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This Gateway Region Junior Handbook contains the policies, procedures and Due Process adopted by the first Board of Directors in 1994, including additions and amendments through August 2011.

All coaches are required to read and know all of the rules contained in this Handbook. Neither lack of awareness, nor misunderstanding of a rule or standard is a defense to a charge of wrongdoing.

Any questions regarding deviations from these set policies and/or procedures should be directed to the Regional Commissioner, Tim Neels. In unusual circumstances, waivers may be granted.

## Attachments

- Parent Code of Conduct
- Tryout Sanction Form
- Instructions for Tryout Registration and Waiver Form
- Tryout Registration and Waiver Form
- FAQ Sheet
- Binding Commitment Letter
- Individual Membership Form (includes Waiver and Release of Liability/Code of Conduct)
- Team Registration Form
- Player Medical History and Release Form
- Tournament Sanction Form
- Tournament Entry Form

**As soon as they become available, current copies of the following forms may be downloaded from the Publications page on the Gateway Region website at [www.gatewayvb.org](http://www.gatewayvb.org):**

- **Sport Accident and General Liability Insurance Fact Sheet**
- **Insurance Information Sheet on Incident and Claim Forms**
- **Incident Form**
- **Claim Form**
- **Instructions for Certificate of Insurance Request**
- **Certificate of Insurance Request**

In addition to this Junior Handbook, The Gateway Region Player's Handbook and Tournament Director's Manual can be found on the Gateway website, [www.gatewayvb.org](http://www.gatewayvb.org) with additional copies at the Gateway Region Office.

## GATEWAY REGION HISTORY

The Gateway Region was formed in 1993 to promote the growth of volleyball within our area. Tim Neels was the first Commissioner and continues to be Commissioner of the Region to date.

At the August 1993 USAV Heart of America Regional meeting, the HOA Board voted to release the Gateway district to apply for full region status at the 1993 mid-year ROD meeting. In the 1994 season, the Gateway Region was fully established as a separate and autonomous region.

## GATEWAY BOUNDARIES

The Gateway Region encompasses the eastern and southern parts of Missouri and the southern part of Illinois. In Missouri, the region includes all areas with zip codes beginning with 630 through 639 plus 654 and 655. In Illinois, the boundary includes all areas south of interstates 70 and 270. Our membership comes from cities as far away as Quincy and Springfield in Illinois, to Springfield and West Plains in Missouri.

## GATEWAY REGION JUNIOR MISSION STATEMENT

The USA Volleyball Gateway Region Junior's Program Mission Statement is to promote a wholesome environment so that players can develop skills, team work, positive attitude, competitive spirit, responsibility and sportsmanship. This Mission can only be accomplished with the cooperation of coaches, parents, players and officials.

## JUNIOR OLYMPIC VOLLEYBALL

Junior Olympic volleyball is a program for girls and boys 18 years of age and younger.

The purpose of the USA Volleyball Junior Olympic volleyball program is to offer youths an opportunity to become involved in a wholesome and beneficial athletic activity that they can pursue at various skill levels. In many cases, it is a chance for athletes to receive high quality instruction in skills development and team strategy. A USA Volleyball Junior Olympic volleyball program should be an extension of learning from the high school program and a natural bridge between youth volleyball (ages 8 and under) and college volleyball or USA Volleyball adult volleyball.

USAV Junior Olympic volleyball competition runs from September 1 until the Junior National Championships (JNC) in June/July. Many athletes are also involved in their schools' programs at the same time they are learning from you. Do not put unreasonable demands on the athletes. Let them stay loyal to their school programs as well. If they enjoy your program and that is where they want to focus their attention, let that be their decision. You, not their school coach, will need to be flexible. Try to schedule practice on days or times that don't conflict with the majority of their games. Be reasonable; keep the athlete's best interest at heart. Remember the philosophy of USAV Junior Olympic volleyball program: **ATHLETES FIRST--WINNING SECOND.**

## HOW TO ESTABLISH A USA VOLLEYBALL JUNIOR CLUB / TEAM

Key items listed in the following sections:

Coaches' Requirements – IMPACT and Background Screening (Section II)

Tryout Guidelines (Section VI – VII)

Registration Process (Section VIII - IX)

Officiating Requirements (Section X and p 20)

Uniform & Tournament Information (Section XII – XIII)

**The club director of a junior club in the Gateway Region is the individual who is ultimately responsible for club activities.**

- I. Decide on what type of program you will have. If you are a new team/club contact the Gateway Region Office to make sure that the name you are planning to use is available. If you have an established club and would like to retain the club name from the prior season, the club director must become a member and submit the Team Registration Form (see Section IX)
  - A. What age groups will you have?  
Boy's or Girl's 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11 or 10 and Under age division teams, Coed 10 and Under age division teams or **an 8 and Under program**. (No Junior National Championships, JNC, will be offered in the 8, 10 or 11 and Under divisions).
  - B. What will be your club's focus, your goals and objectives?
    - Take all comers, everyone plays.
    - Elite, accepts only the best.
    - A combination of the above.
- II. Recruit any coaches you will want or need in the program. *Remember, leadership is the key to any program, without strong committed leadership any program is doomed to flounder and eventually fail.* Listed below are 4 requirements regarding coaches:
  - a. All coaches must be, at minimum, IMPACT certified or in the process of obtaining certification (registered for an IMPACT course).
  - b. Each team must have at least one adult coach (18 years of age or older) who is, at minimum, IMPACT certified at every practice and tournament.
  - c. Every coach must be a registered member (see Section IX.)
  - d. Each coach must pass a background screen every other year (see Section IX)

Also, for insurance purposes, ANY adult affiliating with a junior team (e.g. coaches, team representatives, club representatives and chaperones) must become a member and pass a background screen (see Section IX). Members who are subject to screening will be screened every two years.

Note: For the JNC and Qualifying events, it is recommended that the team roster lists two chaperones (registered and background screened) and additional IMPACT (at minimum) certified coaches. This may be necessary in emergency situations.

**2012 Season IMPACT Clinic dates, online IMPACT webinars and a Registration Form can be found on the Gateway website – Coaches page.** Contact Shannon Loso at the Gateway Region Office, [losos@gatewayvb.org](mailto:losos@gatewayvb.org) or 314-849-1221, for IMPACT clinic information.

Any teams without an IMPACT certified coach will not be allowed to participate in Gateway Region sanctioned tournaments. If a team is found to be playing in a tournament without an IMPACT certified coach on its bench, the team may be immediately dropped from the tournament, forfeiting any games played and may be subjected to a fine up to \$100 and probation.

In unusual circumstances, a waiver for IMPACT may be granted. Contact Chris Clauss, the Gateway Region Junior Development Coordinator, at [cmwarner24@aol.com](mailto:cmwarner24@aol.com) or 636-343-4029 with questions regarding IMPACT certification.

III. Decide how the program will be financed.

- A. Initial assessment
- B. Regular monthly dues.
- C. Fund raisers.
- D. Local merchants in your community to donate to the program.
- E. Solicit a sponsor for a team or club.
- F. A combination of the above methods.
  - Filing as a non-profit organization is an option. Consult an accountant for details.

IV. Find a place to hold your tryouts, a place to practice and obtain volleyballs.

V. In order to help players and parents make informed decisions when choosing clubs, our website includes a “Junior Club Profile” page for clubs to provide more details about their program. Guidelines for submitting a Club Profile are available on the Gateway website. Clubs can also direct players and parents to the “Parent’s Page” on the website, for guidance in making their club decisions.

VI. **Tryout Guidelines**

If players want the opportunity to represent their high school, the Missouri State High School Activities Association requires that all potential USAV participants must attend open and publicized tryouts. Many area newspapers offer publication of team tryouts free of charge. You may also generate flyers to send to area schools, give to individuals and post in gyms. Another option is to include your tryout information on the Gateway web page through the sanction process detailed in the next paragraph. The Illinois State High School Association rules, in some cases, greatly differ from those in Missouri; please check and abide by all pertinent rules for both states.

For USAV insurance purposes all tryouts must be sanctioned. To sanction your tryout, complete the Gateway Region Tryout Sanction Form located on the “Publications” page on the Gateway website. There is no sanction fee. If indicated on your form, your information will be added to the tryout schedule posted on the web page.

### Tryout Starting Dates (2011-2012 Season)\*

Boy's 15s, 16s, 17s and 18s may have tryouts on or after Friday, **September 30**.

Girl's or Boy's 8s – 14s and Coed 8s - 10s, on or after Friday, **October 21**.

Girl's 15s, 16s, 17s and 18s, on or after Friday, **November 18**.

\*Clubs who are located geographically in the border areas of the Gateway Region may request a waiver to allow tryout dates earlier than the dates listed above.

