2017 Handbook

**USA Beach National Program Policies OVERVIEW**

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# Preamble

The purpose of the Beach National Program Handbook is to inform current elite athletes what is required and what resources are available to athletes aspiring to play for USA Volleyball internationally and ultimately in the Olympic Games. The plan of USA Volleyball is to map the Program to the evolving landscape of competitive opportunities presented internationally by the FIVB and NORCECA and domestically by USA Volleyball sanctioned / recognized events.

We want to take advantage of every opportunity available to a qualified team, and assist and support those teams to be in a position to win medals at every international event while balancing the overall needs of the Beach National Program (BNP).

The BNP, as implemented by the Director, Beach National Program, , is a multi-faceted and comprehensive undertaking designed to both support and develop elite athletes to proudly and successfully represent the United States.

# Beach National Program Objectives

* + To create and sustain a program that yields consistent international competitive excellence as evaluated by achieving podium results in FIVB and NORCECA events and ultimately the Olympic Games.
	+ To create, promote and expand beach programs that will result in a steadily increasing number of talented athletes entering the Beach National Program.
	+ To create a highly visible and respected program that will inspire the youth of America to engage in the sport of beach volleyball.

# Beach National Program – General Description

The BNP is designed to support, train and provide competitive experience to athletes that comprise the BNP. The BNP is made up of the following:

* A1 Beach National Team (BNT) – The top eight (8) ranked USAV athletes per gender according to individual FIVB Entry Points who meet the BNP minimum criteria (reference Section IV) and are ranked within the top 64 according to individual FIVB Athlete Entry Points.
* A2 Beach National Team (A2BNT) – The eight (8) highest ranked USAV Athletes per gender according to individual FIVB Entry Points after the A1 athletes who meet the BNP minimum criteria (reference Section IV) and are ranked within the top 96 according to individual FIVB Athlete Entry Points.
* Elite Development Program (EDP) – Athletes identified by the EDP coaches and the Director, Beach National Program to be part of the EDP based on objective results (FIVB, NORCECA, USA Beach Ranking, Age Group Competitions, NCAA, etc.) and performance at tryouts, camps or other observational opportunities.

# Minimum Beach National Program Criteria

In order to be eligible for the Beach National Program an athlete must:

* + Be a national of the United States.
	+ Hold a valid U.S. passport.
	+ Be eligible to compete for the United States per FIVB regulations / requirements.
	+ Be a currently registered member of USA Volleyball (that includes a signed Registration Form and Code of Conduct).
	+ Sign the USA Volleyball Beach Athlete Agreement (that shall not be in conflict with the USOC’s Athlete Rights and Commercial Terms).
	+ Complete the USOC’s FREE online 90 minute SafeSport training.
	+ Complete an Individual Performance Plan (IPP) when requested by USAV.
	+ Be actively training, registering and competing in international events that are available to an athlete based on their respective FIVB technical ranking, force majeure reasons excluded.

# Support Overview

Athletes in the Beach National Program (BNP) are eligible for the following support from USAV/USOC:

* + Direct Athlete Support (DAS) – DAS is a monthly stipend that is paid to the athletes based on their position in the Beach National Program.
	+ Athlete Health Insurance – There are two types of Athlete Health Insurance that are available to qualified athletes in the BNP:
		- Elite Athlete Health Insurance (EAHI) which is a health insurance policy that is available to the top BNP athletes through the USOC.
		- USAV BNP Personal Health Insurance Reimbursement Policy which reimburses qualified BNP athletes up to a certain amount of the personal monthly health insurance premiums.
	+ Competition Travel Support – Athletes (CTSA) – The purpose of this support is to defray travel costs for Teams representing the United States in FIVB and NORCECA competitions.
	+ Coaching Honoraria (CH) – The purpose of this support is to provide coaches of teams representing the United States in FIVB and NORCECA competitions financial support for their professional services.
	+ Competition Travel Support – Coaches (CTSC) - The purpose of this support is to defray travel costs for coaches of teams representing the United States in NORCECA and FIVB competitions.
	+ Athlete Wellness Program - The purpose of this program is to offer sports medicine and other wellness-oriented services to athletes.
	+ Product – The official supplier and sponsor of USAV’s Beach National Program will be provided to qualified BNP athletes that choose to wear/use Mizuno.
	+ Mikasa and Molten Volleyballs – The purpose of this support is to provide qualified BNP athletes with Mikasa and Molten volleyballs free of charge for training purposes to better prepare for international competitions.
	+ USAV Facilities and Services – USAV provides strength and conditioning, nutrition consulting, physical therapy, sports psychology, etc. out of the Beach National Program Center in Torrance, CA, the American Sports Center in Anaheim, California (training center for USAV indoor national teams) and through the USOC.
	+ Athlete Injury and Pregnancy Policy – This policy was put in place to provide care for athletes that get injured or become pregnant while they are active members of the BNP.

