

VOLLEYBALL RULES & POLICIES

3rd-8th graders in NVJCYO

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The following rules and policies of NVJCYO Volleyball supplement the standard USA Volleyball rules and shall govern in the case of an inconsistency with USAV rules. All rules and policies may be amended by the Diocese at any time.



Office of Youth, Campus, and Young Adult Ministries

“Sports contribute to the love of life, teaches sacrifice, respect and responsibility, leading to the full development of every human person.”

—St. John Paul II

	Specifically how is our parish/team using sports to...	Coaches can promote...
Advocacy	...ensure a safe environment for youth? ...foster leadership in each youth? ...foster the development of marginalized youth? ... promote confidence?	...self-confidence; supportive environment among teammates, parents; the idea that <u>each</u> youth has leadership potential by providing opportunities to lead drills and activities; the support of players who need the most work or seem ostracized; a safe environment; identification of leaders of all sorts.
Catechesis	...teach and reinforce virtue in real-life experiences?	...sportsmanship; humility; obedience; respect; relying on others; care for others; corporal & spiritual works of mercy; persistence.
Community Life	...promote the team as community? ...make each youth feel part of the parish community? ...encourage family involvement?	...teamwork; engagement in the larger community; the idea of coach as role model; families getting involved in the parish; team socials; team activities and service for—and with—the parish (altar servers, etc.); authentic hospitality to guests.
Evangelization	...help each youth understand that how we play reflects our values? ...help each youth to be more Christ-like?	...demonstration of virtue and sportsmanship during practices and games to allow us to live our faith and for others to see that (effective player and coach role modeling makes others want what we have).
Justice and Service	...learn about the importance of respect? ...teach about service to others?	...assisting teammates who are in a tough spot; helping teammates outside of practice/games; respecting opponents, refs, coaches; corporal & spiritual acts of mercy; a team service project.
Leadership Development	...identify existing youth leaders and cultivate leadership characteristics in all? ...build confidence in each youth?	... youth respectfully advocating for themselves at practice; providing each youth with a responsibility and a leadership task; encouraging contributions by each youth; the rotation of team roles.
Pastoral Care	... to promote the total development of each youth? ...develop adult leaders and coaches to have the skills and attributes necessary to develop each youth?	...the total development of each youth; understanding each's strengths and weaknesses; treating others fairly in a game or practice; the art of winning and losing gracefully.
Prayer and Worship	...help youth become comfortable with prayer in their daily lives? ...encourage participation in the sacraments of our faith? ...help youth reflect on spiritual needs?	... faithfulness & what that looks like for a Catholic; prayer, by the coach being comfortable in leading prayer and ensuring the team prays before & after each practice and game; personal reflection by players about expected attitudes and behaviors in parish sports; team/families attending Adoration, Confession, Mass together.

