

Chapter 4

Team & Player Eligibility



USA Volleyball®

OPEN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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Who is Eligible to Enter?

Teams representing a USAV Member Organization and who are authorized by their organization's executive/Regional Commissioner may submit an entry application. Additionally, non-USA teams are permitted to enter the USAV Open, AA, A, BB or B, Masters / Seniors or Sitting championships and shall meet the prescribed eligibility rules. All participants / roster personnel from USA domestic teams, in addition to being a member of the organization they represent, must be a current registered member of USA Volleyball.

Eligibility Requirements – General

Eligibility rules for teams and athletes in all tournaments of the USA Volleyball Open National Championships shall be those legislated and implemented by the organization that each team and participant represent, as well as those of USA Volleyball included in the Bylaws, Operating Code and policies adopted by the USAV Board of Directors. ***It shall be the responsibility of team representatives and participants to obtain this information and be familiar with these requirements, especially those detailed in Article X of the USAV Operating Code published in the USA Volleyball Guidebook.***

All teams and persons listed on the official entry application forms for participating teams shall be eligible under the rules of the organization they represent, as well as those of USA Volleyball specifically as follows:

1. **ALL** participants (i.e.; players, coaches, managers, trainers, team representatives/officials) must currently be registered as members of USA Volleyball, or with their own national volleyball federation and be at least **18 years of age**.
2. Players are required to adhere to the rules and regulations of the organization which they represent as well as those of USA Volleyball.
3. **ALL** players competing in a Club (AA, A, BB, B) Championship Tournament shall be eligible for that Club tournament only. Players may be eligible for non-Club tournaments if otherwise eligible and not concurrent. All participants shall be registered strictly in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Member Organization they represent.
4. **ALL** current **REGULAR REGISTRANTS** of USA Volleyball and properly registered participants from other national volleyball federations are eligible to participate in Events for which they are eligible.
5. Teams will be restricted to participate in one Championship Tournament during any one session. With the exception of #3 above, for those Championship Tournaments that are not conducted concurrently, a team/player may participate in a second Championship Tournament.
6. A player's name shall not appear on more than one roster except as authorized. Should this infraction occur, first participation shall determine the player's team, and he / she will be declared ineligible for any other teams on whose roster his / her name appears. Responsibility for this will rest collectively and jointly with the Regional Commissioner / Organization Executive, the individual participant and the Team Representative.
7. Non-USA players (individuals) whose names appear on the roster of any domestic team must be registered with the National Federation they represent and fill-out the appropriate paperwork.
8. A non-USA team composed entirely of non-USA players shall register all of its players with its national volleyball federation. Non-USA teams shall purchase insurance from USA Volleyball at the current established rate.

9. Any participant causing disruptive or unfavorable action to USA Volleyball during these Events as determined by the Competition Director / Designee of the Event shall be liable for disciplinary action by the Event Arbitrator. Such disruptive or unfavorable action includes that which occurs at the playing venue or anywhere in the host city during the scheduled events, including pre-event days a participant is in the host city.
10. Teams competing in the 1st session may be eligible to participate in another tournament of the 2nd session (see: ***“Eligibility for Participation in Two Championship Tournaments”***).
11. Teams entering the Open, Sitting and Masters / Seniors tournaments may be conglomerate. Conglomerate teams shall be considered those teams composed from any source and essentially a group of players who may or may not have played together prior to this Event. All participants must be currently registered members of the Member Organization they represent.
 - a. Conglomerate teams participating in the Sitting and Masters / Seniors tournaments shall represent a USAV Member Organization or another national volleyball federation. The appropriate authority from the Member Organization/Country the team is representing must verify all conglomerate team rosters.
 - b. Conglomerate teams participating in the Open tournaments must ensure that each participant is properly registered with USA Volleyball or another national volleyball federation in the approved manner. The appropriate authority must verify and approve the roster prior to competition.
 - c. Conglomerate teams are not required to participate in earlier USA Volleyball or RVA sanctioned competition unless it is required of the Member Organization they represent.
11. Players registered in a national volleyball federation other than through USA Volleyball shall obtain the required permission and release from their respective country’s national volleyball federation.

