

PAROCHIAL ATHLETIC LEAGUE (PAL)

OMAHA

VOLLEYBALL RULES

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SECTION 1 – NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of this league shall be Parochial Athletic League (PAL) Volleyball Omaha. Information can be found on the league website at <https://palvballomaha.com>.

SECTION 2 – MISSION

To provide an opportunity for eligible students to enjoy a team sport while learning the proper etiquette, rules, and skills of volleyball, emphasizing a Christian attitude of sportsmanship, honesty, teamwork, team spirit, respect, and responsibility.

SECTION 3 – RULES

To help foster age-appropriate skill development, as well as support a positive on-court experience, general rules and guidance have been adopted from various sources including the Nebraska Schools Activities Association (NSAA) and USA Volleyball-Great Plains Region, as appropriate for application to the PAL Volleyball league to enhance the playing experience for youth participants. The rules outlined below are intended to provide guidance and consistency for play within the PAL Volleyball league.

SECTION 4 – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1. Player eligibility includes any of the following:
 1. Students enrolled in a represented school.
 2. Students belonging to a representing parish.
 3. Students enrolled in organization's Religious Education program.
 4. Student from another parish that does not have a participating team at current grade level at their own parish.
2. If a player is currently attending a school or Religious Education program of a parish that has a participating team in their current grade level, that player must play for that school or parish team.
3. If a school or parish does not have a team or the player is unable to play on the participating team due to player cuts, that player may play with another participating school with league permission.
4. Girls and boys are allowed to be rostered on a team with no more than 1 boy on the floor during play. Boys may be rostered with their grade level in 3rd and 4th grades. Boys participating in 5th and 6th grades must play two grade levels up. For example, a boy who is rostered on an 8th grade team must be in 6th grade or younger to participate. In general, 7th and 8th grade boys are not allowed to participate in the PAL Volleyball league.
5. Any exceptions to the above player eligibility rules must be requested and approved by the PAL Volleyball commissioner(s) prior to the first game of the season.

SECTION 5 – UNIFORMS

1. All team members must have uniforms of the same color **with numbers clearly printed on the front and back of jerseys** large enough to see from the referee stand.
2. Libero must have a different color uniform than regular team members **with numbers on front and back of the jersey** large enough to see from the referee stand.
3. No jewelry at all is preferred, but small post or stud earrings may be worn. All other jewelry should be removed. For safety purposes, the referee may request jewelry removal at their discretion with the exception of the stud/post earring. The player will be expected to comply, and the coach will be expected to support the decision.

SECTION 6 – GYMNASIUMS

1. Host schools will provide individuals to run the clock and scoreboard. **Clock operators will need to be present no less than 15 minutes prior to game time.**
2. Gyms will generally be open 30 minutes prior to the first game scheduled and will have discretion to communicate readiness to teams for warm-ups. Warm-ups should be allowed no less than 15 minutes prior to game time.
3. Gyms must have regulation nets, referee stands, boundary lines, antennas, and clearly marked serving lines (can be temporary with cones, tape or permanent lines). See section 14 and Appendix A for serving line requirements.
4. In general, the designated home team for the match will be the official scorebook of record. If both teams agree, the visiting team for the match may keep the official scorebook of record. Host schools are not required to keep the official scorebook or provide scoresheets. Host gym volunteers are not required to keep the official scorebook.
5. Gym admission fees for PAL Volleyball matches, including all league and tournament games, are **suggested** at \$3 for Adults and \$1 for Students (PreK-12).
6. Reschedules will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the PAL Volleyball commissioner. Additional rescheduling fees may apply, as described in ***Section 9 – Fees/Schedules*** below.

SECTION 7 – THE NET

1. Net will be set to women's regulation height (7' 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ "') for all games and all divisions.
2. Net rules - all net touches except for hair are violations.
3. Center line - all infractions **completely** crossing over the centerline are violations.

SECTION 8 – LIBERO

1. One libero only per set as presented with jersey on and indicated on the line up sheet before the set starts. No changing of libero to another player during the set. If the libero is injured during a set, the set will be completed without a libero.
2. Libero must have a different color uniform than regular team members with numbers on front and back of the jersey large enough to see from the referee stand.

