



2026 ADULT OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT MANUAL

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Welcome to Orlando- Adult Opens 2026

USA Volleyball and the Indoor Events Department welcomes you to Orlando, Florida, and to the Orange County Convention Center for the 2026 USA Volleyball Adult Open National Championship (Adult Opens).

We appreciate your support and wish all participants an enjoyable and successful event.

First-time participants can look forward to new connections; returning players will enjoy renewing friendships.

Special thanks to Visit Orlando and the Orange County Convention Center Staff for their partnership and preparation.

USA VOLLEYBALL EVENT DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

Josie Russell, Indoor Event Manager

Megan Vallance, Indoor Events Lead

Molly Crockett, Indoor Events Director

Email

opens@usav.org

Phone Number

719-228-6800

Address:

4065 Sinton Rd Ste 200, Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Website:

[2026 USA Volleyball Adult Open National Championship \(Adult Opens\) - USA Volleyball](https://www.usav.org/adult-opens)

Registration Process

REGISTRATION PROCESS- HELPFUL LINKS

Advanced Event System (AES) registration link for the Adult Open National Championship:

[2026 Adult Open National Championship - AES](#)

2025-2026 AES Instructions to Register for Adult Opens:

[2025-2026-AES-Instructions-to-Register-for-Adult-Opens-FINAL.pdf](#)

2026 Membership Locator (Use for assistance on which membership to purchase/Assistance on which region you are a part of):

[2026 Membership Locator](#)

**Please Note: A few regions (Pioneer, Gateway and Great Plains have not activated their membership yet as of 1/19, so if you reside in one of those regions, you may have to wait to purchase your Adult Player Membership.

If you are unsure of which region you reside in, use this link to view a map of the USAV Regions:

[USAVERGIONS.ORG - Home](#)

Website:

[2026 USA Volleyball Adult Open National Championship \(Adult Opens\) - USA Volleyball](#)

REGISTRATION PROCESS- ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

Your entry is NOT considered complete, and will NOT be ACCEPTED until the following is met:

1. Rosters have been completed (Teams need a minimum of 6 verified players added to their roster to be compliant).
2. The Entry Fee has been paid.
3. Hotel Requirements have been met.

Housing Requirement for the 2026 Adult Open National Championship

“ACE YOUR STAY” UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAM/BENEFITS



Understanding the Ace Your Stay Program

Why Ace Your Stay?
Booking through our Ace Your Stay program benefits teams, families and partner hotels, cranking up the value of your competitive travel. When teams book rooms through hotels that are partnered with USAV and Team Travel Source, the hotels can plan ahead and are excited to offer discounted rates and extra perks for those families. This setup gives hotels the steady flow of the guests they love, and the Ace Your Stay agreements push them to offer fierce rates and sweet perks.

Benefits of the Ace Your Stay Program

PLATINUM LEVEL HOTEL RATES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower nightly rates Free breakfast (where available) Free parking (where available) Other amenities like early check-ins or late check-outs as well as dedicated spaces for teams to gather (where available)	VERSATILITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority for special requests like room configurations or upgrades (subject to availability) Seamless reservation management through Team Travel Source More lenient cancellation policies	STREAMLINED PROCESS FOR ALL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quickly reserve rooms for your team Modify your reservations as necessary, like adjusting room quantities or team member details Get real-time updates and support for any cancellations or modifications
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EXEMPTIONS
Email: Volleyball@teamtravelsource.com
Subject: USAV (Event Name & Year) EXEMPTION REQUEST
Form Needed: Request Exemption Form via email
Each Approved Exemption: 2 room nights
Max: 2 exemptions (4 room nights) per team

EXEMPTION TYPES:
#1 - FREE ROOM WITH POINTS
 Book directly with hotel
 Attach reservation showing full stay paid with points
 Earning points = exemption
#2 - LIVE CLOSE (WITHIN 75 MILES)
 Attach player's name, team & proof of address
 If club is local (within 75 mi), no individual forms needed
#3 - MILITARY/GOV'T DISCOUNT
 Attach discounted reservation, athlete name & club
 Must show ID at check-in

QUESTIONS? Contact Team Travel Source Volleyball Specialists

For more information regarding how these benefits can affect you and your club, contact Team Travel Source.

**TEAM TRAVEL SOURCE**
502.354.9103
info@teamtravelsource.com

QUESTIONS ABOUT TTS REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES?

TTS has spent the offseason working with Visit Orlando and the hotel and condo properties in Orlando to ensure that all teams are able to book accommodations that best fit their needs.

Reach out to TTS at the contacts below about room night requirements, exemptions or for assistance with finding a property that best fits your needs:

- Email: Volleyball@teamtravelsource.com
- Phone number: (502)354-9103

Please note that room night requirements are dependent on the division that you are playing in, so please reach out to the email above to confirm the requirement for your specific division.

Division Split and Entry Fees- Session 1

<u>Division</u>	<u>Entry Fee</u>	<u>Check-In Day</u>	<u>Pool Play Days</u>	<u>Finals Day</u>
VLA Division		Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's Open	\$1,050	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's Open	\$1,050	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's A	\$925	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's B	\$925	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's 40's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's 50's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's 60's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Men's 70's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's A	\$925	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's B	\$925	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's 40's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's 50's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's 60's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Women's 70's+	\$900	Thursday May 21st	Friday May 22nd-Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Special Olympics (SONA)	\$625	Friday May 22nd	Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th
Coed 4's	\$250	Friday May 22nd	Saturday May 23rd	Sunday May 24th

The adjusted entry fees for 2026 was made to create consistency across the different division types and to reflect current event operations, marking the first update to these rates in several years.

Division Split and Entry Fees- Session 2

Division	Entry Fee	Check-In Day	Pool Play Days	Finals Day
Men's AA	\$925	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Men's BB	\$925	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Men's 45's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Men's 55's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Men's 65's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Men's 73's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Women's AA	\$925	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Women's BB	\$925	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Women's 45's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Women's 55's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Women's 65's+	\$900	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Sitting Division	\$250	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th-Tuesday May 26th	Wednesday May 27th
Reverse Coed 4's	\$250	Sunday May 24th	Monday May 25th	Tuesday May 26th

The adjusted entry fees for 2026 was made to create consistency across the different division types and to reflect current event operations, marking the first update to these rates in several years.

2026 “Cancelled Divisions”

DIVISIONS ON THE “CANCELLED DIVISIONS” LIST FOR 2026

CONTINUINING INTO 2026:

Please note that registration for certain divisions will NOT be enabled at the time of registration (Division list on the website)

In order for the division listed on the website to be enabled for registration, a MINIMUM OF FIVE teams must request entry into their desired division(s).

Please email opens@usav.org to request your division.

ACTIVATION REQUEST LIST

The current activation request list can be viewed here: [2026 Open's Cancelled Divisions List.xlsx](#)

ADDITIONAL DIVISIONS

Please Note: If there are any additional divisions that you would like to request to be added, please also email opens@usav.org

We are more than happy to discuss adding additional divisions if there is convention center space and enough interest.

