

2027 Boys Championship *Manual*

The following manual contains information regarding both the National Boys Qualifiers and Boys Junior National Championship

Revised: October 2026
2026/2027 Season

USA Volleyball reserves the right to adjust or alter the procedures and policies outlined in the Championship manuals for the 2026/2027 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 a national championship annually, including the USA Volleyball Boys Junior National Championships (BJNC). The USA Volleyball Boys Junior National Qualifiers (NQ) are one avenue for Teams to gain entry into the championship.

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

A Team can earn an Invitation to the BJNCs 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 USA Volleyball (USAV) Boys Championship Manual (BCM) is intended to be a resource for those organizations currently hosting one of the USA Volleyball Boys National Qualifiers (NQ) and for those organizations whose teams attend the NQs.

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

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

CHANGING THE CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL

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

The BCM is a living document, and while significant edits to the document will not be made frequently throughout the year, the USAV Events department reserves the right to adjust and edit the document if needed. Should significant changes be made during the events season, explicit notice of changes will be sent to Regions and Qualifier Directors prior to the updated document being posted on the website.

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

The Events Department annually updates the BCM and distributes an electronic copy of the updated version to each NQD for review. The Events Department will post the updated BCM on the USAV website.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BCC: Boys Competition Committee.

Invitation: An Invitation invites a Team to play in the BJNCs through a Boys National Qualifier (NQs) or At-Large invitation process. To use the Invitation, a Team must meet all entry deadlines and other requirements set by the USAV national office.

At-Large Invitation: A BJNC Invitation awarded in the Open or USA Division upon the completion of the Qualifier Season by the BJNC Seeding Committee based on performance during that season, in relation to other non-qualified Teams in that age group.

Reallocation Invitation: A USA Division Invitation to the BJNCs that is unused and is returned for reallocation to a Region. Reallocation is performed by the USAV Events Department.

Trickle-Down Invitation: A BJNC Invitation awarded at a NQ to a Team finishing lower than a usual invitation award position. This happens in some situations when a higher finishing Team has previously accepted a BJNC Invitation from another NQ or an Invitation is declined.

BJNC: Boys Junior National Championship

NQ: National Qualifier NQD: NQ Director

BCM: Championship Manual

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

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

Frozen Player: A player who is restricted from participating on the roster of another Team. The specifics of the "Frozen Player" are numerous. (Please see Frozen Player Rule).

JA: Junior Assembly of USA Volleyball

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 BJNCs.

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

Open Division: The first-tier division for 14s – 18s of the BJNCs where Teams must obtain an invitation to participate

Playing Surface: Area deemed as "playable" by the USAV 2025 – 2027 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 BJNCs, Open Divisions of NQs (if requested by NQs Tournament Director) and selection of At-Large Invitations for BJNC.

Team: A minimum of six (6) rostered players and a maximum of fifteen (15), who are members in good standing of USAV and at least one (1) coach who is a member in good standing of USAV, IMPACT certified, SafeSport trained, and has successfully passed a USAV background screen. All additional rostered staff up to five (5) total, must meet the respected requirements to their 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. Boys 16s Open Tournament) that could also be known as a "Championship."

USA Division: The second-tier division for 14s – 18s of the BJNCs where Teams must obtain an invitation to participate.

USAV: USA Volleyball

QD: Qualifier Director

CHANGES/EDITS TO CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL FOR 2026 SEASON

- The overall formatting of the document has been updated
- Term change from Bid to Invitation when applicable
- Page 9 – Age Definition Updates
- Page 23 – Update to 15-min match start rule
- Page 32 – Junior members 18 years and above must clear Safesport and background screening within 45 days, not 30. Edited to reflect Safesport policy.
- Page 32 – Information regarding Boys One Event Coaching Membership added.
- Page 34 - Roster Verification and Team Check-in has been edited to reflect transition to primarily online check-in for NQs & combination of online and onsite check at BJNC.
- Page 39 – Updated wording for Officials staffing requirments

A NOTE FROM USA VOLLEYBALL

USA Volleyball's vision and unwavering commitment is “to build, create, and support a safe, inclusive, positive volleyball experience and a lifetime of opportunity for all.”

HARASSMENT INCIDENT RESPONSE-OFFICIALS & STAFF (HIROS)

In addressing the increasing number of harassment incidents making headlines in sports, this serves as a reminder that there is ZERO TOLERANCE for harassment towards our officials, tournament staff, players, coaches, and spectators. To ensure accountability, the creation of the Harassment Incident Response – Officials & Staff (HIROS) is presented at all Qualifiers and National Championships to encourage tournament staff to confidently respond in real-time to what is deemed as hate speech, inappropriate gestures, or aggressive physical interaction targeting an individual's ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and physical appearance. Those who witness on-site harassment must report these unacceptable behaviors and actions to our officials, arbitrators, or tournament staff.

