



VOLLEYBALL

TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Traditional Team Competition

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Volleyball shall govern all Special Olympics competitions. Special Olympics has created these rules based upon United States Volleyball Association (USVBA) rules, which shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Volleyball and Article I. In such cases, the [Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Volleyball](#) shall apply.

COMPETITION MANAGEMENT

1. Team Classification
 - a. A team's age group is determined by the oldest player on the team.
 - b. A team without competition in their age group may be assigned to a different age group.
 - c. Coed teams participate in the men's division.
 - d. A minimum of seven (7) and maximum of 12 players are on a roster.
2. Team Level
 - a. Each team shall be placed in one (1) of three (3) Levels for play, based on attributes that best characterize the team.
 - b. The Level placement is subject to change by the Volleyball Sport Management Team prior to the tournament.
 - c. A team's level will serve as the basis for division placement.
3. Mandatory Matches
 1. Teams will be divisioned onsite utilizing pool play process. Reference #8 under General Rules.
 2. Competition prior to Summer Games is strongly encouraged.
4. All team members must have participated in the evaluation round in order to participate.

TEAM LEVELS					
	LEVEL 1 (<i>Regulation Volleyball</i>)		LEVEL 2 (<i>Volleyball Lite ball</i>)		LEVEL 3 (<i>Volleyball Lite ball</i>)
1	High to excellent skills and athleticism	1	Above average to average skills and athleticism	1	Average to below average skills and athleticism
2	Implements strategies	2	Some strategy	2	Limited strategy
3	Serves and returns effectively	3	Most serves and returns legal	3	Does not adjust to the way the other team plays
4	Reacts to the way the other team plays	4	Some players aggressive	4	Usually driven by one or two players
5	Aggressive play			5	Serves and returns occasionally successful
				6	Limited aggressiveness

DIVISIONING

1. A divisioning process will be used for volleyball, like all other team sports. The Volleyball Management Team along with SOIN staff will work together to create these divisions by using a combination of age, gender, and ability levels. Results from the preliminary round will be used to gauge the team's ability level.
2. The primary goal with the divisioning process is to create divisions of equal ability for quality competition.
3. Program location and travel time will be considered when scheduling.
4. Team will be grouped in divisions based on a classification round game or minimum game requirement and submitted game records.

SPORT RULES

UNIFORM SPECIFICATIONS

1. All participants must have a playing uniform consisting of jersey, athletic shorts and athletic shoes. No blue jeans or dress slacks allowed.
2. All jerseys must be marked with numbers not less than 8cm (3 inches) in height on the chest and not less than 15cm (6 inches) in height on the back.

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3. Players requesting the use of sweatpants or any other uniform adjustment (due to religious or medical reasons) during any State-sanctioned tournament or match MUST submit a written request to the State Office for approval. Requests must be made one (1) week prior to competition.
4. Jewelry is prohibited. Religious and medical-alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical-alert medal must be taped and may be visible.

EQUIPMENT

1. The playing court shall be 18m x 9m (59 feet X 29' 6").
2. The height of the net measured from the center of the court shall be 2.43m (7' 11").
3. Ball: Level 1 teams will use a regulation volleyball. Level 2 and Level 3 teams will use a Volleyball Lite ball.

