

ONTARIO VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION PROCEDURE ON RECRUITMENT

Objective

1. Ontario Volleyball strongly encourages the volleyball community to work cooperatively to ensure all volleyball participants have a positive experience by following these principles and rules.

2. Definitions

- a. *Association*: Ontario Volleyball Association or OVA.
- b. *Club Recruiters*: all individuals, members of the OVA or not, including but not limited to team representatives, coaches, administrators, managers and parents/guardians who are affiliated with an OVA club and have an interest in recruiting an athlete to a club program.
- c. *High Performance Programs*: all training programs that are offered to OVA member athletes and that are planned, organized, delivered by OVA/Volleyball Canada (VC) Representatives and that are led by coaches directly hired by OVA and VC staff. These programs include but are not limited to Team Ontario, High Performance Centre, Beach Fulltime Training Group, Tall Maples, Team Canada and the Regional program.
- d. *OVA Offer Form*: either a re-signing offer form or OVA offer form as defined the OVA Tryout Window Policy.
- e. *Registration Waiver*: includes the OVA Individual Registration Form and either the Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims and Indemnity Agreement or the Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement.
- f. *Free Agent Period*: the period between May 31st and the date of an athlete's commitment to a club by signing an OVA Offer Form or Registration Waiver.
- g. *OVA/VC Representative*: any Ontario Volleyball or Volleyball Canada permanent or contracted staff. This includes coaches directly contracted by OVA and VC to deliver High Performance Programs (i.e.: Team Ontario and National Team coaches).
- h. *Post-Secondary Recruiters*: all individuals, members of the OVA or not, who wish to recruit an OVA athlete to a post-secondary volleyball program including but not limited to USport, CCAA or NCAA.
- i. *Recruiting*: The act of attempting to convince an athlete to join a program they are not currently a part of by providing information about such program or by offering incentives to do so.
- j. *Season of play*: the period between an athlete's commitment to a team or club by signing an OVA Offer Form or Registration Waiver to May 31st.

Purpose

3. This policy is designed to ensure that athletes are able to participate in Ontario Volleyball's programming free of recruiting pressures and provide them with the opportunity to obtain information and communicate with other programs during the Free Agent Period.

4. Athletes and parents are encouraged to seek out information about different club programs in their community. Parents and athletes should be seeking information on: club philosophy, coaching philosophy, coaching certification information (including NCCP number), coach screening, try out dates, registration fees, financial policies (including refunds), practice times/location/frequency, playing policy, tournament schedule, travel arrangements, accommodations and extra fees.
5. This policy also aims to provide OVA clubs with the confidence that their athletes will honor their commitment to them. It demands that all recruiters behave ethically in their relationships with athletes, parents and other clubs. It stresses that coaches are not allowed to initiate transfer discussions with OVA athletes during the season of play.

Application of this Policy

6. This policy applies to all Individuals who, at any given time, have an interest in convincing an athlete to join a program they are affiliated with, whether it is an OVA club or any other non-OVA program.
7. Recruiters have a responsibility to be aware of the provisions of this policy and to make sure they abide by them. In the case where an athlete contacts a Recruiter first, it is the Recruiter's responsibility to know whether pursuing the interaction with the athlete falls within the accepted recruiting practices set in this policy.
8. This policy cannot possibly cover all interactions between Recruiters and athletes. Individuals should carry out their recruiting with respect and integrity. There may be recruiting practices that do not violate this policy but that should still be discouraged in a volleyball community focused on collaboration. Specifically, when recruiting athletes from another OVA club, all coaches and club representatives should aim at maintaining a positive relationship with the athlete's current club. The OVA recommends that clubs be transparent with each other during the recruiting process. It is also recommended that clubs focus on developing quality programming that will naturally attract athletes rather than actively trying to recruit athletes who were developed elsewhere. Clubs and coaches are there to serve the athletes and not the other way around.

Obligations

9. Athletes have the right to register with any club and are free to try-out for any team until they have made a commitment to a club for a season. The period of an athlete's commitment to a club or team is the season of play.
10. Recruiters, regardless of their affiliation, shall not directly contact an athlete who is under 18 years of age without obtaining prior permission from the athlete's parents/guardians. Recruiters should seek written permission from the parents/guardians when possible.

