last pool position is played off. It is possible that Teams will be eliminated from the GOLD bracket in a National Qualifier as the Tie Breaker is played to determine the chance to play for a Qualifier Bid, NOT for the Gold Bracket.

### ***USAV Girls Jr National Championships (GJNCs) and USAV Boys Junior National Championships (BJNC):***

Tied Teams are ranked by their point percentage from the pool. Tie Breaker Sets are played as 1 set to 15 and may be brackets of 2, 3, or 4 Teams. Tie Breaker sets will only be played for the last spot leading to the GOLD Bracket.

The Tie breaking procedure is the same as outlined in the above steps 3(a), 3(b), & 3(c).

It is possible for one or more of the tied Teams to advance without having to play in a Tie Breaker Set as only the last spot is played off.

If one or more of the tied teams are not present at the court at the beginning of the timed warm-ups for a tiebreaker match (including the officiating team, which may only have officiating responsibilities), the following scenarios should be followed:

- If one of the tied teams is not present, the missing team will be eliminated from the tiebreaker and assigned the lowest position available within the tie.
- If two of the tied teams are not present, the missing teams will be eliminated from the tiebreaker and the one team present will be awarded the highest position available. The other two teams will be placed based on head-to-head results in the pool.
- If all three of the tied teams are not present, the teams will be placed based on points.

# TEAM AND PLAYER POLICIES

## PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE DIVISIONS

It will be allowable for an athlete to play on more than 1 weekend of a multi-weekend Girl's National Qualifier provided the divisions are held on separate weekends and all other eligibility requirements are met.

An athlete can still only play in 1 division on a particular weekend. **\*All Frozen Player rules still apply.**

For the 18sGJNC and GJNC policies for multiple division participation are as follows:

- Athletes meeting the age definitions for age groups younger than 18 may participate in both Events, but only one (1) championship division per Event (18sGJNC, GJNC 11-13s, & GJNC 14-17s). The qualification divisions are Open, National, USA, Liberty, American & Freedom.
- A Team represented by a specific team code may participate in no more than ONE (1) division that requires qualification of the 18sGJNC and GJNC combined. EXAMPLE: A 17's Team that qualifies and accepts a position for an 18s' qualification division in the 18sGJNC may NOT play in a 17's qualification division of the GJNC.

## PLAYING UP

A Team should play in the division that conforms to the USAV age requirements for the Team's players. The Team's 11digit code stipulates its proper age division. If a Team desires to play up an age division AND there is space available without denying an entry position to an age-appropriate Team that has met the entry requirements the Team may play in an upper age division. A Team may play up a maximum of two age divisions (i.e., a 15's Team could only play up to 16's or 17's).

A Team may be moved up at the request of the Tournament, but if this Team is accepted in the proper age group, they must agree to the move. A Team unable to gain access may be offered the opportunity to play up by the Tournament.

## TEAM FORFEITURES

A Team that intentionally forfeits a Match at an Event will be excluded from further participation in that NQ.

- The forfeit is intentional unless the Team shows good cause for the forfeit, such as illness and emergency circumstances.
  - The Event Arbitrator will determine if good cause exists.
  - The Event or Arbitrator will report any Team that intentionally forfeits a Match to the USAV Events Department.
- Forfeiting Teams may be subject to a fine paid to the Event in the amount not to exceed that as posted by the Event in its pre-Tournament information.
- For all NQs, if a Team intentionally forfeits a Match in a Gold Pool or Gold Bracket in any division Open Division Match the Team's penalty will be:
  - The forfeiting Team is ineligible for participation in that year's GJNCs. ALL Adult Members listed on the verified Event competition roster and the Club Director will be suspended from participating in all NQs, Regional Qualification Events and the GJNCs for the remainder of that season and the following season.

### *Last Day Forfeits*

Teams that enter a NQ are committing to participating in the full Event. Teams have control over their travel plans and those plans should be made so that a Team will not have to forfeit any Matches.

A Team that forfeits a Match for any reason other than illness, injury or emergency is denying another Team a Match. Additionally, in a single elimination format, it is poor sportsmanship to deny a Team the right to move on by beating them and then forfeiting out of the Event. Furthermore, it is even more unacceptable to forfeit and then, as loser of the Match, not to remain and officiate the next Match.

Teams that have no flexibility in their travel plans and know they will need to leave before their division completes play will report to the Tournament Director no later than the end of play on the day prior to the final day of Tournament.

The Event Arbitrator with the input of the Tournament director will decide what forfeitures are needed. Teams forfeiting should recognize that additional penalties may be imposed.

- Teams that forfeit a last day Match are still responsible to officiate the next Match scheduled on their court. If the team is unable to fulfill the officiating duty, monetary penalties will be collected by the tournament to cover match fees. Teams playing the next scheduled Match may not be required to begin play early.

## TEAM UNIFORMS

Team players are required to wear uniforms that are in full compliance with the USAV regulations. If two (2) or more sets of uniforms are used, players are required to wear the identical number for each set of shirts.

- The numbers "0" and "00" are not permitted.
- The numbers must be centered.
- Front numbers must be a minimum of 4" and back numbers a minimum of 6"
- All Libero shirts are required to be numbered and must be contrasting with the non-libero uniform shirts.