NVJCYO Volleyball Rule Matrix

	Leagues: 3 rd /4 th and 5 th /6 th Grades	League: 7 th /8 th Grade
Ball	Volley Lite or Equivalent	NFHS certified
Libero	No libero	No libero
Net Height	3 rd /4 th Grade: 6ft.6in. 5 th / 6 th Grade: 7ft.0in.	7ft. 4 and 1/8in.
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rally scoring, 25 points per game, 15 points for tiebreak game. Must win game by 2 points, however, there will be a Maximum of 27 points in games 1 and 2, and a maximum of 17 points in tiebreak game 3. Best 2 out of 3 games wins match. Maximum of 3 consecutive points per server 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rally scoring, 25 points per game, 15 points for tiebreak game. Must win game by 2 points, however, there will be a maximum of 27 points in games 1 and 2, and a maximum of 17 points in tiebreak game 3. Best 2 out of 3 games wins match. Maximum of 3 consecutive points per server.
Service Line	3 rd /4 th Grade: 24ft. (see note below under “The Serve” 5 th / 6 th Grade: 24ft.	30ft. (all servers)
Serves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves may be either overhand or underhand. Ball is allowed to stay in the stationary hand during the underhand serve. No toss required. Maximum 3 consecutive successful serves, then mandatory rotation. 2 attempts permitted on first serve after a rotation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves may be either overhand or underhand. Ball is allowed to stay in the stationary hand during the underhand serve. No toss required. Maximum 3 consecutive successful serves, then mandatory rotation. 2 attempts permitted on first serve after a rotation
Substitutions	Continuous substitution during a rotation into the front left outside hitter position. Back row left position exits during substitution.	Normal substitution rules per NFHS
Time-Outs	(2) 60-second per game	(2) 60-second per game
Playing Time	The league recommends <i>roughly</i> equal playing time/points throughout the match. The continuous substitution rule is designed to foster this...coaches should not change the order of substitutions in order to give someone more/less playing time. Coaches must make sure all players get substantial playing time unless there are specific behavioral or attendance issues involved. Enforcement is left to the honor system but coaches who see violations should report to the commissioner after the game.	The league recommends roughly equal playing time/points throughout the match. This can be difficult with volleyball since there is no continuous substitution requirement at this age so coaches have latitude. However, coaches must make sure all players get substantial playing time unless there are specific behavioral or attendance issues involved. Enforcement is left to the honor system but coaches who see violations should report to the commissioner after the game.
Match Timing (All Leagues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All matches have a 50-minute time limit, regardless of current match score. At the scheduled match start time, scorekeeper will set scoreboard clock to 50 minutes and start the time. Time on scoreboard will run continuously until expired. Upon expiration of 50-minute time limit, if match has not completed, team ahead in games (for matches that have not reached a 3rd tiebreak game) will be declared match winner. For matches that are currently in a 3rd tiebreak game, if time expires prior to conclusion of the match, team ahead in score of the tiebreak game will be declared match winner. For 3rd/4th grade league matches only, even if a 3rd (tiebreak) game is not necessary, a “fun” 3rd game may be played if both coaches agree. Match timing rules (see above) still apply. 	
Warm-ups (All)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 minutes (prior to game 1) 2 minutes between games 	

PRE-MATCH

I. Prayer

Prayer is essential to our lives, our community, and to this activity. Please make certain that all coaches and players reinforce its importance in practices and at matches.

- A. All matches must begin with a prayer. Teams meet at midcourt.
- B. Coaches must close each post-match wrap up with a prayer.
- C. Gym (including spectators) should be quiet and reverent prior to the start of prayer. Coaches, please ask your spectators who are able to stand during prayer.
- D. Acting commissioner, commissioner or other appropriate individual will use script provided by the Diocese. (If a priest is in attendance, ask him if he'd be available to bless the players/activity.)

II. Other Pre-Match Items

- A. The referee will call a captain's meeting within 5 minutes of the scheduled start time of each match. The two captains will meet for instructions. Coin toss will determine team to serve first.
- B. Each team will provide a volunteer to be line judge.
- C. Home team will provide a scorekeeper to run the scoreboard.
- D. If a referee is not present, coaches will provide a parent volunteer to referee.
- E. Teams will **share the court** during warm up time, including hitting and serving.
- F. All jewelry must be removed prior to start of match. This includes watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, etc. EXCEPTION: religious medals or "medicalert"-type medals are allowed but must be inside uniform jersey/t-shirt.

THE MATCH

I. During the Match

- A. The referee will summon the starting 6 players from each team onto the court. The line-up can be changed at the start of each game.
- B. Breaks between games during a match will not exceed 2 minutes.
- C. Each team will be allowed two time-outs per game. Time-outs last 60 seconds.

