GEVA Parent Information Guide for the 2024 – 2025 Season

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 About Juniors in the Region

The Garden Empire Volleyball Association (GEVA) is the local Regional Volleyball Authority of USA Volleyball, the National Governing Body of Volleyball, and as such is responsible for the promotion and growth of volleyball in New Jersey, Long Island, and the Greater Metropolitan Area of New York City (to include Westchester, Rockland, Dutchess, Putnam, and Orange Counties).

GEVA promotes volleyball by offering competition, training, and education in a multitude of disciplines including but not limited to Juniors. We typically authorize clubs who in turn offer training programs, and competitive opportunities on many levels. We authorize and currently conduct indoor tournaments throughout the winter and spring months and authorize outdoor, beach and grass tournaments in the spring & summer months. GEVA Juniors conducts programs including Junior High Performance and Paralympic Volleyball as well as education opportunities for Coaches, Players and Parents.

Junior's Tournaments are normally held on weekends at various venues throughout the region and usually last all day. A team can expect to play at least sixt sets per tournament; more should they advance to the playoffs.

GEVA offers age level competition for Junior athletes in single age groups starting at 10u and continuing through 18u as well as programs for younger folks. (Typically 12s and younger play as 12s in competitions).

1.2 Content Changes / Revisions

Content in this document is subject to change upon review and approval of the GEVA Junior Competition Committee or at the direction of the Junior Director. Any policy revisions or clarifications published to the GEVA website will supersede the contents of this document based on date/timestamp of the publication.

2.0 Parents Guide to Club Volleyball

2.1 Choosing a Club

Choosing a volleyball club can be a difficult decision. It is a serious commitment in dedication to training, time and money. This guide is intended to help your family make

an educated decision about selecting an appropriate club or team for your player. You will want to contact prospective clubs and coaches and ask at a minimum the following questions: *This is particularly important as we move forward this season*

- What is the primary goal of the club - is it competitive, recreational, or developmental training?
- What are the projected fees and what do they cover (gym costs, coach stipends, club dues, uniforms etc.)?
- If the team travels to out of town tournaments, who covers the coach's expenses (traveling costs, hotels, meals). Are travel fees separate, or included, and are there any other additional costs? Tabulate all fees to compare costs between clubs.
- How many practices are held per week; when, where, and how long?
- Does the practice schedule change or remain the same through the season?
- What are the expectations of the club with regard to the commitment from the player? What happens if I miss a practice or tournament - possibly due to other sports, sickness, or religious events?
- Are practices held during major holidays - if so what days and times?
- Is other training expected, or available, and at what time and cost?
- Will the team participate in local, regional or national level tournaments? How many and when will the schedule be confirmed?
- Is the team an open or club level team and will the team participate in National Qualifiers, National Championships, or other end of Season Tournaments? If so, what are the additional costs?
- What are the travel policies, does the player travel with the team or with parents?

These questions may be difficult for clubs to answer for the upcoming season. Please give them the courtesy and respect as they negotiate through the ever challenging new season trials and tribulations.

2.2 Other Questions to Ask

- Who will be the coach of my team and what are their credentials and experience? *One of the most important elements of club volleyball is the nature and quality of the coaching your child will receive.*
- How many players will be on the team, what spots have been filled and how many are available?
- How does the selection process work? How will I be notified?
- How long is the spot held and when do I have to make a decision? (By GEVA policy you always have at least the day of the offer plus three days to accept an offer. This season no affiliations will become binding prior to October 1, 2024. Please refer to the GEVA Recruiting and Commitment Policy for more information.)
- What is the club or team policy on playing time? (equal, shared, performance only, play to win, etc.)
- Will players and/or parents be expected to participate in fundraising activities? If so, get details on the financial commitment and time requirements.

- Are there written policies and procedures and is there a process to address and escalate complaints?

2.3 Considerations

Parents should consider the goal of your young adult's experience playing club volleyball. Are they playing for health and recreation, more experience for high school or junior play or possibly to play at the college level? Although college coaches attend some major events, getting recruited is more about self-marketing than "being discovered". Knowing where the coaches from colleges you want to attend will be recruiting or available, is just as important as going to events that you perceive the coaches will be attending.

As a parent of a volleyball player, you have a shared responsibility with the player and club. Other than providing financial support you may be called on to be a team parent or chaperone or to assist with transportation of teammates. You will also help by showing and encouraging good sportsmanship and responsible behavior. Parents should be careful of behaviors that are detrimental to the team. Look at both teams on the court, not just your player.

Clubs are obligated to deliver what they promise and treat all players and all parents with dignity and respect. They must help ensure that the adults involved with your child are positive role models. Please keep in mind that clubs are independent businesses and need to balance their needs with the needs of all of the club members. There is no one type of club that is appropriate for everyone and you should feel confident that you will find an appropriate match for your player. Do not get pressured into making a hasty decision. Talk to other clubs and parents. View each club's offerings as a product; shop for what fits your player and your family needs.

GEVA Juniors Volleyball and USA Volleyball have strict restrictions on player transfers from club to club. This is necessary to protect players, their teammates, and their clubs and is in accordance with USA Volleyball rules . In choosing a club, carefully consider your goals with potential clubs' emphasis on elite teams versus developmental teams offered, cost, practice quantity and quality, number of coaches and their qualifications, distance to tournaments, length of the season, playing time, and tournament schedule.