USAV & FIVB Federation Membership Requirement

All persons whose names appear on the Official Roster, including players, coaches, team representatives, trainers, and managers must be registered with USAV through a USAV Member Organization or their FIVB Federation. The purpose of this registration is the extension of USAV’s liability insurance program or, in the event of a USA Territory, FIVB Federation Member purchasing event insurance. This will ensure all registered USAV players, coaches, team representatives, managers, and trainers at this Event have liability coverage and Sports Accident Insurance (this is an excess coverage plan). If a medical emergency arises, athletes and coaches must have all necessary documentation to show proof of medical insurance, primary and / or excess coverage.

Policy on Foreign (Non-USA) Individual & Foreign Team Participation

DEFINITIONS	
"Foreign Participant":	A participant who is not a citizen of the United States OR a citizen residing in a U.S. territory having its own National Volleyball Federation with which the participant is affiliated.
"Non-Resident" Foreign Participant:	A person who is not a citizen of the United States residing outside the 50 United States OR an individual residing in a U.S. Territory that has its own National Volleyball Federation with which the participant is affiliated.
"Resident" Foreign Participant:	A person who is not a citizen of the United States residing in one of the 50 United States and holding "resident" versus "visitor" status. Proof of "Resident" status includes providing documentation substantiating enrollment and attendance in an educational institution in the United States (excludes on-line courses) OR proof of employment in the United States AND a corresponding physical residence address (excludes a P.O. Box or "care of" address). A copy of a current student or work visa is required for the duration of eligibility.
Foreign Participant "Release":	Written approval by a foreign participant's National Volleyball Federation of origin for that person to affiliate or participate with USA Volleyball.

FOREIGN (NON-USA) TEAM PARTICIPATION

1. A Foreign (Non-USA) 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.
2. Each (Non-USA) Foreign Participant (on a US team) and all members of a Foreign (Non-USA) Team must purchase foreign participant insurance, which will be provided by USA Volleyball. The expense shall be debited to the event at cost and shall be added to the entry fee.
3. A waiver to the foreign participant insurance fee shall be granted to Canadians who provide **written proof of 24-hour health coverage valid in the United States**.
4. Each Foreign (Non-USA) Participant and all members of a Foreign (Non-USA) Team shall have in their possession, and shall have previously filed with the Event Director, the following documents:
 - a. Photo identification (Driver's license, passport or comparable government issued document), and
 - b. A signed copy of the USA Volleyball Code of Conduct and Waiver and Release of Liability (provided on page 2 of the Foreign Team Tournament Registration form).

Foreign team participation forms can be found here – scroll down to "Required Forms":

<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Volleyball/Calendar/2019/May/24/Open-Nationals/Participant-Info>

FOREIGN (NON-USA) INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

1. A **Resident Foreign (Non-USA) Participant** (residing legally in the United States) may participate if he/she is duly registered with a USA Volleyball Regional Volleyball Association (RVA) and follows all event participation policies and registration procedures.
 - a) A Resident Foreign (Non-USA) 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 before he / she can become a registered member of a Regional Volleyball Association.
 - b) This would not apply to a participant who has been in continuous legal residence in the United States and unaffiliated with a foreign (non-USA) national volleyball federation for greater than two years.
2. A **Non-Resident Foreign (Non-USA) Participant** may participate only with the following classifications (e. g. Open, AA, A, BB, B, Sitting, and age classification tournaments) on the condition that he/she has been granted a written release from his/her national volleyball federation of origin and follows all event participation policies and registration procedures.

Foreign (Non-USA) Team Registration

This applies to **ALL NON-USA** Volleyball members or Member Organizations (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, Canada, Mexico, etc.).

The Team Representative will be responsible for checking in their entire team at the registration kiosk, and must have all of the required fees for each player and staff member. Individual check-ins by foreign participants will not be accepted at registration.

Each foreign (non-USA) team is required to send in their required individual and team forms to the USA Volleyball National Office by **May 12, 2019** by email at opens@usav.org or mail. Failure to comply will result in a \$100 late fee charged at team check-in.

REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL FORMS

1. Players and Staff: Foreign Participant Registration Form*, which includes the Code of Conduct on page 2
2. Players and Staff: Copy of photo ID (i.e. Passport)

REQUIRED TEAM FORMS/FEEES

1. Foreign Summary Team Participation Form*
2. \$100 US Dollars for Insurance (Canadian teams exempt with proof of coverage in the U.S.)
3. A letter of good standing from the volleyball federation.

