

Chapter

Team and Player Eligibility

4



**April 5 – April 7, 2012
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Kansas City, Missouri**

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ELIGIBILITY RULES - GENERAL

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 complete the Limited Membership Form prior to attending the event.
2. Any participant causing disruptive or unfavorable action to USA Volleyball during this Event as determined by the Tournament Director 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 event, including pre-event and post-event days a participant is in the host city.

NCVF TEAM ELIGIBILITY RULES

- 1 To be an NCVF Eligible Team, a team must meet the following requirements in addition to other applicable NCVF Rules:
 - a. All participants listed on a team roster must meet individual player eligibility rules specified in the Player Eligibility Rules section.
 - b. All players listed on a team roster must be enrolled in the same 2-year or 4-year degree-granting university in order to be eligible to compete as a team. The NCVF reserves discretion to ascertain the accreditation or status of any degree-granting universities for team or player eligibility purposes.
 - c. Team rosters may only include 2 Former Varsity Players as defined in the Player Eligibility Rules section. Team rosters may not include any Current Year Varsity Players as defined in the Player Eligibility Rules section.
 - d. A women's team roster may not include men and a men's team roster may not include women. No women players are allowed to compete as a player on a men's team, and no men are allowed to compete as a player on a women's team.
 - e. Teams must be registered in good standing on the NCVF website.
 - f. Teams must cooperate in the timely submission of all team information, including but not limited to roster information, school information, contact information, competition results and other information reasonably requested by the NCVF.
 - g. Teams that are not in good standing with an NCVF Recognized League, Conference or Division shall be presumed to not be in good standing with the NCVF.
 - h. Among other requirements, "good standing" shall include a team's adherence to NCVF Code of Conduct requirements.
- 2 The following rules apply to the NCVF Championships:

- a. Only NCVF Eligible Teams may participate in the NCVF Championships.
 - b. All teams seeking entry to the event must be actively participating as an NCVF recognized representative volleyball club team from their school during the NCVF Competitive Season.
 - c. All teams must timely submit their current season schedule of competition and results to the respective NCVF men's and women's polling and seeding chairpersons, as specified on the NCVF website.
 - d. All teams must either be a Registered NCVF Team, as defined in Section 3, below, or fulfill the guidelines of an Independent Team, as defined in Section 3, below, in order to be eligible to participate in the event.
 - e. The NCVF retains discretion to recognize a school's representative sport club teams for purposes of admission to the event.
 - f. The NCVF reserves discretion to reject any competition results from any teams that fail to meet NCVF team or player eligibility requirements.
- 3 The following rules define NCVF Registered Teams and Independent Teams for purposes of NCVF benefits, NCVF Recognized Competitions and entry into the NCVF Championships.
- a. An NCVF Registered Team is an otherwise eligible team that competes in a recognized NCVF Conference, League or Women's Division and has fulfilled the team registration requirements on the NCVF website.
 - b. An Independent Team is a team that does not satisfy the definition of an NCVF Registered Team but is otherwise eligible under NCVF Team Eligibility Rules above. To be eligible to participate in the NCVF Championships, an Independent Team must show evidence of "active participation" during the current competitive season, as follows:
 - i. "Active participation" for men's teams must involve a minimum of two scheduled events after January 1st of the current NCVF season that include competition against at least four or more teams from NCVF recognized conferences at each of those events.
 - ii. "Active participation" for women's teams must involve a minimum of two scheduled events after January 1 of the current NCVF season, involving four or more similar competitive units (teams), with at least two matches being against two different collegiate club teams (not including "B" teams, i.e. a second team from a university).
 - iii. It is the sole responsibility of each Independent Team to ensure that their competition results are reported to the designated and applicable NCVF male or female seeding and poll chairpersons within 10 days following a competition or event. The NCVF reserves the right to accept or reject any reported competition results from any Independent Team for any reason.
 - iv. Independent Teams are not entitled to the NCVF benefits that are available to NCVF Registered Teams.
- 4 Teams not recognized by their university during the quarter/semester of the NCVF Championships, based on disciplinary reasons, shall be ineligible to participate in the NCVF Championships. At the discretion of the NCVF, the rule will not be used to prohibit a team from participating in the NCVF Championship if the institution's primary rationale is unrelated to player, team or club disciplinary issues.