# Event Entry Procedures

1. FIVB Events:
	1. Athletes must sign up online by the specified USAV entry deadline.
	2. All sign-up deadlines and links will be available at: <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-volleyball/usa-teams/beach-volleyball/registration/fivb-registration> as soon as possible after the FIVB’s schedule is published online.
	3. In general, USAV deadlines are 7 days prior to the FIVB deadlines below –
		1. FIVB Senior World Championships -60 days
		2. FIVB World Tour (1-5 Star Events) -30 days
		3. FIVB World Tour Final -as per FIVB
	4. USAV registrations follow the FIVB Sports Regulations, which can be found at: http://www.fivb.org/EN/BeachVolleyball/Document/2017FIVB\_BVB\_Sports\_Regulations\_Final\_20161202.pdfFailure by athletes to familiarize themselves with the FIVB Sports Regulations is **NOT** the responsibility of USAV.
	5. Both athletes of a team must register separately.
	6. USAV encourages athletes/teams to plan accordingly and register early as USAV will not be held responsible for late entries for **any** reason.
2. Late Entry:
	1. If an athlete/team fails to sign-up by the specified USAV deadline, the athlete/team may request to be registered by emailing USAV’s Director, Beach National Programs.
	2. Both athletes of a team must send separate emails specifying the following-
		1. FIVB Event to be registered for
		2. Partner’s name
		3. Reason for late entry
	3. There is no guarantee that athletes registering late will be registered and thus it is strongly recommended that athletes plan accordingly and sign-up early.
	4. If an athlete signs up late and gains entry into the specified FIVB event, USAV will charge the following late entry fees -
		1. 1st late entry $500 per athlete
		2. 2nd late entry $1000 per athlete
		3. 3rd late entry Entry will be denied
	5. All fees will be deducted from an athlete’s Competition Travel Support – Athlete (CTSA). If an athlete fails to qualify for a CTSA they must pay the fine to USAV prior to competing in their next event or USAV reserves the right to remove them from their next event and/or not register them for events going forward.
3. Competition Plan:
	1. The top four (4) Beach National Program teams per gender must submit a ***proposed*** 2017 international competition plan to the Director, Beach National Programs as part of their HPP.
	2. The competition plan should also indicate on which competitions the Team coach is expected to accompany the Team.
	3. If a Team is nominated by USA Volleyball to compete in an international event that it has requested entry into, it is expected that the Team will compete in that event. If an athlete or Team withdraws from an FIVB event for which it has been nominated, 33 days or less before the start of an Open as listed on the FIVB websites, USA Volleyball may remove that athlete or Team from the next FIVB event of equal or lessor ranking that athlete or team registers for. The aforementioned penalty shall not be applicable if the withdrawal is due to injury or debilitating illness (as certified by a registered medical doctor or USAV Beach ATC), other force majeure conditions as agreed by the Director, Beach National Programs or the athlete withdraws to participate in a conflicting NORCECA event (only if the NORCECA Playoff for said NORCECA event occurred after the FIVB Open registration deadline).
	4. If an athlete does not register and/or declines nominations to two (2) or more events in a calendar year they are eligible for without informing USAV of the reason, USAV may reduce support or remove the athlete from the Beach National Program.

# Event Withdrawal Policy

1. FIVB Events:
	* All withdrawal request must be submitted by emailing sean.scott@usav.org and/or phil.noyes@usav.org.
	* All parties involved in the withdrawal request must submit something via email. For example, if a team would like to withdraw from an event, both athletes must email stating they would like to withdraw. If the withdrawal involves a player substitution, then all three players (the withdrawing player, substituting player and continuing player) must contact USAV via email, stating their plans.
	* All withdrawals will be done per the current FIVB Regulations which can be found at <http://www.fivb.org/EN/BeachVolleyball/Document/2017FIVB_BVB_Sports_Regulations_Final_20161202.pdf>. USAV encourages athletes to read the Sports Regulations to familiarize themselves with the withdrawal deadlines and procedures. Failure to abide by the FIVB Sports Regulations and any eventual fine and/or sanction is solely the responsibility of the affected athlete/team. Should a player have any doubts about the FIVB Sports Regulations they are encourage to contact the USAV Beach Office.
	* Due to time zone differences and COS signing off on all withdrawals, athletes are encouraged to submit withdrawals ASAP and at the very latest, 3 days before the FIVB deadline to allow for appropriate time to process the withdrawal, thus avoiding any fines and/or sanction. Withdrawal request after 3 days before the event cannot be guaranteed to get in on time and the team/athlete will be held responsible for any fines and/or sanctions. USAV will work with athletes in force majeure situations to get the withdrawal request in on time.
2. NORCECA Events:
	* Withdrawals for NORCECA events will be per Addendum A.