For example: The Women’s 70’s division was added to the list due to expressed interest.

Important Event Specific Deadlines

All teams will complete the requirements below through AES by the established deadline listed below:

Please Note: Entry forms are only required to be sent into the USA Volleyball office IF a check is being mailed to pay for your team entry fee.

ALL TEAMS / ALL DIVISIONS (US and Foreign)

Online Tournament Registration in AES ALL-DIVISIONS	Friday, April 3, 2026 by, 11:59 PM ET.
Seeding Form	Friday, April 11, 2026, by 11:59 PM ET
Jersey Verification Edits in AES (Please Check the Uniform Section of the Manual for More Information)	Friday, May 1, 2026 by 11:59 PM ET
Last Day to Receive Entry Refund	Friday, May 1, 2026 by 11:59 PM ET

All payments must be received by 7:00 PM ET, May 1st, 2026, to complete your registration. **If payment is not received by the designated deadline, your team may be dropped from the tournament.**

***Teams registering after the deadline or dropped for non-payment will be placed on a waitlist until a spot becomes available in the desired division. No spots are guaranteed after the May 1st deadline.**

Important: Teams SHOULD NOT solidify travel plans (booking flights) prior to AT LEAST 5 teams being registered for their division as we will not hold divisions with less than 5 teams.

ROSTER ADDITIONS & CHANGE DEADLINES

Roster Change Policy:

- Roster changes are free until May 22, 2026 (Session 1) and May 25, 2026 (Session 2).

After these deadlines and before a team's first match, the following on-site fees apply:

Action	Fee
Add participant to roster	\$50
Team name change	\$25
Jersey number change	Free

- No roster changes allowed after the team's first match starts.
- Matches will not be delayed for roster issues; officials check rosters before each match.

Team Representatives:

- **May 1st:** Online Jersey Verification Edits Deadline: This is the deadline for when teams are able to edit and make changes to your roster through the AES system.
- **After May 1st** all roster changes will need to be made by a USAV staff member. Please email membership@usav.org for any roster changes during this time.

Onsite Check-In Process

WHAT HAPPENS AT ONSITE CHECK-IN (LOCATION AND PROCEDURES)

On-site team check-in is required at the Orange County Convention Center (location and schedule provided in the team letter and on event signage).

- The team representative/coach will receive printed rosters and other tournament specific information.
- The team representative/coach will verify the team roster and uniform numbers.
 - Once verified, the roster will be in effect throughout the Championship. **No additions/changes to the roster or uniform number changes are allowed once play begins.**
 - The team roster is limited to fifteen (15) players and five (5) adult staff members. **ONLY those persons whose names appear on the verified roster are permitted to sit on the bench.**
 - Coed team rosters will be limited to six (6) players.

Online roster check-in is encouraged ahead of the event; email membership@usav.org for assistance with roster errors.

ON-SITE TEAM CHECK-IN PENALTIES FOR NO SHOWS

IMPORTANT: Teams must check in by 9:00 PM on their designated day—No check-ins are allowed the morning or afternoon of competition day without prior USAV approval.

- Failure to check in by 9:00 PM may result in forfeiture of the team's first set, with further forfeits for continued non-compliance at the tournament director's discretion.
- Teams not checked in by their second scheduled match will be removed from the event (unless USAV has received and approved a valid request).

No schedule changes will be made to accommodate late arrivals or forfeits.

ONSITE CHECK IN DATE AND TIME (DEPENDENT ON DIVISION)

Divisions	Date/Time
VLA, Club Divisions (M Open, W Open, M A, M B, W A, W B), Age Divisions (M40, M50, M60, M70, W50, W60, W70)	Thursday, May 21, 2026 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM Local Time (EST)
Reverse Coed 4s, SONA (Special Olympics)	Friday, May 22, 2026 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM Local Time (EST)
Club Divisions (M AA, M BB, W AA, W BB), Age Divisions (M45, M55, M65, M73, W45, W55, W65), Reverse Co-ed (2-day play format)	Sunday, May 24, 2026 1:00 PM – 9:00 PM E Local Time (EST)

PLEASE NOTE: The check in dates/times for the divisions is subject to change. Please be sure to keep an eye on the website, and for any additional information shared by our tournament staff.

Foreign Player and Team Information (Policies and Rules)

DEFINITION OF A “FOREIGN PARTICIPANT”

- **Foreign Adult Participant:** An adult residing outside the U.S. or in a U.S. territory with its own National Volleyball Federation (proof of residence required).
- **Resident Foreign Participant:** A non-U.S. citizen residing legally in one of the 50 U.S. states.
- **Foreign Participant Release:** Written approval from the participant’s original National Volleyball Federation to participate or affiliate with USA Volleyball.

PARTICIPATION RULES

Resident Foreign Participants may compete if:

- They are legally residing in the U.S.
- Registered with a USA Volleyball Regional Volleyball Association (RVA) and hold a valid membership number.
- If previously represented another country’s national team internationally, a written release must be obtained from that country’s volleyball federation before registering with an RVA.

Foreign (Non-USA) Teams may participate if:

- They apply and are accepted according to event regulations.
- They are not representing their country in an official (national team) capacity.

REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE

- All foreign participants—both individuals and entire teams—must satisfy these requirements and be verified through the AES system before being included on any roster.
- Refer to the “**FOREIGN PLAYER AND TEAM PARTICIPATION- REGISTRATION**” section included below for more detailed information, links and due dates for these requirements.

Foreign Player and Team Information (Registration)

If you have any questions about the information below, please reach out to membership@usav.org for help.

FOREIGN PLAYER AND TEAM PARTICIPATION- DEADLINE

The following online registration for Foreign Participants must be completed by Friday, May 15, at 11:59PM ET.

FOREIGN PLAYER AND TEAM REGISTRATION (CANADA, PUERTO RICO AND GUAM)

Canada, Puerto Rico, and Guam residents need to obtain 2026 Adult Opens Championship Membership ID through SportsEngine with the following links:

[25-26 USAV Canadian & US Territory Adult Opens Participant Membership](#)

FOREIGN PLAYER AND TEAM REGISTRATION (ALL OTHER FOREIGN TERRITORIES)

If you DO NOT reside in Canada, Puerto Rico, or Guam, please follow these Foreign Player Requirement Steps:

1. Fill out the [Foreign Participant Registration Form](#)
2. Sign electric documents and waivers
3. Pay Foreign Insurance

- \$10/person (*This is paid online during the registration form process.*)
Note: Proof of age and residency should remain with each player near the playing space in case an official request to see it

IMPORTANT- TEAM REGISTRATION AND ROSTER VERIFICATION

After completing the foreign player registration above, there is nothing else for you to do on your end!

You will receive email confirmation that it has been completed, but the next steps are done manually from a USAV staff member:

- The process to receive your official membership is manually done by a USAV Staff Member and your USAV membership number will become active beginning in April.
 - Until then, you will not show as “verified” when being added to the roster.
- A member of the USAV team will check often for new registrations to be completed, but this is a manual process, so your patience is much appreciated!