SECTION 9 – FEES/SCHEDULES

1. The fees to register and participate in the PAL Volleyball Omaha league will be \$150.00 per team.
2. Fees are to be paid no later than July 31st .
3. Referee fees are \$20 per team per match to be paid in cash by each participating team directly to the referee **prior to the start of the match.**
4. The PAL Volleyball commissioner should be advised immediately of potential forfeits. A forfeit will be deemed, and a loss recorded if the offending team does not give proper notice or submits a request for reschedule within 48 hours of the scheduled game time or within a reasonable timeframe if an emergency (discretion of league commissioner) and/or is not present with their team on site and ready to play within 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of the game. Forfeit fees are \$40 per game plus a \$50 forfeit fee for no shows or late shows, as determined to be 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time. The offending school will be required to pay the entire \$90 fee if a forfeit occurs, and a loss will be recorded on their record and standings. Repeat offenses could result in suspension or disqualification from the league. The league will pay the ref and the forfeiting team's Athletic Director will be billed by the league for the forfeit.
5. Once the schedule is posted to the league website, it is considered final. Any schedule change requests should be addressed first to the organization's volleyball coordinator who will then contact the PAL Volleyball commissioner as soon as possible after the schedule is posted. Changes are at the discretion of the league commissioner and are not guaranteed. The reason for the change must be provided and must be related to a change in the parish/organization schedule that conflicts with a scheduled game. The charge for a schedule change after posting is \$75 per game rescheduled.

SECTION 10 – SCORING

1. All coaches are required to have a scorebook. The Home team is responsible for scorekeeping and will be the book of record in the event of a score discrepancy. Home team is defined as the team connected to the gym where the match is played, or if both teams are visiting a gym, the team listed first on the schedule is the Home Team.
2. All scoring will be rally scoring.
3. A match will consist of the best two out of three sets to 25 with the third deciding set to 15.
4. No score cap for any sets, excluding friendship. Sets must be won by two points.

5. If a third set is required to determine the match, and time is limited, the ref will assess the time left to play and discuss with both coaches. In general, every effort will be made to start the third set with the score at 0 and play to 15 points, win by 2. However, if this is not possible, the referee will discuss it with the coaches and determine a cap prior to the start of the third set to keep the schedule on time for subsequent games. In this case, the third set may or may not be played to 15.
6. There will be no change of sides during the match.
7. The winning coach will be required to report the score of the match via the scoring link sent to the head coach via email within 48 hours of the match. The website allows both coaches to enter the score for additional confirmation. If a match is won or lost in two sets a score of zero to zero should be entered for the third set when submitting the game score.

SECTION 11 – SUBSTITUTIONS

1. Total substitutions allowed per set are 18.
2. When multiple players address the referee for multiple substitutions at the same time, players should be prepared to address the sideline (between the 10-foot line and the centerline) one at a time. For example, if 3 players are substituted at one time, each player will take their turn, one at a time in succession.
3. Once a player has substituted into a position within the lineup, they may only substitute out and back into that established position within the set.
 - a. Example 1 demonstrating a CORRECT substitution - Sally starts the set for Team A. During the set, Mary is substituted for Sally; later in the set, Sally substitutes back in for Mary.
 - b. Example 2 demonstrating a CORRECT substitution - Sally starts the set for Team A. During the set, Mary is substituted in for Sally; next, Linda is substituted in for Mary; later in the set, Sally substitutes back in for Linda. At any point in the set, Mary, Sally or Linda may be a substitute into this SAME lineup position on the floor as long as they maintain the SAME order in which they originally substituted; in this example the order is Sally - Mary - Linda.
 - c. Example 3 demonstrating an INCORRECT substitution - Sally starts the set for Team A. During the set, Mary is substituted in for Sally; later in the set, Sally substitutes in for Sam. This is an incorrect substitution as Sally cannot substitute back in the game in a different lineup position; she must go back in for Mary as she can only substitute back into the same lineup position.

SECTION 12 – BALLS

1. Teams in 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade will use the volley lite ball for game play.
2. Teams in 7th and 8th grade will use regulation volleyball for game play.
3. Home team should provide the game ball to the referee prior to match start.
4. If possible, the host site should provide ball carts to help facilitate team warm-ups.
5. EACH TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING VOLLEYBALLS FOR THEIR WARM-UP. SITES WILL NOT PROVIDE WARM-UP BALLS.