II. Basic Rules of Volleyball

- A. Each team is entitled to a maximum of 3 hits to return the ball to their opponents.
- B. A ball may NOT be caught, thrown, held, or lifted.
- C. A player may not contact the ball twice in succession.
- D. A block of the ball at the net does NOT count as a hit.
- E. Contact with the net by a player is not a fault, unless it interferes with the play.
- F. A ball driven into the net may be recovered within the limits of the 3-team hits, so long as the contact with the net is within the antennae. Ball may never touch the antennae.
- G. A player's hands and feet are allowed to be on the centerline, but NOT across the centerline. If any part of the player's body touches the floor on the opponent's court, it is a violation. This is for hands and feet play below the net and **not above the net**.
- H. A ball hitting the net and going over the net is legal and in play, even on the serve.

III. The Playing Area

- A. The lines on the court are considered part of the playing area. If any portion of the ball falls on any portion of the line, that ball is IN.
- B. All basketball backboards, rims, and anchoring equipment attaching them to the ceiling are out-of-bounds. If the backboards are raised they become part of the ceiling and balls touching them are playable.
- C. A ball off the walls of the gym is out-of-bounds.
- D. A ball in the bleachers is out-of-bounds.
- E. A ball hitting the gym divider on a serve is out-of-bounds.
- F. The rest of the gym is considered playable.
- G. If during a volley, the ball hits the gym divider, ductwork, or ceiling rafters, and comes back to the team that hit it, they may continue to play it, as long as they are still within their 3 hit maximum.

IV. Team Rules and Minimum Number of Players:

- A. Players, coaches, and assistant coaches are the only ones allowed on the sidelines of the court.
- B. The coaches may stand on the sideline with the rest of their team, beyond the attack line and give instructions to players.
- C. Teams will normally play with 6 players on the court.
- D. A minimum of 5 players is required to start play. If a 6th player arrives, that player may enter the game during stoppage of play. When playing with 5 players, the team will not lose the serve when the 6th player "hole" goes to serve. The next player in the rotation will serve.
- E. If fewer than 5 players are on the court 10 minutes after the scheduled game start time, the entire match is declared a forfeit and the match result will be recorded as a 2-0 win for the opposing team. Teams are encouraged to split up available players & play for fun.

V. Substitutions

- A. All substitutions, regardless of grade level, must occur within the substitution zone (area between the attack line and the center court line), using the hand touch method.
- B. To promote equal playing time, **continuous substitutions (upon rotation)** into the front left outside hitter position is required for **3rd/4th and 5th/6th grade leagues**. If a team is carrying substitutes, with each rotation, the player in the **left back row** position substitutes-out and the next player on the sideline substitutes-in to the **front left outside hitter** position.
- C. For **7th/8th grade league**, normal federation substitution rules apply (without libero).
EXCEPTION: There will be no limit on the number of substitutions that a team may perform, in each game.

VI. The Serve

- A. The server must always wait for the referee to signal for serve, prior to the serve. If a serve is executed before the signal to serve, the referee will signal a re-serve.
- B. Servers must always be positioned behind the end line prior to contacting the ball.
- C. A foot on the line at the time the ball is contacted is a foot fault violation and will result in loss of serve and a point for the opposing team.
- D. With agreement from both coaches, the 24' service line (see above service line rules) for a 3rd/4th grade game may be moved to a location closer to the net, if both coaches agree that the adjusted service line is necessary to ensure that a majority of players have a better opportunity at a successful serve. More advanced players, who do not need to use such a modified service line, should be encouraged by the coach to use the 24' line.
- E. If the ball, after having been tossed or released by the server, lands on the floor without touching the player, the server is allowed to re-serve. This is called a service error. The server is allowed one service error of this type per serve.
- F. **Each player on her first serve in a new service rotation is allowed a first missed serve and then one re-serve.**
- G. There is a 3-point cap on the number of serves a server can win off of her serves and then the team must perform a rotation.

POST MATCH

I. Handshake

- A. All coaches and players must participate in team handshake with opponents. Failure to do so—or inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior—will result in a minimum of an automatic one weekend suspension.