SPECTATOR CONDUCT

We also remind coaches of their crucial role in maintaining respectful and courteous behavior and their responsibility to guide their teams and spectators. Unsportsmanlike conduct by spectators will be addressed by Arbitrators and Event Staff and may lead to dismissal from the event. Let's all play our part in upholding the safety and integrity of the game and ensure a positive experience for all involved.

USA Volleyball Event Code of Conduct: CLICK HERE

USA VOLLEYBALL JUNIOR PLAYER AGE DEFINITION

For use during the 2026-2027 Season:

Once a player has:

1. Been enrolled at a university, college, community college, or junior college AND
2. Has participated in an official practice for the above program while enrolled

The Player is ineligible to take part in any regional and national programming, which includes but is not limited to national JNC qualifying and championship events.

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[1]	18 & Under[2]	17 & Under	16 & Under	15 & Under[3]	14 & Under[4]	13 & Under[5]	12 & Under	11 & Under	10 & Under	9 &Under	8 & Under
July	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Aug	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Sept	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Oct	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Nov	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Dec	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Jan	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Feb	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mar	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Apr	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
May	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
June	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019

[1]Players who were born on or after July 1, 2007 and a high school student in the twelfth (12th) grade or below during some part of the current academic year are eligible to compete in 18 & under.

[2a]Players in this age range that have graduated high school are ineligible only if they have been enrolled at a university, college, community college or junior college AND have been cleared to participate by that (volleyball) program.

[2b]Players who were born on or after July 1, 2008, (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.

[2]**Male Only -** Players who were born on or after July 1, 2012 OR players who were born on or after July 1, 2011 (15 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the eighth (8th) grade during the current academic year **are eligible to play in the 14 & Under division**. This is because 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.

[3]**Male Only -** Players who were born on or after July 1, 2012 (14 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the seventh grade (7th) during the current academic year are eligible for a Region approved waiver to compete in the boys 13's age group.

[4]**Male Only –**Players who were born on or after July 1, 2013 (13 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the sixth grade (6th) 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 2026.

QUALIFICATION & INVITATION PROCESS

BJNC DIVISIONS OF PLAY: OPEN, USA, CLUB

There are three (3) major divisions of play at BJNCs – Open Divisions, USA Divisions, and the Club Divisions.

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

- To participate in an Open Division at the BJNC, a Team must earn an invitation from participating in an NQ Open Division – either winning outright at a NQ or being selected for an At-Large Invitation after competing in a NQ Open Division (see Open At Large Invitation).

The goal of the BJNCs **USA Divisions** is to create more opportunities for teams to play, to provide a second qualification division at the BJNC, and create more manageable field sizes between the Club and Open divisions at the BJNC.

- To participate in a USA Division at the BJNC, a Team must earn an invitation from participating in an NQ USA Division – either winning outright at a NQ or being selected for an At-Large Invitation after competing in a NQ Open or USA Division (see USA At-Large Invitation)

The goal of the BJNC **Club Divisions** is to allow opportunity for Teams to participate at the BJNC without following the qualification process.

AGE CLASSIFICATION, DIVISIONS & TEAM ENTRIES

	18 & Under	17 & Under	16 & Under	15 & Under	14 & Under	13 & Under	12 & Under
Open Division	24 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams	24 Teams		
USA Division	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams	36 Teams		
Club Division*	64 Teams	48 Teams	64 Teams	32 Teams	32 Teams	24 Teams	16 Teams

*Club 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.

Overall team count and individual division sizes will be fluid and may change from the initial registration opening count. USAV reserves the right to combine bid divisions in certain age groups during the first two days of play to create a well-rounded competitive environment at BJNC. If division combinations occur, teams will always be split back out to their initial registered bid division on the final day of play.

NATIONAL QUALIFIER PROCESS

The primary purpose of the NQs is to select, through Tournament competition, which teams in various age groups will qualify to play in the Open and USA Divisions at the BJNC. Tournament play at the NQs is divided into Open divisions and USA divisions. Some NQ may opt to offer a non-invitation division named Club.

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.

The below NQs are offered for the 2026-2027 season. Please refer to the individual event webpages for the most up to date tournament information.

Qualifier	Location
Southwest Boys Classic National Qualifier	Anaheim, CA
Boys Winter Volleyball Championship	Madison, WI
Dennis Lafata Gateway Boys National Qualifier	St. Louis, MO
Far Western No Dinx Boys National Qualifier	Sacramento, CA
Florida Fest 18s Qualifier	Orlando, FL
NIKE Boston Volleyball Festival	Boston, MA

USAV'S ROLE IN NATIONAL QUALIFIER EVENTS

The USAV Events Department, in consultation and coordination with the appropriate committee(s) will develop, standardize, implement, evaluate, and oversee the qualification process for the BJNC.

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

- Determine the process by which Teams are accepted or denied entry into a NQ division.
- Have final approval of all formats used at NQ.
- Approve the NQ schedule grid.
- Have final approval of at-large invitations selected for the BJNC, based on the recommendation of the BCC.
- Review and recommend improvements for NQ operations.
- Establish and verify individual eligibility requirements for all participants in both Invitation and non-invitation 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 and USA Division. Currently, a NQ may host a maximum of 48 Teams in each Open and USA Division. On a case-by-case basis, the USAV Director of Events may grant a waiver for a NQ division to exceed these numbers when requested by a NQ.