Uniform Requirements, Rules and Regulations

TEAM UNIFORMS: USA VOLLEYBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Team players shall wear uniforms that are in compliance with the USA Volleyball rules book regulation (see Rule 4.3)".

If two or more sets of uniforms are used, players will be required to wear the **same** number for each set of shirts.

Shirt numbers must be clearly visible for identification by Scorers as well as members of the All-Tournament selection committee and spectators.

The numbers "0" and "00" are unacceptable and will not be permitted.

Team members shall be in proper uniform when warming up.

All Libero shirts shall be numbered.

If an individual competes in a position other than Libero as well, his / her number must be the same.

Please note that **Rule 4.3.3.1 and 4.3.3.2** will be strictly enforced. This rule specifies that numbers must be of contrasting color (to the jersey) with no smaller than 6-inch numbers on the back and 4-inch numbers on the front of the jersey.

Rule USAV 4.3.3.1: Uniform numbers must be clearly visible and centered side to side on the front and back of the jersey. Numbers are recommended to be placed on the upper half of the jersey. Numbers may not extend below the player's waist and may not be tucked into the uniform bottom.

Color combinations for numbers such as purple/black, dark green/black, navy/black, white/light yellow or navy/maroon are not distinctive enough to comply with Rule 4.3.3.1C.

Once competition has begun, no number changes will be permitted.

Rule USAV 4.3.5 states, "For nationally-sanctioned competition, uniforms must be identical with the exception of the sleeve length and the Libero Player.

An exception will also be made for a single manufacturer's logo or trademark on the outside of the jerseys or shorts, provided that the logo or trademark does not exceed 14.6 square cm (2 1/4 square inches)".

USAV 4.3 states: "If undergarments, including but not limited to t-shirts, boxer shorts, tights, leotards, body suits, bicycle shorts, sports bras, etc., are worn in such a manner that they are exposed, they will be considered a part of the uniform. In that case, they must be similar and the same color for any team members who wear such an undergarment. Socks and sport shoes are not part of the uniform."

Teams must wear jerseys that meet all the requirements as described above but may wear uniform **shorts or athletic/sport pants** that are similar in color, regardless of style, cut and trim.

Rule USAV 19.2a states, "The Libero player's jersey must contrast in color with that of the predominant colors of the jerseys of the other team members. Color combinations such as purple/black, dark green/black, navy/maroon and white/light yellow are not distinctive enough to comply with the rules.

Uniform Feedback, Q/A and Resources

2025 ADULT OPENS- ILLEGAL UNIFORM VIOLATIONS

Please Note: Our head officials present at the 2025 Adult Opens Championship saw over 100 illegal uniform violations. With this, USA Volleyball is adding in different questions to review and resources that are important to use before making your team uniform.

This information will be posted on the website, in the manual and included in the Registration Summary.

Please be sure to review this information so that there are no penalties/forfeitures instated at the event.

Q/A FOR JUDGING LEGALITY OF UNIFORMS

If you can say **YES TO ALL** of the questions below, you should meet uniform requirements:

- Are the numbers centered (left to right) on the front and back?
- Upper half of jersey is preferred
- Are the numbers contrasting to the color of the jersey? (This does not include the border)
- Do the numbers maintain a minimum 3/4" wide stripe? (not including a border)
- Is the front number a minimum 4" tall? (not including border)
- Is the back number a minimum 6" tall? (not including border)

Numbers must be Arabic. This means the way we normally write our numbers. Block fonts are most preferred. If the font has breaks in the lines, or hard to read, this is not Arabic.

The number 0 (zero) is NOT legal. Any leading 0 (zero) is not legal. Ex: 07 is not legal

RESOURCES FOR UNIFORM HELP

If you are not sure, please review the “Rules and Interpretations” resources linked [here](#)

If you are still unsure, please send uniform submission to USAV Rules Interpreter, Bill Stanley.

Please contact Bill if you have any questions regarding uniforms.

Rule Changes and Clarifications (2025-2026 Event Season)

SIGNIFICANT RULES CHANGES (2025-2026 EVENT SEASON)

- **USA V 9.2.3.2:** At the second hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action, and the ball is next touched by a teammate.
- **USA V 9.3:** Faults in Playing the Ball DOUBLE CONTACT: A player hits the ball twice in succession or the ball contacts various parts of his/her body in succession on the third team hit or on the second team hit and the ball is not next touched by a teammate. (see also 9.2.3)
- **USA V 12.5.3:** Any player of the serving team is forbidden to raise their hands above the head during service, until the ball has passed beyond the net. The 1st referee may warn a team through the game captain, if he/ she suspects that the team is deliberately screening.
- **USA V 15.1:** Each team may request a maximum of 15 substitutions per set.
- **USA V 15.6a:** Fifteen substitutions are the maximum permitted per team per set.
- **USA V 15.6d:** Unlimited individual entries by a substitute within the team's allowable 15 substitutions are permitted.
- **USA V 19.1.1:** Each team has the right to designate from the list of players on the score sheet (roster) up to two specialized defensive players called Liberos. A team may designate zero, one, or two Liberos for each set.
- **USA V 24.2.7a:** The R2 controls the substitutions used by each team and reports substitutions 12, 13, 14, and 15 to the appropriate coach or game captain. (see also 15.1, 25.2.2.3)
- **USA V 24.2.7b:** The R2 notifies the 1st referee of a team's 15th substitution.

SIGNIFICANT RULES CLARIFICATIONS

- **USA V 4.3.3.1a:** Uniform numbers must be clearly visible and centered side to side on the front and back of the jersey. Numbers are recommended to be placed on the upper half of the jersey. Numbers may not extend below the player's waist and may not be tucked into the uniform bottom
- **USA V 4.3b:** The legality of a team's uniform(s) is not grounds for a protest by their opponent. The determination of a team's uniform legality is the responsibility of the match referee(s), head referee(s), and/or tournament staff.
- **USA V 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.
- **USA V 6.4.2:** If failure to adhere to Rule 6.4.2 is due to insufficient players on a team to begin a match, the team forfeits the first set at match time. After a team forfeits the first set of a match, an interval of up to 10 minutes shall be allowed for the team to produce sufficient players to play the next set. If the team is complete (per USAV4.1.1c) prior to the expiration of this interval, the late team will be permitted use of the full court for a four-minute warm-up before play begins. If, after the 10-minute interval the team is not complete, the second set shall be declared a forfeit. If the match consists of the best three out of five sets, an additional 10-minute interval shall be allowed before the match is declared a forfeit.
- **USA V 7.3.4:** If a team submits a line-up sheet that lists a player's number as both a Libero and as a starting player, the coach or captain shall immediately decide whether that player will be a Libero or a starting player. If the duplicate number will be a Libero, the coach must correct the line-up but only in the starting position where the Libero's number was recorded. If the duplicate number will be the starting player, another player may immediately be designated as Libero. The team will not be charged.
- **USA V 20.1.2:** Participants must accept referees' decisions with sporting conduct.
- **USA V 20.2.1:** Participants must behave respectfully and courteously in the spirit of FAIR PLAY, not only toward the referees, but also toward other officials, the opponent, teammates and spectators.