II. Prayer and Departure

- A. Due to time constraints related to gym space, coaches and players should immediately clear the benches after the handshake.
- B. Coaches must ensure that their players AND spectators stay off the court after a match so the other teams may warm up.
- C. If there is a game after, post-match wrap-up talk should be held either outside or in a hallway—not in the gym.
- D. Post-match wrap up must close with a prayer.

III. Score Reporting

- A. The coach of the winning team shall post the score into the online system, or—based on the guidance by the commissioner—text or email the score to the commissioner.

MATCH FACILITIES AND BEHAVIOR

I. Match Facilities

- A. Coaches, players, cheerleaders, and spectators shall abide by the diocesan, parish, school and gym rules set forth at venues/facilities used by the league. This includes the following rule among others: **NO ALCOHOL, NO FOOD, NO CHEWING GUM, NO DRINKS, AND NO SMOKING** in the gyms. Water bottles should be left in safe foyer areas.
- B. Each head coach is expected to see that the team adheres to the facility rules and to oversee any other aspect of the behavior of the team. Each head coach is expected also to advise the team's supporters of the rules of facilities and to take an active part in preventing or stopping any misbehavior (including abusive language) by the team's supporters. Spectators, participants and coaches are expected to abide by the Diocese of Arlington Code of Conduct. Any spectator, participant, or coach exhibiting misbehavior or any breach of the Code of Conduct shall be subject to suspension or expulsion by the League Commissioner, Acting Commissioner, Volleyball Program Manager or the Diocese of Arlington Office of Youth, Campus and Young Adult Ministries.
- C. If coach, player or spectator is ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct from a game, the coach, player or spectator will be suspended, at minimum, for the team's next scheduled match. If the player, coach or spectator is ejected a second time the player, coach or spectator will be suspended for the rest of the season. Any coach, player or spectator that has been suspended for a match may not attend that match, nor any other Diocese of Arlington league match regardless of league, while serving the suspension.
- D. All sanctions for any rule or policy in this document or inappropriate behavior not delineated in this document are at the sole discretion of the Diocese.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A primary goal of the diocesan youth ministry sports program is to foster Christ-centered relationships within the parish community. As such, all programs are designed to revolve around the parish; youth should participate with their respective parishes. Research shows that the more positive interactions young people have with multiple faithful and appropriate adult role models throughout their parish community, the more likely it is that they will remain in the faith. If done properly and under the oversight of the pastor, the program can truly become a ministry of the parish rather than simply one of a dozen sports options available in the larger northern Virginia area.

Principles and Requirements of Participation

1. The spirit of the eligibility rules is as important as the letter of the rules. Violations may affect a parish's ability to continue participation. Be vigilant as the consequences may not simply impact an individual or a team but multiple teams and the entire parish.
2. The program is only a ministry if each person involved treats it as such. If you, as a parent, coach, or participant, do not feel like a focus on ministry is appropriate or can be your focus, please take advantage of one of the scores of other leagues available in Virginia.
3. The league is parish-based—not school-based.
4. There should be ZERO active recruitment of individuals outside of your parish's boundaries (e.g., you or your youth asking a friend from your youth's neighborhood/community, AAU, travel or various other leagues to play in this league).
5. Team shopping is not permitted (e.g., playing for one parish's basketball team and another parish's track team) unless a given sport is not offered by the youth's parish. (Even then, the preference is that the parish without a team begins one.)
6. No one is guaranteed participation. Parish and diocesan resources including gym space, volunteers, and staff are finite which may influence the level of participation for individual

In addition to other requirements for eligibility stipulated in this section...