GENERAL RULES

1. Each team is required to be at its assigned court by the official start time. If a team is not at its assigned court at the time of the scheduled match, the offending team will forfeit the first set (game) of the match. After an additional five (5) minutes, if the offending team has not reported, the team will forfeit the match.
2. Timeouts
 - a. Each team is allowed two (2) 30-second timeouts per set (game).
 - b. The clock will stop for a timeout in the last two (2) minutes of Match-Play. Timeouts will not stop the clock in Pool Play.
3. Players
 - a. All matches shall start with six (6) players. In the event of injury or illness during a match a team may continue with five (5) players during tournament competition.
 - b. A team will forfeit their match if they are reduced to fewer than five (5) players.
4. Coin Toss
 - a. During the pre-match conference, a coin toss shall be conducted with the captains and head coaches of both teams. The visiting team's captain shall call the toss. The winner shall choose to serve/receive or choose the playing area.
 - b. The loser of the toss shall be given the remaining choice.
 - c. For the third game tiebreaker (if necessary and only during medal round play), the captains and head coaches will meet at center court. Another coin toss will be conducted and will follow the same procedure as the pre-match coin toss.
5. Service
 - a. The team which receives the ball for service shall rotate one (1) position clockwise before serving.
 - b. The server shall have eight (8) seconds after the referee's whistle in which to serve the ball.
 - c. The server shall not have any part of their body in contact with the end line or the lines marking the service area at the time of the serve.
 - d. The server may serve from anywhere on the back end line.
 - e. After a ball is released for service, it may be caught or dropped for re-service a maximum of one (1) additional time.
 - f. The serve shall be considered good if the ball passes over the net. A net serve is legal.
 - g. Service cannot be made with two (2) hands or arms.
 - h. If the ball is served before the referee's whistle, the serve shall be cancelled and a re-serve directed. A second early-serve will result in a side-out.
 - i. Once a server has scored three (3) consecutive points, the team shall rotate to the next server with no penalty.
6. Play
 - a. Each team is allowed a maximum of three (3) successive contacts of the ball.
 - b. The ball may contact any part of the body.
 - c. A player shall not contact the ball more than once without another player touching it in between contacts, except in blocking.
 - d. Any player participating in a block shall have the right to make the next contact.
 - e. The team which executes a block may have three (3) additional contacts after the block.
 - f. The ball shall not come to rest in the arms or hands of a player. The ball must be hit so that it rebounds cleanly after contact.
 - g. A player shall not block or attack a served ball. If a player on the receiving team blocks/attacks a served ball, play shall be stopped and a point shall be awarded to the serving team.
 - h. If a player's action causes the player to contact the net during play, that player shall be charged with a fault.
 - i. A player may step on, but not over, the center line.
 - j. Players may not enter an adjacent court conducting competition in order to play a ball.
 - k. If the volleyball strikes an object above the court, it shall remain in play if it returns to the same side from which



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it was hit, provided the team has hits remaining.

7. Substitutions

- a. Substitutions shall be made when the ball is dead and when recognized by the referee.
- b. A team shall be allowed a maximum of 15 substitutions in any one (1) set (game).
- c. Players re-entering the set (game) must assume their original position in the serving order in relation to other teammates.
- d. Substitutes going on the court must wait by the side of the court in the designated substitution zone until permission is given by the referee.
- e. The original starter shall replace a substitute during the game. There shall be a maximum of three (3) players in any one (1) position (except in the case of injury).

8. Scoring

- a. Pool-Play: two (2) sets will constitute a match during pool-play **OR** 30 minutes, whichever occurs first.
- b. Match-Play (medal round): matches shall consist of the best two (2) out of three (3) sets **OR** 45 minutes, whichever occurs first.
- c. Sets will be played to 25 points and teams must have at least a two (2) point advantage with a cap of 30 points.
- d. Match-Play only: If a third set is needed, teams will play to 15 points and teams must have at least a two (2) point advantage with a cap of 17 points.
- e. A cap is defined by the maximum amount of points a team may score in one (1) set.
- f. The rally system will be used for all sets during a match. Points are scored by the serving team or receiving team following each serve.
- g. When a fault / side-out is committed by one (1) team, a point is awarded to the opposing team.
- h. Medal round tiebreakers (if regulation time runs out), based on game possibilities:
 - i. Set 2 is tied when regulation time runs out. Teams will continue to play until one (1) team has a one (1) point advantage. That team is declared the Set 2 winner. If teams split Sets 1 and 2, then move to the next scenario (10.h.ii) listed below. The team that held serve when time ran out will continue to serve for the set.
 - ii. If teams split Sets 1 and 2 when time runs out, there will be a third set played to five (5) points with no cap. See coin toss runs to determine first serve.
 - iii. If teams are tied in Set 3 when time runs out, the team that holds the serve will continue the serve with the team winning the next point declared the winner.

9. Change of Playing Areas

- a. Teams will change sides and benches between sets of a match.
- b. Correct protocol for changing sides is as follows:
 - i. All team members move counter-clockwise around the court to their bench.

10. Referees

- a. Referees shall have full authority to interpret the rules. For further questions, the Volleyball Sport Management Team shall be consulted.
- b. Ball handling will be called in accordance with the ability level of the athletes.
- c. Line Judges
 - i. Teams will be required to provide Line Judges for matches not involving their team.
 - ii. Line Judges must register with the Tournament Director prior to the start of competition.