RULE CLARIFICATION- COACHING

Rule USAV 5.3.1 – Assistant Coaches:

- Only one assistant coach at a time may stand to give instructions, without disturbing or delaying the match.
- While standing, instructions may be given within the free zone in front of the team bench, between the attack line extension and warm-up area, but no closer than 1.75 meters (5'10") from the sideline.
- If a team has multiple assistant coaches, only one may stand during a set. There is no requirement to designate a "stand-up" assistant coach.
- Assistant coaches may not address referees or intervene in the match. Others may give instructions while seated on the bench.
- If the head coach must leave, an assistant coach may assume head coach duties with authorization from the first referee, upon request by the head coach or team captain.

RULES OF PLAY – CO-ED 4’S

All normal USAV Indoor Rules will be followed, with the following exceptions:

- Must have 2 women and 2 men on the court at all times
- The roster may contain up to six (6) players, and three (3) staff members. One (1) Head Coach and two (2) assistant coaches.
- There are NO court position restrictions or requirements in 4’s volleyball, but service rotation must remain the same throughout a single game.
 - For example, players can stay in the same court position an entire game (at the net/back row etc.), but each player MUST serve in the same service rotation for the entire game (implication of this is that both men can be front row all the time, with one of the females also being considered front row)
- No open-handed tipping: Players who contact the ball with one hand and are putting the ball over the net must cleanly hit with the heel or palm of hand (a roll shot), with straight, locked fingers and a locked wrist (a cobra), knurled fingers (a camel toe), or with the back of the hand (locked wrist and locked fingers/knuckles. One-handed placement or redirection of the ball with the fingers (dink, open-handed tip, or redirected block) is a fault.
- If a player is going to play the ball into the opponent's court by setting or volleying, the player must contact the ball with 2 hands above the shoulders and it must be set directly forward or backward in relation to the player's body (shoulders and hips should be in the same position from prior to the set happening). NO DUMPING! This applies even if it is the team's 3rd hit.
- No gender contact rule (i.e., a team is not restricted to having a female player contact the ball if it is contacted more than one time)

RULES OF PLAY – REVERSE CO-ED 4’S

The USAV Indoor Rules listed above for the “Co-ed 4’s” division remain the same for Reverse Co-ed with these additional rules applied ONLY for Reverse Co-ed:

- Played on a Women’s Height net
- Male players may ONLY attack from BEHIND the 3-Meter line.
- Male players may ONLY block when the last contact from the opposing team came from a male player.

Eligibility to Participate in Two Divisions (Separate Sessions)- Updated 2.6.2026

New to 2026

In previous years, USA Volleyball permitted only athletes within age divisions to compete in both sessions. Athletes in the club divisions were restricted from playing in both sessions.

Please review the procedures and contingencies below for athletes wishing to compete in multiple divisions in 2026:

INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS- RULES AND REGULATIONS

Important:

Beginning with the 2026 Adult Opens National Championship, athletes will be allowed to compete in both sessions **WITHIN** the club divisions within 1 level up or down.

For example: If an athlete plays in A in Session 1, they may play down to BB, or can play up into AA in Session 2.

Please Note: USA Volleyball will have an appeals committee, so athletes who wish to play further down than one level must request an exemption by emailing Opens@usav.org.

Please include the athlete's name, team name, current division, requested division, and a brief justification.

The event's appeals committee will review appeals as promptly as possible; all decisions of the committee will be final for the purposes of the event.

Prior to the Event:

- The event organizers reserve the right to deny any athlete's request to participate in multiple divisions if there are concerns about the athlete's level of play relative to the division in which they intend to compete.
- Once registration opens, event staff will routinely review entries for athletes registered in multiple club divisions and may contact athletes or teams to provide clarification or justification.
 - Any athlete or team that triggers a review ("red flag") must respond within the stated timeline or risk removal from the requested division.

During the Event:

- If concerns or complaints are raised that a player's skill level clearly exceeds the appropriate standard of the division—creating competitive imbalance or safety issues—the event staff and Competition Director reserve the right to remove that player from the team roster at any time during competition.
- Athletes must play in half of the pool play matches to be able to play on the finals day.

IMPORTANT: If a player is removed due to the reasons listed above, there will be no refunds given for their membership fee, or any additional fees/expenses associated with the event. Teams must have enough players to play a match, and all rules of play will be enforced.

TEAMS- RULES AND REGULATIONS

To preserve fairness and competitive balance, USA Volleyball will not allow entire teams to compete in multiple divisions.

- If a Session 1 team has more than six (6) players appearing on the same roster for Session 2, the request will be denied.

Protests and Appeals During the Event

PROTEST OF PLAYING RULES

Protests of the playing rules during a set/match must be lodged in a formal manner prior to the next service. Between sets, a protest of the last play of the set must occur within one minute, and the protest of the last play of the match must also occur within one minute.

The protest shall be handled by a committee of two (2) to three (3) persons, one of whom must be a certified USA National referee or scorer, depending on the nature of the protest. The committee shall be composed of the following:

1. **Committee Chair:** The National Rules Interpreter or designee (Head Referee for the Event)
2. A representative of the USAV Championship Committee, USAV Events Department staff or designee to be named by the Event Director.

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 ONLY be related to the rules of play.

Judgment calls are NOT subject to protest.

- A protest related to a judgment decision may result in a penalty (red card) being assessed to the captain or coach.

Allowable Protests are:

- Misinterpretation of a playing rule
- Failure of the 1st referee to apply the correct rule to a given situation
- Failure to charge the correct penalty-sanction for a given fault
- Scoring discrepancy

DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS

Due Process & Appeals: USAV Bylaws (Article XI) and USAV Operating Code (Article X) govern protests, appeals, due process and ancillary procedures. Both of these documents are available in this link: [Governance - USA Volleyball](#). Protests, appeals and due process for this event are specifically governed by these documents. Protests and appeals at this Championship vent are a simple one- or two-step process.

USA VOLLEYBALL RULEBOOK/GUIDEBOOK

We recommend that every Team Representative purchase or download and have in his / her possession a current copy of the USA Volleyball Guidebook and USA Rule Book to be sufficiently aware of required information regarding the USA Volleyball Bylaws, Operating Code, other policies and procedures.

- The USAV Indoor Rules Book will be in effect for the 2025-2026 season (see: [See 2025-2027 Indoor Rules Book](#)). Participants, Coaches, Team Representatives, and Officials are subject to all rules, regulations, and policies of USA Volleyball. Please review the additional material under "Indoor Casebook, Indoor Critical Rules, Points of Emphasis, and Rules Interpretations" section using the link above.