7. A Roman Catholic youth who wishes to request to participate in the league **must be:**
 - a. **registered** in a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish
 - b. **attending Mass regularly** (at minimum Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation)
 - c. **registered by October 1, regularly attending, and actively participating in religious education within:**
 - **a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school; OR**
 - **a non-diocesan Catholic school of the Latin Rite; OR**
 - **a religious education program of a parish of the Diocese; OR**
 - **a home-schooling Roman Catholic religious education curriculum** approved by the youth's Catholic Diocese of Arlington pastor or pastor's designee.
 - i. A youth who is attending a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school or religious education program at the youth's home parish must play for that home parish if they have a team.
 - ii. A youth who is attending a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school outside of the youth's parish and wishes to play for that school's parish may do so as long as the youth's home parish does not object.
 - iii. A youth of a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish who is attending a Roman Catholic school but not a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school (e.g., a Roman Catholic school in Washington, DC or a non-diocesan Catholic school in northern Virginia) must play for her home parish unless that parish does not participate in the league.

parishes.

8. All participation must be in accordance with diocesan and parish guidelines related to child protection and other guidance.
9. Youth must play for teams of their biological sex and in alignment with the intent of Bishop Burbidge's "A Catechesis on the Human Person and Gender Ideology" and the Catholic Diocese

of Arlington's Policy for Schools & Ministries Related to the Human Person and Gender Ideology.

10. A youth of a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish who has already received Confirmation in another diocese must still be participating in religious education prescribed by the pastor (e.g., further youth ministry participation, etc.)
11. A youth who is not Roman Catholic who wishes to request to participate must be taking Roman Catholic religious education (at a Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish school or, if actively seeking initiation into the faith, other education approved by her intended Catholic Diocese of Arlington parish's pastor).
12. Requests for a waiver to the eligibility requirements must be submitted to the league through the parish representative to the league.
13. All inquiries related to eligibility must come through the respective parish representative. (If more than one parish is involved, the requesting parish representative should communicate with the other parish prior to inquiry to the league.)
14. An individual parish may have guidance that is more strict or restrictive than these guidelines for participation in/from their parish.
15. The parish must approve (via the official roster submission with appropriate signatures) each coach and participant's eligibility prior to consideration by the league. The parish or Diocese has the discretion to rescind those approvals at any time before or during the season.
16. A youth who registers for religious education and agrees to attend—but then does not do so—automatically forfeits her ability to continue to play in the league for the current year as well as the subsequent year. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the league but they must be fully supported by the evidence and receive permission of the Pastor or Director of Religious Education or Director of Youth Ministry prior to the request being made to the league.
17. 9th graders are not eligible to participate even if he or she meets the age criteria.
18. Boys may only play on boys teams and girls may only play on girls teams.
19. All approvals of participation or waivers are subject to the discretion of the diocesan Office of Youth, Campus, and Young Adult Ministries.
20. All approvals of league participation are subject to being rescinded at the sole discretion of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington and the Diocese reserves the right to change eligibility at its discretion at any time.

Steps Required for a Youth to Participate for a Parish Other than The Youth's Home Parish When the Home Parish Does NOT Have a Team:

1. By October 1, the youth must be actively participating in the parish school or religious education program at the youth's home parish.
2. The youth's parents/guardians must demonstrate that they have attempted to get their home parish to begin a team (currently or for the future). This requirement is an attempt to further the goal stated at the beginning of the eligibility section related to fostering parish community. The family should work with the parish representative to seek out other youth from their own parish to begin a team(s).
3. The youth's home parish must share at least one common boundary with the parish for which the youth wishes to participate.
4. The youth's parents must contact the parish representative for the parish for which the youth wishes to play and ascertain whether there are any openings on teams. As long as all other Catholic education, age, and other requirements are met it is as the discretion of the parish whether the parish permits the youth to play.

Steps Required for a Youth to Participate for a Parish Other than The Youth's Home Parish When the Home Parish DOES Have a Team:

1. By October 1, the youth must be actively participating in the parish school or religious education program at the parish for which the youth wishes to play.
2. The youth must demonstrate via some correspondence approved by the Pastor, the Director of Youth Ministry or the parish's representative to the league that the youth's home parish does not object to the youth playing for the parish where the youth attends a Catholic Diocese of Arlington school or religious education program.