Team members need to be in proper uniform when warming up. If an individual competes in a position other than Libero as well, his/her number must be the same as their regular uniform.

## TEAM OFFICIATING DUTIES

The NQ must publish an officiating assignment schedule for the Teams; the Teams must fulfill all their scheduled officiating assignments.

Teams are responsible for providing an officiating/work crew for Matches in which they are not scheduled to play. Those work assignments can be found in the official play schedule. For planning purposes, be prepared to provide the following officials:

- Second Referee (GJNCs will provide R2s as available)
- Must be a rostered adult (non-players) for **ALL** age division Matches (with approval from the tournament staff, a rostered adult from another team within the same club may work as second referee)
- Certified Scorer (PENALTIES NOTED BELOW)
- Scoreboard Operator
- Libero Tracker
- 2 Line Judges

Non-rostered personnel may be allowed to work on the officiating Team, with the exception of the R2 position, provided they can provide documentation that they are registered with a Region of USAV to include a current membership, cleared background screening, completed SafeSport training, as well as have the appropriate certifications. Appropriate paperwork would need to be provided for Foreign Team personnel.

## ***Missed Officiating Duties***

- A Team's failure to have a complete officiating crew—including a rostered adult from the same Club—available and on time for an officiating assignment will result in the Team forfeiting the first set of its next Match.
- For every minute an officiating Team is late to fulfill its assignment, one (1) point will be awarded to that Team's next opponent in the first set of the next Match for up to 25 points. No more than 25 points will be awarded to the Team's next opponent, even if the Team designated to officiate misses the entire Match. The time that determines how many penalty points are assessed begins at the start of the receiving Team's warm-up.
- A Team will forfeit its entire next Match for failing, a second time, to have an officiating crew available on time for an officiating assignment.

## **AGE WAIVERED PLAYERS**

Teams competing in a NQ Bid award division **MAY NOT** use any players who have an age waiver from their Region unless those players are otherwise age-eligible to play in the division. NQs may allow Teams using players who have a waiver from their Region for age requirements in any division that does **NOT** have a Bid for the GJNCs.

**Exception:** Players who were born on or after July 1, 2005, (who are defined as 18 & under by the USAV Age Definition) and are in the 11th grade for the current academic year are eligible to compete in 17 & under. **Example:** A 17-year-old player who is considered by the Age Definition to compete on an 18s team and is still in the 11th grade for the current academic year, may compete on their 17s team in a qualifying division at a NQ and at GJNC. **Please note:** *This is a National Age Waiver approved by the National Office.* The frozen player rule would still be enforced. A player can play on both 17s & 18s teams during the season but would become frozen to a roster with whichever team they qualify with and would no longer be eligible to play for both teams in qualification.

With region approval only, teams with waived players may be eligible to participate in the non-qualifying Patriot Division of the GJNC. USAV will fully support the region's decision on whether or not to allow waived players in this division. Waivered players must be waived the entire season in order to participate in the Patriot Division of GJNC. Players **MAY NOT** transfer clubs prior to the GJNC to participate in the Patriot Division.

## **TEAM ROSTERS**

A Team must have a minimum of one (1) head coach and six (6) players. A Team may have a maximum of fifteen (15) players and five (5) additional personnel on their roster, one of which must be listed as the Head Coach. The other four (4) roster positions may be any combination of the following:

1. Assistant Coach
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Coach
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Assistant Coach
4. Chaperone
5. Team Representative
6. Team Manager

## ***Rostered Athlete Requirements***

All rostered players must be FULL MEMBERS of a Region of USA Volleyball.

**Athletes turning 18 during the season** will be required to take "Core" Center for SafeSport training upon turning 18. To prevent any disruption in play, the center will allow athletes who are 17, turning 18 during the season to take

"Core" given parental consent. Once a player turns 18, he or she will not be permitted to continue play until "Core" SafeSport training has been completed.

### Player's Number on Official Roster:

For all Events, each player is required to wear the **same jersey number as listed on the official roster** throughout the entire Event, with limited exceptions as required by emergency or blood rule applications.

**If a player is found playing in the wrong numbered jersey**, the Event Arbitrator, with the input of the Tournament Director, will determine the penalty(ies) to be imposed. Penalties should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Penalties for an **incorrect number** are listed below:

- If the error is discovered **prior** to the team's first match, the roster may be adjusted, and the player may play once the corrected roster is presented to the referees.
- If the error is discovered **during** the match, the player may not compete for the remainder of the match and the roster may not be adjusted until the conclusion of the match. If the player is on the court at the time of the discovery, USAV 7.3.5.3 as listed in the *2023-2025 Indoor Rules Book* is applied. If the Team at fault is currently serving, all points scored during that term of service are removed, and the lineup is corrected. If the opponent is serving, the lineup is corrected, and no additional penalty or sanction is assessed.
- If the error is discovered at the **completion** of the match, the player in question may not play in the following match and the roster may be adjusted prior to the match, but must be noted on the scoresheet that the player is ineligible for that match
- A \$50 fine and a roster change fee will be imposed to the Team by the tournament. In order for the player to be eligible for play, the penalty must be paid in full. Teams found with wrong jersey numbers should recognize that additional penalties may be imposed.