(Tryouts for Girl's 15s, 16s, 17s and 18s **cannot** begin until after the Missouri and Illinois State Volleyball Championships.) Girls eligible to play 14 and under who are in high school cannot tryout before **November 18**.

No athlete can be required to make a formal commitment prior to the commitment dates noted in Section VII, Notification/Acceptance Procedure.

Note: Boys who attend summer team tryouts must not be currently registered with any junior boy's team. An exception may be granted in advance, if a team declares that they will not continue playing after the boy's high school season. This intent must be on file at the Gateway Region office before tryouts. Violation of this policy may result in a player's suspension from USAV participation for up to one year.

### Tryout Paperwork Required

1. Junior Tryout Information Registration & Waiver Form (see website or attachments)
2. FAQ Sheet (see website or attachments)
3. Information Sheet (created by club)

For insurance purposes, each player must complete a combined Junior Tryout Information Registration and Waiver Form which requires player and parent/guardian signatures. Players under 18 years of age must have a parental signature before being allowed to tryout. If the parents do not sign, USAV insurance will not apply and your team/club must assume any liability risks. If a participant is injured, return their Waiver Form to the office. Otherwise retain the forms in case they are later needed for insurance purposes.

Upon request, parents will be permitted to observe tryouts provided that they are not disruptive or pose a safety hazard to players or coaches.

Each club/team will be required to make the **FAQ sheet** and an **Information Sheet** available at tryouts. This information sheet must be pertinent to all teams within the club. The minimal information that must be included is as follows:

**Club History**—Years of operation.

**Club Philosophy**—What level of teams (high, intermediate, training)? Will age waived players be accepted? Club organization of administration: is it centralized or does each team run independently? Club goals: to service certain localities, national level competition, training players, or all of the above. Policy of moving players from one team to another within the club

during the season. Level of commitment from players and parents (fundraising, travel etc.). Attendance at practice, and parents' required behavior and responsibilities within the club.

**Budgets**—Estimates; line item estimates; non-refundable club fees, uniforms, registration, tournament fees, travel costs. Are coaches or club directors paid? And how much? When are moneys due? Does individual player money go to support another team within same club?

**Team Information**—How many teams are planned per age group? Who will coach? (if known) Will teams practice together?

**Head Coach Biography**—Past coaching experience, including age groups and accomplishments, formal coaching education (IMPACT, CAP Level training, other); assistant coach biographies are welcomed.

**Practice**—Estimated times per week, location, and approximate length of practices. Penalties for failure to attend practice?

**Tournaments**—Approximately how many tournaments per month? In town? Out-of-town? Starting in what month?

- VII. Select team or teams as outlined below (and in accordance with Missouri and Illinois State High School Association rules). Stress to the player and parent/guardian that it is their responsibility to be aware of the Gateway tryout procedures. Violations by club administrators or coaches may be reported by the player or parent/guardian to the Junior Coordinator, who will then follow the Gateway Region Due Process Guidelines.

### **NOTIFICATION / ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURE**

An optional Binding Commitment Letter is available (on the Gateway Publications page or in the attachments) for club use to facilitate the Notification / Acceptance process. However, coaches and club administrators cannot mandate that a player sign the Binding Commitment Letter if used. Binding Commitment Letters collected by a club are NOT submitted to the Gateway Office except in a situation where the commitment has been violated. The form must then be submitted to the office immediately.

Coaches may let players know if they have been selected for an age division within their club at any time after their tryout. At that time, a coach can tell the player one of three things:

1. You have made a team.
2. You are an alternate.
3. You did not make a team.

For tryouts held on the first available weekend, the coach must allow a "waiting period" for the chosen athlete to make the decision on whether or not to commit, according to the following guidelines:

If the tryout start date is Friday, **September 30, 2011**, the **official** commitment date/time is 7 pm **Sunday, October 2, 2011**. If the tryout start date is Friday, **October 21, 2011**, the **official** commitment date/time is 7 pm **Sunday, October 23**. If the tryout start date is Friday, **November 18, 2011** the **official** commitment date/time is 7 pm **Sunday, November 20**.

If a coach makes an offer to a player, the offer cannot be rescinded unless a player declines an offer or does not respond by the commitment date/time listed above. Rescinding an offer before the commitment dates/times listed for each applicable tryout period constitutes a recruiting violation by the coach and/or Club, which is a punishable offense under Gateway Region policies. "Conditional offers" (offers made with a condition attached, such as "commit right now and we'll guarantee you ...") are likewise unethical and constitute a punishable recruiting violation.

A "waiting period" is not required for clubs holding tryouts on or after the official commitment dates and time defined above; the player may be asked to officially commit to the team immediately.

For tryouts held on the first available weekend, a player essentially has 3 options when the coach notifies them that they have been selected for a team:

1. To accept the offer\*
2. To reject the offer
3. To use the "waiting period", according to the above guidelines, before making their decision

\* The optional Binding Commitment Letter is available to formalize the player's acceptance of an offer by a club. A player can choose to sign the letter or not; a coach or club administrator cannot mandate that a player sign this document. If a player accepts a club offer by signing the Binding Commitment Letter, the player may not leave that club to represent another club during the season (see page 12).

At any time after the official commitment dates/times defined above, club administrators may now direct players to register online through the process detailed on the Gateway website or collect the signed Individual Membership Form. Any additional paperwork and club fees may also be collected at this time. After completing this registration process with the club administrators, the player may not leave that club to represent another club during the season (see *Transfers* page 13).

VIII. Conduct a meeting with players and at least one parent or guardian of each player.

- A. Introduce your coaching staff and their qualifications.
- B. Explain how the program will operate.
- C. Discuss the methods of financing the program.
- D. Decide on how the team will get equipment and uniforms.
  1. Borrowed.
  2. Purchased by the club and rented to the players.
  3. Purchased by the club and owned by the players.
  4. Each player to purchase their own.

- E. You **MUST** tell both the players and their parents or guardians that players can be hurt seriously playing volleyball. (THIS MUST BE DONE FOR LIABILITY INSURANCE PROTECTION.)
- F. Individual participants should complete the registration process detailed in Section IX.
- G. A notarized Medical History and Release form must be completed by all players and signed by parents of any player under 18 years of age. Coaches should carry these forms with them during team practices and competitions. You do not need to send a copy of the Medical History forms to the region office.
- H. You should tell them that neither the players nor their parents or guardians may recruit another player who has already committed to another club during the season.
- I. Get a commitment from parents as to what their assistance to the program will be (help with travel, uniforms, fund raising, treasurer, etc.). A Parent Code of Conduct Form is available for your use (in the attachments or on the Gateway website).

- IX. Register all Individuals and Teams with the Gateway Region. Club Directors have administrative access to the online system, webpoint. In order to retain admin access to club records, Club Directors should apply for membership in webpoint and submit fees as soon as possible after September 1 and before October 31.

### Process for Individual Registration:

Individuals must apply for membership online in webpoint, accessed from the Gateway homepage, [www.gatewayvb.org](http://www.gatewayvb.org), and pay appropriate fees. (The hard copy *Individual Membership Form* will still be accepted for players however, this method is discouraged. Any adult affiliated with a junior team must apply in webpoint online; see next 2 paragraphs). Both methods include a waiver and release of liability and code of conduct sections where the parent either authorizes through the online process or signs the Individual Membership Form. Parental authorization is required if the player is under the age of 18. It is recommended that club administrators total the membership fees owed and submit with the Team Form (see Team Registration process below).

In addition to completing the registration process, any adult intending to affiliate with a junior team or referee / mentor at junior events, must also pass a background screen. Screens are prompted during the online membership application in Webpoint. Background screen fees are \$20.

All Club Personnel must complete a *Junior Club Personnel Code of Ethics Form*. This form is part of the online membership application process in Webpoint.

### Process for Team Registration:

A Team Registration Form (excel version located on the Publications page on the Gateway website) must be completed and submitted **with all appropriate fees**. ***ALL TEAMS MUST REGISTER WITH SEPARATE DISTINCT NAMES. THIS NAME MUST BE USED WHEN ENTERING ALL TOURNAMENTS.***

The Team Form (and any Individual Membership Forms for players who did not apply in Webpoint) and the Fees must be submitted to the Gateway Office a minimum of 10 days prior to practicing or participating in a sanctioned event. Individuals that register late may be required to pay a \$10 late fee for each player.

**Online registration instructions** and all forms are on the website, [www.gatewayvb.org](http://www.gatewayvb.org) with hard copies of forms also included in the appendix and on the Publications page on the Gateway website. Complete forms, and collect the necessary funds. Compile into one check, if possible, made payable to the Gateway Region. Mail or deliver the Team Registration Form and check (and any necessary hard copy memberships) to the Gateway Region Office. It is a good idea to bring the completed forms and check to the office, if possible. You can then pick up Domestic Competition Regulations (rule books) for coaches/officials and officials' training material for your teams. All forms must be properly completed, including both player and parental (or guardian) signatures where required. Additional players may be added to your original team roster at a later date; however, you need to email the office or send in a new team form with only the additional players listed.