* Foreign team participation forms can be found here – scroll down to “Required Forms”: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Volleyball/Calendar/2019/May/24/Open-Nationals/Participant-Info>

Eligibility to Participate in Two Championship Tournaments

Teams or players competing in the **USAV Open** tournaments *are ineligible* to compete in any other tournaments during these Events.

TEAM ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN TWO CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS

Open	Not eligible to compete in any other tournaments
AA/A	Eligible to compete in the following divisions: Sitting, Masters or Seniors tournament for which they are eligible in the opposite playing session
BB/B	Eligible to compete in the following divisions: Masters or Seniors tournament for which they are eligible in the opposite playing session.
Masters / Seniors	Eligible to play down in one of the other master tournaments being offered in the opposite session or in a CLUB division for which they are eligible in the opposite playing session.
Sitting	Eligible to compete in the following divisions: AA, A, Masters or Seniors tournament for which they are eligible in the opposite playing session.

USA Volleyball Age & Identity Falsification Policy

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

For all USA Volleyball corporate events, any person who alters any document that certifies the age or identity of a participant, or falsifies any statement which lists the age or identity of a participant, will be sanctioned as follows:

1. be immediately suspended from USAV membership and barred from further participation in the event;
2. be barred from participation in any USAV Corporate events in any capacity for a minimum of two (2) years; and
3. have a minimum probation of one additional year to run consecutively to the suspension.

An **ADULT PLAYER** who knowingly plays in a higher age classification for which he/she is **NOT** actually eligible or any player who knowingly misrepresents his / her identity shall:

1. be immediately suspended from USAV membership and barred from further participation in the event;
2. be barred from participation in any USAV Corporate events in any capacity for a minimum of two (2) years; and
3. have a minimum probation of one additional year to run consecutively to the suspension.

Any player in question must provide proof of identity and age eligibility, if requested.

When discovered and confirmed during an event, the above penalties shall be the required **minimum** penalty imposed by the Event Arbitrator or the Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee.

The Event Arbitrator or the Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee may recommend a more severe penalty. The Event Arbitrator or the Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee shall file a report of any age or identity violation with the Corporation's Ethics and Eligibility Committee and with the registering Member Organization with its recommendation.

USA Volleyball Gender Determination Policy

Transgender athletes must request permission to play by submitting a request to the Chair of the Gender Committee. Documentation of testosterone levels may be required. Requests should be sent to ChairGenderCom@usav.org. Below is the Policy that has been proposed but not adopted by the Board of Directors. It will be the basis for the Guidelines used by the Gender Committee.

USA VOLLEYBALL PROPOSED GENDER COMPETITION POLICY (GUIDELINES)

The vast majority of athletes are expected to compete as a member of the gender noted on their birth certificate. The goal of the USAV policy is to permit athletes to compete in the gender with which they identify, while minimizing any competitive advantage which may accrue. Athletes who wish to compete as a member of the gender opposite that recorded on their birth certificate must duly notify USAV of their intent, and provide appropriate medical documentation of their status to the USAV Gender Committee (GC) at least six weeks prior to the competition in which they wish to participate. Sufficient documentation must be provided to permit the GC to determine that the applicant has taken the necessary steps to transition to their adopted gender. At a minimum, this should include medical records documenting the athlete's intended sexual reassignment (including physicians' and psychotherapists' statements, record of hormonal therapy, and the response to such therapy). The GC reserves the right to consult and share relevant information with medical experts, as deemed necessary.

Hormone therapy is a critical component of sex reassignment, but treatment with sex hormones may potentially provide transsexual athletes with an unfair competitive advantage. For this reason, the USAV GC requires that transsexual athletes provide documentation of appropriately managed therapy at the time of initial application to compete. If the athlete is approved to compete as a member of their adopted gender, periodic submission of test results documenting hormonal levels in response to ongoing treatment may be required by the GC. The GC will therefore be responsible for tracking transgender athletes once registered, in addition to serving as the point of contact for all inquiries regarding these participants. The expense of any required testing will be the responsibility of the athlete.

Note: This policy does not apply to any competition or event where the International Olympic Committee's policy on transgender may apply, or to a competition or event being used as a qualifier for another competition or event where the IOC's policy on transgender may apply. This may include, without limitation, (i) USA Volleyball National Team qualifiers, competitions or events, and (ii) competitions or events operated or sanctioned by FIVB, the IOC, the International Paralympic Committee or World Para Volley, whether involving beach, indoor or sitting disciplines.