### Player Missing from Official Roster:

For all Events, each player is required to be listed on the official roster throughout the entire event. If a player is found participating and is not on the official roster, the following penalties will be imposed:

- If the missing player is discovered **prior** to the team's first match of the tournament, the player may be added to the roster and may play once the corrected roster is presented to the referees.
- If the missing player is discovered **during** the match, the player may not compete for the remainder of the match and Rule 7.3.5.4 as listed in the *2023-2025 Indoor Rules Book* is applied: *Where a player is found to be on court but he/she is not registered on the team roster, the opponent's points remain valid, and in addition they gain a point and service. The team at fault will lose all points and/or sets (0:25, if necessary) gained from the moment the non-registered player entered the court, and will have to submit a revised line-up sheet and send a new registered player into the court, in the position of the non-registered player.* The team may add the player to the roster after the conclusion of the match, but before the next match, but only after paying a \$250 penalty, as well as any additional roster change fees imposed by the tournament .
- If the missing player is discovered after the **completion** of the match, The player in question may not play in the following match, and the player may only be added to the roster after confirming the player is eligible, and the team pays a \$250 penalty as well as any additional roster change fees imposed by the tournament.
- No penalty is assessed on the previous round or matches where the non-rostered player may have played.

### Rostered Staff Requirements

All rostered personnel (non-players) must:

- Be FULL MEMBERS of a Region of USA Volleyball
- Be SafeSport trained, and

- Have a current, cleared background screening if applicable.

**Junior level members under the age of 18** do not need to be background screened and can only serve as a Team Manager on the roster.

**Junior members 18 years old and above**, serving in non-player capacity on a junior Team, must have submitted, and cleared a background screening within 30 days of their 18th Birthday and must be SafeSport trained.

**In order to be listed as a coach, serve in a coaching capacity**, one must possess a minimum coaching certification level of IMPACT (Entry Level).

An IMPACT certified person, listed on the roster, must be present and on the bench at all times. It is strongly recommended that Teams have more than one IMPACT certified person on their roster. In the event an IMPACT certified person is not present (late, sick, ejected or disqualified), the Team must have another IMPACT certified person on their roster and on the Team bench for play to begin or continue without forfeit. No additional time will be allowed to comply with the IMPACT certified person requirement to continue play except for unused time outs and/or time allowed between sets.

The Head Coach listed on the Official competition roster must have no other head coach designation with any other Team concurrently within the same Event, **with the exception** being a single NQ taking place over two weekends.

IMPACT certification rating may be met by successfully completing one of the following programs:

- USA Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP), Levels I, II or III
- RVA IMPACT course (Region or National Office verification required)
- Canadian Volleyball Associations Levels 1-4
- FIVB International Courses Levels 1-3
- ACEP “Principles of Coaching” course with proof of purchase of the USAV IMPACT Manual
- USA Volleyball IMPACT In Person
- USA Volleyball IMPACT On Demand
- USA Volleyball CAP or BCAP I, II, or III
- NFHS Fundamentals of Volleyball
- NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching
- ASEP Coaching Principles
- NCCP Level 1 Community Coach Workshop (minimum)
- FIVB Level 1 Course (minimum)
- University of college approved “Introduction to Coaching” course

The **Team Manager** position is primarily reserved for, but not restricted to, junior level members (members who are registered in a junior level membership category or are under the age of 18) participating with a junior Team in a non-player capacity. These members cannot be placed in any Team staff position other than “Team Manager”. Junior level staff members must be at least 10 years of age. USA Volleyball, the Event arbitrators, and the NQ designee reserve the right to conduct random ID checks on any staff person listed on the roster at any time.

Individual participation eligibility requirements (membership, background screening, IMPACT, minimum age, SafeSport trained etc.) are subject to verification by USAV, including use of random ID checks by the Event Arbitrator and/or the NQ or GJNCs designee.

If a person that is not listed on the official roster for a team and is found present on a team’s bench **during a match**, a roster violation has occurred, and the individual is deemed an Illegal participant for that team. The following penalties will be enforced:

- The Illegal Participant will be asked to leave the bench and the team will receive a penalty fine that is at the Tournament Director's discretion. All events must post their fine they are imposing on their tournament information page.
- If the same individual is caught a second time and verified during the match, then they will be removed from the event and the team will forfeit the current set.

**\*The addition of staff to an official roster is not allowed once a Team has begun Match play in the Event.**

## ***USA Volleyball Age and Identity Falsification Policy***

Any member in question must provide proof of identity and age eligibility if requested by an Event staff member or a USAV Arbitrator.

The following constitutes as proof of identity and age:

- Current Driver's License or Identification Card
- Birth Certificate – Junior Members Only
- Military Identification Card
- Current Passport

For all USAV Sanctioned Events, any person who alters a document that certifies the age or identity of a participant, or falsifies any statement that lists the age or identity of a participant, will be penalized as follows:

- A junior player who knowingly plays in a lower age classification than he or she is actually eligible for, or an adult player who knowingly plays in a higher age classification than he or she is actually eligible for, or any player who knowingly misrepresents his or her identity shall be:
  - Immediately suspended from registration with USAV and barred from further participation in the Event; and barred from participation in any USAV Events, in any capacity, for a minimum of two (2) years; and
  - Placed on a minimum probation of one (1) additional year, to run consecutively with the suspension.
- Any Team Representative, Coach, Club Director or responsible adult found to be a party to such action shall be subject to the same penalties.