<b>Background Screen Fees</b>	\$20.00 ea
<b>Individual Membership Fees</b>	
Regular Membership (Adult/Junior)	<b>\$45.00</b>
Junior (Limited Participation)	<b>\$30.00*</b>
10 and Under Players	<b>\$15.00**</b>
8 and Under Players	<b>\$5.00***</b>
Junior Summer Players	<b>\$15.00****</b>

\*The Region offers a discounted membership rate for junior players registering after their school's spring volleyball season

\*\*The 10 and Under Player option applies to players born on or after September 1, 2001. Players using this option are ineligible for national level events and are restricted to participating in 10 and Under Gateway events only. To participate in 11s or older events, the team must register in the appropriate age division, players must register as Regular members (\$45) and the team will then be ineligible for 10s events.

\*\*\*The 8 and Under Player option is available for Gateway 8 and Under club programs only. To participate in 10 and Under or older events, the team and players must register in the appropriate age division and corresponding membership fees for that age category must be paid.

\*\*\*\*The Junior Summer Player option is available after 5/1/2012. Players using this option are ineligible for the USAV Junior National Championships.

If it is found that a non-registered individual participates in a sanctioned event, a \$35 fine must be paid in addition to the regular membership fee before the individual will be allowed to participate. Additional penalties may apply.

If an Individual Adult or Junior Member (or person acting in this capacity) owes fees to the Gateway Region, the individual is considered not in good standing and is ineligible to participate in USAV sanctioned events until the debt is paid in full. If a Junior Team Rep

(or person acting in this capacity) owes fees to the Gateway Region, all team members are not in good standing and are ineligible to participate in USAV sanctioned events until the debt is paid in full. The Junior Club Representative (or person acting in this capacity) is ultimately responsible for any of their club's debt to the Gateway Region and that individual is considered not in good standing and ineligible to participate in USAV sanctioned events until the debt is paid in full.

Coaches and certified officials receive the USAV Domestic Competition Regulations (rule book) with membership. **Rule books will be published in odd dated years only.** In addition to this Junior Handbook, the Gateway Region Player's Handbook is available on the Gateway website. It is your responsibility to be familiar with this material.

- X. USA Volleyball competition has traditionally been officiated by the players. Each team must supply Junior or Adult Certified Officials. It is strongly recommended that several players (if not all) receive certification as referees and/or scorers. Officiating responsibilities include: 1st referee (certified), 2nd referee (certified), scorer (certified), two line judges and an assistant scorer to attend to the visual score and to track the Libero. Refer to the Junior Officials' Requirements section.
- XI. Begin practice. If facilities require proof of insurance, Certificates of Insurance can be issued by contacting Shannon Loso, [loso@gatewayvb.org](mailto:loso@gatewayvb.org). **Members/clubs who have sanctioned activities through the Gateway Region where USAV insurance is provided must be in good standing in the region. Good standing may be revoked if facility requirements are violated or outstanding fees are due for facility usage. If a member's/club's good standing is revoked, they may forfeit the privilege of sanctioning activities in the region for the remainder of the season or for the following season**
- XII. Order uniforms.
- A. Uniform restrictions:
1. Player's uniforms consist of a jersey and shorts. Socks, shoes and kneepads are not part of the uniform.
  2. The color and the design for the jerseys and shorts must be uniform and clean for the entire team. The Libero must wear a different color uniform shirt in contrast to the other members of the team.
  3. If undershirts, boxer shorts, tights, leotards, body suits, bicycle shorts, etc., are worn by more than one team member in such a manner that they are exposed, they must be similar and of the same color for any team members who wear such a uniform (except for the libero).
  4. It is forbidden for junior age players to wear **any** jewelry.
  5. Player's jerseys must be numbered\*\* from 1 to 99. The number must be centered on the chest and the back. It is recommended that the size of the numbers be a minimum of 6 inches on the chest and a minimum of 8 inches on

the back. It is acceptable for the number size to be 4 inches in height on the chest and a minimum of 6 inches in height on the back. Uniforms that comply with the former numbering requirements will still be allowed for Gateway tournaments this season. The stripe forming the numbers shall be a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in width. The color and brightness of the numbers must contrast with the color and brightness of the jerseys. Each uniform jersey must use the same color and number height for all team members (except the Libero). Refer to the current Rule Book for specific details regarding uniform requirements.

\*\*For the JNC, and National Qualifying Events, all players (including the Libero) are required to wear the same jersey number throughout the entire event. This is not required for Gateway sanctioned events (excluding Gold/Silver Regionals). This policy allows a team to use one Libero jersey for multiple players.

6. If a team has any players at **Gateway** tournaments without a proper uniform, the club/team will be subject to a \$10 fine per violation. This fee should be given to the Tournament Director and forwarded to the Gateway Region Office.

- XIII. Enter tournaments as early as possible because they fill up fast. The later you enter, the less likelihood there is you will be accepted. A list of junior tournaments and the tournament directors can be obtained from the Gateway Region Office and will be listed on the Gateway Website: [www.gatewayvb.org](http://www.gatewayvb.org). The list is constantly updated.

If a team withdraws from a tournament, the team forfeits its entry fee unless a replacement team can be found. The withdrawing team cannot play in another Gateway sanctioned tournament on the same weekend regardless if the spot is filled or not. Tournament directors may keep 25% of a team's entry fee if a team chooses not to participate due to dangerous travel conditions. If a tournament director cancels an event for any reason, a team's total entry fee must be refunded. If the region office can confirm that the tournament director owes tournament fees to a club/team, then the tournament director is not in good standing and ineligible to participate in USAV sanctioned events until fees are paid.

### PLAYER CONTACT

Recruiting is the active pursuit of an athlete to play for a particular club or team. Once an athlete has signed with a team or club, contacts with the player or parents of the athlete with respect to recruiting cannot be done during the official Junior Olympic Volleyball Season. The junior season runs from **September 1** and concludes at the end of the JNC. If the athlete's team has finished playing for the season it is acceptable for a recruiter to contact the player or parents of the athlete. This must be confirmed by the head coach or club/team rep prior to the contact or the recruiter will be subject to penalties.

## **TRANSFERS / REASSIGNMENT of JUNIOR PLAYERS**

There are no player transfers between active junior teams. The regular junior season runs from September 1 and concludes at the end of the JNC. Once a junior member has committed to a team/club (signed the Binding Commitment Letter and/or completed the registration process and paid fees) she/he may not leave that club to represent another club during that season.\*

\*A player can be reassigned to a different club in the Gateway Region if the team the player is currently affiliated with has discontinued play for the season. This must be confirmed by the head coach or club/team representative before any contact with the player. The process to reassign a player is for the club/team representative to notify the Gateway Region Office that the current team of affiliation has concluded play for the season, followed by a request from the new club/team representative to reassign that inactive player to their team.

### **Recommendations for Gateway Coaches**

The following are recommendations from the Gateway Region. Some are suggested in fairness to all Gateway clubs and current or potential new participants, while other recommendations are included to protect a player's school eligibility.

- Do not make excessive contacts with a player or parents in preseason. (Example: sending a mailer or making 1 or 2 contacts is enough to let a player know you are interested).
- Do not try to influence a commitment from a player or parents once they have accepted a position with another club.
- Promote the game of volleyball as positively as possible.
- Support and understand the region's policies.
- When traveling out of region with other teams, support our region's teams.
- Explain extra costs up front to parents and any possible fundraising the team might do. (Example: uniforms, coaches travel expenses, tournament entry fees, gym rental fees....)
- Know when your team will practice, where and for how long.
- If your club has two teams in the same age group, know the club's policy on placing players on teams.
- Explain to parents/players what level of team you are expecting to have this season (competitive vs. developmental; waived vs. non-waived).
- Know how many tournaments and weekend trips you expect to take.
- Have an idea of how many players you will keep (8---12???)
- Explain to parents and players they are paying to be coached, not to play every minute of every game.

## Age Division Definitions for 2011-2012

Once a player participates (including but not limited to practicing, training, attending workouts and/or competing) in a club or varsity program for any university, college, community college, or junior college, he/she is ineligible to take part in any regional and national programming, which includes but is not limited to national JNC qualifying and championship events.

