



*USAVolleyball*

**RETURN TO PLAY  
GUIDELINES**

**OVERVIEW** – USA Volleyball (USAV) has prepared *Return to Play Guidelines* for region leaders, club directors, event promoters, venue operators, members, and families to provide guidance as volleyball activities begin to recommence across the United States.

The following recommendations are not intended or implied to be mandates. Many of these recommendations are based upon current guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other Federal government agencies. The knowledge surrounding COVID-19 is constantly changing and circumstances are different based on geographic region. Therefore, region leaders, club directors, event promoters and venue operators should adhere to their state and local guidelines when determining their own re-opening policies and procedures.

**All USAV sanctioned activities will be required to adhere to the most stringent federal, state and local regulations for their respective areas and USAV insurance coverage will only be provided for activities that are permitted under federal, state and local government directives.**

Until COVID-19 is either eradicated, a vaccine is developed, or a cure is found, there is no way to completely eliminate the risk of infection and as such USAV strongly encourages all participants to follow these recommendations as safety precautions. The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, nor does USAV or its forty (40) Regional Volleyball Associations (Region(s)) assume any liability or responsibility for the recommendations provided herein.

**PURPOSE** – The purpose of these guidelines is to create a comprehensive return to play plan for USA Volleyball sanctioned activities in the United States that are compliant with federal, state, and local regulations. USAV sanctioned activities include but are not limited to: tryouts, lessons, practices, scrimmages, camps, clinics, combines, showcases, or tournaments.

1. **RISK CATEGORIES** – Current volleyball activities are segmented into three types of risk categories:
  - a. **Low Risk** – Individual skill development (passing drills, blocking, hitting, setting, serving, general fitness, strength training) at home (backyard, driveway, in-home), alone or with household members and with owned and sanitized equipment.
  - b. **Medium Risk** – The above activities in public spaces alone or with household members; individual skill development with non-household members following the recommended physical distancing and sanitizing volleyballs.
  - c. **High Risk** – Individual skill development with non-household members not following the recommended physical distancing & not sanitizing volleyballs. Participating in any team or group play.

2. **RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUALS** – Follow all CDC, federal, state and local guidelines when participating in any activities.

a. **Before Activities**

- Be symptom free for at least 14 days prior to any activity.
- Stay home if you are sick or do not feel well.
- Be aware of and disclose any potential contacts with affected individuals.
- Wash and sanitize your hands often.
- Do not touch your face, eyes or mouth with unclean hands.
- Practice social distancing regularly.
- Wear a face mask to reduce exposure to airborne particles.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow if you cough or sneeze.
- Keep a list of people you have been in contact with each day.

b. **During Activities**

- Refrain from attending any activity if displaying any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Comply with all permissible regulations approved for the venue.
- Wash and sanitize your hands often.
- Do not touch your face, eyes or mouth with unclean hands.
- Refrain from contacting other participants and attendees (high fives and huddles).
- Practice social distancing as often as possible.
- Wear a face mask while at the venue.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow if you cough or sneeze.
- Bring hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes.
- Properly dispose of your personal drinking cups, bottles, or utensils used.
- Keep a list of people you were in contact with during the activity.

c. **After Activities**

- Wash and sanitize your hands often.
- Do not touch your face, eyes or mouth with unclean hands.
- Monitor your health and report any symptoms after every activity.
- Practice social distancing as often as possible.
- Wear a face mask when possible to reduce exposure to airborne particles.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow if you cough or sneeze.
- Wash/sanitize all gear, uniforms and apparel used during the activity.

3. **RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES FOR CLUBS AND CLUB FACILITIES**- Follow all CDC, federal, state and local guidelines when participating in any activities.

- a. **Before Activities**
    - Disinfect the venue and all equipment, including volleyballs, where the club activities will take place.
    - Verify that venue staff, club staff and participants are symptom free before participating in any activities.
    - Provide hand washing/sanitizing stations throughout the venue.
    - Turn off water fountains at the venue.
    - Establish social distancing protocols.
    - Create and display signage clearly outlining the venue's COVID-19 policies.
  - b. **During Activities**
    - Continue to clean and disinfect the venue and equipment, including volleyballs, where the club activities will take place.
    - Enforce social distancing requirements.
    - Regularly sanitize commonly touched surfaces during the club activity.
    - Remove anyone from a club activity if they exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms.
    - Limit the number of people in the facility to be compliant with local guidance.
    - Modify drills or activities to limit/reduce potential violations of social distancing requirements including but not limited to: high fives, huddles, and team meetings.
    - Use hand whistles as opposed to regular whistles when possible.
  - c. **After Activities**
    - Sanitize all surfaces and volleyballs that were used during club activities.
4. **RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITION VENUES and EVENTS** - Follow all CDC, federal, state and local guidelines when participating in any activities.
- a. **Before Activities**
    - Designate an event management team, including a licensed Medical Director. This group has the authority to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel the event based on public health risk or other factors.
      - The Medical Director shall make the final decision if a player can return to play, should be sent to self-quarantine or should be sent for further examination (when COVID-19 related).
    - Create a Medical Plan for the event.
      - Identify local healthcare resources (e.g., urgent cares, emergency rooms, ambulance services) and notify them of the event logistics.
      - Create a flyer with the names, addresses and contact numbers for local healthcare resources that can be given to all attendees.