SECTION 13 – LINE UP

1. Each team will provide the referee with the lineup by player number prior to the start of the match. The lineup should always start with the first server, even for the receiving team. See Appendix B for example of a correct lineup card. Line Up cards are available to print on the PAL Website under “Rules, Forms, Information”
2. Only at the start of the match, players will line up on the back service line in the order they are going to go out on the court. In subsequent sets, players can go right out on the court into their positions.
3. If the team is the receiving team to start the set, teams will back their starting lineup counterclockwise one rotation, so the first server is starting in zone 2.
4. A team may start each set with five players. All teams will automatically side out and a point will be granted to the opposing team when the missing player spot rotates into the service line position. If a team is waiting on players, but has 5 players ready, the match warm up, and if necessary, the match will start. The match will not be held up waiting for players to arrive.
5. A team may **only** use a player from another team in a lower division (i.e. a player that is not listed on the registered team roster) as a substitute in the event that the team is short players.
 - a. Substitutions for teams that are short players: Definition of “short players” means if a team will only have 5 or fewer players for a match. If a team is short players, they may add a player or players from a lower grade and division team only to equal 6 players. If a team has 6 players, the team should play with those 6 and not add additional substitute players. If a school has more than one team in the same division, the teams cannot share players between teams to cover game shortages. Players can only be rostered on one team in the same grade and may not move between teams to cover shortages. An example of correct substitutions: if a 7th grade A team only has 5 players, they can utilize a player from 6th grade A or B but not 6th grade AA or AAA. If that school has two 7th grade A teams, they cannot share players from the other team to cover the player deficit and must utilize 6th grade or lower grade players as substitutes.
 - b. 4th grade team shortages, the coach will borrow from a third grade team if the organization has a third grade team. If no third grade team, the coach can borrow from another fourth grade team if available or play short. The coach should call and speak to the league director as soon as a shortfall of players is known to discuss possible options for filling the deficit.
 - c. 3rd grade teams may borrow between teams to fill a shortfall and discussion with league is not required. If a team has 6 players they should not borrow, they should play with 6.

SECTION 14 – SERVING

1. Serving lines will be designated on each court at the 24-foot line and at the regulation 30-foot line. The 24-foot line must be marked clearly on each court by a line or cone by the host gym. Please refer to Appendix A at the end of this document for a visual of the court and line designations.
2. All servers will be required to serve within 8 seconds from the time the referee blows the whistle and signals the player to serve. If a serve is not completed within 8 seconds, the referee may signal a side out and a point will be awarded to the opposing team.

3. Serve Rules by Grade:

3rd Grade:

- Players should practice at the 24 foot or regulation line for serving. Coaches need to work with players on this skill during practice.
- During a match, those players struggling to serve at the 24-foot line may step in front of the 24-foot line for serving, no more than 3 feet.
- No player should serve at the 10 foot line.
- Up to 3 feet in front of the 24-foot line will be allowed to start the season.
- **BEGINNING WEEK 5 (September 18, 2026) OF SEASON PLAY, ALL PLAYERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO SERVE AT THE 24 FOOT LINE, NO FURTHER SERVING IN FRONT OF THE 24 FOOT LINE WILL BE ALLOWED.**
- After **five** successful serves in a row inside the court, the player must move to the regulation line to complete their service rotation.
- Players may serve overhand or underhand.
- No foot faults will be called.
- Any player playing up must follow the serving rules of the division they are playing in.

4th Grade:

- Players should practice serving at the regulation line. Those players serving overhand should be at regulation line. Coaches need to work with players on this skill at practice.
- Players may serve at the 24-foot line but not in front of the 24-foot line. Foot faults will be called if over the 24-foot line.
- After **five** successful serves in a row from inside the court, the player must move to the regulation line to complete their service rotation.
- Players may serve overhand or underhand.
- No foot faults will be called at the regulation line if the player steps on the line. A fault will be called if the player's foot is completely over the regulation line.
- Any player playing up must follow the serving rules of the division they are playing in.

5th Grade:

- Players should practice serving at the regulation line. Those players serving overhand should be at regulation line. Coaches need to work with players on this skill at practice.
- Players struggling to serve may serve inside the court, up to the 24-foot line but not in front of the 24-foot line. Foot faults will be called over the 24-foot line.
- After **five** successful serves in a row from inside the court, the player must move to the regulation line to complete their service rotation.
- Players may serve overhand or underhand.
- Foot faults will be called at the 24-foot line. Foot faults will be called at the regulation line after five successful serves in a row. No player should go over either line.
- Any player playing up must follow the serving rules of the division they are playing in.

6th, 7th & 8th Grades

- Players should practice serving at the regulation line. Coaches need to work with players on this skill at practice.
- All players will serve from regulation line.