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.

BJNC INVITATIONS AWARDED BY A NATIONAL QUALIFIER

USAV allows each NQ to award a certain number of Invitations to the top finishing Teams in 14-17 Open and USA 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). To award Open and USA invitations, the NQs must offer single age group divisions in all divisions that are offered at the BJNC. In addition, Open and USA invitations will only be awarded at NQs in age divisions that are held over a minimum of two days

Table 1: Explains the total number of invites that will be allocated to a NQ, provided the event meets the minimum team thresholds required to hold both Open and USA divisions **separately** in a specific age.
Separate Open and USA Divisions

	Open Invitations	USA invitations
Number of Teams	**Number of Invitations**	**Number of Invitations**
6-7	1	1
8 – 11	2	2
12 – 15	3	3
16 - 23	3	4
24+	3	5

Should either Open or USA divisions in an age group fail to receive the minimum number of six (6) registered teams, the divisions may be combined and called OPEN-USA. Please review Table 2 for the potential invites that may be distributed.

Table 2: Explains the total number of invites that will be allocated to a NQ if they have to **combine** the Open and USA Divisions in order to run the age division.
Combined Open and USA Divisions

	Combined: Open Invitations	Combined: USA invitations
Number of Teams	**Number of Invitations**	**Number of Invitations**
6-7	1	0
8 – 11	1	1
12 – 15	1	2
16 - 23	2	2
24-27	3	3
28-30	3	4
31+	3	5

Additional Invitations: NQs with the largest registration from the 2026/2027 season in each respective age division will receive additional invitations in that age division. The distribution of additional invitations will be decided by the USAV Events Department based on available invitations. NQs will be notified of any additional invitation allocations prior to event start.

*USAV reserves the right to reallocate invitations for the 2026/2027 season based on the Tournaments registration numbers

OPEN AND USA DIVISION INVITATIONS

- In the NQ, 14-17s Open or USA invitations will be offered to the teams that finish the competition in an award position. The Invitation(s) can trickle-down to the next highest finishing Team, provided the next highest finishing Team finished no lower than 50% of the field size in the Tournament.
- Invitations must be accepted or denied at the time the invitation is awarded by the tournament director. Tournament Directors must provide written proof that the invitation was declined. Invitations not awarded at the National Qualifier will revert to the Open or USA At-large pool.
- NQs will determine the timing of written declaration of an invitation, this may occur as early as team registration.
- To compete in an Open or USA division at the BJNC, a team must earn an invitation at a NQ or be offered an invitation through the at- large process. (Please see Open and USA At Large Criteria for more on the At Large Process Criteria)
- At all NQs, the USA Division will be offered for the 14s-18s age groups.

After initial registration, teams can be reallocated to age appropriate Open or USA divisions should the USAV seeding committee deem the reallocation appropriate. Open or USA division allocation will be dependent on the end of year results evaluation by the USAV seeding committee.

Although final allocation will be determined by USAV, teams that receive a BJNC invitation from NQ participation or USAV regional tournament participation are encouraged to indicate a preferred division for consideration.

***For the 2026/27 SEASON: USAV Reserves the right to adjust the invitation distribution in the event of combining divisions**

OPEN AND USA AT-LARGE INVITATIONS AWARDED THROUGH USA VOLLEYBALL

To be considered for an At-Large invitation to the BJNC, a team must enter the event through the approved USAV online registration system as an Open or USA team, and submit complete and accurate results by all posted deadlines. In the absence of results, a letter of explanation addressing the reason(s) why such results are not available, and reason(s) why the team should be considered for an at-large invitation should be submitted. The letter is to be submitted to the USAV Events Department by the entry deadline. Please see the current BJNC Pre-Tournament Manual for deadlines and other information (usavolleyball.org). The teams awarded the at-large invitation will be selected by the BCC with final approval of the USAV Events Department using the following criteria:

1. Must have competed in at least one (1) national qualifier (in a bid division—Open OR USA)
2. Register your team in the desired At-Large division for the BJNC in AES and send payment and the entry form by the posted deadline (may not register for both Open & USA but if a team is not awarded an Open invitation, it will be considered for USA). ***Please note: If previously registered in club division please reach out to BJNC@usav.org to change divisions to the desired At Large division**
3. Strength
4. Record against Qualified teams
5. Record against At-Large applicants
6. Past year's BJNC finish of the rostered players
7. Date of entry

The BCC and the USAV Events Department will rank all Open At-Large and USA At-Large applicants together regardless of the division entered and assign invitations by that agreed upon rank. Teams awarded an At-Large bid have up to three (3) business days to accept or decline the invitation. If a team declines an invitation, the declining invitation will trickle down to the next team in rank order. If a team accepts an invitation but does not participate in BJNC, the team is subject to sanctions for not using invitations.