When age or identity falsification is discovered and confirmed during an Event, these penalties shall be the required minimum penalty imposed by the Event Arbitrator or the Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee. Additional penalties will be imposed to include forfeitures.

The Event Arbitrator shall file a report detailing the incident of any age or identity violation, to USA Volleyball. USA Volleyball shall notify the Region of the penalty and further actions required.

## ***Gender Competition Policy***

To receive the complete USAV Gender Competition Policy, a gender ruling or ask any questions, please contact the USAV Gender Committee at [ChairGenderCom@usav.org](mailto:ChairGenderCom@usav.org).

For more information please refer to the USAV website at <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Volleyball/Events/Gender-Competition-Guidelines>.

## ROSTER VERIFICATION AND TEAM CHECK IN

Each Event will publish information about the process and requirements for roster verification registration and Team check in.

For the GJNCs, an adult staff member listed on the roster will need to sign that the club has and abides by a Team travel policy and all other SafeSport policies.

Prior to beginning play an adult staff member (Coach, Club Director or other designated adult) listed on the roster must confirm a Team's presence at the Tournament by signing an Official competition roster (Official Roster). Some NQs may allow another designated adult to check in the Team.

No additions or changes for players or staff on a Team's roster are allowed once a Team has begun match play in the event, except as specifically stipulated elsewhere in this document or outlined in the USAV Rules Book. The person who signs the Official Roster, whether the Coach, Club Director or other designated adult (Signing Agent), assumes all responsibility for verifying that:

- All of the information contained on the Official Roster is both complete and correct, including that:
  - All rostered positions adhere to the requirements listed under TEAM ROSTERS (Please see [Team Rosters](#)) OR have fully completed the necessary process established for Foreign Teams (Please see [Policy on Foreign Individual and Foreign Team Participation](#)).
  - All reported Team competition results are complete and accurate.

If a Team wins an Open Bid or accepts a National, USA, Liberty or American Bid at a NQ, the players on the Official Roster, as signed by the Signing Agent, are frozen to that Team.

NQs will send the Official Rosters of the Bid winners, Bid acceptance forms and official results for each division of the NQ to the USAV Events Department at the conclusion of the Event (no later than two days post Event). The Events Department will post the qualified Team rosters and results on the USAV website.

(See [Frozen Player Rule](#) below for additional information about Region Bids and At-Large Bids in regards to Official Rosters.)

## SAFESPORT

Participation in nationally sanctioned events will require that SafeSport training be completed by all registered adults (note, foreign teams are exempt, but we strongly recommend you take the course). Individual regions may set earlier deadlines for their respective regional events.

### **SAFESPORT TRAINING REQUIREMENT:**

SafeSport training is required for adults having frequent contact with or authority over Minor Athletes.

Parental consent is required for minor athletes to register for SafeSport training. [Complete the parental consent form](#) before registering.

To register for SafeSport training:

1. Sign in and go to "[SportsEngine HQ](#)"
2. In the top right-hand corner click the profile photo (or initials icon if there is no photo).
3. Choose My SportsEngine.
4. Click the Household tab on the left-hand navigation menu.
5. Click the desired Profile to view.
6. Find the desired membership and click View Details.
7. Click the "Membership Name" again to open the drop-down information and view the eligibility requirements.



8. Complete the requirement(s).
9. Should you need to return to your coursework at a later time, log in to your USAV account and click on the "Log into USAV" Academy button
10. For technical issues, while completing the course, please visit <http://help.usavolleyballacademy.org>

Adults having frequent contact with or authority over Minor Athletes must read over and adhere to the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy, otherwise known as the MAAPP. A shortened version of the MAAPP is provided below:

MAAPP At-A-Glance Link: [2024 SafeSport MAAPP Policy](#)

All adult participants of USA Volleyball are mandatory reporters of abuse.

The U.S. Center for SafeSport has exclusive jurisdiction over allegations of Sexual Misconduct. To report sexual misconduct, please click on the following link to report directly to the U.S. Center for SafeSport: [Report a Concern | U.S. Center for SafeSport \(uscenterforsafesport.org\)](#)

To report any other form of Misconduct, including Physical and Emotional misconduct (such as bullying, hazing, harassment), retaliation, violations of the MAAPP, or any other violations of the SafeSport Code, you may file a concern with USA Volleyball at the following link: [USAV Incident Reporting Form \(formsite.com\)](#)

In addition, the U.S. Center for SafeSport offers SafeSport training for parents and minor athletes free of charge. These courses can be taken at the following link: [U.S. Center for SafeSport \(safesporttrained.org\)](#)

## THE “FROZEN PLAYER” RULE

Once a female junior player has participated in a bid division GJNCs qualifying Event (Regional or NQ), she may not be on the Official Roster of, or participate in, another GJNCs qualifying or Championship Event with a different Club. Example: a player plays on a Club in a bid division of a national qualifier in an attempt to qualify. The player’s Team does not qualify. That player may not transfer to another Club.