Current transsexual testing requirements are as follows:

Female to Male, all age groups (prepubertal, pubertal, and adult)

All athletes must submit appropriate documentation upon request. Testosterone levels must not exceed the upper limit of the normal male reference range for their age group.

Male to Female:

All athletes must submit appropriate documentation upon request.

Testosterone levels must not exceed the upper limit of the normal female reference range for their age group.

Age18 and Over (registered as an Adult)

Testosterone levels must fall within normal adult female reference range for a minimum of 1 year prior to the application to participate.

Open Tournament

1. The OPEN tournament is highest level of competition at the USA Volleyball Open National Championships open to USA and NON-USA teams and players.
2. Entries will be limited to a maximum of 12 teams.
3. Any team or group of players registered with USA Volleyball or another national volleyball federation are eligible to compete in these tournaments.
4. No more than two (2) current national team players are allowed on an Open roster.
5. All competition will consist of the best of five set matches and SINGLE ELIMINATION format.
6. Teams competing in the **USA Open** tournament **are ineligible** to compete in any other tournaments during these Events.
7. RULES OF PLAY: The USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations will govern this competition.

Club Tournaments (AA, A, BB, B)

Club Tournaments (AA, A, BB, B) are **open to Domestic as well as Non-USA teams**. Each Member Organization is guaranteed the entry of one team into each classified tournament of the Club Championships provided that:

1. Non-USA teams are eligible to participate in the Club Divisions provided there are slots available and no USA teams are prevented from entering.
2. The following levels of classification will be conducted for both men and women, contingent upon a minimum entry of six (6) teams: Class AA, A, BB and B.
3. Teams / players participating in a Club tournament are eligible only for that CLUB tournament, unless they are also eligible for participation in Sitting or Masters / Seniors Tournament being offered in a separate session.
4. Open players are **NOT** eligible to participate with a Club Team.
5. A team competing in a Club Championship tournament may be either club or conglomerate teams and must represent a USAV Member Organization or another FIVB affiliated national volleyball federation.

All such players:

- a. may be a registered member of another Federation or RVA other than where the club team is registered provided that the player's original team is not participating in this event.
- b. may **not** be added to the roster of a team, which is playing in a classification lower than that of a player, or the team that the player was registered with during the current season.

- c. may **not** be added to the roster of a team if the team they were registered with during the current season is also playing in the current Club Championships.
6. Teams will be entered into the tournament classification (Class AA, A, BB or B) as authorized by the Regional Commissioner / Organization Executive and as approved by the Championship Committee. Regional Commissioners should approve a team for the classification consistent with their current season's placement within their organization.
7. Teams representing a Member Organization other than a USAV / RVA must obtain and submit the appropriate form, signed by the proper authority from said Member Organization, and make certain it is attached to the team entry form. Additionally, they must register with USA Volleyball in the prescribed manner. Failure to do so will require the USAV Events Department / Championship Committee to defer consideration of the entry until this has been done.
8. All teams applying for entry shall conform strictly to the rules and regulations of the organization they represent to be eligible for entry into this Event. The authority verifying the team entry application, by witness of Internet confirmation or signature, is certifying that these teams have adhered to the rules to the best of their knowledge. Organizations, teams, team representatives, and / or other participants will be subject to disciplinary action during and beyond the tournament for violating these rules and regulations and this representation.
9. The number of teams competing will determine the number medal rounds to be played (i.e.; Gold, Silver, Bronze, Copper and / or Emerald).
10. There is no maximum age limitation for players in these championships.
11. All competition will consist of the best of three set matches and SINGLE ELIMINATION format.
12. RULES OF PLAY: The USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations will govern this competition.

Sitting Tournament

Teams entering these championship tournaments may be either club or conglomerate teams and must represent a USAV Member Organization or another FIVB affiliated national volleyball federation.

1. Division is open to male & female athletes of all abilities.
2. Teams may consist of male and female athletes.
3. Competition may be limited contingent upon the number of courts available for these tournaments.
4. The number of teams competing will determine the number of medal flights (i.e.; Gold, Silver and Bronze).
5. A minimum of five (5) teams will be required in order to conduct a national championship tournament.
6. Non-USA teams are permitted to compete in this tournament.
7. There is no maximum age limitation in these championships.

