



2023-24 Player & Parent Handbook

OUR IDEALS & MISSION

We are a Nationally competitive volleyball club dedicated to providing quality coaches, training and scheduling. AVC is and has been dedicated to providing young athletes with the opportunity to grow and mature through the sport of volleyball.

This is executed in many ways, but one of the most important tools is the culture we have worked hard to create over time. AVC is committed to assisting young athletes in achieving their goals by fostering in them a personal commitment to support each other and work as a team, which requires diligence, perseverance and discipline.

We recognize that all the athletes, parents, members and coaches benefit from being committed to a volleyball club that has a continuity of purpose and that pursues excellence in every aspect. We will continue to learn and grow ourselves as a business year after year, and we appreciate your commitment to us.

Overall – We believe that it is imperative for young players to receive proper volleyball training while learning important life lessons in responsibility, preparedness, and teamwork. At AVC, we prepare players with the physical and mental skills they need to be better athletes, overcome obstacles, and achieve their goals, both on and off the court. We provide a training environment for all skill levels to develop volleyball aptitude, build confidence, and most importantly, have fun. This is what we do.

*Each coach may implement their own additional team rules but below is a guide for players at all levels while under an AVC contract.

PRACTICE POLICIES

Practice will begin at the scheduled time. Only AVC practice T-Shirts are to be worn at practice. Players should take care of putting on shoes, knee pads, ankle braces, net set up, taping, etc. before the start time of practice. Upon arrival to AVC, please go to the right and head upstairs to the players lobby and then down the back stairs when you go to your court for practice.

If you are going to be late to practice, the athlete should contact the coach directly with an approximate arrival time. If an athlete cannot make practice, they should call the coach directly. Injured athletes who can attend school are expected to come to practice to support their team. Even when you cannot participate physically, there is a lot that can be learned though observing and listening to the coach. Participation in any form is valuable.

UNIFORMS

All athletes are required to wear specific AVC uniform gear and equipment. The type of team you are on will determine the requirements. Required uniform packages and their details will be made available to each team, since the packages differ between National, American, and Regional teams (also between age divisions). If items are lost, some may be purchased at AVC pro shop, but uniforms would need to be ordered. Any replacements would not be covered by AVC and the player would need to purchase. Please note, there is at least a 6-week time for uniforms to be printed. Players who do not have proper uniforms at tournaments need to notify their coach. Lack of proper uniform/gear may affect playing time as determined by the coach and/or match officials.

OTHER CLUBS

All athletes who have signed a contract with AVC are not allowed to participate in indoor open gyms/camps/clinics at other clubs in the Cleveland area. This does not include strength training or sand volleyball.

TOURNAMENTS AND TRAVEL

Participation

Players are expected to attend all scheduled tournaments. Scheduling conflicts should be brought to the attention of the coach at the beginning of the year. Conflicts may result in the athlete's court time being affected at practice as the team prepares during those practices leading up to an event. Missed events do not constitute a reimbursement of the participant's fees.

Playing Time

The overall goal is to develop athletes AND to help our program be successful. This is a skill all of our staff is working on perfecting. The methods for this will vary throughout the different levels. At the National level, you are paying to train, no guarantees will be made on playing; winning and qualifying are highly important. At the American and Regional levels, there will be a more balanced opportunity for players to get time. The goal at this level is to win as much as possible while all players have a chance to contribute to the team's success at tournaments. For ALL levels, these decisions are to be determined by the Coach and what they feel is best for the team first. AVC believes all players have important roles and responsibilities to support their team. This support is equally as important when an athlete is on the sideline as when an athlete is on the court.

Team Officiating

Officiating is the shared responsibility of the entire team. All athletes are required to help with line judging, score keeping, libero tracking, score flipping, and R1/R2 officiating. An athlete who has an officiating assignment may not leave a tournament before the assignment is completed. Coaches will provide further information regarding scorekeeper and officiating online clinics. Online clinics are also listed on the OVR website under the "Training" tab and then "Junior Officiating Info". Completing the scoring/officiating is the responsibility of the player and we expect the players to handle this responsibility with great attention to detail and with a positive attitude. This is another area the players can represent AVC, and themselves, in a way people will remember and respect in a positive way.

Overall Tournament Policies

- Playing time for athletes is determined by the performance of the athlete during practices and previous matches and is left to the discretion of the coach.
- Proper demeanor is expected of all members of the Club (athletes, parents, and supporters); this includes treating members of the officiating crew with respect. Failure to do this may result in a potential suspension.
- Only AVC uniform pieces will be worn during tournaments, no other club gear.
- All athletes must abide by the "stay to play" rules of the National tournaments.
- Athlete may not leave tournament site until excused by the coach and no player is to wander off alone between matches.

- Be respectful of referees, work teams and opponents. Any issues must be brought to Coach and Site Director.
- Do not address playing time issues at tournaments. This should be done through contacting the coach later (minimum of 24 hours after last play of the day) to set up a meeting.

Travel Policies

Violation of any travel policy may result in the athlete being sent home immediately at the expense of the parent. Further action by the club may follow.

- Athletes must report any illness or injury to the coaching staff immediately.
- An athlete who damages any property at a hotel or playing facility will be personally responsible for damages. Athletes who may cause any disturbances at a hotel or playing facility will have consequences determined by the AVC Leadership Staff.
- Athletes found in possession of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs (vaping included) will be sent home immediately at the expense of the parent. Further action by the AVC Leadership Staff will follow.