- Foot faults will be called.
- Players may serve underhand or overhand

4. Any player who substitutes or plays up for any reason (i.e., combined teams or substitutions) will adhere to the guidelines for the grade as reflected on the PAL schedule. For example, a 5th grade player participating in a 7th grade scheduled game will adhere to the 7th grade serving rules.

5. The 24-foot serving line is not designed to score points on strong serving players. If a player is serving inside the 24-foot line and hitting the back row on the other side, it is the expectation that the coach progresses the player to the regulation line immediately, not after slamming the back row with serves. If the coach does not progress the player, the referee may request the player move to the back line at their discretion.

6. The player serving overhand is allowed to drop or catch the ball on a poor toss one time per each successful serve. More than one drop or toss per serve rotation will result in a side out and a point to the other team.

SECTION 15 – WARM UP

1. Warm-ups shall be 2-4-4; two minutes shared where each team stays on their own side of court, four minutes where the serving team has the entire court, and four minutes where the receiving team has the entire court. Warm-up time begins after the coin flip with the official. Four minutes includes serving time with no additional shared serving. Warm up will start on time regardless of whether all team members are present. The referee will not hold up the warm up clock for late players.

2. No team will warm up or bounce volleyballs in the gym area except during their designated warm up time which includes shared time and the team’s designated 4-minute time on the volleyball court only. No additional warm up activities will be permitted outside of these designated times or outside of the volleyball court.

3. If a referee has not shown up at least 15 min prior to the start of a match, the home team coach should work with the host gym and start the coin toss and team warm ups. The away coach should make a call to the PAL Volleyball commissioner to notify them of a late referee so the league can follow up.

SECTION 16 – TIME OUTS

1. Each team has two one-minute time outs per set.

2. The head coach must signal a time out directly to the referee only when the ball is dead.

3. Any team requesting an additional time out beyond the allotted two per set will be charged with unnecessary delay of game and be penalized by either a side-out and point to the opposing team if they are serving or one additional point to the opposing team if they are in serve receive.

SECTION 17 – SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Youth volleyball plays a vital role in encouraging physical, social, and emotional growth of children. It is therefore essential for our spectators, coaches, and players to embrace the values of good sportsmanship, discipline, and character development.

2. PAL Volleyball believes in good sportsmanship and expects coaches, players, parents, and spectators to exhibit this both on and off the court. Violations could result in warnings or suspension from the league.
3. During service or general game play any loud, unsportsmanlike cheering, yelling or other noises that are perceived as or have the intent to distract or interfere with the opposing team will not be tolerated (such as “balls up”). Referees have discretion in issuing a yellow card as a first warning. A red card may be used at the discretion of the referee and will result in the person who received the red card expelled from the gymnasium. If a coach receives a yellow or red card, the PAL Volleyball commissioner will be notified, and additional penalty may be enforced.
4. “ACE” cheer during play is not allowed.

SECTION 18 – VOLLEYBALL COORDINATOR DUTIES

1. The school coordinator is the main point of contact for their representative school/organization and will serve as a liaison for the league between the PAL Volleyball commissioners and their respective coaches.
2. Coordinators should be sure all coaches are aware of and have a copy of the rules, with explicit understanding of rules specific for the grade(s) they are coaching.
3. Coordinators should be sure all coaches are supplied with balls for travel. Gyms are not responsible for providing balls for warm ups.
4. Coordinators should be sure the coaches have score books and are trained on score keeping.
5. Complete and submit all forms and fees required for registration prior to or by due date.
6. Submit final rosters to the commissioner prior to the first scheduled game.
7. Provide gym availability for a minimum of 5 Fridays, 5 Saturdays, and 2 Sundays for regular season league play and additional gym availability for end of season tournament play where possible.
8. Support play days of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for all teams in their organization. All teams will be expected to play on all three days of the weekend as needed.

SECTION 19 – COACH ZONE

1. Teams often have more than one coach on the bench. In this instance, only ONE coach may stand during the set. The area for the coach to stand and move is between the 10 foot line and the end of the court. The coach may not come in front of the 10 foot line or go any farther behind the regulation line of the court

SECTION 20 – FRIENDSHIP GAME

1. The friendship game is played only if time permits at the referee’s discretion. It is not guaranteed the friendship set will be played.