The BCC and USAV EVENTS DEPARTMENT reserve the right to accept as many or as few teams applying for an At-Large Invitation to round out numbers and create even pool play.

*In the Open Division(s), Hawaii and Puerto Rico will be given one (1) invitation for the 14s-18s & under age divisions. (Please see section BJNC Invitations Awarded Through a Region for more information)

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

BJNCS INVITATIONS AWARDED THROUGH A REGION

Each Region may award one (1) USA bid per age division* (14U, 15U, 16U, 17U, 18U) if that division is offered and contested as a stand-alone competition at their Junior Regional Qualifier.

*PUR and Hawaii will be given at-large invitations to support grassroots and reduce travel for younger teams. Neither territory is considered a sanctioned national qualifier.

Regions: PU and AH	1 Open Invitation for 14s, 15s, 16s, 17s and 18s Age Divisions	1 USA invitation in the 14s, 15s,16s, 17s, and 18s Age Divisions

Each territory will award those invitations to a team in each age division by any means they deem appropriate (i.e. a tournament or via an application process). Any other team wishing to receive an invitations for the 14-18s & under age divisions must attend a national qualifier and apply for an At-Large invitation, if necessary**. If Hawaii or Puerto Rico choose to award the allotted invitations via a tournament, that tournament is not considered a sanctioned USAV national qualifier and does not count towards the required criteria to be eligible to apply for an at-large bid.**

REALLOCATION INVITATIONS

When an Invitation is returned, the USAV Events Department distributes Reallocation Invitations to the Regions in an order determined by the number of junior boys' members and the proximity of that number to certain benchmark membership numbers. When a Team earns a higher-ranking Invitation, the vacated Invitation will stay with the Region (see Rules for Priority of Invitation Use).

INVITATIONS: RULES & PRIORITY 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 Invitation, or by some combination of these processes. If the Team earns more than one (1) Invitation, the following rules apply as to which Invitation the Team must use, and what happens to the other Invitation(s).

The priority use of Invitations is as follows:

1. Open
2. USA

The Open Invite from a NQ is the highest-level invitation that can be earned in order to compete at the BJNC. When a team has earned and accepted the Open invitation spot for the BJNC, they are not able to accept a USA invitation at another NQ. Once the Open invitation is accepted by a team, they must use the Open invitation to compete in the Open division at the BJNC. A team earning and accepting a USA invitation may apply for Open At-Large if all criteria has been met and must notify USAV Events at (BJNC@usav.org) to be considered for an Open At-Large. Teams in any division may decline bids.

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

- If a Team previously accepted a USA invitation, the Team must use the Open Invitation. The USA Invitation will remain in the Region of the Team that originally accepted the USA Invitation. If the Region

is unable to allocate this Invitation, the Invitation will go into the At-Large Invitation process.

When a USA Invitation is the second Invitation a Team earns and accepts:

- If a Team accepts a reallocated USA Invitation through a Region Invitation process and then earns a USA Invitation at a NQ, the NQ USA Invitation will supersede the Region reallocated USA Invitation. The vacated USA Invitation will revert to the Region of origin for reallocation. If the Region is unable to allocate this USA Invitation, it reverts to the At-Large Invitation process.

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

PENALTIES

To ensure the integrity of BJNCs 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 the 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 BJNCs
- Previous club/member behavior
- Level of play (Open vs. USA)
- Where an Invitation is earned and accepted (NQ vs. Regional)
- Severity of offense
- Age and Experience
- Region Input

PENALTIES FOR NOT USING AN INVITATION

It is disruptive to the quality of the Event when Invitations 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 earns and accepts a BJNC Invitation (Open or USA), then does not use it, may be subject to the following penalties:

FINANCIAL PENALTIES

- Payment of entry fee (if a team returns a bid at least 30 days prior to the start of BJNC) OR entry fee plus $1,000 fine (if a team returns a bid within 30 days of the start of BJNC).
- If the payment is not received for the BJNC Event Entry Fee and/or fines, the club director(s), coaches affiliated with official qualification roster will be prohibited from participating in NQ and BJNC 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 Clubs and/or Teams within their Region.

PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL USE OF AN INVITATION

If a Team is deemed ineligible or has ineligible participants (age falsification, frozen player, foreign participation, ethics/eligibility, 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 BJNC Event entry fee and/or fines, the club director(s) and the coaches affiliated with official qualification roster will be prohibited from participating in NQs and BJNC 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 BJNCs 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 Clubs and/or 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 adhere to the same competitive format standards when conducting their events. The information in this section of the Championship manual applies to all NQs.

RULES OF PLAY

The rules of play are as prescribed in the USA Volleyball Indoor Rules Book. There are no updated rule changes for the 2026-2027 season. See below for a reminder of the rule changes that most recently occurred; these will continue to be points of emphasis for the upcoming season.