**18 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1993

or

Players who were born on or after September 1, 1992 AND a high school student in the twelfth grade or below during some part of the current academic year

**17 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1994

**16 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1995

**15 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1996

**14 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1997

**13 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1998

**12 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 1999

**11 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 2000 - No JNC div.

**10 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 2001 - No JNC div.

**8 and Under:** Players who were born on or after September 1, 2003 - No JNC div.

### **Boys 14 and Under Division:**

Regionally waived boys teams in the 14 and under age group will be allowed to participate at the USA **Boys'** JNC using the following age/grade definition:

Players who were born on or after September 1, 1997

or

Players who were born on or after September 1, 1996 (15 years or younger) who shall neither have completed nor are in a grade higher than the eighth grade (8<sup>th</sup>) grade during the current academic year. (This exception is based on the net height difference of 7' 4 1/8" to 7' 11 5/8" between the 14 and Under Division to the 15 and Under Division.)

These age definitions are used by domestic club programs and are NOT the same as the age definitions for the International and Domestic High Performance programs for 2012.

The classification cut-off date of Sept 1 was reviewed by the USAV YJOVD prior to the 2008 Annual Meetings and research justified the continuation of the cut-off date of Sept 1. Additional information can be found on the USAV website.

### Notes:

- a. A team or an individual may play up in any division but not down, for example: a 15 year old sophomore on a 16 and under team may play in an 18 and under tournament, but they could not play in a 14 and under tournament. **NOTE:** A player who is technically a lower age division player, but registered on an upper age division team, may play on a team within their club at the lower age division. Any roster changes must be noted on the tournament roster prior to the start of play.
- b. Only Girl's and Boy's 15s, 16s, 17s and 18s may play in an adult division. A notarized copy of the player's medical release must be available during adult tournament play.

### Waivers

Waivers will be granted to players born between June 1 and August 31, to play in the lower age group only within the Gateway Region, Waivered teams may not participate in Gold/Silver Seeding Tournaments and JNC bid offering events; this includes Girl's Gold/Silver Regionals and the Gateway Boy's Festival. The Team Registration Form includes a column where age waived players must be noted. Individuals that fall within this time period will automatically be issued waivers by the Gateway Region office.

Other Regions may not accept these waivers; it is the decision of each region. Please contact individual Tournament Directors to see if they will allow age-waived players. In unusual circumstances other age waivers may be granted. In these cases, contact the Junior Development Coordinator.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

***Girl's teams with age waived players (registered with the region at the beginning of the season) will not be allowed to participate in any event in which a bid to the USAV Junior National Championships is awarded (includes the Gold/Silver division of the Gateway Regional Championships) and/or the Junior National Championship events at any age.***

***Girl's waived teams in the 11 and Under age division may participate in the Gold/Silver division of the Gateway Regional Championships - no Junior National Championships are offered for 11s or younger.***

*Girls' teams with age waived players may participate in the Bronze/Copper division of the Gateway Regional Championship at their own age group or the Bronze/Copper division of a higher age group. See the Section on the Junior Regional Championships on page 24).*

Developmental boys may apply for team waivers to play in a lower age group (Region play only, excluding the Gateway Boy's Festival\*). If it is found that these teams are too strong for the lower age level they will be evaluated and may be required to move up to the appropriate level.

\*Boys with age waivers are excluded from participating in the bid offering divisions of National Bid Events, including the Gateway Boy's Festival, at their waived age level. They may play in bid events in their true age division or higher. (This does not apply to the B14s; see USAV age division definition on prior page). National Bid Events are sanctioned through USAV.

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Membership will provide:

- USA Volleyball individual registration number for use on all tournament entry forms.
- USA Volleyball team registration number for use on all tournament entry forms.
- Domestic Competition Regulations (rule book) **for coaches and certified officials**, which are printed in odd dated years.
- A liability insurance policy for sanctioned events & certificates of insurance when required.
- Organized practices that are directly under the control of a registered, background screened and IMPACT certified USA Volleyball coach.
- A player injury sport accident secondary policy.
- Officials' training.
- The right to enter any sanctioned USA Volleyball Tournament in any region in the United States provided the entry criteria are met.
- The right to enter any sanctioned USA Volleyball Gateway Tournament or USA Volleyball Junior National Championships in which you qualify and are accepted.

## HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

Whether coaching a state high school team, junior volleyball team, or hosting a junior tournament for high school aged girls or boys, please remember that the high school associations have certain restrictions on players, coaches, awards, clinics, camps, and all-star matches. Tournament directors and coaches must take the rules into consideration when considering USA Volleyball competition. It is imperative that USA Volleyball sanctioned coaches, teams, practices, tournaments, clinics and camps comply with these high school regulations in every aspect. The Gateway Region and USA Volleyball will not tolerate any action, whether intentional or unintentional, which will jeopardize the high school or college eligibility of these young athletes.

Missouri Rule Regarding Non-School Competition By-Law Standard (235.2 b) **HAS BEEN ELIMINATED**. All players on a non-school team **MAY** be comprised of members from the same school team. In the past, this By-Law did not allow a non-school volleyball team to be comprised solely of members of the same school team.

### **By-Law Standard (235.2 d)**

If held during the school year, but outside the designated school season for the sport, the participant shall receive no coaching from a member of the coaching staff of the school the student attends or will attend the following year. **Editors note:** the participants in any sport may be coached, during the summer months only, by a member of the school coaching staff the participant has or will attend next year.

### **Illinois Rule**

Illinois rules state that a player may tryout for a non-school team while they are on a school team in that same sport. A player may not practice, receive instruction, participate in workouts or participate in competition with a non-school team until the school team ceases play in that sport. This means your school team has terminated for the season.

**Special Note to Clubs:** The High School Associations and NCAA have rules that do not permit letting an athlete play for free, if you charge for your program, or at a reduced rate from what is charged other athletes in your program. Violation of this rule will cause an athlete to lose her/his amateur standing and be declared ineligible for high school and NCAA competition. If you have any questions, contact the NCAA or your state association first!

Missouri State High School Athletic Association  
1 North Keene St.  
Columbia, MO 65201  
(573) 875-4880  
www.mshsaa.org  
email: [email@mshsaa.org](mailto:email@mshsaa.org)

Illinois State High School Athletic Association  
2715 McGraw Dr  
Bloomington, IL 61704  
(309) 663-6377  
www.ihsa.org  
email: refer to website

### HOSTING A JUNIOR TOURNAMENT

**Tournaments are defined as competition between teams from more than two clubs**

- I. You must be a current registered member of the Gateway Region. Choose a site and get a list of available dates. In choosing a site consider the following: condition of the court, nets and standards, parking and seating accommodations, restrooms and specific policies of that facility. If facilities require proof of insurance, Certificates of Insurance can be issued by contacting Shannon Loso, [loso@gatewayvb.org](mailto:loso@gatewayvb.org). **Members/clubs who have sanctioned activities through the Gateway Region where USAV insurance is provided must be in good standing in the region. Good standing may be revoked if facility requirements are violated or outstanding fees are due for facility usage. If a member's/club's good standing is revoked, they may forfeit the privilege of sanctioning activities in the region for the remainder of the season or for the following season**
- II. To ensure date availability, contact the Region Office. The number of tournaments allowed on a specific date is limited based on the number of teams registered in that particular division from the prior season. This is to protect the tournament directors from competing for limited numbers of teams and to ensure the quality of tournaments at those divisions. Limited sanctions will be allowed on the weekends of the Junior Regional Championships.
- III. Complete the Tournament Sanction Form, which can be found on the Gateway website or in the appendix of this manual, and return to the Gateway Region office with two checks, payable to "Gateway Region USAV". One check should cover your sanction fee of \$5.00 per team (\$10 per team for multi-weekend events) and the other is a results deposit of \$100. The sanction fee is an administrative fee to run a Gateway tournament. The results deposit will be shredded if you have turned in the results and all Tournament Entry Forms (rosters) within ONE week of the tournament. Gateway has established guidelines for all sanctioned tournaments (e.g. maximum 4 teams/ct, \$100 entry fee). If you want to deviate from these guidelines, you must note it on your sanction application and you will be notified whether the exceptions will be allowed. If a sanction exception is granted, you must inform teams upon receipt of entry or before, of the deviations from the standard guidelines so the team can decide if they wish to enter the tournament.

- IV. After the sanction process, follow the guidelines in the Tournament Directors' Manual posted on the Gateway website. The manual and related forms include: entry forms, playing schedules, score sheets, line-up sheets, posting grids and brackets, as well as information on tournament procedures and minimum requirements. Your tournament will be listed on the Gateway tournament schedule and published on the Gateway website.
- V. Below is an abbreviated list of tournament guidelines. Please consult your Tournament Director's Manual for specifics.