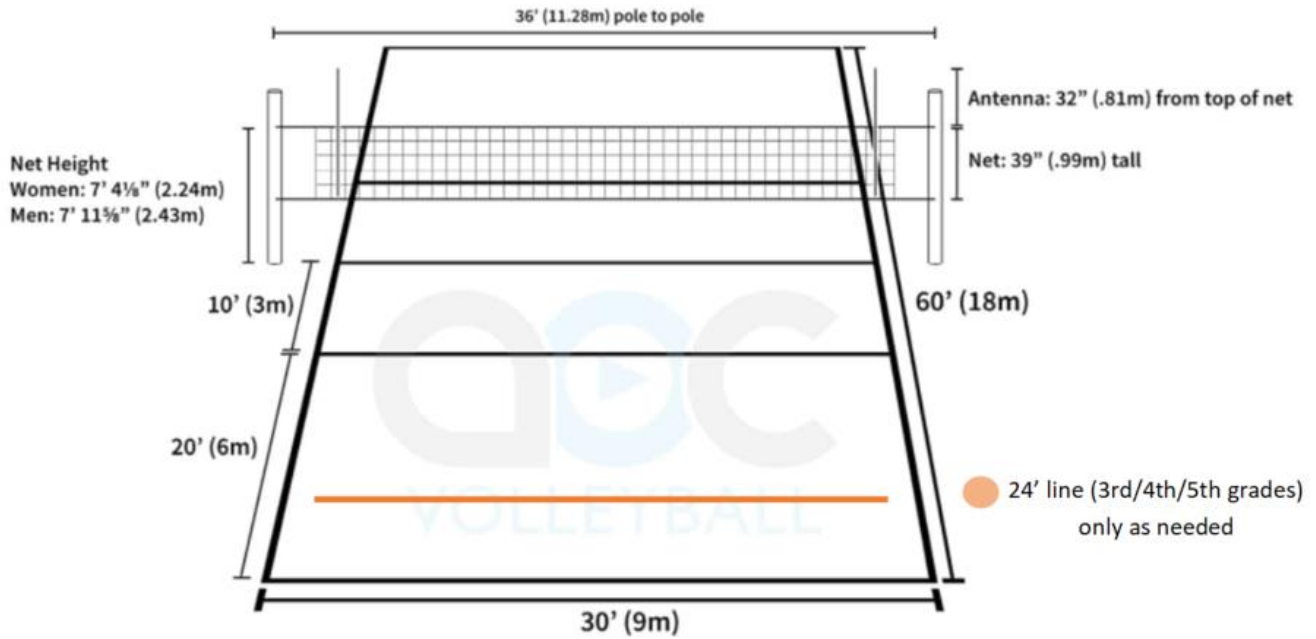
2. The set is played to 15 but may be called early for time.
3. No line up is required.
4. No time outs are allowed.
5. Substitute players in and out freely, the set is not stopped to call a substitution.
6. The set is NOT COUNTED in scores reported on the website; if a game is won or lost in two sets a score of zero to zero should be entered when submitting the game score.

SECTION 21 – TOURNAMENT PLAY END OF SEASON

1. Rosters will be set, no substitutions allowed.
2. No friendship game is played; best 2 of 3 with the match ending if a game is won or lost in two sets.
3. Scores must be immediately reported by the winning coach to keep the brackets updated.
4. Tournament is single elimination.
5. Tournament dates will be posted on the website for all divisions. Coaches should communicate to parents the dates of season play that are listed on the PAL Volleyball website prior to the start of the season to avoid player shortage issues at tournament time.

APPENDIX A

COURT DIAGRAM FOR SERVING LINES



Ceiling Clearance Recommendation: 23 feet (7 meters)

Court Line Width: 2 inches (5 centimeters)


Exterior Boundary Lines: 6 feet (2 meters) minimum, 10 feet (3 meters) recommended

● = Gym Line/Cone

APPENDIX B

LINE UP CARD

1. Position 1 on the lineup card will always be your first server.
2. If your team is serving first, your team will be lined up on the floor and will match your lineup card.
3. If your team is receiving, your lineup card will still have your first server jersey number in the first position on the card, but your team will line up on the floor one rotation counter clockwise (so your first server will actually be on the floor in zone 2) because your team will rotate when the first side out occurs.
4. Complete the card using JERSEY # and not names.