- **9.2.3.2:** At the first hit of the team, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action. 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.
- **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)
- **New 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.
- **USAV 15.1:** Each team may request a maximum of two time-outs and 15 substitutions per set. USAV
- **15.6a:** Fifteen substitutions are the maximum permitted per team per set. Substitution of one or more players is permitted at the same time.
- **USAV 15.6d:** Unlimited individual entries by a substitute within the team's allowable 15 substitutions are permitted.
- **USAV 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.
- **USAV 24.2.7a:** The R2 controls the number of time-outs and substitutions used by each team and reports the second time-out and substitutions 12, 13, 14, and 15 to the appropriate coach or game captain. (see also 15.1, 25.2.2.3)
- **USAV 24.2.7b:** The R2 notifies the 1st referee of a team's second time-out and 15th substitution.

SIGNIFICANT RULE CLARIFICATIONS

- **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.

ARTIFICIAL NOISE MAKERS AND PORTABLE MUSIC DEVICES

Due to their disruptive nature, artificial noise makers are prohibited at NQ and BJNC. 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. Approved Tournament flow charts are posted on the USA Volleyball Website and must be followed.

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 3rd (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 win the first two (2) sets of the Match, that Team has won the Match, but Teams will still play the 3rd 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 3rd 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 five teams may be utilized.

The USAV Events Department with input from the BCC will approve the Tournament formats and flow charts for National qualifier Tournaments according to the number of teams in a division. The ideal format is to create pools of four teams but depending on the number of teams in a division, may create pools of three or five.

A final pool finish will be determined first by match results and then followed by set percentage. A "round" is one complete pool for a division.

For a 2-day event, five (5) matches or the equivalent number of sets are guaranteed, and a 3-day event will guarantee seven (7) matches or the equivalent number of sets.

DIVISION FORMATS

The top four (4) to twelve (12) Teams in an Open Division play two (2) rounds of pool play, and, if necessary, a single elimination bracket to determine the overall winner of the Tournament.

- If additional playoff matches are necessary to award a trickle-down bid(s), teams will hold their earned playoff bracket seed going into the new playoff bracket. More information on playoffs under the Invitation Playoffs section of manual.

SEEDING OF DIVISIONS

The Seeding of divisions within a NQ will be done by the NQ. A NQ may request that the Open divisions be seeded 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 BJNCs is determined by Team results throughout the year as collected by teams 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

All pool play will follow the sequence listed below unless otherwise 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)	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)

Two Four-Team Pools (A & B) on 2 Courts		Five-Team Pools on 2 Courts
A 1 vs. 3 (ref B3)	A 2 vs. 4 (ref B2)	2 vs. 5 and 1 vs. 4 (ref 3)
B 1 vs. 3 (ref A3)	B 2 vs. 4 (ref A4)	3 vs. 5 and 2 vs. 4 (ref 1)
A 2 vs. 3 (ref B3)	A 1 vs. 4 (ref B4)	30 Minute Break
B 2 vs. 3 (ref A2)	B 1 vs. 4 (ref A4)	1 vs. 3 and 4 vs. 5 (ref 2)
A 1 vs. 2 (ref B4)	A 3 vs. 4 (ref B1)	2 vs. 3 and 1 vs. 5 (ref 4)
B 3 vs. 4 (ref A1)	B 1 vs. 2 (ref A3)	30 Minute Break
		3 vs. 4 and 1 vs. 2 (ref 5)

A Team's final pool finish is determined by Match results. If Team(s) are Tied in matches at the completion of pool play, Tie breaker procedures will be required (see **Tie Breakers to Determine Pool Finish** section below).

PLAYING SCHEDULES

- All matches will be scheduled one (1) hour apart. Some pools may play on two days to complete the pool (e.g. begin play one day in the evening and finish the next morning).
- The first match of a pool may not begin before 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, the work team and the Tournament staff all agree to it and there is sufficient time for the warm-up protocol.
- The first Match of a pool must begin at its scheduled time. Within a pool, and after the first Match, a Match may begin prior to its scheduled starting time provided the following stipulations are met:
    - The two (2) Teams competing, the working team, and the officials unanimously agree the match can start early. Should one of the above groups protest an early start time, the match will proceed only when originally scheduled
    - The R1 relays an earlier start time has been unanimously agreed upon to a tournament Head Official
    - The match is NOT being to be moved to a new court unless approved explicitly by Tournament Director, the match must occur at its originally scheduled court.
- NQ Directors can allow matches to proceed ahead of the published schedule after the second round in pool play. All teams involved must be present and agree.
- Playoff brackets may not be larger than 24 Teams.
- It is recommended for Day 3 of play at a NQ that no bracket should be larger than 16 teams.
- It is recommended on Day 2 that those teams that are still in bid contention should play in the morning wave. As court space and scheduling allows for.
- 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 if a team receives an invitation. Should the situation occur on the last day of play in the Gold Bracket where there is need for the tied 5th place teams to play off for a trickle-down invite, the following steps should be followed:
    - Teams that are either declining or have already won and accepted an Invitation in an equal or higher division will be eliminated from the trickle down matches.
    - Of the teams that are still playing, the following scenarios should be followed:

# Teams w/out an Invitation	# Invitations Available	
4	3	Two 2 team brackets, bracket winners earn bid AND two losers play bracket of 2 for final invite
4	2	Two 2 team brackets, both bracket winners earn an invite
4	1	One Bracket of 4, bracket winner earns the invite
3	3	No matches played, all teams earn an invite and finish 5th
3	2	Reverse Bracket of 3 based on current seeds (1v2 then loser plays 3) winner of match 1 and 2 win the 2 invites
3	1	Bracket of 3 based on current seeds, bracket winner earns invite (2v3 then winner plays 1)
2	2	No matches played, all teams receive invite and finish 5th
2	1	One Bracket of 2, bracket winner receives invite
1	1	No matches played, team earns invite and finishes 5th

COURT USE

- A NQ may not schedule more than 13 matches on a court in one day, unless otherwise approved by the USAV Events Department. Tie-breaking sets will not count as scheduled matches.
- Final matches must be scheduled to start no later than 9:30 p.m. and must adhere to the above constraint of no more than 13 matches on a court in one day.
    - For NQ Matches on day 3 of competition, Matches in invitation divisions may not be scheduled to begin later than 3:00 p.m. 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 one (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.

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 2026-2027 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 and must be considered **in the order listed,** not individually.

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 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.
    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 Invitation/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 an Invitation/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 an Invitation/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 Boy's 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 initial ranking in the pool. Tie Breakers 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 Invitation.

    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 Invitation, NOT for the Gold Bracket.

USAV Girls Jr National Championships (GJNCs) & USAV Boys Junior National Championships (BJNC):

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 maybe 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.

TEAMS NOT PRESENT FOR 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.
- 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 AND PLAYER POLICIES

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.

PLAYING UP

A Team should play in the division that conforms to the USAV age requirements for the Team’s players. The Team’s 11-digit 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 bid division the Team’s penalty will be:
    - The forfeiting Team is ineligible for participation in that year’s BJNCs. 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 BJNCs 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 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. It is expected that the Officiating Team will report to their assignment in a timely manner that allows the match to commence without delays. Those work assignments can be found in the official play schedule. For planning purposes, be prepared to provide the following officials:

- Second Referee (BJNC provides 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
- 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, and SafeSport training, as well as having 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 penalties against the Team.

- 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 official time warm-ups.
- 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 Open or USA 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 an invitation for the BJNCs (Example: Club). (Please see the USA Volleyball Junior Player Age Definition for more information)

With region approval only, teams with waivered players may be eligible to participate in the non-qualifying Club Division of the BJNC. USAV will fully support the region's decision on whether or not to allow waivered players in this division. Waivered players must be waivered the entire season in order to participate in the Club Division of BJNC. Players ***MAY NOT*** transfer clubs prior to the BJNC to participate in the Club 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. 2nd Assistant Coach
3. 3rd 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 or after** 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.
    - NOTE: After the first day of play, jersey number updates are subject to a roster change fee of up to $50 per change. The fee must be paid to the tournament desk before the roster is updated. These fees must be posted on the Tournament's website. *Such changes should be limited to urgent or unavoidable circumstances*
- 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 *2025-2027 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.

No penalty is assessed on previous rounds or matches where the player may have played in the wrong numbered jersey.

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 $50 roster change fee is paid, and the corrected roster is presented to the referees.
- If the missing player is discovered **during** the match, the following will occur :
    - Player may not compete for the remainder of the match and Rule 7.3.5.4 as listed in the *2025-2027 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 $50 penalty.
    - Note: the player must be an eligible member within the Club and available to be added to the roster. Please reference the USA Volleyball Age and Identity Falsification Policy for further review.
- If the missing player is discovered after the **completion** of the match, the following will occur:
    - The team will forfeit the match(es) within the round where the illegal player was found to have played.
    - The player may only be added to the roster after confirming the player is eligible, and the team pays a $50 roster change fee to be paid at the tournament desk.

- Note: the player must be an eligible member within the Club and available to be added to the roster. Please reference the USA Volleyball Age and Identity Falsification Policy for further review

After teams have advanced to the next round of play, no forfeits will be assessed on the previous round 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 or for the 2026-2027 season a Boys National one-Event Membership is allowed
- 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 45 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). For coaches with a Boys One Event membership, IMPACT certification is not required. For additional information on Boys One Event memberships, please reach out to membership@usav.org.

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 BJNCs designee.

STAFF MISSING FROM OFFICIAL ROSTER:

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

- If a person that is not listed on the official roster for a team and is found present on the team’s bench **prior to the match**, the roster may be adjusted, but only after the Rostered Staff has been confirmed as eligible, any roster change fees has been paid to the tournament desk*, and the corrected roster is presented to the referees.
- If a person 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 for the remainder of the match and a delay warning will be imposed on the team.
  - 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 once play has started may result in monetary fines per the Tournament Director’s discretion. Any fines must be posted on the tournament’s information page

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 review the complete USAV Gender Competition Policy, please refer to the USAV website at: https://usavolleyball.org/about/gender-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 BJNCs, 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 completes the online and/or on-site check in, 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 input online and/or at onsite check-in 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 accepts or wins an Open, USA, 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 Invitation winners, Invitation 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.