NCVF PLAYER ELIGIBILITY RULES

- 1 Only NCVF Eligible Players may participate on NCVF Eligible Teams.
- 2 **University Enrollment Criteria** – To be an NCVF Eligible Player, participants must meet the following requirements:
 - 2.1 Be an enrolled student with a minimum of 3/4 full-time enrollment (generally 9 units) as an undergraduate student or minimum of six hours/units as a graduate student at an NCVF recognized 2-year or 4-year degree-granting university *throughout the current NCVF Competitive Season*. For purposes of this section, NCVF Registered teams shall be presumed to be attending an NCVF recognized 2-year or 4-year degree-granting university.
 - a. **Graduating Senior Exception** – Graduating seniors are any undergraduate or graduate students who are graduating during the semester/quarter of the NCVF Championships. Such students may carry any number of units required to graduate. Players who are graduating during the semester/quarter of the NCVF Championships, and are taking less than the required hours described above, must complete a *Graduating Senior Certification form* and file it with the NCVF Compliance Committee by February 16.
 - b. **Internship Exception** – Students who do not meet the minimum enrollment requirements due to a school required/recommended internship must file an appeal with the NCVF Compliance Committee by February 16. Students must read the *Internship Exception form* before filing an appeal.
 - 2.2 All quarter-school participants must meet the eligibility requirements for both the winter and spring quarters.
 - 2.3 Participants must be listed on the roster of a team that meets the Team Eligibility Rules.
 - 2.4 The following additional participant eligibility criteria apply to all players seeking entry into the NCVF Championships:
 - a. If the NCVF Championships occur during an academic break, the preceding semester/quarter will be used to determine eligibility.
 - b. Players must be enrolled for the minimum number of credit hours at least 45 days prior to the start of the NCVF Championships.
- 3 **Current Year Varsity Players** – Current year varsity players are not eligible to participate as roster members of an otherwise NCVF Eligible Team. A “current year varsity player” is defined as any player listed on a school’s varsity volleyball team roster during the same academic year as the NCVF Championships.
 - 3.1 The term “roster” includes, but is not limited to, any player listed on a school’s online varsity volleyball roster.
 - 3.2 Any such player shall be presumed ineligible for all NCVF Recognized Competitions, including the NCVF Championships, for the entirety of the corresponding NCVF Competitive Season.

3.3 Any player listed on a school's varsity volleyball roster during any academic year other than the academic year of the NCVF Championships shall be presumed to be a Former Varsity Player as defined below.

3.4 Timely appeals from teams and players seeking an exception to the current varsity player rule will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the NCVF pursuant to the NCVF Appeal Process.

4 **Former Varsity Players** – Former varsity players are eligible to participate on an otherwise NCVF Eligible Team so long as the player meets all Eligibility Rules. NCVF Eligible Teams may only include a maximum of 2 former varsity players on their NCVF roster during the NCVF Competitive Season, including the NCVF Championships.

4.1 A “former varsity player” is defined as any player listed on a school's varsity volleyball roster during any academic year other than the academic year of the NCVF Championships.

a. The term “roster” includes, but is not limited to, any player listed on a school's online varsity volleyball roster.

b. Any such player shall be presumed to be a former varsity player and may compete in NCVF Recognized Competitions, including the NCVF Championships, so long as the player otherwise meets all eligibility requirements for the entirety of the NCVF Competitive Season.

4.2 Timely appeals from teams and players seeking exceptions to the former varsity player rule will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the NCVF pursuant to the NCVF Appeal Process.

5 **Professional Players** - A professional indoor volleyball player is not eligible to participate as a roster member of an otherwise NCVF Eligible Team.

5.1 The term “professional indoor volleyball player” is defined as any one or more of the following:

a. Any player that has been declared a professional indoor volleyball player by a recognized professional indoor volleyball team or league.

b. Any player that has received a salary, wage or regular and periodic payments, directly or indirectly as consideration for playing on an indoor volleyball team.

5.2 The NCVF reserves discretion to determine when or if a player has become a professional indoor volleyball player within the meaning of this section.

6 **Consecutive Years**

6.1 **Four-Year Universities** - Eligible Players are limited to six consecutive years of participation in NCVF Recognized Competitions, including the NCVF Championships or other previous national collegiate club volleyball championship tournaments. Year one begins the first year that an Eligible Player's name appears on a NCVF Eligible Team roster, previous national collegiate club volleyball championship tournament team roster, or the first year their name listed on a school's varsity volleyball roster.