Travel Arrangements

All travel arrangements and accommodations for the season will be the responsibility of the parents.

If the event is a “Stay to Play” tournament, you must book hotels through the link provided by the tournament or your coach (can be found on website under hotels). Teams that fail to meet the “Stay to Play” requirements will not be accepted to participate in the tournament.

- Player's travel to and from the tournament is the responsibility of the parent.
- Player and family are entirely responsible for player’s welfare in travel process.
- Player and family are responsible to transport player from the airport to hotel and vice versa.
- It is mandatory for the player to arrive at the hotel on time for the team meeting, to be determined by coach.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Knowing when to communicate and how to communicate with your athlete's coach is a concern for almost every parent at some time during the season. Most often the concern is how to inquire about issues surrounding playing time. Each coach may implement specific requests on this topic but below is the AVC general policy.

Athletes should be encouraged to talk to the coach when a problem arises (i.e., regarding playing time, position or unclear expectations in practice or competition). We at AVC want the player to feel they can advocate for themselves and to continue to build trust in their relationship with the staff. Parents can best help their athlete by guiding them through this process and supporting communication with the coach. Athletes should be the one to approach a coach regarding "coaching decisions", not the parents. Coaching decisions include, among other things: practice organization, playing time, positions, substitutions, etc....

The amount an athlete is on the court is the result of a complex determination, in that coach's opinion, of the athlete's ability, the athlete's potential, the team's needs at the moment, and the team's needs in the future. The coach will not be required to defend his/her thought process or conclusions in these determinations. It should be expected, however, that the coach be able to relay information to the athlete to explain the athlete's current role on the team and what the athlete needs to improve upon to resolve the concern. We feel this is the best way for the coach-athlete relationship to have mutual respect and trust. If further issues in communication or understanding arise, a parent may request a meeting at that time, the player will need to be present for this meeting.

The athlete and/or parents *SHOULD*:

1. Approach the coach 24 hours after any incident to ask for a meeting time to be set.
2. Expect meetings to be at a location other than a tournament. The offices at AVC are preferred when meeting with athletes (and their parents).
3. Expect that the meeting should be between the coaches of the team and the player first.
4. If a concern remains unresolved, approach the coach to ask for a meeting time to be set. At this time the meeting should be between the athlete, the coaches, and the parents.

5. If the concern remains unresolved, the parent should contact the Division Director for intervention (National/American/Regional).

The athlete and/or parents *SHOULD NOT*:

1. Confront a coach during a practice or during tournaments.
2. Expect meetings to be set during practice or tournament participation.
3. Attempt to “compare” or evaluate another athlete.
4. Use profanity towards the coach.
5. Harass or threaten the coach.
6. Athletes and/or parents that discuss their concerns with other athletes and/or parents are negatively affecting the team culture, and this is considered inappropriate behavior (as elaborated on in the GENERAL BEHAVIOR section of this handbook).

NUTRITION AND THE ATHLETE

Good nutrition is essential for the athlete to be able to compete at a consistent level, not to mention maintain a healthy body. While AVC will be able to assist in guiding the athlete to consume balanced meals and healthy snacks while on trips, you as the parent are the ultimate tool in creating good nutritional habits for life. Our registered dietician, Abby Grimm from FWD Fuel will be offering many seminars throughout the season and these are available to all athletes! She is also available for one-on-one consulting.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR

AVC will not tolerate hostile, aggressive confrontations by a parent towards an official, a director, a coach, an athlete, or another parent. Violation of this policy may result in the athlete being dismissed from the club. In such cases, no refunds will be issued.

It is inappropriate for an athlete or a parent to involve other AVC members (third parties) about a problem the athlete or parent is having with an AVC coach, objections to coaching decisions, or disagreements with an administrative decision.

Any member who, as a third party, hears remarks or stories being told about AVC, its employees or its policies, that cause the member to be concerned is encouraged to call the Director immediately to determine the facts, or to alert the club administration to a situation it may be unaware of.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This writing recognizes that Participants and Parents have been informed of and acknowledge the Academy Volleyball Cleveland our Player/Parent Handbook.

It is also understood that all Participants are responsible for payment of all fees and expenses incurred during the season. Failure to pay tuition/fees may result in loss of practice time or playing time at tournaments.

General Statement from Leadership:

"EXPECTATION OF OUR PLAYERS - The expectation for our athletes as a member of AVC: You must treat this opportunity as a PRIVILEGE. And with that privilege comes a tremendous amount of responsibility. You will be representing yourself, your teammates, and the AVC program. It is important that you choose your actions and communications wisely. The team and the program are bigger than any one individual. And your commitment to excellence is YOUR responsibility--in sport, training, nutrition, physical health, mental health, and public image."

**This handbook provides policies and guidelines associated with our athletes. AVC recognizes that the majority of our athletes are minors. And although players are encouraged to communicate directly with their coaches, we understand that parents are also closely involved. Each coach may implement their own additional team rules based on the age group and the division of their team. This is a guide for players and their parents at all levels while under an AVC contract.

*The term parent includes guardians or other persons who are responsible for the athlete's welfare.