11. Recruiters shall not contact an athlete during school hours, during an OVA indoor competition, during an OVA Beach Tour event, during OVA and Volleyball Canada High Performance Programs or while the athlete is actively participating in a volleyball practice or league/exhibition game.
12. Club Recruiters shall not ask one of their club athletes to recruit on their behalf through player to player interactions.
13. The OVA is responsible for reporting all confirmed infractions to the appropriate association, athletic conference and/or member institution. Violation of these rules, or the spirit of these rules, may result in the sanctioning of a Recruiter, including, but not limited to a ban from attending future Ontario Volleyball tournaments and events.
14. The following rules apply to recruiters during the specified periods:

Period	Club Recruiters	Post-Secondary Recruiters
Free Agent Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate with any athlete and their parents to provide information about their club program • Are not allowed to offer athletes a position in their club outside of the designated re-signing and offer periods as defined in the Tryout Window Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate with athletes according to their association, athletic conference and/or institution's rules
Season of Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not allowed to initiate communication with a committed athlete or their parents for the purpose of informing them about their program or recruiting them to their club unless they have permission from the athlete's coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate with athletes according to their association, athletic conference and/or institution's rules • Must receive permission from the athlete's club coach to contact the athlete • Must not initiate contact with an athlete during a competition • if attending Ontario Championships to recruit athletes Recruiters must notify the OVA in writing in advance with their information by sending an email to the OVA

OVA and Volleyball Canada High Performance Programs

15. Ontario Volleyball and Volleyball Canada offer high performance programs that complement OVA club programming within the Canadian volleyball athlete development pathway. The purpose of these programs is to offer training opportunities that wouldn't be available to the athletes elsewhere. OVA and Volleyball Canada understand the importance of working in collaboration with clubs to achieve optimal athlete development.
16. OVA/VC Representatives:
- are permitted to inform athletes about OVA and Volleyball Canada High Performance programs when attending OVA events as long as they contact the athletes' parents/guardians first. Providing information to athletes and their parents about OVA and Volleyball Canada High Performance Programs isn't considered recruiting as per the definition provided in this policy.
 - must wear appropriate attire identifying them as an OVA/VC representative when attending OVA events for the purpose of identifying athletes for High Performance Programs.
 - must introduce themselves and identify the institution/organization they represent to the parents/guardians of the athlete.
 - are considered Club Recruiters or Post-Secondary Recruiters if they are acting on behalf of a club or post-secondary program they are affiliated with. In this case, they shall not use their position within the OVA or Volleyball Canada to gain an advantage in the recruiting process. Such situation is subject to the provisions set forth in the OVA Conflict of Interest Policy.
 - shall not, in any circumstances, engage an athlete in recruiting conversations for their affiliated club or post-secondary program in the context of an OVA or Volleyball Canada High Performance Program.
17. Team Ontario coaches are expected to behave with the highest levels of integrity and respect. They are role models for the athletes they coach as well as for the rest of the Ontario Volleyball community. It is important that they abide by the policies set by the OVA to protect themselves, the athletes and the Team Ontario programs themselves. When recruiting for their affiliated club or post-secondary program, Team Ontario coaches must not only abide by the provisions of this policy but they should also set an example of recruiting best practices by acting in a way that reinforces the confidence of the community in the Team Ontario program.
18. All Individuals are obligated to report any recruiting practices they feel do not meet the above regulations. Individuals should be aware that casual interaction between post-secondary or club recruiters and athletes during a tournament is acceptable, so long as conversations and contact do not involve recruitment.

Adherence

Recruiting Best Practices

The following best practices are recommended by the OVA and are considered to be in line with OVA's organizational values of collaboration, integrity and respect. They should be applied by coaches in order to maintain harmonious interactions between members.

- **Clubs should focus on creating quality programming that will lead to the best possible development opportunity for athletes as opposed to focusing on piecing together the team that has the best chance to win**
- **Clubs should consider their ability to help the development of an athlete before they consider how that athlete can help their club win**
- **Clubs should communicate and collaborate in determining what is the best development opportunity for an athlete**
- **Coaches should contact an athlete's previous season's coach if they are recruiting them for their club**
- **Clubs should encourage an athlete who is changing clubs to be transparent with their former club and coaches and communicate their intentions with them**

19. The OVA reserves the right to investigate any possible recruiting infractions regardless of how the OVA learns about the incident. This is a self-policing policy and all OVA members are obligated to report any infractions and cooperate fully with the investigation. If the OVA determines that an offense has occurred, any of the following sanctions may be imposed, depending on the severity of the offense:

- a. Letter of reprimand.
- b. Fine of up to \$1000.
- c. Suspension for up to one year from all Ontario Volleyball events, beginning from the date when the investigation concluded to the individual, team or club.
- d. Indefinite suspension from Ontario Volleyball events, beginning from the date when the investigation concluded to the individual, team or club.



e. Individuals, teams, or clubs suspended for more than one year must apply in writing for reinstatement as a member in good standing. Approval for reinstatement will be contingent upon a full review of the application by Ontario Volleyball.

20. An individual, team or club may appeal a sanction through the Ontario Volleyball Association Appeal Policy.

21. When reporting a possible infraction please include the following information:

- a. Date of infraction and Offending club
- b. Any type of objective documentation that supports a violation to the policy, includes but not limited to:
 - Website links and or Social media posts or screenshots in thereof
 - Emails and or texts
 - Publications (newspaper ads, flyers etc.)
 - Receipts
- c. Contact information for the person reporting the incident

All complaints can be forwarded to info@ontariovolleyball.org