Ethics and Eligibility (Arbitrators and Event Appeal Committee)

EVENT ARBITRATORS

Event Arbitrators are appointed by USAV and are present for all USA Volleyball National Championship events.

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 Arbitrators(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.

Officiating Requirements/Resources Provided at Adult Opens

OFFICIALS AT USA VOLLEYBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT



Referees: USA National Referees and Junior National Referees will be assigned as first referees (R1) and second referees (R2) to all matches in the Event.



Scorers: USA National Scorers will be assigned to all VLA and OPEN division matches in the Event. The Officials' Division may approve the use of lower USAV-rated Scorers, as necessary, in the USAV Club BB and B, Masters/ Seniors and Sitting tournaments.

TEAM OFFICIATING DUTIES

- Teams entered in all divisions (EXCEPT Open) are required to provide a total of three (3) support officials: two (2) line judges, and one (1) Scoreboard Operator. Officiating assignments will be listed on-line through the AES competition schedule. These assignments generally will be immediately prior to or after the match in which the team has played.
- When/If a Co-ed 4's team is assigned to officiate on two courts at the same time, the official's division will assist in fulfilling the 3-person requirement for each of these courts.
- Only the Tournament Director and Competition Director may release a team from an officiating assignment.
- Failure to provide officials as assigned will result in the following actions:
 - o **1st Offense:** For every minute the officiating team is late, or does not appear, one point shall be assessed and given to their next opponent – up to a 25-0 forfeit of the first set. This time calculation will begin at the designated warm-up time ten minutes prior to the time when the assigned match begins.
 - o **Additional Offenses:** Forfeiture of assigned team's next match.

Match Structure and Protocols

STRUCTURE OF PLAY

- Pool play precedes medal rounds. Some tournaments may have two round-robin pools.
- Final day: Single elimination in all Open, Club, Sitting and Co-ed Divisions; Double elimination in the Gold Bracket of all Age Divisions.
- Each team will be scheduled to play a minimum of six matches.

Please note: This is subject to change based upon the number of entries in a tournament.

MATCH PROTOCOL

- Courts are available for a 10-minute warm-up before each match. If a prior match runs late, warm-up begins immediately afterward.
- Ball handling on any concrete surface is **prohibited**.

Warm-up:

- 5 minutes per team separately OR 10 minutes jointly if both captains agree (see USAV Rules Book, pgs. 26 and 35).
- Open Division warm-up: 6 minutes shared or 3 minutes separately per team.

- Matches do not start before the scheduled time. The Championship Committee may reschedule or relocate matches to expedite play, with changes posted and team reps notified.

Scoring

- Non-deciding sets: Rally score to 25, win by 2 points.
- Deciding set: Rally score to 15, win by 2 points.

Libero Rules

- Libero(s) must be designated on the lineup sheet before each set.
- Teams may designate 0, 1, or 2 liberos and change them each set.
- Libero may not block or attempt to block.
- Libero may serve in one rotation when replacing the player in position 1.

Playing Area & Ball Retrieval

- Teams must play within their own playing area and free zone.
- Players may reach beyond the free zone to retrieve balls but must be in contact with the playing surface during contact.
- Non-playing areas include walls, spectator seating, team benches and the area behind them, scorer table area, and any other area defined by the first referee pre-match.
- When courts are separated by nets or dividers, only the player playing the ball may move the net or divider.

Forfeits (Expectations and Solutions)

EVENT PLAYING COMMITMENT (MOST SPECIFICALLY ON THE FINAL DAY OF PLAY)

When your team enters this Championship Event, you have made a commitment to play the full tournament. USAV places high importance on attendance of Finals Matches at every level. In other words:

Schedule your travel to allow competition through the completion of the tournament.

- **Matches CANNOT BE RESCHEDULED to accommodate travel schedules.**
- Be prepared to play/work at 8:00 am on the first day and as late as 9:00 pm on the Championship Day.

MUTUAL FORFEIT SOLUTIONS

When both teams prefer not to play a match, captains may propose to the tournament desk:

- Playing a shortened 1-set match instead of best-of-three.
- Alternatives decided by the Competition Committee.

Withdrawals (Procedures, Rules and Penalties)

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

- If a team must withdraw, the team representative must notify the Tournament Director and Competition Director within one hour of completing their last match.
- The Championship Committee will attempt to fill any open Finals Match or determine alternative actions.

WITHDRAWAL RULES

- If withdrawal occurs after pool play begins but before its conclusion, all played match results stand. Remaining un-played matches are forfeited according to Rules of Play and factored into standings. Remaining teams advance to the next stage as scheduled.

WITHDRAWAL PENALTIES

Except for injury or emergency, withdrawal may lead to:

- Forfeiture of all tournament standings and future event seeding
- Recommendation for disciplinary action against the team's organization
- Possible suspension from future USAV Championship events, at the discretion of USAV Events Department and Competition Director

Tie Breakers (Summary Based on Different Scenarios)

- At the end of pool play, pool standings are determined by each team's match record.
- If two or more teams are tied in match record, ties are resolved using the Tie Break Rules, including in 3-team pools where all sets are played.
- For the 2025-2026 season, Playoff Tie Breaker Sets have been reinstated for all National Championship pools.
- For full procedures, see the [Tie-Breaker Rules PDF](#).

TWO TEAM TIE IN MATCHES (DETERMINATION PROCESS)

Step 1 (Head-to-Head Wins/Losses):

a) Always broken head-to-head (NO EXCEPTIONS)

THREE OR MORE TEAMS TIE IN MATCHES (DETERMINATION PROCESS)

Step 1 (Head-to-Head Wins/Losses):

- 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 only two teams remain tied after this step → use head-to-head winner.
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.

Step 2 (Set Percentage):

Set percentage is the 2nd 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.

IMPORTANT: 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 Adult Opens using Steps 2(c) and 2(d):

- c)** If NO TEAM is eliminated from advancing to the Gold at Adult Opens, 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.
- d)** If a Team would be eliminated from advancing to the Gold at Adult Opens, the remaining Teams that are tied in match percentage and set percentage have Playoff Tie Breaker Set(s) played as defined in step 3. (Below)

Step 3 (Tie Breaker Sets):

Playoff Tie Breaker Sets are played if 3 or more Teams remain tied after applying steps 1 & 2. (Above)

- 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 Breakers 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 a spot leading to the GOLD Bracket.

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.

Tie Breaker Sets are played off specifically based on how many spots are available in the gold bracket:

Please Note: For all scenarios, 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.

- a) If there is **ONE** spot available for a Team to advance to play in the gold bracket of Adult Opens, all Teams participate in the Tie Breaker Sets.
- 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.
- c) If there are **THREE** pool positions available for teams to advance to play in the gold bracket, the two Teams with the highest point percentages each receive one of the advancing spots. The remaining Teams participate in the Tie Breaker Sets.

TIE BREAKER RULES (TEAMS NOT PRESENT AT THE TIE BREAKER)

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. This is the only penalty that will be enforced on this team.
- 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 point percentage. If teams are tied in point percentage, they will be placed in the pool based on their initial seed.