# Financial & Handbook Disclaimer

All references to monetary support levels are based on the 2017 USA Volleyball Board- approved budget and may be subject to change in accordance with Corporation policy.

The policies and procedures specified in this Handbook are based on current understanding of FIVB regulations. In the event FIVB regulations change for 2017, this Handbook will also be revised or adjusted accordingly.

The allocation of USOC resources is subject to USOC approval of USAV’s Performance Partnership Agreement (PPA).

**Addendum A**

**2017 NORCECA Nomination / Playoff System**

Minimum Requirements for teams to enter the Playoff:

1. Meet the Minimum Beach National Program Criteria specified in Section IV.; and
2. Pay a $75.00 registration fee per athlete. Athletes in the USAV Beach National Program as defined in section III will be refunded $50 per athlete within one week after the playoff.

Playoff Dates: Playoff registration deadlines will be posted on  [http://www.teamusa.org/usa-volleyball/usa-teams/beach-volleyball/registration/norceca-registration](http://www.usavolleyball.org/) and emailed to all BNP athletes as defined in section III, as soon as reasonably possible once the NORCECA schedule is confirmed. Published Playoff dates are subject to change based on NORCECA calendar changes and any changes will be updated online and emailed to all BNP athletes ASAP.

Playoff Format:

* + Twelve (12) Team Draw. Top eight (8) teams plus four (4) wild cards. Any unused wild cards will be allotted to the next highest ranked team. Teams will be ranked according to the sum of the individual USA Beach Ranking points of both partners.
	+ If enough teams do not sign up to fill the Draw, USA Volleyball reserves the right to enter teams at its discretion to complete the Draw.
	+ Single elimination with a playoff for 3rd place.
* Should an athlete withdraw after the NORCECA Playoff registration deadline up to 5 pm Pacific the day before the playoff, USAV will replace the team with the highest seeded team from the reserve list and reseed the playoff accordingly.  If there are no reserve teams then USAV reserves the right to replace the team with a team of its choosing and will reseed the playoff accordingly.  Should the withdrawal happen after 5 pm Pacific the day before the playoff, USAV will **NOT** replace the team with a team from the reserve list and the team that was supposed to play the withdrawing team will get a bye.  In either instance the team withdrawing must present a medical certificate from a licensed medical professional and allow USAV’s Head Athletic Trainer, Beach National Teams evaluate him or her, if so requested. Athletes that fail to present a medical certificate from a licensed medical professional and allow USAV’s Head Athletic Trainer to evaluate him or her, will forfeit the right to register for further NORCECA Playoffs.

NORCECA Nominations and Procedures

* The team that wins the playoff gets to go to the assigned NORCECA tournament(s).
* If spots are available, the 2nd place team from the playoff gets to go to the assigned NORCECA tournament(s).
* Players must compete in the NORCECA event(s) they qualified for with the same partner they won the corresponding NORCECA Playoff with, except in the following situation:
	+ In case of an injury, an athlete is allowed to change their partner and maintain their spot in the event they qualified for only once per calendar year.
* If the #1 team accepts a bid to a NORCECA event and then withdraws for a non-force majeure reason, each athlete will be fined $500 for a first offence, $1,000 for a second and not allowed to compete for 365 days from the last offence for a third offence. #1 teams may not withdraw and compete in another event during the same time frame for any reason once they have committed to the event.
* If a team pulls out of the assigned NORCECA event for whatever reason, the next highest finishing team in the corresponding NORCECA Playoff will be offered their spot. This will continue on a “trickle down” basis until a team accepts the nomination and all spots are filled. If all the teams that participated in the playoff decline the nomination, then USAV reserves the right to nominate a team.
* Teams that qualify for a NORCECA event through the Playoff will not be given a nomination to another NORCECA event should the NORCECA event they qualified for be cancelled.
* Teams with 1000 or more FIVB Entry Ranking Points as of the NORCECA Playoff registration deadline will NOT be eligible to participate.
* USA Volleyball reserves the right to allow a team or teams with 1000 or more FIVB Entry Ranking Points to compete in a playoff should the allowance be based on a strategy to gain access into FIVB events or win the NORCECA season long points race.

**END**