SAFESPORT

Participation in nationally sanctioned events will require that SafeSport training be completed by all registered adults and all players who are 18 years or older during the event (note, foreign teams are exempt, but we strongly recommend you take the course). Individual regions may set earlier deadlines for their respective regional events. The Safe Sport Training requirement is associated with each member's USA Volleyball membership. If there are questions or issues completing Safe Sport training, please email: membership@usav.org

Adults who have 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 can be found here: 2025 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: USA Volleyball Misconduct Reporting Form

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)

FROZEN PLAYER RULES

Once a junior player has participated in a BJNC National Qualifier, he may not be on the Official Roster of, or participate in, another BJNC qualifying event with a different club.

Example: a player plays on a club in a NQ in an attempt to qualify. The player's Team does not qualify. That player may not transfer to another club to attempt to qualify.

Earning and accepting an Open, USA, or accepting any At-Large Invitations defines the Team as "qualified" for the BJNC. 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:

All teams and players must maintain eligibility compliance within their region and adhere to regional transfer policies when applicable. Violations of the Frozen Player Rule will result in sanctions being imposed on the already qualified team, its club, and/or the individual(s) involved, including the player, the coach and the club director. The USAV Event Department will determine sanctions for violations of the Frozen Player Rule.

Exception: If a team disbands, and there is no other opportunity for the player to play within the club, the player may request a club transfer with permission from the region. (Note: please be aware that not all regions allow transfers. USAV will uphold the region's policies).

FROZEN PLAYER RULES

Accepting an invitation defines a team as Qualified. All players listed on the roster of a team are "frozen" to that roster at the time the team earns or accepts an invite. Players from a Qualified team cannot be added to any other team roster submitted for NQ, or the BJNC. This includes teams from within the same club. There are no restrictions on additions to the roster of new players or players from non-qualified teams—up to the limit of fifteen (15) players. All teams and players must maintain eligibility compliance within their region. Violations of the Frozen Player Rule will result in sanctions being imposed on the already qualified team, its club, and/or the individual(s) involved, including the player, the coach and the club director. The USAV Event Department will determine sanctions for violations of the Frozen Player Rule. For a first offense, the sanctions may be a warning, probation, suspension or expulsion.

FROZEN PLAYER RULE – AT-LARGE

All players listed on the roster of a team are "frozen" to that team at the time the team applies for an At-Large invitation to the BJNC. Applying for an At-Large invitation is defined as registering for the BJNC in AES and submitting an entry form and payment to USAV. Accepting an invitation defines a team as Qualified. Players from a Qualified team cannot be added to any other team roster submitted for NQ or the BJNC. This includes teams from within the same club. There are no restrictions on additions to the roster of new players or players from non-qualified teams—up to the limit of fifteen (15) players. If a team does NOT earn an At-Large bid and chooses to accept the Club Division invitation, the roster is still frozen. If a team does not earn an at-large bid and decides not to attend the Championship, all players shall be considered released and shall be permitted to be added to another team's roster from within the same Member Organization (refer to the BJNC Tournament Manual, Chapter 2, Player Eligibility for transfer and release policies for purposes of attending JNCs). HOWEVER, the released player(s) are required to have a signed release from the original team coach, club representative, new team coach AND Member Organization commissioner/designated representative, if eligible.

FROZEN PLAYER RULE – CLUB

The Players on the roster shall be considered frozen upon submittal of the Entry Form AND payment to USAV. NO player listed on this roster may participate with any other CLUB TEAM for the purpose of these Championships. If this team decides not to attend the Championship, all players shall be considered released and shall be permitted to be added to another team's roster from within the same Member Organization (refer to Player Eligibility for transfer and release policies for purposes of attending JNCs). HOWEVER, the released player(s) are required to have a signed release from the original team coach, club representative, new team coach AND Member Organization commissioner/designated representative. All teams and players must maintain eligibility compliance within their region and adhere to regional transfer policies when applicable.

PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE DIVISIONS

Each NQ that operates under one name or one USAV Sanction is defined as a single NQ Event, even if the NQ activity is held on multiple weekends or in multiple locations. A player may only be on one (1) Team roster in a single NQ.

- Players frozen to rosters may no longer play on a different Team at NQ.

POLICIES FOR MULTIPLE DIVISION PARTICIPATION AT NATIONAL QUALIFIERS

- **Individual athletes within the same club** may participate on more than 1 weekend of a multi-weekend Boy'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.

- **A team represented by a specific team code** may participate in multiple divisions of the same National Qualifier, provided the divisions are held on separate weekends and all other eligibility requirements are met.