- Create and display COVID-19 information signage throughout the venues.
- Ensure the facility has a comprehensive ingress and egress plan.
- Designate a separate area such as a first aid office/tent or EMT office/tent to take potentially sick patients to be evaluated.
- Limit overall number of exhibitors/vendors and require them to submit their safety protocol plan prior to the event for review and approval.
- Create a mechanism to be able to text all participants/spectators in the venue should an emergency notification (contact tracing) be necessary.
- Inquire about the use air walls between groups of courts, where practical, as it relates to the facilities air circulation/filter system.
- Establish sanitary stations throughout the playing venue.
- Provide sanitizing materials for scoring tables, official's stands, etc.
- Eliminate on-site team check-in if possible.
- Remove water stations and require participants to bring their own water.
- Eliminate player benches and create player/coach boxes with tape.
- Eliminate unnecessary equipment (chairs, tables, libero/line ups, etc.)
- Space the courts a minimum of 25 feet apart and refrain from using adjacent courts at the same time when possible.

**b. During Activities**

- Disinfect volleyballs between all matches.
- Eliminate on-site ticket sales.
- Require officials to post all scores electronically to eliminate unnecessary face to face contact.
- Limit officiating teams to one R1 per match who shall keep the visual score on the stand.
- Require officials to use a hand whistles in lieu of traditional ones.
- Emphasize court time management by officials to reduce the instance of courts getting behind schedule and contributing to crowds waiting by the court.
- Stagger match start times to space out participant's entry.
- Require all attendees to wear face masks except for athletes on the court playing.
- Establish volleyball specific social distancing match protocols including the elimination of handshakes, high fives, and huddles. Also, the Modified coin toss, warm-up and substitution procedures should be used.
- Suspend the protocol of teams switching sides in indoor play. In the event there is a clear and distinct disadvantage then teams will switch sides, observing all social distancing protocols.

**c. After Activities**

- Sanitize courts, volleyballs, rakes, and all equipment after each match.
  - Create no touch procedures for trophy, medal & award distribution.
5. **NOTIFICATIONS** – Club directors and venue owners/operators are required to abide by all federal, state and local regulations regarding the posting of notifications, guidelines, or information to participants.
6. **GLOSSARY** – The following definitions are provided to help readers understand how these terms are to be applied under the USAV Return to Play Guidelines:
- a. **Activity** – This reference addresses any USAV sanctioned activity (i.e. tryout, practice, scrimmage, camp, clinic, combine, showcase, or event).
  - b. **Area** – This geographical reference addresses the State, County, or City where the venue is located. The lowest level of government in your area that has issued a formal reopening plan will govern what phase your venue is in, which will dictate which USAV sanctioned activities are permissible.
  - c. **Household Member** – This is defined as someone living with you.
  - d. **Participant** – This references any USAV registered member (athlete, coach, chaperone or official).
  - e. **Physical Distancing** – This is currently defined by the CDC as 6 feet away (or more) from a non-household member.
  - f. **Sanction** – This references the authority granted by USAV or a Region for insurance coverage.
  - g. **Shared Equipment** – This is defined as equipment owned or shared with non-household members (including volleyballs).
  - h. **Venue** – This references any facility or site where a USAV sanctioned activity may take place.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- Latest Information from the White House on COVID-19: <https://www.coronavirus.gov/>
- Link to the President's Opening Up American Again Guidelines - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>
- CDC Guidance for Large Community Events and Mass Gatherings: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>
- CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Community Facilities: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- CDC Guidance for Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html>
- CDC Guidance on Coronavirus and Travel in the US: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>

**DISCLAIMER** – These guidelines are provided for general informational purposes only and are not intended as, or should be relied upon as, specific medical or legal advice. All participants are strongly encouraged to consult with qualified medical personnel and/or public health officials for medical advice. Also consult with federal, state and local orders and/or laws for legal considerations. If you use any considerations provided herein, you do so at your own risk and specifically release from any and all liability, USAV, the forty (40) Regions, and their directors, officers, employees, volunteers and agents in connection with your use of the enclosed guidelines. USAV and the Regions make no warranties or statements as to the completeness, reliability, and accuracy of the information contained herein.