TEAM & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY- General Requirements

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ENTER?

- Teams DO NOT have to be from the same region, but must obtain an adult player membership from the region they are located in. Please use the “2026 Membership Locator” for assistance with which region to do.
- Foreign teams are eligible for the Open, AA, A, BB, B, Masters/Seniors, Coed 4s, Reverse Coed 4s, or Sitting Championship provided they meet prescribed rules listed by division and complete the foreign team/player requirements.
- All participants on domestic teams must have valid USA Volleyball Adult Player memberships and must complete the steps to validate this membership.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS – GENERAL

1. All participants (players, coaches, managers, trainers, team representatives/officials) must be at least 18 years of age.
2. All participants (players, coaches, managers, trainers, team representatives/officials) must have a valid Adult Player membership.
3. All teams and players must comply with their own organization’s rules as well as those of USA Volleyball.
4. Players may enter club divisions (Open, AA, A, BB, B) and non-Club events (Coed 4s, Reverse Coed, Sitting, or Masters/Seniors) if competitions are not during the same session.
5. Teams may enter only one Championship Tournament per session. A second entry is permitted if not held concurrently.
6. No individual may appear on more than one roster as a player within the same session. Violations result in ineligibility for the additional team.
7. Non-USA participants must register with their National Federation and complete required foreign player/team paperwork.
8. Non-USA teams must also purchase USAV insurance at the established rate located within the foreign player/team paperwork. (The insurance is purchased at the time of the membership and counts as the membership fee)
9. International players must obtain official release/permission from their home Federation.
 - a. Some foreign countries require a letter from USA Volleyball to participate. Please email opens@usav.org for us to connect you with a member of our team to assist.
10. Disruptive or unfavorable conduct by any participant, at the venue or within the host city during the event, may result in disciplinary action by the Event Arbitrator.

TEAM & PLAYER ELIGIBILITY- USA Volleyball Enforced Requirements

USAV & FIVB FEDERATION MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS/INSURANCE

All persons listed on the Official Roster (players, coaches, team representatives, trainers, and managers) must be registered with USA Volleyball through a USAV Member Organization or with their FIVB Federation. (The region must line up with the region the captain resides in, or the country that a foreign team resides in).

Registration provides liability and Sports Accident Insurance coverage under USAV's excess insurance program.

The foreign player/team registration has an insurance fee per player/team which provides those teams with liability and Sports Accident Insurance coverage under USAV's excess insurance program.

In addition, all athletes and coaches must carry documentation showing proof of primary and/or excess medical insurance for emergencies.

USA VOLLEYBALL AGE & IDENTITY FALSIFICATION POLICY

- Any person who falsifies age or identity documents will be sanctioned:
 - Immediate suspension from USAV membership and removal from the event.
 - A two-year ban from all USAV Corporate events.
 - An additional one-year probation following the suspension.
- Adult players who knowingly enter higher age classifications or misrepresent identity will face the same penalties above.
- Proof of identity and age eligibility must be provided upon request.
- If a violation is confirmed during an event, the above penalties are the **minimum required**.

The Event Arbitrator or Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee may impose stricter sanctions and must report violations to the USAV Ethics and Eligibility Committee and the player's registering Member Organization.

USA VOLLEYBALL GENDER DETERMINATION POLICY: New to all USA Volleyball Events Starting in 2026

All resources and information on this topic can be found here: [Gender Competition Policy - USA Volleyball](#)

Regulations, Eligibility and Format (Applicable for All Divisions)

DIVISION REGULATIONS (ALL DIVISIONS)

The information in this section pertains to all divisions listed below:

Age Divisions (40's, 45's, 50's, 55's, 60's, 65's, 70's, and 73's), Club Divisions (Open, AA, A, BB, B), Co-ed Divisions (Reverse and Regular) and the Sitting Division are open to both U.S. and non-U.S. teams, with classifications offered for Co-ed, Men and Women if at least five teams enter per classification.

Eligibility and Rosters:

- Teams DO NOT have to be from the same region.
 - **Adult Player memberships will be from the region each individual player resides in.**
- Any team or group of players registered with USA Volleyball or an FIVB-affiliated National Volleyball Federation is eligible to participate.
- Players cannot play for multiple teams during the SAME session.
- Team classification must be approved by the Regional Commissioner/Organization Executive and confirmed by the Championship Committee.
- For teams representing Federations outside USAV/RVA, please see the foreign player/team section within the tournament manual.

Rules of Play: Governed by the USA Volleyball Rule Book as modified and approved by the USAV Rules Testing Committee.

Registered Junior players or players who are under 18 years of age are NOT eligible to participate.

Below you will find a section for each division offered at Adult Opens that includes additional rules, regulations and format.

For additional information or clarification, please contact USAV at opens@usav.org

Specifications for Each Division: Regulations, Eligibility and Format

VLA DIVISION

The VLA Division is returning to Adult Opens in 2026!

For this division, VLA will select the Men's teams to attend the event to play other VLA teams.

The teams in this division were formed prior to Adult Opens making it the only division not eligible for any team to participate.

Competition Format:

- Best-of-five matches, single elimination on the finals day.
- Number of medal rounds (Gold, Silver, Bronze) will depend on entries.
- No maximum age limit applies.
- All teams must strictly comply with organizational rules. Violations may result in disciplinary actions.

Please Note: The VLA division may follow a different set of rules, regulations and overall format than all other divisions based on the agreement between USAV and VLA.

VLA Website: <https://www.usavla.com/>

OPEN DIVISION

The Open Division is the highest level of competition at the USA Volleyball Adult Open National Championship for players to form their own teams.

Prize Money: The Open Division for Men's and Women's has a cash prize for the teams that place 1st, 2nd and 3rd. 1st Place receives \$5,000, 2nd place receives \$3,000 and 3rd place receives \$2,000.

Competition Format:

- Best-of-three matches, single elimination on the finals day.
- Number of medal rounds (Gold, Silver, Bronze, Copper, Emerald) will depend on entries.
- No maximum age limit applies.
- All teams must strictly comply with organizational rules. Violations may result in disciplinary action.

VLA TEAMS AND VLA INDIVIDUAL PLAYER RULES (DIVISION PARTICIPATION)

- VLA Tier 2 and below teams are ONLY allowed to participate in the Open division.
- Individual VLA players are not restricted to only the Open division.

CLUB DIVISIONS (AA, A, BB, B)

Competition Format:

- Best-of-three matches, single elimination on the final's day.
- Number of medal rounds (Gold, Silver, Bronze, Copper, Emerald) will depend on entries.
- No maximum age limit applies.
- All teams must strictly comply with organizational rules. Violations may result in disciplinary actions.

AGE DIVISIONS (40+, 45+, 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, AND 70+)

Eligibility:

Each player must meet the minimum age for their division within the same calendar year of competition.

Example: For a May 2026 tournament, players are eligible if they turn the required age at any point in 2026.