Earning and accepting an Open Bid, submitting an Open At-Large Bid application or accepting any National, USA, Liberty, American or Freedom Bid defines the Team as “qualified” for the GJNCs. Once a Team is deemed qualified, the players on the qualified Team’s Official Roster are frozen to that Team. The players on the Team’s Official Roster are subject to the following restrictions:

- A Frozen Player cannot be on the roster of, or play for, another Team in a Regional Qualifier or NQ Event, the roster of a Team applying for an Open At-Large Bid, or another Team playing at the GJNCs.
- A Club may add player(s) to the Official Roster of one of its Teams qualified for the GJNCs, provided the additional player(s) are members of the Club and are not on the Official Roster of another of the Club’s Teams at the GJNCs.
- No player may switch from one qualified Team to another qualified Team, even within the same Club at the same National Championship (i.e., 18sGJNC or GJNC). **NOTE:** A player under the age of 17 can switch between a Team that has qualified for the 18sGJNC and another Team that has qualified for the GJNC as long as both Teams are within the same Club. A player may not help multiple Teams qualify for multiple GJNCs.
- **\*NEW: This also applies to the GJNC split of GJNC 11 – 13s and GJNC 14 – 17s.**
  - a. **EXAMPLE 1:** A player in the 17’s age division plays on an 18’s Team at a national qualifier and that Team Qualifies for the 18sGJNC in the Open Division. That player may not play on any other Team (e.g., a 17s Team trying to qualify for 17 Open) at any National Qualifying Events to help that Team qualify for the GJNC for the remainder of that Club season. She may, however, be added to the 17 Open roster to play in the GJNC within that Club after the team has already qualified.
  - b. **EXAMPLE 2:** A Club has a Team that has qualified for the 18 USA Division of the 18sGJNC, they may add a player from their Club who plays on a younger Team to play in the 18sGJNC even if the younger Team has qualified for the GJNC.

Violations of the Frozen Player Rule may result in Sanctions being imposed on the already qualified Team, its Club, the Team’s coach, the player and/or the Club’s director.

The USAV Events Department will determine Sanctions for violations of the Frozen Player Rule. (See [Penalties for Illegal use of Bid](#))

# POLICY ON FOREIGN INDIVIDUAL AND FOREIGN TEAM PARTICIPATION

## Purpose:

The purpose of the Foreign Junior Player Participation policy is to provide definitions of what is a foreign player and foreign team and to provide guidance on when a foreign player or foreign team may participate in USA Volleyball ("USAV") and/or one of its 40 Regional Volleyball Associations ("RVA") events.

## Definitions:

- I. Resident Junior Foreign Player. A Resident Junior Foreign Participant is someone residing legally in the United States per the requirements of legal residence and is attending a United States high school.
- II. Non-Resident Junior Foreign Player. A Non-Resident Foreign Player is an individual who does not meet the requirements of legal residence in the United States.
- III. Foreign Team. A team of Non-Resident Foreign Participants seeking to participate in a USAV-sanctioned event.

## Policy Statement:

- I. Individual Foreign Participation: Subject to the above Definitions, a Resident Foreign Player may participate in all USAV and RVA events if:
  - a. She/He is a duly registered member of a USAV RVA; and,
  - b. Follows all event participation policies and registration procedures.

*Exception: A Resident Foreign Participant, who has competed in international competition representing his/her country/federation of origin (i.e. Youth National Team, Junior National Team, Senior National Team, or other "elite" team that has represented that country in international competition) is required to have a written release from that volleyball federation of origin before he/she can become a registered member of a USAV/RVA. Note, once this release is granted and applied to allow for membership with USAV/RVA, this waiver will apply for the remainder of that volleyball season and the Resident Foreign Participant will not be permitted to rejoin their original volleyball federation until the volleyball season has ended on August 31st of each calendar year. This would not apply to a Resident Foreign Participant who has been in continuous legal residence in the United States and unaffiliated with a foreign national volleyball federation for greater than two (2) years.*

- II. Foreign Team Participation for National Junior Competitions (e.g., USA Volleyball Girls Junior National Championship, USA Volleyball Boys Junior National Championship, National Qualifiers, and other qualifying events):
  - a. A Foreign Team (registered with its National Volleyball Federation) may participate if it duly applies for and is accepted in compliance with the Event's regulations, is not representing its country in an official capacity, and the federation of origin grants permission for participation.

- i. Only Foreign Teams from U.S. Territories with their own national volleyball federation (Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam) are allowed to participate in bid-winning divisions of Girls National Qualifiers and the Girls Junior National Championship.
  - ii. Only Foreign Teams from U.S. Territories with their own national volleyball federation (Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam) AND Canadian teams are allowed to participate in bid-winning divisions of Boys National Qualifiers and the Boys Junior National Championship.
- b. Foreign Teams must complete the Foreign Team application process with USA Volleyball, including purchasing Foreign Team Participant Insurance (\$100)
- c. Each member of a Foreign Team shall have in his/her possession(s) the following documents:
  - i. Photo identification (Driver's license, passport or comparable government issued document); and
  - ii. Copy of birth certificate or Government Issue Identification with birth date for those under 18

Prohibited Actions:

- I. A Non-Resident Foreign Junior Player shall not be eligible to participate in any USAV or RVA events.
- II. Concurrent registration with more than one National Volleyball Federation is prohibited.

**Contact:** [membership@usav.org](mailto:membership@usav.org)

# TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS

## OFFICIALS

All pool play and playoff bracket Matches must have a USAV-certified official as the first referee.