FAQs

1. Q: Does the parish's representative to the league need to fill out waiver form if...:
 - ❖ ...a youth's parish does not have a team and the youth wishes to play for the youth's school or adjoining parish?
 - A: **NO. All other requirements must be met.**
 - ❖ ...a parish wishes a youth to "play up" a grade or more?
 - A: **NO** (Keep in mind that there may be size, skill, and maturity differences so parents and a parish should be aware of the various concerns involved and the parish representative to the league should consult with parish staff.)
 - ❖ ...a youth transferred into the parish's school or religious education program after the October 1 deadline but meets all other requirements?
 - A: **It is at the discretion of the parish of whether to allow participation of this individual. NO, a waiver is not required (but an amended roster must be submitted for approval).**
2. May a youth who is a parishioner of **parish A** (who has a team) but is homeschooled and participates in home-school religious education with a homeschool group centered around and made up primarily of families from **parish B** play on a team with parish B?
 - A: The strong preference is that the youth participates with the youth's home parish in order to foster that parish community. However, in this circumstance, as long as the youth meets all other requirements and the pastor or his designee at parish A indicates his approval to the parish representative at parish B then this will be permitted.

Other Eligibility Criteria

1. A player must meet the following age/grade criteria:
 - 8th grade leagues: 8th grade or below and will not have reached her 15th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 7th grade leagues: 7th grade or below and will not have reached her 14th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 6th grade leagues: 6th grade or below and will not have reached her 13th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 5th grade leagues: 5th grade or below and will not have reached her 12th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 4th grade leagues: 4th grade or below and will not have reached her 11th birthday prior to the next June 1.
 - 3rd grade leagues: 3rd grade and will not have reached her 10th birthday prior to the next June 1.

ROSTERS

I. Coaches.

- A. The parish representative and coaches are responsible for ensuring that each roster includes at least two unrelated responsible adults, 21 or older, who meet all the child protection and other requirements of the Diocese and parish prior to being placed on the roster as the coaches (or assistant coaches) of the team. These are the legally responsible adults/chaperones.
- B. All coaches and other persons with substantial contact with youth must be approved by the parish's liaison for youth and child protection prior to participation in any practices, games, or other activities.
- C. All coaches and other persons with substantial contact with youth must register using the league-designated registration system.
- D. All coaches and other volunteers must sign the Volunteer Risk Awareness Agreement and provide to the parish representative for the parish to retain.

II. Players.

- A. A player may not be rostered on—or play on—more than one NVJCYO team (per sport).
- B. Each player shall have a completed official NVJCYO Permission Slip/Medical Release Form before participating and will provide that completed and properly signed form to the coach.
- C. A new completed Permission and Release form shall be submitted for each NVJCYO sport.
- D. Parents/guardians of each rostered player must sign the Concussion Awareness form and provide it to the coach who will compile and give to the parish representative.

III. Submission and Retention of Forms.

- A. The coach should retain a copy of the NVJCYO Permission Slip/Medical Release Form during all practices, games and other activities.
- B. The NVJCYO Permission Slip/Medical Release Form must be kept on file at the parish and is subject to review by league/Diocesan officials.
- E. The NVJCYO Roster must be signed by the appropriate individuals (i.e., Pastor, Principal, or Director of Religious Education, depending on the circumstances) by the deadline established by the Diocese. The signed rosters are retained by the parish. The league and Diocese will use the rosters submitted electronically; however, the league also has the right to check the signed form at any time. The oversight of the parish representative is important. Any paper rosters that differ from electronic submissions by the parish are not considered official.

IV. Team Size.

- A. Each team must roster a minimum of 8 players. No exceptions. (**N.B.** beginning in 2026 minimum team size will be 9 for volleyball).