Rules Specific for Men's 70+, 74+, and 78+ Divisions:

Up to two women may appear on a roster if:

- a. They meet the minimum age requirement.
- b. They play under men's net height and rules.
- c. This option is allowed but not required.
- d. These divisions will not be considered Co-Ed.

Competition Format:

Minimum of five teams required to hold a championship.

Medal rounds (Gold, Silver, Bronze) depend on total entries.

Best-of-three set matches, double elimination on finals days.

No maximum age limit applies.

AGE DIVISIONS ON THE “CANCELLED DIVISIONS” LIST FOR 2026

Please note that registration for certain age divisions will NOT be enabled at the time of registration due to them being cancelled for the past several years. (Please check the website for which divisions)

In order for these division to be enabled for registration, a MINIMUM OF FIVE teams must request entry into their desired division(s).

Please email opens@usav.org to request for your division to be enabled.

ACTIVATION REQUEST LIST

The current activation request list can be viewed here: [2026 Open's Cancelled Divisions List.xlsx](#)

ADDITIONAL DIVISIONS

Please Note: If there are any additional divisions that you would like to request to be added, please also email opens@usav.org

We are more than happy to discuss adding additional divisions if there is convention center space and enough interest.

For example: The Women’s 70’s division was added to the list due to expressed interest.

Sitting Division (Rules of Play and Requirements)

Sitting volleyball is a discipline of the sport in which athletes play in a seated position. The sitting game utilizes the same volleyball skills and techniques as the standing game with a few key rule differences. Players use both their arms and legs to move across the court, and it's a physical, fast-paced game. USA Volleyball is the official National Governing Body for sitting volleyball.

For more information regarding Sitting Volleyball, rules and policies, programs around the country and information about our US Sitting National teams, please visit the “About Sitting Volleyball” website here: [About Sitting Volleyball - USA Volleyball](#)

RULES OF PLAY – SITTING DIVISION

The World ParaVolley (WPV) Official Sitting Volleyball Rules, 2025-2028 rulebook, will govern this competition with the following modifications:

- a. Rules regarding disability/classification are not in effect
- b. Substitution rules and procedures will follow USA Volleyball Rules Book
- c. Libero rules and procedures will follow USA Volleyball Rules Book

Official USA Volleyball Sitting Rules and ParaVolley Rules Books (2025-2028):

- [Official USA Volleyball Sitting Rules 2025-2028](#)
- [NEW 2025-2028 ParaVolley Rules Book](#)

Approved sitting rule changes for '25-'28 and other important information are available here:

<https://worldparavolley.org/disciplines/sitting-volleyball/>

DIVISION REQUIREMENTS AND EXCEPTIONS

1. Teams entering these championship tournaments may be either club or conglomerate teams and must represent a USAV Member Organization or another FIVB affiliated National Volleyball Federation.
2. Division and teams are open to male & female athletes of all abilities.
3. Competition may be limited contingent upon the number of courts available for these tournaments.
4. The number of teams competing will determine the number of medal flights (i.e., Gold, Silver and Bronze).
5. A minimum of five (5) teams will be required to conduct a national championship tournament.
6. Non-USA teams are permitted to compete in this tournament.
7. There is no maximum age limitation in these championships.
8. No more than three (3) active national team players are permitted on a Sitting roster.
9. A player is considered an active national team player once they are actively listed on a roster for their National Federation at an event sanctioned/recognized by World ParaVolley or World ParaVolley Zone.
10. All competition will consist of the best of three set matches and the competition / playoff format will be determined by USAV once the number of teams have been confirmed.

Special Olympics Division (Requirements and Rules of Play)

Please review the sections included in the manual for important information and requirements, such as uniforms, team officiating duties, etc. As SONA will follow the USA Volleyball rules with these requirements.

Please contact cpippert@specialolympics.org if you have any questions.

RULES OF PLAY – SPECIAL OLYMPICS DIVISION

SONA and SOI volleyball events do not use USA Volleyball rules, but use FIVB rules with Special Olympics modifications.

The official FIVB rulebook can be found here: [FIVB Official Volleyball Rules 2025-2028](https://www.fivb.org/documents/2025-2028)

The list of SO modifications to FIVB rules can be found here: <https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/sports-essentials/sport-rules/Sports-Essentials-Volleyball-Indoor-Rules-2024.pdf>

DIVISION RULES, REQUIREMENTS AND MODIFICATIONS

IMPORTANT- Minors participating on Special Olympic Rosters

If a team would like to add players under the age of 18, please reach out to cpippert@specialolympics.org in order to get approval for these athletes to be added to your roster.

PLAYER DOMINANCE- REGULATIONS AND PENALTIES

If concerns or complaints are raised regarding a player whose skill level appears to exceed the appropriate standard of the division—resulting in potential competitive imbalance or safety issues—USA Volleyball and the Competition Directors reserve the right to remove that player from the team roster at any time during competition.

PLAYER DOMINANCE- POSSIBLE PENALTIES

First Violation: Verbal warning to Coach: Head coach held accountable, and the warning documented on match scoresheet

Second Violation: Team penalty (no. 1): Team penalized 1 point and serve goes to the opponent

Third Violation: Team penalty (no. 2): Team penalized 3 points and serve goes to the opponent

Fourth Violation – Sanction 1: Set forfeit (does not have to be the same infraction or the same player)

- The head coach will be informed of their 4th violation and the opposing coach will be informed of the sanction.

Fifth violation – Sanction 2: Match forfeit (does not have to be the same infraction or the same player)

- The head coach is informed of their 5th violation and the opposing coach will be informed of the sanction.

Sixth violation – Sanction 3: Match forfeit and removal from competition and/or medal round (does not have to be the same infraction or same player). Team removed from official competition and receives participation ribbon. The opposing coach will be informed of the sanction.

Tournament Equipment Information

GAME BALL USED DEPENDENT ON DIVISION

NO USED TOURNAMENT BALLS WILL BE SOLD AT THIS EVENT.

Molten FLISTATEC



Men's and Women's AA, A, BB, B
Men's and Women's 40+ and 45+
Sitting
Coed 4s
Reverse Coed 4s

Molten Super Touch



Women's 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+
Men's 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, 70+, 74+, 78+
Special Olympics

Molten FIVB Volleyball



Open and Sitting



VLA (Will use the Franklin Ball)

Note:

Teams wishing to change the game ball (Excluding the Franklin Ball) must obtain approval from USAV at the Championship desk. The switch will be permitted only if both teams agree, and the Competition Committee will confirm mutual consent before each game. Ball changes are allowed on a game-by-game basis.

BALL RENTALS (FOR PRACTICE AND WARM UPS)

USA Volleyball will have balls available to rent at the beginning of each day of play, along with for the practice sessions. USA Volleyball will supply 6 balls and a ball cart in accordance with the ball used for your division. (Listed above)

These balls will be available for check out at the equipment tent located next to the Championship desk each day in exchange for your ID, passport, or any other form of identification, and will need to be returned at the end of your playing session each day.

