

**CARY PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
2026 ADULT VOLLEYBALL RULES**

I. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- A. The league shall be administered by the Sports Division of the Cary Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department (CPRCR).
- B. The Cary Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Department reserves the right to make any changes they deem necessary.

**USAV RULES WILL BE USED WITH THE FOLLOWING
INTERPRETATIONS AND/OR MODIFICATIONS.**

II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Players must be 18 years old as of January 1, 2026.
- B. All players must be listed on the official team roster, which must be submitted online through the TeamSideline website. Initial team rosters (minimum of 7 that have completed the enrollment process) are due on **Monday, March 9th**. Deadline for final roster changes is **Tuesday, April 14**.
- C. All players must have completed the enrollment process on the TeamSideline website **prior** to participating in a game or practice.
- D. **A participant may not play on two different coed, men's or women's teams.** This means, for example, that you cannot play on a Men's Open and Men's A team. **Violation of this rule may result in forfeiture of all matches in which that individual participated and suspension from the league for up to a year.**
- E. When adding or changing players on the roster, waiver forms must be accepted online (via TeamSideline) and payment of any applicable non-resident fees is required. The player cannot participate until the waiver form is accepted online. It is the responsibility of the team captain to ensure that all of the team's players are eligible.
- F. **Use of players not listed on a team roster may result in forfeiture of the match(es) in which the player participates and possible player and/or captain suspension of up to a year. Please refer to the 'Protests' section at the end of this handbook for more information.**
- G. There will be no uniform requirement for any leagues.
Exception: Teams wishing to use a Libero must provide their own distinctive pinnie or jersey. Libero must wear the distinctive pinnie or jersey during the match.
- H. All team members are required to know the rules of the game and abide by them.

- I. The head coach and playing team captain are responsible for discipline and proper conduct of team members.
- J. The playing captain is the only player who may address the referees and shall be the spokesperson of their team.
- K. The Sports staff **may check player photo ID's**. If a player does not have proper ID at the gym, they may not be allowed to participate.

III. COED PLAYING RULES

- A. Teams may start or continue a match with a minimum of 2 players of each gender. A fifth or sixth player arriving late may take the vacant spot upon their arrival provided the four male or four female limit is not exceeded.
- B. When the ball is played more than once by a team, there are no mandatory requirements for male or female to play the ball.
- C. In Coed play, direct substitutions may only be made male for male, female for female.
Exception: Libero substitution, see rule “H” below.
- D. Substitutions will be unlimited to the number of times a player may enter a game. All substitutions must be made before the ball is blown into play.
- E. Teams may elect to use a rotation substitution pattern rather than direct substitution. Both direct substitution and rotation substitution may not be used in the same game.
Exception: Libero substitution, see rule “H” below.
- F. If a team uses the rotation substitution pattern, a male may substitute for a female and vice versa. If the rotation substitution pattern is used, a player must be rotated out and another rotated in for each rotation (except as described in “G” below). The position on the floor where the substitution is implemented must remain the same for the entire game. Players arriving late may not be added to the rotation pattern until the start of the next game. At no time may there be fewer than two of each gender on the court. (Teams with only two women or two men present may not use the rotation substitution method.)
- G. A team may also use a rotation substitution pattern for only one gender. For example, if a team has three women, they can rotate those three through the two positions on the floor held by women, while the four men remain on the floor without being rotated out. All other restrictions on the rotation substitution pattern as listed in “A” through “F” above hold, except that the gender not being substituted for is skipped when they pass the position on the court at which the rotation substitution is taking place for the other gender. Because direct and rotation substitution may not be used in the same game, any team substituting only one gender in a rotation pattern may not substitute at all for the other gender.

H. **Libero Rules:**

Teams may use a Libero, with clarifications below:

Teams wishing to use a Libero must provide their own distinctive pinnie or jersey. Libero must wear the distinctive pinnie or jersey during the match.

- a) Only one Libero is allowed per team, per match.
- b) Libero may serve if replacing the player in position “1” (per USAV rules).
- c) If the Libero rotates into the front row, they must be replaced with another non-libero player. Liberos can enter the match as often as they like, as long as it is between points.
- d) Libero is considered a direct substitution, but can be used even if a team is using a rotational substitution. The player subbed out for the libero would become the next sub in a team’s rotation queue.
- e) Libero can replace any player in back-row position, regardless of gender.
- f) Libero **does** count towards the minimum requirement of 2 players of each gender on the court, and the team is still required to maintain 2 players of each gender on the court at all times (including when libero rotates off the court when rotated to front row).

IV. **MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PLAYING RULES**

- A. Teams must have at least four players to start a game. A fifth or sixth player arriving late may enter the game upon their arrival.
- B. If the rotation substitution pattern is used, a player must be rotated out and another rotated in at the same point in the rotation **each** rotation. The position on the floor where the substitution is made must remain the same for the entire game.
- C. Substitutions will be unlimited to the number of times a player may enter a game. All substitutions must be made before the ball is blown into play.
- D. **Libero Rules:**

Teams may use a Libero, with clarifications below.

Teams wishing to use a Libero must provide their own distinctive pinnie or jersey. Libero must wear the distinctive pinnie or jersey during the match.