8. No more than three (3) active national team players are permitted on a Sitting roster.
 - a. A player is considered an active national team player once they have been listed on a roster for their National Federation at an event sanctioned/recognized by World ParaVolleyball or World ParaVolleyball Zone.
 - b. A player is no longer considered to be an active national team member once their respective National Federation confirms the player to be in retired status.
9. All competition will consist of the best of three set matches and SINGLE ELIMINATION format.
10. RULES OF PLAY: The World ParaVolleyball (WPV) Official Sitting Volleyball Rules, 2017-2020 rulebook, will govern this competition with the following modifications:
 - a. Rules regarding disability/classification are not in effect
 - b. Substitution rules and procedures will follow USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations
 - c. Libero rules and procedures will follow USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations
 - d. WPV Rulebook available for download at: <http://www.worldparavolley.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2017-2020-SITTING-Volleyball-Rules-with-Diagrams.pdf>

Masters & Seniors Tournaments

(Men's & Women's 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, Men's 70, Men's 74, Men's 78)

Teams entering these championship tournaments may be either club or conglomerate teams and must represent a USAV Member Organization or another FIVB affiliated national volleyball federation. Each player must meet the minimum age qualification for the tournament in which they participate.

Date for Age Determination: Players shall have obtained the minimum age requirement for participation in a given championship tournament by no later than December 31, 2019.

1. Competition will be offered for men and women in the following age groups:
 - a. Masters: 40+ & 45+
 - b. Seniors: 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, 70+ (Men only), 74+, 78+ (Men and up to 2 women only)
2. Players in the **Men's 74s and 78s & Over Division** may send individual entries and will be placed on teams if a sufficient number of players enter.
 USAV will allow up to two (2) women per roster in the Men's 74+ and 78+ division ONLY in 2019, under the following conditions:
 - i. The women on the roster meet the age criteria
 - ii. The women adhere by the men's 74 & 78 net height and rules
 - iii. This division will not be considered Co-Ed
 - iv. Having a woman on the roster is optional, not required
3. Non-USA teams are permitted to compete in these tournaments.
4. The number of teams competing will determine the number of medal tournaments to be scheduled (i.e.; Gold, Silver and Bronze).

5. A minimum of five (5) teams is required to conduct a championship tournament.
6. All competition will consist of the best of three set matches and DOUBLE ELIMINATION format.
7. There is no maximum age for any tournament.
8. RULES OF PLAY: The USA Volleyball Domestic Competition Regulations, as modified and approved by the USAV Rules Testing Committee, will govern this competition.
9. **All foreign teams must submit proof of age (copy of photo ID) AND foreign team forms to the USAV National Office prior to May 13th, 2018.**

Ethics & Eligibility Violations

Event Arbitrators: Event Arbitrators shall serve as the first level for hearing and resolving ethics and eligibility issues at a specific event. Teams or individuals accused of committing violations of ethics and / or eligibility rules and regulations at qualifying and / or championship events shall meet with the Event Arbitrator(s).

The authority for the Event Arbitrator to act begins with the arrival of a team and individual participants in the Championship city, or 48 hours prior to the first day of competition, whichever is earlier, and shall continue through the duration of the Event through its conclusion.

Decisions of the Event Arbitrator shall be conveyed immediately to the affected parties. A decision of the Event Arbitrator may be appealed to the Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee.

Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee: An Event Ethics and Eligibility Appeals Committee shall be formed for each qualifying and championship event sponsored by the Corporation. Each committee shall be composed of three (3) members, one (1) of whom shall meet the definition of the Corporation as a domestic player who is at least 21 years of age.

Each committee shall act on appeals of ethics and eligibility decisions that occur during the conduct of the event. The conduct of an event shall commence when an individual or a team arrives at the site of the event, or forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the first day of competition for that event, whichever is earlier. That authority shall conclude with the departure of the individual and / or team from the city in which the event has been held.

If the Committee is of the opinion the violation is of such a nature that requires further review or more serious discipline beyond the duration of a National Championship event, the Committee will send a report to the chair of the Corporate Ethics and Eligibility Committee for further action. If the chair is unavailable, then the Associate Chair of the Corporate Ethics and Eligibility Committee will be given the report. The Chair (or Associate Chair if necessary) will notify the USAV Events Department outlining what action (if any) was taken as a result of the report.

Protests or questions relevant to the conduct of all tournaments shall be referred to the Championship Committee on site. Decisions rendered by the Competition Commissioner are final and cannot be appealed.