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6.2 **[Effective for the 2012-13 Season] Two-Year Universities** - Eligible Players from recognized 2-year universities are limited to three consecutive years of participation in NCVF Recognized Competitions, including the NCVF Championships or other previous national collegiate club volleyball championship tournaments. Year one begins the first year that an Eligible Player's name appears on a NCVF Eligible Team roster, previous national collegiate club volleyball championship tournament team roster, or the first year their name was listed on a school's varsity volleyball roster.

- a. If a player from a recognized two-year university transfers to a four-year university, that player's eligibility will be considered under the six-year consecutive rule.

6.3 Exceptions to the six year and three year consecutive participation rules may be granted by the NCVF for military, medical, religious service, or other "extraordinary circumstances" pursuant to the NCVF Appeal Process.

Comment 1. An "extra ordinary circumstance" is a narrow exception as it goes beyond what other similarly situated players may be encountering.

Comment 2. "Extraordinary circumstances" typically describe unfair, unreasonable, or unique factors or situations that are independently caused, i.e., with little or no student control or choice. For example, "extraordinary" includes situations where a fire, flood, or institutionally imposed decision has restricted an individual's playing opportunities.

NOTE: NCVF reserves the right to make clarifications to the rules from time to time as needed.

Enrollment Verification Forms: must be brought in person to the on-site registration on Wednesday, April 4 at the Kansas City Bartle Hall verifying each participating student's academic status at the institution they are representing.

- Semester Schools: Students from schools that have academic semesters starting during the month of January and continuing through the championships date must be enrolled 3/4 of full-time enrollment as an undergraduate or 6 or more credit hours as a classified graduate student.
- Quarter Schools: Students from schools that have academic quarters must be enrolled 3/4 of full-time enrollment as an undergraduate or six (6) or more credit hours as a classified graduate student during both winter and spring quarters.

Post Event Enrollment Verification: The top four teams in each division and 5 randomly selected teams from each division will be required to fill out and submit a second enrollment verification form following the tournament. This second form must be filled out, signed and stamped by the registrar, and submitted to the NCVF Office between April 10 and May 30. The top four teams/division and those randomly selected must fulfill this requirement. Those teams that fail to submit the second certification form, or have students that are not enrolled in the required number of credits will not be allowed to enter the 2012 NCVF National Collegiate Club Volleyball Championships and will potentially be disqualified from their final finish.

USAV MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

All persons whose names appear on the Official Roster, including players, coaches, team representatives, trainers, and managers must be registered with USAV by completing a Limited Member Application prior to competing. The purpose of this registration is the extension of USAV's liability insurance program. 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.

MEN'S DIVISIONAL RULES

1. No more than one men's team per university/college may enter MDI, MDIAA, MDIAAA, or MDII.
2. Up to two teams from the same university/college may enter MDIII.
3. A university/college may not have more than three teams entered in the Championship Tournament.
4. Student enrollment includes undergraduate and graduate students.
5. Submission of appropriate entry forms, including a rosters and a fee for the Championship Tournament constitutes a team's acceptance to play in whichever division the Ranking Committee selects for it providing all information is accepted by the entry deadlines.
6. The Ranking Committee will place teams into divisions based on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - a. Exception - Throughout the season the Ranking Committee will rank the top twenty-five teams. Any team within the top twenty-five at the time of the Championship Tournament entry deadline will have its spot reserved for the division in which it is ranked. That said, if a top twenty-five team registers after the entry deadline, this exception no longer applies.

Example - Fifty teams register for MDI. Team X turns in its entry packet and fee on the entry deadline, and is ranked #10 by the Ranking Committee. Team X is guaranteed a spot in MDI. If Team X registers after the entry deadline, it is not guaranteed a spot in MDI.

MEN'S DIVISIONAL STRUCTURE

1. Men's Division I/IAA/IAAA (MDI, MDIAA, MDIAAA)
 - a. MDI shall consist of forty-eight teams.
 - b. MDIAA may consist of up to forty-eight teams.
 - c. Teams from a four-year university/college with a total student enrollment of 15,000 or more must play in MDI MDIAA or MDIAAA. Total enrollment is full-time undergraduate and full-time graduate students.
 - d. When splitting the divisions, the Ranking Committee will give preference to teams from a university/college with a student enrollment of 15,000 or more.
 - e. Teams from a four-year university/college with a student enrollment less than 15,000 may play in MDI, MDIAA or MDIAAA if placed by the Ranking Committee or if space still is available after the entry deadline.
 - f. Teams that are not selected for MDI, MDIAA or MDIAAA will remain on the wait list. In no event will a team be permitted to play in MDII or MDIII.
2. Men's Division II (MDII)
 - a. MDII shall consist of forty-eight teams.