National Qualifiers hosting multi-weekend events should monitor these scenarios. Teams registering for multiple weekends must designate their first-choice division. Entry into any additional weekends will only be permitted after December 1st, if space remains available, and once other teams have had the opportunity to register for and be accepted into those divisions.

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. **Foreign Junior Team.** A team of Non-Resident Participants seeking to participate in a USAV or Region-sanctioned event.
II. **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.
III. **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.

Policy Statement for Foreign Teams:

I. 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 purchase SECONDARY foreign participant insurance for $100 per team, which will be provided by USA Volleyball.
c. Each player listed on the Roster will fit USA Volleyball Age Definitions
d. Foreign Teams must complete ALL steps in the USA Volleyball Foreign Team Approval Process to be considered eligible to participate in any USA Volleyball Sanctioned Event.
e. 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

Policy Statement for Foreign Players

I. Individual Foreign Participation: Subject to the above Definitions, a Resident Junior 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. 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.

A USA Volleyball affiliated club is permitted to roster a maximum of two junior foreign athletes per team, per season, to participate in any USA Volleyball sanctioned events, when such junior foreign athletes are documented members of any foreign national team. Any roster with more than two junior foreign athletes that are documented members of a foreign national team would deem that roster illegal and invalid and any/all penalties permitted per the USA Volleyball Championship Manual may be enforced.

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.

TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS

OFFICIALS

All pool play and playoff bracket Matches must have a USAV-certified official as the 1st referee. It is highly recommended that these officials have National, Junior National or Regional certification.

It is required that there be a USAV certified 1*st* and 2*nd* referee for quarterfinals, semifinals, 3rd place, and finals matches in Open and USA divisions.

- Any exceptions to this rule must be requested and approved by the USAV indoor event department in writing no later than 48 hours in advance of tournament play.

It is considered best practice to provide USAV certified 1*st* and 2*nd* referees for quarterfinals, semifinals, 3rd place, and finals matches in the Club division.

***Note for 2027/2028 Season**: It will be required for 1st and 2nd referees for quarterfinals, semifinals, 3rd place, and final matches in all division gold brackets.

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, USA, American, and Club 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, USA, American, and Club Division that is hosted by the Event. Playing out a third place match is not mandatory but NQ Directors will need to give individual and team awards to both third place teams.
- NQs will not select or give awards for All-Tournament Teams.

For the BJNC, All-Tournament and Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards will be given in the following age divisions: 18, 17, 16, 15, and 14 Open, USA, American, and Club Divisions.

TEAM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR NQ'S

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 NQ'S

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.

Under no circumstance is a NQ permitted to allow or entertain teams attempting to pre-register in advance of registration opening. Parity across the registration process must be upheld to ensure as equal of a registration opportunity as possible for all competing teams.

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 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 National Qualifier 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.
- 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.
- A protest related to a judgment 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 BJNC. 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 NQs or BJNC 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.

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.

NATIONAL QUALIFIER DIRECTOR INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

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. NQ Directors should reach out to USAV Events Department for any questions about pre-approved flow charts.
- Age group assignments by August 1 or communication if unable to meet this deadline
- Information, or access to 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 Invitations – 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 1st 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

USAV NATIONAL QUALIFIER POLICIES

The following information must be provided to all interested parties:

- Ethics and Eligibility information
- BJNCs qualification procedures and Invitation numbers
- Penalties for not using an Invitation & illegal use of Invitations
- Team roster requirements
- Awards
- Tournament format
- Open, USA, 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 January 1st 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).

SEEDING CRITERIA

1. Final Finish at Multi-Day Events (most recent events taking priority over previous events)
2. Head to head results
3. Record against the field
4. Prior BJNC finishes
5. Regional rankings
6. Overall record

RECOMMENDED FACILITY SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Currently, a NQ must have, at a minimum, enough courts for:

- 24 Teams in each of the age divisions;
- It is strongly recommended that courts 85 feet in length be provided for the 16 & under, 17 & under, and 18 & under divisions.
- Competition conducted in four-team pools, with no more than two (2) pools or thirteen (13) matches scheduled on one court in one day.

All facilities must conform to the safety guidelines in the current USAV Indoor Rules Book.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

All courts must meet minimum court quality and size standards as stated in the current USAV Indoor Rules Book. 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 2025 MAAPP Policy.

It is recommended that QDs provide all NQ Event Staff and Officials at the given NQ with a credential to easily identify approved and USAV compliant adults working the event.

ATHLETIC TRAINERS

All NQ 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 trainers be SafeSport trained and successfully pass a USAV background check.

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 NQs will have the same fields as specified by the USAV Events Department. Fields required: 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 NQTD by December 31st 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

Each NQ will set its own refund policy and clearly state the policy in its entry information. These policies apply to all NQ:

- A team that applies by the deadline date and 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 for the Tournament, who will be part of the Protest Committee. The head official will instruct all officials to enforce the rules outlined in the Indoor Rules Book. 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. NQ will cooperate with the Evaluator 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.

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 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. 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 2025-2027 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-invitation award divisions and exhibitions.