Most clubs will require that you sign a contract. The contract may be a legally binding agreement between the club and you, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a junior player. Read and understand what you are committing to before signing! Please be aware that what GEVA regards as a *binding commitment* is completely separate from any legal contract or agreement which you sign with a club. See the GEVA Recruiting and Commitment Policy for more information. Clubs are independent businesses and as

such their business and financial actions are not regulated by the Garden Empire Regional Volleyball Association.
Their membership in our organization is regulated and is monitored for ethical behavior and the best practices of our sport.

2.4 Conclusion

Choosing a club is serious business; a bad decision can make for a very long season or a disappointing experience. A little time researching your options and opportunities may lead to a more rewarding Club Volleyball experience. Remember to review the GEVA Recruiting and Commitment Policy and be sure to ask a lot of questions. If a club operates outside these guidelines or is hesitant to answer these questions or provide written policies, it may be best to reconsider. Remember all youth sports including Volleyball are supposed to be FUN!

3.0 Recruiting and Commitment Policy

The Recruiting and Commitment Policy has been amended for the 2024 -2025 season. It is posted in both the Juniors and Club Director resource centers on the website. Please review carefully.

4.0 USAV Age Definitions

USA Volleyball amended the Age Group definitions starting with the 2020 -2021 season. These changes remain in effect.
The Cut Off Date has been moved to July 1st. The intent is to allow more players (not all players) to play with players in their own grade. It also allows Juniors in High School who will reach the age of eighteen in their Junior Year of High School to be rostered on seventeen and under teams. There are restrictions, consult your Club Director. If they can not answer your questions, please ask them to consult the Junior Office, we will assist them. The Junior Office, Registrar or Admin will not answer questions directly from players or parents.

Refer to: 2024-2025 USAV Age Definitions

5.0 Parent / Spectator Policy

5.1 Entry into Events / Facilities

IMPORTANT NOTICE – Entry into any Authorized Event is granted as a courtesy. GEVA and the Facility reserve the right to Non-Discriminately refuse entry to any person or persons. If you enter to attend this GEVA Region Authorized event, you are agreeing to abide by the code of conduct and facility guidelines.

Without regard to the perception that events are being held in Public Facilities, the facilities are contracted to GEVA and GEVA and the facilities control the admittance guidelines and rules.

5.2 Conduct

How to Behave:

- ✓ I will abide by the official rules of USA Volleyball and the GEVA Region.
- ✓ I will display good sportsmanship at all times.
- ✓ I will encourage my child, and their team as well as all participants without regard to the outcome on the court.
- ✓ I will acknowledge effort and good performance, remembering that all of the players in this event are amateur athletes and someone's child
- ✓ I will honor the rules of the host and the host facility.
- ✓ I will generate goodwill by being polite and respectful to those around me at this event.
- ✓ I will redirect any negative comments from others to the Site Director.
- ✓ I will notify the Site Director in the event that I witness any illegal activity.
- ✓ I will support the policies and guidelines of the team and club that I represent.
- ✓ I will model exemplary spectator behavior while attending this event.
- ✓ I will respect the tradition of the sport of volleyball by being a good ambassador.

How Not to Behave:

- ✓ I will not harass or intimidate the officials, line judges, or score table personnel.
- ✓ I will not coach my child from the bleachers or sidelines.
- ✓ I will not criticize my child's coach or their teammates.
- ✓ I will not participate on the court without being a current GEVA USA member on a Junior Roster.
- ✓ I will not bring or carry any illegal items or material in a GEVA Region event.

✓ I will refrain from bringing or consuming alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substances or using inappropriate language at any Youth / Junior Volleyball event.

Note: Any violation of this Code of Conduct will result in you being asked to leave the site/facility and may result in you possibly being banned from attending future GEVA Region authorized events. Any on-site GEVA Administrator and/or the Site Director have the final say regarding their individual event. Local law enforcement will be contacted if necessary, to resolve any disputes or altercations.

6.0 GEVA / USAV Useful Links

GEVA Website: www.geva.org
GEVA Social Media: www.geva.org/social
USA Volleyball: https://usavolleyball.org/

7.0 Violations

Please report all suspected violations of any USAV or GEVA policy to the GEVA Commissioner by using the GEVA Incident Report found on the GEVA website.

Questions or concerns may be directed to the GEVA Region – Junior Division office via juniors@geva.org.

7.1 GEVA Region Administrative Suspension Policy (Region Hold)

USAV registration as “current” is required for participation in any USAV/GEVA authorized event or approval for any administrative position. In certain instances, registration or renewal through the USAV Member management system will be declined until a pending “Region Administrative Suspension” is resolved.

Region Administrative Suspension is a category of membership used by the USAV, GEVA and The Center for Safesports to temporarily remove the individual member’s privilege of participating in authorized competitions or other GEVA /USAV authorized events, or conducting business or other club activities as a Club Director or Administrator.

The Region Administrative Suspension does not fully suspend a current membership but may affect current and future participation or negate the possibility of renewal.

All regions of USAV recognize and respect all Region Administrative Suspension without regard to what governing body issued them.

Possible reasons for the imposition of Region Administrative Suspension may include:

1. Behavioral incidents which impact the safety and well-being of others
2. The imposition of “immediate automatic sanctions” in accordance with the USA Volleyball, GEVA Bylaws or The Center for SafeSport.
3. Other circumstances that require the immediate imposition of a Region Administrative Suspension necessary to protect the interests of GEVA. These circumstances require prior review and approval of the Executive Committee.

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