All gold level (3<sup>rd</sup> pool) Matches in Open Division, and semifinal and final Matches of gold level National, USA and American Divisions, must have USAV-certified first referee. It is recommended to provide second referees as available.

NOTE: It is recommended that there be first and second referees for gold level quarterfinals in National, USA, or American Divisions.

## AWARDS

It is the obligation of the head coach to be aware of his/her individual State High School Association rules regarding the acceptance of awards. If necessary, present the properly signed papers as required by your State High School Activities Association.

All Events will, at a minimum provide the following awards:

- A Team plaque or trophy to each first, second, and third place Teams in the gold level of each Open, National, USA, Liberty, American, Freedom and Patriot (GJNCs only) Division that is hosted by the Event.
- Individual awards of minimal value (non-merchandise such as a plaque, trophy, or medal) to each player on each first, second, and third place Teams in the gold level of each Open, National, USA, Liberty, American, Freedom and Patriot (GJNCs only) Division that is hosted by the Event.
- NQs will not select or give awards for All-Tournament Teams.
- For the GJNCs, All-Tournament and Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards will be given in the following age divisions: 18, 17, 16 and 15 Open, National, USA, Liberty, American, and Freedom Divisions.

## TEAM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR NQS

The date a NQ receives an entry application does not automatically determine the Team's acceptance into the Tournament. All entry requirements must be met.

Each individual NQ may have additional entry requirements. These requirements shall be clearly specified in the respective NQs entry procedure documents and information.

## TEAM ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA FOR NQS

NQs will accept Teams who have met all entry requirements until available space is filled, or the deadline date, whichever comes first, based on the following criteria:

- Postmark or electronic date of complete entry requirements, as specified by each Event.
- Strength.
- If the NQ limits the number of accepted Teams per club, per division, that limit can be no less than two (2) Teams per club, per division, but may be higher (maximum number of accepted Teams per club, per division to be set by each NQ and clearly stated in the NQs pre-Tournament information).
- Entries from the host state where the NQ is conducted.

A NQ may prioritize the criteria points above as it best meets the needs of that NQ, however, the method by which a NQ will turn Teams away should the Event, or a Division of the Event, be oversubscribed must be clearly stated in that NQs published Tournament information.

After the deadline date Teams may be accepted at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

If a division is filled to capacity by the time a Team completes the entry process, the NQ may offer Teams denied entry into the opportunity to move into another offered division where space is available.

Under no circumstance is a Team that is denied entry into any division guaranteed a berth in any other division.

## ATHLETIC TRAINERS

Each NQ and the GJNCs will provide athletic trainers during all hours of competition and for at least 45 minutes prior to the beginning of competition each day. All trainers are required to be SafeSport trained and successfully pass a USAV background check.

## PROTEST COMMITTEE

Each Event must have an on-site Protest Committee consisting of one (1) to three (3) members, one of which will be the Head Official or Head Scorer depending on the nature of the protest. Other members may consist of the Tournament director or his/her designee, and another qualified person to rule on protests lodged by Teams regarding officiating.

- No Protest Committee member can coach a Team in the Tournament.
- All rulings of this committee are final and not subject to appeal.
- All protests will be settled at the time they are lodged.
  - No Match will be allowed to proceed until the protest is settled.
- Protests can be related ONLY to the rules of play. Judgement calls are NOT subject to protest
  - Misinterpretation of a playing rule
  - Failure of the first referee to apply the correct rule to a given situation
  - Failure to charge the correct penalty-Sanction for a given fault.
- NEW for 2023-2024: A protest related to a judgement decision may result in a penalty (red card) being assessed to the coach.

## ETHICS AND ELIGIBILITY

All Junior National Championship Events offer participants the ability to access normal due process channels should their eligibility to participate be in question. Procedures, including appeal options, are outlined above in this manual.

### ***Event Arbitrators***

Event Arbitrators are appointed by USAV and are present for NQs and GJNCs. They are the first level for hearing and resolving ethics and eligibility issues at a specific USA Volleyball Event. Teams or individuals accused of committing violations of rules and regulations at a NQ or GJNCs must meet with the Event Arbitrator(s) for resolution.

The authority for the Event Arbitrator begins with the arrival of a Team and individual participants in the Event's city or 48 hours prior to the first day of competition, whichever is earlier, and shall continue through the duration of the Event, through 30 minutes after the conclusion of the final Match of the Event.

Decisions of the Event Arbitrator shall be conveyed immediately to the affected parties and may be appealed to the Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee appointed for each Event of USA Volleyball.

### ***Event Appeals Committee Duties***

The committee must meet as promptly as possible following the filing of an appeal or after an arbitrator's recommendation of a sanction which would continue beyond the term of the event. The committee must conduct a full, fair, and objective hearing. Upon completion of the hearing, the committee should confer and render one of the following four decisions:

- **Uphold the decision** of the arbitrator(s).
- **Rescind the decision** of the arbitrator(s).
- **Modify or amend the decision** of the arbitrator(s). The amendment can be more or less restrictive than the arbitrator's decision.
- Rescind the decision of the arbitrator(s) *and* **render a new judgment**.
- The decisions of the Event Appeals Committee are final with respect to eligibility or privileges at the event; no further appeal is available at the event.