➤ **FEES**

- ◆ \$100 per team entry fee limit. If a Tournament Director is owed tournament entry fees by a Gateway registered club/team/individual (or person acting in this capacity) and the region office can confirm the debt owed, the entity owing the debt is not in good standing and ineligible to participate in USAV sanctioned events until the debt is paid. This does not include a situation where the Tournament Director has failed to collect entry fees prior to the team's participation.
- ◆ Tournament Directors may not cash entry checks until a team has been accepted into the tournament. Teams on a waiting list must be notified prior to placing them into the tournament and they must be given the option to decline the spot.
- ◆ If a team withdraws from a tournament, the team forfeits its entry fee unless a replacement team can be found.
- ◆ Tournament directors may keep 25% of a team's entry fee if a team chooses not to participate due to dangerous travel conditions.
- ◆ If a Tournament Director cancels an event for any reason, a team's total entry fee must be refunded. If the region office can confirm that the tournament director owes tournament fees to a club/team, then the tournament director is not in good standing and ineligible to participate in or host USAV sanctioned events until fees are paid.
- ◆ No admission fee will be charged

➤ **ELIGIBILITY / FORMAT / RULES**

- ◆ Facilities are to be kept clean. It is the responsibility of participants, junior coaches and parents to pick up trash and keep all areas litter free.
- ◆ All teams must supply a roster (noting any changes) prior to the team's first match
- ◆ A registered IMPACT certified coach must accompany all junior teams
- ◆ All teams, players, coaches, referees and scorers must be registered USAV members. Tournament Directors must ensure that each team participating in the tournament is registered with the USA Volleyball by contacting the Gateway Region Office ([mayer@gatewayvb.org](mailto:mayer@gatewayvb.org)) one week prior to the tournament. Tournament Directors must contact the appropriate region for registration verifications for teams from other regions (contacts are listed on the National USAV web page at [usavolleyball.org](http://usavolleyball.org)).
- ◆ A maximum of 4 teams per court
- ◆ Teams must be guaranteed a minimum of 8 sets
- ◆ Format should be round robin play followed by playoffs.

- ◆ USA Volleyball rules will be used (exceptions are noted in this document and the Tournament Director's Manual)
- ◆ An abbreviated format is suggested for the 10 and under division (check Tournament Director's Manual)
- ◆ A "Volleylite" type ball must be used for all 12 and under divisions and below
- ◆ 6'6" step in will be used for 12 and younger age groups for regular season tournaments and the bronze/copper division of Regionals (the exception is Gold/Silver division of Regionals & Gold/Silver 12s Seeding Tournaments)
- ◆ The warm-up protocol is 4 minutes for the serving team, 4 minutes for the receiving team. An additional 2 minutes of shared ball handling can be added prior to the 4 and 4 if it is a team's first match of the day. It is recommended that the officiating team issue a 1 minute warning during the 4 minutes to allow the team time to serve. When one team has exclusive use of the court, the other team must either be at its team bench or out of the playing area. Warming up with balls at the team bench or in the spectator walkways is not permitted.
- ◆ The Libero is allowed to serve in Gateway sanctioned tournaments (excluding Gold/Silver designated events)
- ◆ Finals should not be scheduled later than 9 pm
- **OFFICIATING POLICIES**
  - ◆ Teams not advancing to playoffs will not be required to officiate playoff matches.
  - ◆ Tournament Directors may designate that either the winning or losing team from a playoff match will officiate the next playoff match. An acceptable method would be the following: Teams losing in playoffs will be expected to stay and officiate the subsequent match on their court, with the exception of championship match responsibilities, which will be determined by a coin flip between the losing teams in semi-final matches unless one semi-final match finishes before the other reaches 10 points in the 2<sup>nd</sup> set, or if one semi-final match goes 2 sets and the other goes 3 sets. In these cases, the losing team from the shorter semi-final match will be allowed to leave. The method chosen must be announced before the tournament begins.
- **AWARDS**
  - ◆ **Awards must be medals.** Tournament Directors must be prepared to present 10 **medals** per team. **Medals** must be given to all rostered players on the placing team, up to 10 total. Additional awards may be given as desired. The number of **medals** that must be presented is also dependent on the number of entries as follows:
    - \* 0-20 teams: Individual **medals** for players on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams.
    - \* 21 or more teams: Individual **medals** for players on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place teams.
- **BEHAVIOR ISSUES**
  - ◆ Tournament directors should publicize, in advance, regulations and restrictions specific to their facility. Vandalism in any facility used in a sanctioned Gateway event will not be tolerated and penalties to responsible individuals will be imposed.

Tournament directors may issue penalties for behavioral problems of players, coaches, parents or spectators. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their

non-playing children. In addition, tournament directors may issue penalties for individuals in violation of facility policies such as, but not limited to:

- Entering restricted areas
- Food and/or coolers in restricted areas
- Alcohol and/or tobacco violations

Possible penalties a tournament director may impose to a team/s in violation:

- Loss of points / sets in the team's next match
- Individual or team expulsion from the tournament and/or facility
- Financial penalty if the violation is discovered after completion of the event

- VI Junior teams must be certified to referee and keep score at tournaments. See Junior Officiating Policies section for details.
- VII. The Publications page of our web page, [www.gatewayvb.org](http://www.gatewayvb.org), contains a Junior Results Form, formatted in excel. Completing this form and emailing to [mayer@gatewayvb.org](mailto:mayer@gatewayvb.org) is the preferred method to submit junior tournament results. In addition to the Junior Results Form, ALL Tournament Entry Forms (rosters) must also be mailed or faxed to the region office. If the results and all rosters are received within one week, the results' deposit check will be shredded.

Teams should report any deviations from the standard tournament policies to the Gateway Office. Tournament Directors may lose their tournament sanction if they do not comply with these guidelines. Consult the Tournament Directors' Manual for more specific details.

### Playing with 5

For adult men's, adult women's, junior boy's and junior girl's competition, a team may start any set with 5 players and a ghost player, regardless of reason. The 6<sup>th</sup> player can substitute in for the ghost player at any time during the set. An automatic loss of service is charged to a team and a point is awarded to the opponent at the ghost player's term of service. On the scoresheet this is indicated by recording the exit score in the appropriate service round box beneath the ghost server's player number. The service round number is not checked.

The court position vacated by the ghost player is a back row position. When a team of 7 with a Libero is reduced to 6, for any reason, the Libero will become a regular player for the remainder of that set. The player who left the set may return in any subsequent set but not in the same set.

For coed competition only, the ghost player must rotate all positions.

### Boy's Participation in Girl's Tournaments

Boy's 12s may participate in Girl's 12s, 13s, and 14s.

Boy's 14s may participate in designated Girl's 14s, 15s, and 16s/Boy's 14s tournaments.

Boy's 12 tournaments may accept Girl's 12s

Boy's 14 tournaments may accept Girl's 14s, 15s & 16s.

## **\*\* JUNIOR TEAM OFFICIALS REQUIREMENTS \*\***

### PHILOSOPHY

The Gateway Region philosophy is to develop junior athletes as officials and as players. The Officials' Board requires that all junior teams participating in Gateway Region tournaments have trained officials. Our emphasis is placed on training the teams to officiate and function as a unit rather than require individuals to be rated and certified.

Initial training is required prior to participating in any tournaments. A practical evaluation will be conducted in a gymnasium using a game situation format. An approved evaluator will assist the coaches with training their players to officiate (referee, keep score, line judge, etc.). The evaluator will assist the coach with development and training of their team so that they may better understand their role and responsibility as officials. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that all teams know how to officiate prior to the playing season. Coaches will be required to continue to develop and train their athletes as officials throughout the season.

### TEAM REQUIREMENTS

Each participating team is required to have a minimum of one 1st Referee, one 2nd Referee, one Scorekeeper (recommended to have an assistant scorekeeper to track the Libero and aid with the visual score) and two Line Judges in attendance at every tournament. A maximum of four people are allowed at the scorekeeping table: scorer, flipper, libero tracker and a coach who is supervising. These officials need to officiate during any pool play match or tournament playoff match.

### TEAM FEES

If teams do not have certified officials for matches they are scheduled to officiate, they will pay a fee of **\$60** per official needed. This non-refundable fee is paid to the Tournament Director, who will then ensure there are certified officials to officiate at that time. Adult officials who work junior events must be background screened. It is recommended that each certified replacement official receive \$20 per match. This fee does not "buy" the rest of the officiating team. The team that is scheduled to officiate must still provide line judges and a visual score operator.

### GENERAL REGULATIONS

EVERY SEASON, A TEAM MUST:

1. Register the team and all individuals associated with that team. (Parents wanting to participate as referees and/or scorekeepers must register and pass a background screen every other year.)
2. Attend a clinic given by an approved clinician.
3. Complete and pass an open-book written examination.
4. Complete and pass a practical evaluation given by an approved evaluator.  
\* Certification expires January 1 of the next year.