- a) Only one Libero is allowed per team, per match.
- b) Libero may serve if replacing the player in position “1” (per USAV rules).
- c) If the Libero rotates into the front row, they must be replaced with another non-libero player. Liberos can enter the match as often as they like, as long as it is between points.

d) Libero is considered a direct substitution, and can be used even if a team is using a rotational substitution.

V. MISCELLANEOUS MODIFICATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- A. When a team starting with four players adds a fifth during the game, that fifth player must enter in the #5 position, between the person who started the game in the service position (#1) and the person who started the game in the front left position (#4). When a team playing with five adds a sixth, that sixth player must go in the #6 position, between the person who started the game in the service position (#1), and the person that started the game in the back left (#5).
- B. The ball may touch the net while crossing it (including on a serve). The service becomes a fault if the ball touches the antenna or other external object(s).
- C. You may NOT spike or block the ball on an opponent's serve.
 - 1. Back line players cannot participate in a block or a spike unless they leave the ground behind the ten-foot line.
Coed exception: When only one male player is in the front row at service, one male back-row player may be forward of the attack line for the purpose of blocking. The remaining back-row player must be behind the attack line until the ball has been contacted by the blocker(s) or has been hit in such a manner that no block is possible.
 - 2. A block does not count as a hit.
- D. Reaching over the net is permitted during:
 - 1. A follow through of a hit.
 - 2. A block.

*However, you may not take a play away from your opponent.
EXAMPLE: When an opponent is setting the ball.*
- E. Teams are allowed two time-outs per game at 30 seconds per time-out. It is the players' option to leave the court during time-outs.
- F. The ball must be clearly a legal hit. Illegal hits occur:
 - 1. When the ball rests in the arms or hands of a player.
 - 2. When a ball is hit below the waist with an upward swing with hands apart.
- G. The ceilings in all gyms are considered playable if the ball contacts it above the playing area and stays on the same side. Cranked up basketball goals are considered playable if the ball doesn't cross the net before or after contact with the goal. (exception: backboards).
- H. Backboard Play - If the ball is bumped up and touches the backboard which takes away the second and/or third hit, and a legal player is in position to play the ball, a replay will be called.

- I. Any contact with the net by a player not involved in the action of playing the ball will be called a fault.
- J. The ball may touch any part of the body.
- K. Scoring Rules
- Best two of three sets.
 - First two sets are rally scoring to 25 points, with a 27 point cap.
 - Third set, if necessary, is rally scoring to 15 points with a 17 point cap.
- L. There will not be a court switch in the middle of the third game.
- M. To begin the match, a coin toss will be used to determine who serves first in the first game and another coin flip, if necessary, will be used to determine who serves first in the third game.
- N. Grace Periods:
1. First match of the night: A five minute grace period is in effect for the first game. If a team is not able to play after five minutes, they forfeit the first game. An additional fifteen minutes are allowed before the second game (and therefore the match) is forfeited.
 2. All subsequent matches: Game time is forfeit time for the first game of the match. If a team is not able to play after fifteen minutes, they forfeit the second game (and therefore the match).
- O. Game time for the third match of the night will be no later than 5 minutes after the conclusion of the second match. Exception: If the third match is the first match of the night for one of the teams it will start at the scheduled time.
- P. **Jewelry:** USAV Rules apply. Flat wedding bands are acceptable.
- Q. Teams must fill out a score sheet each match with a list of all players attending that night's play. Only those players attending that night should be on the list. Players arriving late should see the official to add their name to the list. Failure to abide by this rule could result in forfeiture of matches involved.
- R. A player may not contact the net.
- S. A player is allowed to go under the net (over the mid-court line) as long as neither of their feet crosses completely over that line or they do not interfere with opponent's ability to play.
- T. A league ball will be available on site. If teams wish to use a different ball, both teams must agree.

FOR A RULEBOOK VISIT usavolleyball.org

PROTESTS

Protests Regarding Rules

A protest involving rule interpretation must be made at the court in accordance with the USAV rules.

Protests Regarding an Ineligible Player | AFTER the Roster Deadline

Once the roster deadline has passed, protests regarding an ineligible player **must be made on site**. After the roster deadline, each team's roster of eligible players can be found in the court notebooks.

A team may protest the eligibility of a specific player, not a general statement that the team is using illegal players.

In order to protest an ineligible player, both captains (or acting captains) and the official should come together prior to the match. The captain of the protesting team must state before the match that there is a specific player they believe is ineligible. The accused player must:

1. Be listed on the Roster, which is printed out and in the court notebooks after the roster deadline.
2. Present a form of photo ID that matches the name on the lineup sheet turned in for the night.

If the protest is upheld, the ineligible player cannot play.

Note: If the protest fails, the captain cannot continue to protest additional players.

Protests Regarding an Ineligible Player | PRIOR to the Roster Deadline

The rosters are not available in the court notebooks until after the roster deadline, so the process for submitting a protest regarding an ineligible player is different. Please only refer to this section if a protest on player eligibility is being made prior to the roster deadline.

A team may protest the eligibility of a specific player, not a general statement that the team is using illegal players.

Managers wishing to protest may submit, in writing, by 5pm the next business day, a statement describing your protest to sports@carync.gov.

PENALTY: Use of players not listed on a team roster may result in forfeiture of the match(es) in which the player participates and possible player and/or captain suspension of up to a year.

All protests will be reviewed and decided upon by the Sports Staff. Those protests ruled to be invalid by the staff will not be accepted.