### ***Event Appeals Committee Members***

For all USAV Championship events, the committee consists of three individuals (age 21 or older), as follows:

- A person appointed by the Event Director.
- A person who is or has been an elected or appointed USAV lay leader.
- A person who meets the definition of a domestic athlete.
  - For all qualifier and bid events, the committee consists of three members (age 21 or older), as follows:
    - A committee chair appointed by the Event Director.
    - Two other persons (one a domestic athlete) who have no connection to the persons involved in the incident. All coaches on the event roster are ineligible to serve on this committee.



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## **CHAPTER 2 – NATIONAL QUALIFIER DIRECTORS**



# PREPARING FOR NATIONAL QUALIFIER EVENTS

## NATIONAL QUALIFIER INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

The following information must be provided directly to the USA Volleyball Director of Events:

- Notification of Head Referee – 90 days in advance of the start of the Event.
- Flow Charts to be approved – 2 weeks prior to the start of the Event, with any later changes communicated, as necessary. Applies only if not using preapproved flow charts
- Age group assignments by August 1 or communication if unable to meet this deadline
- Information, or access the information in order to verify all NQ Event participants are currently registered with USAV and meeting all membership requirements
- Final results and list of Teams accepting Bids – submitted by no later than noon on the second day following the end of the Event.
- Notification of competition venue/city – 18 months prior to 1<sup>st</sup> day of competitions.
- Other items as requested by the USA Volleyball Events Department.
- A screen shot of division numbers at the time of registration close date or seeding start date

The following information must be provided to all interested parties:

### ***USAV National Qualifier Policies***

- Ethics and Eligibility information
- GJNCs qualification procedures and Bid numbers
- Penalties for not using a Bid & illegal use of Bids
- Team roster requirements
- Awards
- Tournament format
- Open, National, USA, Liberty and American Division selection criteria
- Minimum Team entry requirements
- Team entry selection criteria
- Team acceptance criteria
- Warm-up procedures
- Tie breaker procedures
- Team officiating responsibilities
- Penalty(ies) for missing officiating assignments
- Frozen Player information

## ***Tournament Information***

- Process and deadlines for submitting Tournament entry fees, forms, Seeding and any other required entry application information.
- USAV Events Department recommends that the entry deadline date for NQ Events be no earlier than February 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year, or 45 days prior to the first day of competition, whichever is earlier.
- The number of Teams that will be accepted for all age divisions in the current season's NQ Event.
- Team check in procedures, including procedures for Teams arriving late.
- Coaches' meeting information, if one is scheduled.
- Refund Policy.
- Tournament play schedule.
- Format description.
- Round-to-round advancement (flow chart).

## **RECOMMENDED FACILITY SPACE REQUIREMENTS**

It is recommended that a NQ have minimum space for:

- 24 Teams each in the Open Divisions, as well as the 11 & 12 National Divisions, 12 & 13 USA Divisions, and 13-18 Liberty;
- 64 Teams each in the 14's - 18's USA and American Divisions; and
- 48 Teams in the 12 and 13 American and National Divisions.
- Competition conducted in four-Team pools, with no more than two (2) pools or thirteen (13) Matches scheduled on one (1) court in one day.

All facilities must conform to the safety guidelines in the current USAV Domestic Competition Regulations.

## **EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

All courts must meet minimum court quality and size standards as stated in the current USAV Domestic Competition Regulations. Officials will enforce USAV National Rules and ground rules.

## **EVENT STAFF MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

All adults contracted by the QD as onsite NQ Event staff within the NQ Event must be verified by the QD as having a current, cleared USAV-approved membership, a cleared background screen and be SafeSport trained. All Event Staff should receive a copy of the [MAAPP Policy](#).

## **Athletic Trainers**

All NQ tournaments are required to provide certified athletic trainers during the course of the event. It is recommended that one trainer be assigned to each facility if more than one facility is used to conduct the tournament. Trainers must provide proof of liability insurance coverage to the Tournament Director. It is recommended that the trainers also provide proof of their current certifications. It is also required that any self-employed/independent trainer be background screened and SafeSport trained.

Please provide each trainer with copies of the Incident Report Form. They must be filled out and sent to USAV at the conclusion of the event.

## ONLINE REGISTRATION AND RESULTS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Online Team entry registration systems used by all NQs will have the same fields as specified by the USAV Events Department. Fields required are: division, final finishes, club name, team name and team code. A head-to-head report maybe requested by the USAV Events Department. All Team participant data and competition results, regardless of division, must be able to be exported in a sequence determined by the USAV Events Department to allow for seamless importing. Required fields and reporting sequence of these fields will be communicated to the QDs by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year leading into the current Qualifier season.

- Registration records need to be made available two (2) weeks prior to the start of the Event (or two (2) weeks prior to the start of the respective weekends if Event is held over multiple weekends), and again after the conclusion of the Event.
- Reported results used for Seeding will be made accessible to USAV, all Coaches, Club Directors or Club Representatives upon request.

Final Event competition results must be made available to USAV in a format requested by the USAV Events Department no later than two (2) days upon completion of the Event.

## REFUND AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

For Teams accepted into an Event, each NQ will set its own refund policy and clearly state the policy in its entry information.