### CLINICS

1. If your club has an approved clinician and evaluator you will need to obtain all pertinent materials from the Gateway Region office. You will also need to inform the office personnel of your scheduled dates for conducting the required clinics and practical evaluations at least two weeks in advance.
2. If your club does not have an approved clinician and/or evaluator, but does have persons interested in obtaining approval, Train the Trainer clinics will be offered for administering

referee and scorekeeping clinics. You will be responsible for obtaining all pertinent materials from the Gateway Region office. You will also need to inform the office personnel of your scheduled dates for conducting the required clinics and practical evaluations at least two weeks in advance.

3. If your club does not have an approved clinician or evaluator, you will be required to contact the office as soon as possible. Depending on the size and location of your club, one or more of the following options may be available:
  - a. A region approved clinician and evaluator will be sent to your area to conduct the clinic and practical evaluation.
  - b. Attend a clinic and practical evaluation being held by another club in your area
  - c. Attend a region sponsored clinic and practical evaluation.

The region requires a two week time period in order to coordinate clinics and clinicians. You will be responsible for obtaining all pertinent materials from the Gateway Region office.

### PRACTICAL EVALUATIONS

1. Practical evaluations must be conducted in a gymnasium during a game situation. (Minimum of 18 participants required. Two (2) teams playing and one (1) team officiating).
2. An approved evaluator will conduct all practical evaluations. Date, time, and place is required to be approved two weeks in advance.
3. Must be completed one (1) week prior to competing in a sanctioned tournament.

### JUNIOR OFFICIATING POLICIES

- When players are officiating (at any age level), it is mandatory that the officiating team's coach or assistant coach be part of the officiating team or remain at or near the scorer's table throughout the entire officiating assignment. Coaches, parents and all others are not allowed to stand on/at the referee stand with the referee during junior events.
- A maximum of four people are allowed at the scorekeeping table: scorer, flipper, libero tracker and coach or assistant coach who is supervising.
- Members of the officiating team may not use any electronic devices (including, but not limited to cell phones and I-pods) during their officiating assignment, except for the purpose of timing warm-ups. Officiating members found using electronic devices during a match will be subject to a five-point penalty assessed to the first set of their next match.
- A Junior Officials' Mentoring Program has been implemented for the 11s and 12s Division. When available, the region will provide one mentor per each court to assist/critique the officiating throughout the pool play and then referee the playoffs. Adult mentors must be background screened. If no mentors are at a tournament, only adults or juniors, 15 years and older, are allowed to be the 1<sup>st</sup> referee; exceptions must be approved by the Tournament Director.
- If a junior player is refereeing a playoff match, the Tournament Director has the authority to replace that official if deemed necessary, unless the player is an adult certified referee.

### PLAYOFF REQUIREMENTS

- Teams not participating in playoffs cannot be required to perform any officiating duties in playoffs.
- Teams that advance to playoffs and then cannot continue playing for any reason must still fulfill any officiating duty required of the losing team in bracket play.

- It is the responsibility of the individual teams to check the standings for playoff berths and/or officiating duties.

### TEAM PENALTIES

1. If your team does not attend and complete their clinic requirements one (1) week prior to competing, you will not be eligible to play in any Gateway Region tournaments until compliance is met or officials fees are paid (preferably in advance) to the Tournament Director.
  2. Written reports of repeated unsatisfactory officiating will result in a review by the Officials' Board or their designee and another practical clinic may be required. If subsequent practical clinics are required, a \$75 fee per clinic must be paid to the Region. This fee will cover the costs associated with the clinic.
  3. Continued problems may result in team suspensions.
- Teams that arrive late for officiating duties will be charged a \$100 fine, payable to the Tournament Director to pay the replacement officials (1<sup>st</sup> Referee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Referee and Scorer paid \$20 each, the visual Scorer, each line judge, and the Tournament Director paid \$10 each). In addition, the team will be penalized one point per minute late in the next set up to a maximum of one set.
  - Teams that do not stay for officiating assignments will be fined \$150 payable to the Gateway Region to, in part, pay the replacement officials (1<sup>st</sup> Referee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Referee and Scorer paid \$20 each, each line judge and the visual Scorer paid \$10 each, Tournament Director paid \$20 and \$40 to the Gateway Region).
  - Teams with outstanding fines may not participate in any sanctioned USAV event until all debts are paid.

### TEAM RANKINGS

In an effort to place regional teams in their correct order when seeding events, the USAV National Office has asked all regions to provide a list of junior teams ranked by strength. This list is also helpful to Gateway tournament directors when seeding events within our region. The girl's first rankings of each season will be posted in early March and will be updated frequently as additional results are processed. We will discontinue updating the ranking list at the time of seeding for the Gateway Regional Championships.

The ranking system used is based on head-to-head game record of teams within the same age level. Results from competition between two Gateway teams played outside the region, will be included provided the results are verified online or by a rep/coach from both teams. This information can be emailed to [mayer@gatewayvb.org](mailto:mayer@gatewayvb.org). No results are considered when a team's opponent is from a higher or lower age level. Playing more tournaments within the correct level will contribute to the accuracy of each team's rank.

## GATEWAY REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Teams may play in only one Regional Championships event.

Teams that drop out of the Gateway Regional Championships less than 24 hours prior to the start of the tournament may be penalized. Penalties may include, but are not limited to the following: imposing a \$200 monetary fine to the club, prohibiting the club from registering the following season and/or prohibiting the club from participating in the Gateway Regional Championships for the following season.

If a team drops from Regionals to play in another volleyball event (i.e. Qualifier) after the entry deadline, the club will be banned from participating in Regionals the following year.

### GIRL'S JUNIOR REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The Gateway Regional Championships are divided into 2 weekends. Specific information regarding the dates and entry process will be posted on the Gateway website.

Teams will enter the Regional Championships in either a combined Gold/Silver tournament OR a combined Bronze/Copper tournament with the following restrictions:

- Girl's teams may not play in the Gold/Silver division of the Regional Championships in a higher age level than the level of registration at the beginning of the season. Age waived teams may not play in the Gold/Silver division of Regionals at any age group. **(An exception is the 11s age division where age waived teams may participate in either the Gold/Silver or Bronze/Copper divisions.)** Girl's teams with age waived players may participate in the Bronze/Copper division of their own age group or the Bronze/Copper division of a higher age group. However, the tournament director has the right to 'bump' the team up to a higher age group if he/she feels the team is too strong to participate in the Bronze/Copper tournament at their age group.
- Players on the roster of a team in the Gold/Silver division of Regionals **ARE NOT** eligible to participate on a team in the Bronze/Copper division. Players on the roster of a team in the Bronze/Copper division **may be** added to a gold/silver roster.
- Teams that enter the Gold/Silver tournament (excluding 11s teams) must have participated in a minimum of two Gateway tournaments prior to April 1. These tournaments must be the same age level that they will be playing in Regionals. This requirement is for seeding purposes.
- All individual prizes will be custom-made Gateway Region medals.

#### SPECIFICS ON THE COMBINED GOLD/SILVER TOURNAMENT

- Teams are seeded into combined Gold/Silver pools on Saturday based on season results.
- POOL PLAY will determine seeding into either the gold or silver playoffs – at minimum, the top two teams advance to gold playoffs, all others advance to silver playoffs. Additional brackets may be added as needed, based on the number of entries.
- All playoffs will be double elimination format throughout (guaranteeing a minimum of 2 matches on Sunday).
- Individual awards for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place teams in gold playoffs plus team award.

- Individual awards for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams in silver playoffs plus team award.
- Gold division finish will be used to award GJNC bids to eligible teams (except for the 11s age division where no GJNC is held). Teams must accept or decline a Gateway Region club bid before the first gold playoff bracket match.
- Gateway rule variations do not apply to divisions that award bids to the JNC event.

### SPECIFICS ON THE COMBINED BRONZE/COPPER TOURNAMENT

- All teams are seeded into pool play on Saturday based on season results.
- POOL PLAY will determine seeding into either the bronze or copper playoffs - at minimum, the top two teams advance to bronze playoffs, all others advance to copper playoffs. Additional brackets may be added as needed, based on the number of entries.
- All playoffs will be double elimination format throughout (guaranteeing a minimum of 2 matches on Sunday).
- Individual awards for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place teams in bronze playoffs plus team award.
- Individual awards for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams in copper playoffs plus team award.

### ENTRY TO USA GIRL'S JUNIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (GJNC)

In all of the girl's divisions, teams must earn a bid into the JNC due to the high number of teams that want to enter. Entry process details are listed in the Pre-Tournament Manual located on the USA Volleyball website, [usavolleyball.org](http://usavolleyball.org). For a team to be eligible the entry process must be completed and the appropriate forms in the Gateway Office by the deadlines posted on the Gateway web page. Late entries may be processed, but there are no guarantees that the team will be eligible for the GJNC. Some general policies regarding the bid process are as follows.