Teams can bring their own balls and carts if they would like, but USA Volleyball will provide enough for all teams.

BALL HANDLING

All ball handling is restricted to the court surfaces within the convention center. No ball handling is permitted on the concrete surfaces or hallways of the facility.

HEIGHT OF NET BASED ON DIVISION (USA VOLLEYBALL RULE 2.1)

LEVEL OF PLAY	FEMALE	MALE
VLA, Open, AA, A, BB, B, 40s	2.24 m (7'4 1/8")	2.43 m (7'11 5/8")
Coed 4s	2.43 m (7'11 5/8")	
Reverse Coed 4s	2.24 m (7'4 1/8")	
Sitting	1.15m (3'9 1/4")	
Special Olympics	2.43m (7'11 5/8")	

The height of the net MAY vary for specific age groups as follows:

AGE GROUPS	FEMALE	MALE
70 years & above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.29 m (7'6")
60 years & above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.38 m (7'9 5/8")
55 years and above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.38 m (7'9 5/8")
45 years and above	2.19 m (7'2 1/8")	2.43 m (7'11 5/8")

PRACTICE OPPURTUNITIES (LOCATION AND TIMEFRAME)

Practice times will be available beginning at 3:00 PM on Thursday, May 21st until check-in closes at 8 PM local time.

On Sunday May 24th, practice time is allowed ONLY if courts are available as play will still be happening for Session 1 on this day.

All practice sessions will be limited to a one (1) hour session.

Teams may sign up for practice courts anytime that the registration / check-in desk is open at the championship desk.

General Seeding Information

SEEDING CRITERIA BY DIVISION

Seeding for the USA Volleyball Adult Open National Championship is determined by examining various criteria provided by the regions, team representatives and past results. Upon registration, please fill out and submit the USAV digital seeding form included in the “Seeding Survey” section below.

Seeding criteria for each division includes but is not limited to those items listed below:

1. OPEN Teams

- a. Gold Flight Finish from previous year (four returning starters retain seed)
- b. Roster strength (when known)
- c. Previous National experience
- d. Region Ranking
- e. Balance within pools as to geographical area

2. CLUB Classification Teams (AA, A, BB, B)

- a. Gold Flight Finish from previous year (four returning starters retain seed)
- b. Previous National Experience (depending on overall finish)
- c. Results from “out of region” tournaments
- d. Typical Strength of region teams
- e. Balance within pools as to Zone, Region, and geographical area

3. AGE Classification Teams

- a. Gold Flight Finish from previous year (four returning starters retain seed)
- b. Teams moving up in age classification who were Gold Flight finishers in previous national tournaments
- c. Previous National Experience
- d. Results from “out of region” tournaments
- e. Balance within pools as to Zone, Region, and geographical area

SEEDING SURVEY

Help USAV better seed this tournament by completing this seeding form by Friday , **April 11 at 11:59PM ET:**

[2026 Opens Seeding Survey](#)

Seeding Information Form:

To ensure the most accurate seeding, teams are invited to submit the team information form with details such as region and past finishes. The Seeding Committee typically relies on previous years’ results and may not be aware of roster changes or player moves unless forms are completed. Teams who do not submit forms will be seeded based only on available historical data, and placement cannot be guaranteed to reflect your current team.

Team and Individual Awards Breakdown and Process

TEAM AWARDS: GOLD BRACKETS AND FLIGHT BRACKETS

GOLD Bracket (Team Awards)	Additional Flight Brackets (Team Awards Only)
- 1 st Place - 2 nd Place - 3 rd Place	- 1 st Place

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS ALL- TOURNAMENT TEAM (ATT) AND MOST VALUABLE PLAYER (MVP)

Eligibility Requirements-

From each eligible division, six All-Tournament players plus one MVP will be selected from the men's and women's gold bracket competition (6+1).

Excluding: Reverse and Regular Co-ed, Sitting and SONA divisions

To be eligible to be chosen for MVP and All-Tournament, players must be from teams in the gold bracket on the final day of play.

Selection Process-

- The All-Tournament Selection Committee, appointed by the Events Department, manages nominations.
- After medal-round matches, teams will nominate outstanding players from their team and the opposing team using the criteria listed below.

Please Note: Players sanctioned by the Event Arbitrator or match referee are ineligible to be selected for ATT and MVP.

Selection Criteria (ATT and MVP)-

All-Tournament Team:

Players are voted on by members of their team and competing teams on the final day of play using the criteria and % model below, and finalized by the All-Tournament Committee:

- Playing effectiveness (60%)
- Team play (20%)
- Sportsmanship, attitude, and conduct on/off court (20%)

MVP:

Players are voted on by members of their team and competing teams on the final day of play using the criteria and % model below, and finalized by the All-Tournament Committee:

- Team play (75%)
- Value at critical moments during competition (15%)
- Leadership qualities during competition (10%)

Additional Convention Center Information/General Policies

USAV ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONSUMPTION POLICY

USA Volleyball prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages on or near courtside by any participant listed on the roster (e.g., players, coaches, assistant coaches, team representatives, managers, and trainers) during competition and work assignments. Consumption of alcoholic beverages on or near courtside during competition or work assignments could result in disciplinary action such as a warning, deduction of point(s), participant disqualification, game or match forfeiture, team disqualification, or other such sanction.

COOLER AND ICE CHESTS POLICY

Coolers / Ice chests are **NOT** permitted inside the convention center facilities.

ATHLETIC TRAINERS/ TAPING/ FIRST AID

A taping / training area and athletic trainers will be available. Taping supplies will NOT be furnished. Players must provide the tape / bandage, or the player will be charged for needed supplies. Hospitals are located near the playing venue / headquarters hotel. Emergency transportation (to hospitals only) will be provided if needed. The athletic trainers' facility will be located on the Convention Center floor in a central location.

EQUIPMENT APPROVALS

Braces, prosthetic limbs, or other headgear that may cause injury or give an artificial advantage to the player may not be worn. Braces do not need to be approved before the tournament starts, but if for any reason a referee deems a brace unacceptable, the matter will be brought to the Head Referee for a final decision.

EVENT MERCHANDISE

Event merchandise may be purchased in the Orange County Convention Center during the USA Volleyball Open National Championship.

VENDOR LICENSING & RESTRICTIONS

Under the terms of the contractual agreement between USA Volleyball and the Orange County Convention Center, there are strict regulations and specified restrictions as to the sale of retail and wholesale merchandise and other items in all areas of the playing venue. USA Volleyball also has regulations in respect to the sales of event-specific merchandise and resale items normally licensed through its Marketing Department. This notice is posted for your information. Violations of these conditions by a Member Organization or registered individuals, and made known to USA Volleyball, are subject to disciplinary and possibly legal action by USA Volleyball.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: PERMISSION TO SELL

Sales of merchandise, services, officials' apparel and equipment, souvenirs, publications, food or drink and all other items at the playing venue is strictly prohibited unless prior written license is received from USA Volleyball specific to this Event and the Orange County Convention Center, as applicable.