



## Carolina Regional Volleyball Association

### Junior Tryout and Commitment Date Policy

- ❖ Tryouts for Girls' youth and junior athletes for the next USAV season may take place at any time after the completion of the prior season's Girls' USAV Junior National Championships.
- ❖ Athletes may officially select and commit to a USAV club in the Carolina Region beginning on September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
- ❖ Athletes must sign a Carolina Region *Letter of Commitment* form on or after Sept 1<sup>st</sup> to affirm their club of choice. The form will reside with the club and must be made available within 3 business days upon request by the Carolina Region. Note: Only current year *Letter of Commitment* forms issued by the Carolina Region will be considered valid. Prior year forms will be invalid.
- ❖ Players may only affiliate with one club during the USAV indoor club season which ends at the completion of the USAV Girls' Junior National Championships.
- ❖ Requests for transfers to another club will be handled by the Carolina Region Club Transfer Policy.
- ❖ All personal business/legal commitments made between the club and a player's family will remain the responsibility of the related parties. The Carolina Region will not be responsible for enforcing private agreements. Contracts between a club and family are independent of any region obligations and policies.

The Carolina Region Board of Directors endorses the Athlete and Club Bill of Rights, the Club Fair Tryout Pledge, and the importance of all school volleyball programs. Families are encouraged to support clubs that enact policies and procedures that also support those ideals.

## Carolina Region Board Commentary on Club Tryouts



The Carolina Region of USA Volleyball mission statement offers the following:

**The Carolina Region, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is dedicated to promoting all disciplines of the sport of volleyball, developing opportunities, and enhancing participant experiences for all ages from grassroots to elite programs throughout the state of North Carolina.**

Since the inception of Junior club programs in the early 1980s, the Carolina Region has taken a stance emphasizing the importance of middle school and high school volleyball to the development of players and the creation of opportunities for participation in the sport. To that end, the region has consistently supported the position that tryouts for club programs be scheduled to occur after the completion of the North Carolina High School season, typically in late October or early November. As part of the effort to ensure youth players had a fair chance to try out for multiple clubs, and to manage the stress associated with club programs running in tandem with school programs, the Region established a defined signing period to ensure players are not forced to make uninformed or immediate signing decisions. In large measure, those positions had been followed and respected by the clubs throughout the Carolina Region.

During 2021, due in part to changes in the HS season caused by COVID as well as the changing landscape of Junior volleyball, several clubs decided that it was in their best interest to conduct tryouts prior to the conclusion of the High School season in NC. This scheduling has also been introduced by several Regional Volleyball Associations in other areas of the country, and our Board sought input and recommendations from those regions on how this policy has impacted their players and their programs. We sought to find alternate options that would better reflect the realities of the current state of junior volleyball. The reluctant conclusion of the Board was that the published tryouts by those clubs were not technically in violation of the region's tryout policy, although those dates do not follow the spirit of the policy.

Recognizing the realities of the current tryout circumstances in our state, the Board implemented a revised tryout policy that requires clubs to wait until the end of the Junior National Championships to begin the next season's tryout period, as this is when annual indoor club commitments expire. After that date, we will continue to recommend that all clubs wait until the conclusion of the NC High School Championships before conducting their seasonal tryouts but recognize that some clubs may have alternative needs and or requirements that cause them to schedule their dates earlier for some age groups. We will continue to publish and enforce a Carolina Region\USAV signing date, as we do have the mechanisms to allow players to change clubs if commitments are made prior to that signing date.

As a Board responsible for the welfare of all our members throughout the region, we feel it is a better option to modify our policies to be in line with the realities clubs face today, and that incorporates the policies other regions facing these same issues have found success with. The Board will continue to encourage our member clubs to conduct responsible tryouts that protect the interests of the athletes by respecting school athletic calendars, to work with other clubs in their immediate area to schedule tryouts that allow the athletes to attend tryouts from as many clubs as they wish, and to respect the commitment policies of the Region. We strongly encourage all club directors, high school coaches and parents to consider the health and welfare of the players under their direction as they consider the timing of their programs, both in terms of the scheduling of activities and the financial requirements due for the next season. We will continue to look for ways to issue and administer policies in the Region that serve the interest of ALL our constituents – players, coaches, club directors, parents, and officials – and which are fair for all.