- I. Girl's teams interested in playing in the **Open Division** must attend one of the USAV Junior National Qualifiers. A schedule of these events is listed on the USA Volleyball web page. Teams who forfeit bids earned at a Qualifier will be subject to penalties imposed by USA Volleyball. If a team qualifies for the JNC at one of the Qualifying Tournaments, individual players are frozen on that team's roster for the Gateway Regional Tournament. Teams that have participated in the Open Division at a Qualifier(s) but did not earn a bid may still be eligible for an "At-Large" Open bid. The At Large application process is detailed in the USAV Pre-Tournament Manual. Bids are awarded based on results submitted.
- II. The Gateway Region is guaranteed entries into two separate **Club Divisions**: the National Division and the American Division (excluding the Girl's 11s and the 8s and 10s programs). Each region in the country with a minimum of 200 registered junior girls from the season prior receives one bid into the National Division. The highest finisher in the Gateway Region Championships that has completed the entry process for the JNC and has not already qualified will receive the National Division bid for Gateway. American Division bids are allocated to regions based on the total number of girls registered from the season prior. Generally, the larger regions receive at least one American Division bid while the smaller regions do not receive any bids. The next highest finisher that has completed the entry process and has not already qualified will receive the American Division bid for Gateway. Bids into the National and American Divisions can also be earned through the National Qualifiers.

- III. Additional GJNC club division bids may be reallocated to Gateway if other regions return their bids to the pool. Again, these bids will be offered to teams based on their having completed the entry process and their finish in the Gateway Regional Championships.

### NOTES:

- Any team entering the GJNC will be totally responsible for their own entry fees and expenses.
- If a team applies for entry into the GJNC, earns a bid at Regionals and chooses to not take the bid, they must be prepared to forfeit their entry fee and may be subject to additional penalties by USA Volleyball. The highest ranked team not accepting the bid will be responsible for the fee and possible penalties.

***If your team is interested in qualification or entry procedures for this event, consult the USAV web page, [usavolleyball.org](http://usavolleyball.org). or contact the Gateway Region Office.***

## ENTRY TO USA BOY'S JUNIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (BJNC)

Entry process details are listed in the Pre Tournament manual posted on the USA Volleyball web page, [usavolleyball.org](http://usavolleyball.org). For a team to be eligible the entry process must be complete and the appropriate forms in the Gateway Office by the deadlines posted on the Gateway web page. Late entries may be processed, but there are no guarantees that the team will be eligible for the BJNC. Some general policies regarding the bid process are as follows:

- I. The Boy's JNC will offer an Open Division in the 18, 17, 16, 15 and 14 age levels. Teams may earn a position into the Open Division based on their performance in designated Bid Tournaments (such as the Gateway Boy's Festival in January) offered throughout the country. Check the USAV web page for a list of these events. "At Large" bids will also be available for teams that have completed the At Large application process and awarded primarily based on team strength.
- II. A Club Division is offered in the 12 – 18 age levels. Entries for the boy's event are lower than the girl's; therefore, teams that have completed all entry requirements by the deadlines have historically been accepted. However, if a club division is oversubscribed, date of entry is the current criteria being used to determine the field.

***If your team is interested in qualification or entry procedures for this event, consult the USAV web page, [usavolleyball.org](http://usavolleyball.org). or contact the Gateway Region Office.***

### NOTE:

- Any team entering the BJNC will be totally responsible for their own entry fees and expenses.

**\*\*GATEWAY REGION USAV DUE PROCESS\*\***

**PURPOSE**

If an individual is suspected of wrongdoing within a Regional volleyball context where a sanction or penalty may be necessary, due process involves the right of the individual to present his/her side of the story, to receive fair consideration and to have the opportunity to have the Region's decision reconsidered by a higher authority. Gateway's due process guidelines were developed to:

1. Ensure that Region members are treated fairly;
2. Render consistent treatment of members within the Region;
3. Increase the probability that Region decisions will be upheld on appeal within USA Volleyball; and
4. Form a foundation of comprehensive factual information that would be necessary in the event of any legal action.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE PROCESS**

Gateway members have an obligation to be familiar with the rules, guidelines and ethics codes of the Gateway Region and USA Volleyball. Neither lack of awareness, nor misunderstanding of a rule or standard is a defense to a charge of wrongdoing. When a member is uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate policy or ethics, he or she must consult with knowledgeable authorities.

When a member believes that there may have been a violation of policy or ethics by another member, he or she should attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of the other member if an informal resolution appears appropriate and when intervention does not violate any member rights.

If you feel a violation is not appropriate for informal resolution or if informal resolution did not resolve the violation properly, you may file an official grievance. The steps for this process are:

1. Contact the Gateway Region Office or the appropriate Executive Board Member.
2. Submit a written complaint summarizing the violation to the Gateway Region Office or an Executive Board member, which complaint should include the following information:
  - a. Your name, phone number and email address;
  - b. Identity of the club and club representative in violation;
  - c. Description of the violation; and
  - d. Contact information for any witnesses to the violation and any supporting documentation from witnesses, if available.

Members of the Gateway Region must cooperate in investigations, proceedings and resulting sanctions and other requirements. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.

Members of the Gateway Region should not file complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the respondent rather than to protect the public.

## DUE PROCESS GUIDELINES

The Executive Board is charged with the primary responsibility of judicial consideration relating to:

1. Violations of the USAV Participant Code of Conduct set forth on the Gateway Region Individual Membership Form;
2. All club, team and individual eligibility matters; and
3. Any other matter of ethics pertaining to participation in Gateway Region events or activities.

## PROCESS OF ADJUDICATION

### I. VIOLATIONS

All violations, general and specific, committed by registered members will be categorized according to the following schedule:

#### A. Category I Violations

Minor incidents for which an automatic penalty, fine or sanction may be imposed under applicable Region policies. Examples include, but are not limited to, failure to complete officiating duties at a tournament, failure to have certified officials by specified dates, and failure to wear proper uniforms at a tournament.

#### B. Category II Violations

Incidents involving misconduct. Examples include, but are not limited to, improper recruiting (undue pressure, false promises, post-commitment recruiting, undermining another club, team or coach), eligibility and/or registration violations, or failure to fulfill the terms of a previous sanction.

#### C. Category III Violations

Incidents involving serious misconduct, which may, or may not, require immediate action, before and without hearing. Examples include, but are not limited to, possession and/or use of alcohol by a junior member, intentional damage to property (including facilities, equipment and/or vehicles), or theft of property.

#### D. Category IV Violations

Incidents involving behavior which jeopardizes the safety of any individual, requiring immediate action, before and without hearing. Examples include, but are not limited to, sexual misconduct or other inappropriate conduct with a junior, violence or threatening behavior, or actions which seriously undermine or threaten a player (including oneself), club, team, coach, official or the Gateway Region.

### II. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Individuals, groups of individuals or organizations which commit a violation are subject to one or more of the following disciplinary actions, consistent with the USA Volleyball Participant Code of Conduct:

1. Financial penalty - assessment of a specific monetary penalty.
2. Probation - a warning that further violation of the rules may result in suspension.
3. Suspension - removal of eligibility for participation in some or all sanctioned events and activities for a period not to exceed 12 months.
4. Expulsion - removal of eligibility for participation in some or all sanctioned events and activities for a period of more than 12 months.

### **III. RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT**

Any club, team or individual which is a member of the Gateway Region or which is eligible for membership in the Gateway Region may seek a redress of any volleyball-related grievance that directly affects it, him or her, by filing a written complaint as defined in the Grievance Procedure Process. In cases of serious misconduct (Category III) or when the safety of an individual is at risk (Category IV), notification may initially be given verbally to the Commissioner, an Executive Board member, or an authorized representative of the Gateway Region. In addition, the Commissioner, any member of the Region Board and any member of the Gateway Region Office staff may submit a complaint on behalf of the Region.