SET 1 LINE-UP SHEET		
TEAM		
IV	III	II
V	VI	I
		SERVICE
		COACH SIGNATURE

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF AGE DIVISION RULES

Age Division	Rules	Notes
3rd grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volley lite • Woman regulation net height • May start at 24-foot line for serving • May start with 5 players with a side out penalty each rotation for missed server 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FIRST 4 WEEKS OF PLAY ONLY: Players struggling with serve are allowed to start serving at the 24-foot line or no more than 3 feet in front of 24-foot line each rotation even if previously successful • STARTING WEEK 5: All players must be at the 24-foot or at regulation line, no serving in front of the 24 foot line • After 5 successful serves, must always be behind regulation line • Underhand or overhand is allowed at each line • Foot faults at the 24-foot line will not be called if the player is within the appropriate serving line area and it is not deemed to be an advantage for the serving team, at the referee's discretion
4th grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volley lite • Woman regulation net height • May start at 24-foot line for serving • May start with 5 players with a side out penalty each rotation for missed server • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot faults will be called at 24-foot line, player may not go over the line • Foot faults will not be called at the regulation line if the player steps on the line. Fault will be called if player is completely over the regulation line. • Underhand or overhand allowed at either line • After 5 successful serves player must move to regulation line
5th grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volley lite • Woman regulation net height • Player should attempt serving from regulation line when possible but may step inside up to the 24-foot line • May start with 5 players with a side out penalty each rotation for missed server 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowed to start serving inside the regulation line if needed, and up to the 24-foot line but not in front of the 24 foot line • After 5 successful serves, must be behind regulation line • Underhand or overhand is allowed at each line • Foot faults will be called at both lines
6 th /7 th /8 th grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volley lite 6th grade only • Regulation ball for 7 and 8 grade • Woman regulation net height • Players to serve from regulation line • May start with 5 players with a side out penalty each rotation for missed server 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot faults will be called • All players will serve from regulation line • Underhand or overhand is allowed
All grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No "balls up", ace cheer or other distractions allowed • Warm up 2-4-4 (2 shared, 4 serving team, 4 receiving team) • No score cap, must win by 2 • Libero allowed with different, contrasting color jersey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendship games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Played at referee discretion, including duration • Game starts with no lineups or tracking of substitutions • Score cap is 15 points and substitutions are allowed freely • Zero to zero scores are reported for friendship games

APPENDIX D

PAL LEAGUE DIVISION DEFINITIONS

1. Non-Competitive or B Division (applies to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade divisions)

Beginner players that are unfamiliar with the basics of volleyball. Will require consistent practice and coaching to learn rules and basic skills such as serving, passing and rotation

2. Competitive or A Division (applies to 5th grade divisions)

Players know the basics of volleyball including how to pass, set (a little), and can serve fairly consistently but still may make mistakes. Players may already have organized volleyball experience and will continue to progress volleyball skills. Some players may have overhand serving experience; players understand basic rotation.

3. B Division (applies to 6th, 7th, 8th grade divisions)

Players know the basics of volleyball including how to pass, set (a little), and hit, but make mistakes often and skills are not consistent. Players may not be able to consistently hit the ball, may not consistently use 3 contacts, and may only be learning to serve overhand. B players know basic rotations, but do not have club experience and skill levels will continue to improve as the season progresses

4. A Division (applies to 6th, 7th, 8th grade divisions)

Players are beginning to get comfortable with the pass, set, and hit, are actively working to use 3 contacts more often, and are working toward playing the game skillfully. One or more players can hit the ball with light to moderate power and players are not afraid to receive a harder driven ball (though may not be able to consistently return such ball). Players are learning rotations and positions. Some may be serving overhand, and the team may have one or two players with club ball experience.

5. AA Division (applies to 6th, 7th, 8th grade divisions)

Players have a solid knowledge of the game and rules. Players understand rotational sequence, offensive concepts (i.e., 5-1, 6-2, etc.) and defensive positions, and may be working to solidify those skills. Players know the volleyball skills good enough to pass, set and hit consistently to enable the team to gain 3 contacts more consistently in succession and know where to be on the court when plays are developing. One or more players can hit the ball with light to moderate power and players are not afraid to receive a harder driven ball. The team may have 3 or 4 players with club ball experience. Majority of the team serves overhand.

6. AAA Division (applies to 6th, 7th, 8th grade divisions)

Players are aggressive with very good court awareness and execute skills proficiently and consistently. Players understand rotational sequence, offensive concepts (i.e., 5-1, 6-2, etc.), defensive positions and can apply them in competition. Game and player strategies are well understood (i.e., running offensive plays, identifying opponent weaknesses, reading opponents plays during volley, etc.) and the game is run at a higher tempo. Majority of players may have club volleyball experience and most players, if not all, serve overhand.