- b. Only teams from a four-year university/college with a student enrollment less than 15,000 may play in MDII. Total enrollment is full-time undergraduate and full-time graduate students.
- c. Teams eligible to participate in MDII may compete in MDI, MDIAA or MDIAAA if placed by the Ranking Committee or if space still is available after the entry deadline. If a team that is eligible to participate in MDII elects to play in MDI, MDIAA or MDIAAA it vacates its ability to participate in MDII.

Example - Team Y comes from a college with 10,000 students. It is eligible for MDII. Team Y, however, wants to play MDI. Team Y turns in its entry packet and fee on the entry deadline, and is ranked #20 by the Ranking Committee. Team Y is guaranteed a spot in MDI. Team Y selects to play in MDI. Team Y can no longer play in MDII for the current year tournament.

3. Men's Division III (MDIII)

- a. MDIII may consist of up to twenty-four teams.
- b. A team from a two-year university/college is eligible to participate in this division. Such a school may not participate in any other division.
- c. A team from a four-year university/college may participate in this division only if it already entered a team in MDI, MDIAA, or MDII.

Example - Team A, Team B, and Team C come from the same four-year college with 15,000 students. Team A is enrolled in MDI. Team B and Team C now are eligible to participate in MDIII.

Exception – A school's MDI team decides not to attend the Championship Tournament. In this instance, the Ranking Committee will consider accepting that same school's MDIII team.

NOTE: NCVF reserves the right to make clarifications to the rules from time to time as needed and to allow teams into divisions in order to fill a tournament division.

WOMEN'S DIVISIONAL RULES

1. No more than one women's team per university/college may enter WDI, WDIAA or WDIAAA.
2. Up to two teams from the same university/college only may enter WDII.
3. A university/college may not have more than three teams entered in the Championship Tournament.
 - a. A second or third team from the same school will not be ranked for WDI, WDIAA or WDIAAA.
4. Submission of an entry packet and a fee for the Championship Tournament constitutes a team's acceptance to play in whichever division the Ranking Committee selects for it providing all information is accepted by the entry deadlines.
5. The Ranking Committee will place teams into divisions based on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - a. Exception - Throughout the season the Ranking Committee will rank the top twenty-five teams. Any team within the top twenty-five at the time of the Championship Tournament entry deadline will have its spot reserved for the division in which it is ranked. That said, if a top twenty-five team registers after the entry deadline, this exception no longer applies.

Example - Fifty teams register for WDI. Team X turns in its entry packet and fee on the entry deadline, and is ranked #10 by the Ranking Committee. Team X is guaranteed a spot in WDI. If Team X registers after the entry deadline, it is not guaranteed a spot in WDI.

WOMEN'S DIVISIONAL STRUCTURE

1. Women's Division I/IAA/IAAA (WDI, WDIAA, WDIAAA)
 - a. WDI shall consist of the top forty-eight ranked teams as determined by the Ranking Committee.
 - b. WDIAA may consist of up to forty-eight teams, which shall consist of the next top forty-eight teams ranked by the Ranking Committee, except for a second or third team from the same university/college.
 - c. Only teams from a four-year university/college may participate in WDI or WDIAA. A second or third team from the same university/college must play WDII.
2. Women's Division II (WDII)
 - a. WDII may consist of up to forty-eight teams.
 - b. Any team not placed in WDI or WDIAA will be placed in this division.
 - c. Up to two teams from the same university/school may enter this division.
 - d. Any second or third team from the same school must participate in WDII.
 - i. Exception - If a school's WDI or WDIAA team decides not to attend the Championship Tournament, the Ranking Committee will consider accepting that same school's second or third team.

- e. A team from a two-year university/college is eligible to participate in this division. Such a school may not participate in any other division.

ETHICS AND 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 the day after 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 Committee shall be formed for the championship event. The committee shall be composed of three (3) members.

The committee shall act on appeals of ethics 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, and 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 that the violation is of such a nature that it requires further review or more serious discipline beyond the duration of the National Championship event, the committee will send a report to the Commissioner and University Representative. That Commissioner and University representative will notify the Ethics Committee of the actions (if any) that were taken as a result of the report.

All eligibility questions or issues that arise in reference to team or player eligibility will be reviewed and decided onsite by the NCVF Compliance Committee.

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