### **IV. FIRST LEVEL OF ADJUDICATION**

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Gateway Region Commissioner, after reviewing the complaint, shall make an initial determination as to the Category of Violation. The Commissioner shall advise the Executive Board of the complaint and shall review the facts and take one or more of the following actions:

1. In the case of a Category I Violation, imposing a sanction appropriate for such violation as provided by applicable Region policies; by way of clarification, applicable Region policies may authorize the Commissioner, the Gateway Region Office, a tournament director or other person to impose a sanction in the case of a Category I Violation;
2. In the case of a Category II, III or IV Violation, imposing any temporary sanction as the Commissioner may determine is appropriate, such sanction to remain in force until the complaint and such sanction may be considered at a hearing of a Review Panel, which the Commissioner shall schedule as described below;
3. Taking no action after determining that the complaint is without merit or that the Region is not the proper authority for addressing the complaint;
4. Taking such action as the Commissioner may determine is appropriate to attempt to resolve the matter informally; and/or
5. Scheduling a hearing of a Review Panel to consider the complaint, as follows:  
On or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day after the later of the receipt of a complaint or the conclusion of a failed attempt at informal resolution, if any, the Gateway Region Office shall send written notice of the hearing by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service. The notice will include:
  - a. A list of the alleged violations to be considered at the hearing;
  - b. A description of any temporary sanction imposed;
  - c. A statement that the alleged offender has a right to respond in writing, including the required timeframe;
  - d. The date, time and location for a hearing before the Review Panel, which will not be sooner than the 10th day following the date of mailing of the notice unless the Commissioner makes a specific determination that an earlier hearing is appropriate under the circumstances;
  - e. The names of the individuals who will constitute the Review Panel;
  - f. A description of possible sanctions; and
  - g. Complete disclosure of the right to appeal (inclusion of a copy of these Gateway Region USAV Due Process guidelines with the notice of the hearing is sufficient for this purpose).

Notification of the scheduling of a hearing may be done verbally or via electronic media, however the oral, fax or email notice must be promptly followed by a written notice sent by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service.

In the case of a Category I Violation for which the Commissioner, the Gateway Region Office, a tournament director or other person has imposed a sanction authorized by applicable Region policies, the offender may appeal the sanction to the Commissioner by filing a written request for appeal, reciting the reasons for the appeal, with the Gateway Region Office on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day following the date of the violation. If the offender fails to file a timely and proper request for appeal, then the offender shall have forfeited his or her right to appeal. If the offender files a timely and proper request for appeal, the Commissioner shall consider the appeal promptly and the Commissioner's decision shall be final. There shall be no further appeals with respect to a Category I Violation.

### Initial Review Panel Hearing Process

The hearing will be structured so that the Review Panel has an opportunity to be presented with all sides of the controversy. The Review Panel has full authority to conduct the hearing as it may determine in its discretion, and has full authority over decisions concerning procedural matters; the Review Panel is not required to apply any formal rules of evidence to the hearing. The hearing may include testimony by those directly involved, whether in person or in writing. The hearing may be conducted in person or via electronic media. The hearing may be open or closed to other parties. An official recorder of minutes will be provided by the Gateway Region.

#### 1. Review Panel

The Review Panel will be comprised of three Executive Board members selected by the Commissioner (one member will be identified as Chair).

#### 2. Rights of the Alleged Offender

The alleged offender will be afforded the opportunity, prior to and/or during the hearing, to review any written complaints or other materials provided to the Review Panel at or prior to the hearing. The alleged offender will also be given the opportunity to respond to his or her accuser(s) through direct inquiry. In specific instances, however, the right to a hostile cross examination may be determined to be inappropriate (i.e. sexual abuse of a minor). In such cases, confrontation shall mean the right of the Chair of the Review Panel to ask questions of a witness on behalf of the alleged offender. This review and confrontation may be conducted in person or via electronic media.

#### 3. Determination of Outcome

The Review Panel will make its decision based upon a preponderance of the evidence, i.e., whether it is more likely than not (51%) that a violation occurred, and the decision of a majority of the individuals serving on the Review Panel shall constitute the decision of the Review Panel. The Review Panel will make its decision promptly following the conclusion of the hearing, but no later than 60 days following the conclusion of the hearing unless the Commissioner determines to extend such time period. The Gateway Region Office shall notify the alleged offender of the outcome of the Review Panel hearing, in writing, by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service, promptly following the Review Panel

reaching a decision. Where disciplinary action is imposed, the notice of sanction shall include:

1. A summary of the violations;
2. The facts found by a preponderance of the evidence supporting the decision;
3. A description of the sanction(s) imposed, including the term(s) of effect;
4. A statement of the authority for the sanction(s); and
5. Complete disclosure of the right to appeal (inclusion of a copy of these Gateway Region USAV Due Process guidelines with the notice of the hearing is sufficient for this purpose).

Initial notification to the offender may be given verbally or via electronic media, however the oral, fax or email notice must be promptly followed by a written notice sent by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service. The Review Panel's findings and decision must also be filed with the Gateway Region Office.

The sanction(s) imposed, the Review Panel's finding and decision, and/or any of the testimony, materials or other information presented at the hearing or made available to the Review Panel or the offender may be made publicly available at the discretion of the Commissioner.

Any sanction imposed by the Review Panel shall take effect immediately upon the issuance of the Review Panel's decision and shall remain in effect during the pendency of any appeal, unless the Commissioner determines otherwise at his or her discretion.

### V. APPEAL PROCESS

An individual receiving a sanction from a Review Panel may appeal the sanction by notifying the Commissioner, or his or her designate, in writing of his or her request for an Appeal Hearing, which request must recite the reasons for the appeal, on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day following the date of the offender's receipt of the notice of outcome of the Review Panel hearing. The appeal request must be sent by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service. Failure to file the request in the prescribed manner will result in forfeiture of the right to appeal. Upon receipt of a timely and proper appeal request, the Gateway Region Office will schedule an Appeal Hearing in the same manner as the Review Panel hearing.

#### Appeal Hearing

The Appeal Hearing is not required to be a *de novo* proceeding. The Appeal Panel will restrict its review to the reasons for the appeal and may call such witnesses as it deems necessary to make a ruling. The Appeal Panel has full authority to conduct the hearing as it may determine in its discretion, and has full authority over decisions concerning procedural matters; the Appeal Panel is not required to apply any formal rules of evidence to the hearing. The Appeal Panel has full authority to amend (eliminate, add, reduce or increase) any sanctions imposed by the Review Panel as the Appeal Panel may determine in its discretion. The hearing may be conducted in person or via

electronic media. The hearing may be open or closed to other parties. An official recorder of minutes will be provided by the Gateway Region.

### 1. Notification of Hearing

On or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day after the receipt of a timely and proper appeal request, the Gateway Region Office shall send written notice of the hearing by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service. The notice shall include:

1. A list of the violations/sanctions being appealed;
2. The date, time and location for hearing before an Appeal Panel, which shall not be sooner than the 10th day following the date of mailing of the notice unless the Commissioner makes a specific determination that an earlier hearing is appropriate under the circumstances;
3. The names of the individuals who will constitute the Appeal Panel; and
4. A statement that the decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final and not subject to further review, except as an Exceptional Appeal (section VI below).

### 2. Appeal Panel

The Appeal Panel shall be comprised of three At-Large Board members selected by the Commissioner (one member will be identified as Chair), and shall not include any member who served on the Review Panel.

### 3. Rights of the Appellant

The appellant will be afforded the opportunity to address the Appeal Panel and, prior to and/or during the hearing, to review any written documentation that will be provided to the Appeal Panel at or prior to the hearing.

### 4. Notice of the Outcome

The Appeal Panel will make its decision based upon a preponderance of the evidence, i.e., whether it is more likely than not (51%) that a violation occurred, and the decision of a majority of the individuals serving on the Appeal Panel shall constitute the decision of the Appeal Panel. The Appeal Panel will make its decision promptly following the conclusion of the hearing, but no later than 60 days following the conclusion of the hearing unless the Commissioner determines to extend such time period. The Gateway Region Office shall notify the appellant of the outcome of the Appeal Panel hearing, in writing, by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service, promptly following the Appeal Panel reaching a decision. The notice of outcome shall include:

1. A summary of the violations;
2. The facts found by a preponderance of the evidence supporting the decision;
3. A description the sanction(s) imposed/upheld, as amended, including the term(s) of effect;
4. A statement of the authority for the sanction(s); and
5. A statement that the decision of the Appeal Panel shall be final and not subject to further review, except as an Exceptional Appeal (section VI below).

Initial notification to the appellant may be given verbally or via electronic media, however the oral, fax or email notice must be promptly followed by a written notice sent by USPS certified mail or by a nationally recognized overnight delivery service. The Appeal Panel's findings and decision must also be filed with the Gateway Region Office.

The sanction(s) imposed, the Appeal Panel's finding and decision, and/or any of the testimony, materials or other information presented at the hearing or made available to the Appeal Panel or the appellant may be made publicly available at the discretion of the Commissioner.

### **VI. EXCEPTIONAL APPEAL**

Teams or individuals registered with a USVBA Regional Volleyball Association, who have been disciplined by such Regional Volleyball Association, may appeal in writing to the USA Volleyball National Ethics and Eligibility Committee, but such appeal shall be limited only to determining whether the appealing party received due process. Information regarding USA Volleyball Corporate Ethics and Eligibility appeal processes can be found in Article XI of the Official USA Volleyball Operating Code or By-laws.