These policies apply to all Teams denied entry into an NQ that have completed the entry requirements:

- A Team that is denied entry either because there are too many Teams for a division, or because there are too few Teams for a division and the division is being eliminated, will receive a full refund of its entry fee.
- If the division a Team applies to is combined with applicants in one or more other divisions to make a division different from the one the Team applied for, that Team will have the option to play in the new division or withdraw from the NQ with a full refund of its entry fee.
- The NQ will notify any Teams affected by an elimination or combination of divisions within 24 hours of the entry deadline.

## OFFICIALS

The NQ will appoint a head official(s) for the Tournament, who will be part of the Protest Committee. The head official(s) will instruct all officials to enforce the rules outlined in the USAV Domestic Competition Regulations. All Match officials must be FULL MEMBERS of an RVA of USA Volleyball and verified as having a current, cleared USAV-approved background screen and be SafeSport trained.

## USAV ARBITRATOR

USAV will appoint at least one (1) Arbitrator per city, per weekend, to perform duties specified solely by USAV during the NQ. The final number of arbitrators assigned to an Event will be as deemed necessary by the QD and the USAV Director of Events.

The NQ will be responsible for the following:

- Providing, at no cost, credentials for the Arbitrator(s) to all venues and meeting space involved with the NQ Event.
- Providing, at no cost, parking passes for the Arbitrator(s) at all venues if needed.

- Providing, at no cost, internet access for the Arbitrator(s) in the main venue during the hours of competition.
- Providing assistance to USAV in arranging a hotel room for the Arbitrator(s) at a property in as close proximity to the main venue, such room cost shall be comped by the NQ unless no comp rooms are available at which point the cost of the room will be at the expense of USAV.

All other expenses of the Arbitrator(s) shall be the responsibility of USAV.

## USAV EVALUATOR

USAV may appoint up to one (1) person of their choice to perform evaluation duties (Evaluator) specified solely by USAV during the NQ. NQs will cooperate with the Arbitrator in preparation of a summary and evaluative report on the NQ Event.

The QD will be responsible for the following:

- Providing, at no cost, credentials for the Evaluator to all venues and meeting space involved with the NQ.
- Providing, at no cost, parking passes for the Evaluator at all venues if needed.
- Providing, at no cost, internet access for the Evaluator in the main venue during the hours of competition.
- Providing assistance to USAV in arranging a hotel room for the Evaluator at a property in as close proximity to the main venue, such room cost to be at the expense of USAV.

All other expenses of the Evaluator shall be the responsibility of USAV.

The USAV Director of Events will provide a copy of the evaluation and recommendations to the QD and the USAV CEO within 90 days after the conclusion of the NQ.

## USAV MARKETING & BRANDING REQUIREMENTS

As a nationally Sanctioned Event, each NQ has the responsibility to, in cooperation with USAV, promote the USAV brand within, and in relation to, the Event.

USAV will provide a high-resolution logo and brand guidelines to the NQs each year, or as required due to a change in the logo. All use of the USAV logo requires prior written approval, which will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. Proofs and requests for approval should be submitted to [creativeservices@usav.org](mailto:creativeservices@usav.org).

USA Volleyball-branded apparel can be purchased through the USA Volleyball wholesale apparel online store and sold along with event-specific merchandise at the event. For more information on how to purchase USA Volleyball apparel please contact [creativeservices@usav.org](mailto:creativeservices@usav.org) to request access. Note that no apparel may be produced or sold including USA Volleyball logos or marks outside of the wholesale program other than by approved USA Volleyball partners or licensees.

The NQ will provide USAV a high-resolution Event logo and brand guidelines for use by July 1st of each year preceding the event, or as required due to a change in the logo.

The following are branding and marketing requirements for each NQ:

- Place the USAV logo prominently on the NQ website.
- Include the USAV logo in any digital communication or marketing of the event including but not limited to email, social media, mobile applications, etc.
- Prominently display any USAV-provided banners or signage promoting USA Volleyball programs, events, or other activities. The aforementioned materials shall be provided to the NQ in advance of each event as available.
- Display the USAV logo on signage and banners in the venue, including the NQ entry unit

**Note that the USAV logo may not be displayed in close proximity or adjacent to any logos or marks for brands other than those who are official partners of USA Volleyball. The current list of official partners of USAV is available on the USAV website, at the bottom of the home page: [usavolleyball.org](http://usavolleyball.org). All usage of USAV logos and other marks must be approved in writing prior to the start of the event.**

Each NQ will also provide USAV, at no cost to USAV, prominent exhibit space of no less than the equivalent of a single booth space and accessories offered to other exhibitors in a location that is mutually agreed upon within the Event exhibit area,

- USAV will confirm at least thirty (30) days in advance of the NQ Event its use, or not, of the display/exhibit space
- No sponsor-specific materials will be distributed or displayed by USAV that conflict with a NQ Event sponsor.

## USAV SANCTION REQUIREMENTS

All Events Sanctioned by USAV must adhere to the rules and regulations as contained in the 2023-2025 USAV Indoor Rules Book, and other standards printed in the NQ and National Event Pre-Tournament Manuals.

All volleyball Team competition included in a NQ must be approved by USAV. A license fee will apply to all volleyball Team entry fees as specified by the Qualifier License Agreement, including Team competition in non-Bid award divisions and exhibitions.