

Age Class Scouting and Recruiting Rules/Guidelines

Updated: August 25, 2013

PREAMBLE

- A. This document has been created for the Volleyball Manitoba (“VM”) Club Volleyball program. It is a broad document intended for and applicable to:
- Club Volleyball coaches recruiting athletes for the current or future year club season(s);
 - Provincial Team coaches recruiting for elite Provincial Program players;
 - University, college, high school or other academic institutions recruiting athletes for future participation in their programs; AND
 - Any other volleyball programs that may exist, recruiting athletes from the VM Club Volleyball program.
- B. This document has been created by the VM Competitions Committee and approved by the VM Board of directors. The underlying motivation for these rules/guidelines is to seek the best interests of current and future athletes; and to foster a fair and competitive club volleyball environment.
- C. As outlined in this document VM reserves the right to:
- a. Update these Rules/Guidelines from time to time, and communicate any updates to VM membership;
 - b. Thoroughly investigate any person or club in circumstances where possible recruiting infraction has occurred, regardless of how VM becomes aware of the alleged infraction;
 - c. Impose penalties and/or sanctions as outlined in this document, and resolve the matter per the Dispute Resolution Policy.

DEFINITIONS

“**VM Club Volleyball Program**” means the development of teams, practices, team events and competition amongst club teams that ultimately play in the VM Provincial Championships (and perhaps also pursue participation in the Volleyball Canada National Championships).

Seasons:

“**Club Season**” means the period from the day after the Graduating High School All-Star match through to May 31.

“**School Season**” means the period from June 1 through to the Graduating High School All-Star match.

“Team Representative”:

- During the Club Season, a **Team Representative** means any individual representing a university, college, school, provincial, senior or any other team not affiliated with VM Club Volleyball Program.
- During the School Season, a **Team Representative** means any individual representing a Volleyball Club or specific Club Volleyball Team participating in the VM Club Volleyball Program.

For clarity, a Team Representative can include coaches, administrators, recruiters, current or alumni athletes, parents of current or alumni athletes, or any other agent facilitating communication between a team (or teams) and an athlete.

Types of Communication:

“Direct Communication” means a personalized, individual and/or directed message from a Team Representative to a specific athlete or group of athletes.

“Indirect Communication” means a non-personalized message from a Team Representative that is either available to the general public, or is a response to a query that provides no more information than is available to all athletes.

“Communication Method” means the method by which a Team Representative interacts with athletes. A list of Communication Methods is listed below, and for clarity, examples of Direct and Indirect Communication are listed for each Communication Method.

Communication Methods		Indirect Communication	Direct Communication
Live Verbal	Face to Face	Communication exchange typically initiated by the athlete (and/or their family), where the Team Representative responds with information that is available to all athletes.	Communication initiated by Team Representative, or responding to an inquiry -- communicating intentional, and/or specific individualized information to an athlete. This could include personal invitations to a tryout; offering a position on a team; giving feedback on a player’s ability/potential; other feedback motivated to encourage an athlete to join their volleyball club or team.
	Land-line or cell phone		
	Electronic (ex. Skype, FaceTime)		
Verbal Messaging	Exchange of phone or other electronic voice messages		
	Messages forwarded through acquaintances (other athletes, parents, coaches, friends)		
Written Messaging	Traditional mail		
	Email		
	Text/SMS Messaging		
	Internet web- or micro-site	Web-based postings providing information to the public (ex. Open tryouts date information for all athletes).	Web-postings intended for individual(s) ex. Invitation to a closed tryout.
	Posters/Flyers/Newsletters/ advertisements	Distribution of information concerning open tryout dates and other information available to all athletes, and their families.	N/A
Other	Drop-in sessions/ scrimmages/ practices, camps, clinics (collectively “Other Activity”).	Other Activities that intentionally or unintentionally introduce athletes to Team Representatives at Other Activity that is open to the general public to attend.	Other Activities that intentionally introduce athlete(s) to a Club program and/or Team Representatives by inviting individual(s) to Other Activity -that is not open to all athletes.
	Tryouts	Open tryouts to all athletes.	Closed tryouts that limit participation to “by invitation only”.

Types of Blackouts:

“Complete Blackout” means a period of time during which no recruitment, tryouts, in-gym volleyball practices and/or competition can occur for, teams participating in the VM Club Volleyball Program.

“Training Blackout” means a period of time during which no in-gym volleyball practices can occur for teams participating in the VM Club Volleyball Program.

“Recruitment Blackout” means a period of time during which no Direct Communication with an athlete can occur.

RULES/GUIDELINES

1. Responsibilities of VM, Team Representatives, Athletes & their families (collectively “Stakeholders”)

1.1 VM shall be responsible to:

- Prepare, and update as required from time to time, and to post on the VM website these Age Class Scouting and Recruiting Rules/Guidelines, Club Volleyball Handbooks and other supporting documents.
- Investigate meaningful violations of these Rules/Guidelines, discovered by whatever means that have not been self-managed or resolved amongst Team Representatives, athletes (and their families).
- Impose sanctions and/or penalties, as outlined in this document – where an investigation confirms violations of these Rules/Guidelines.

1.2 All Team Representatives are responsible to:

- Review, be aware of and follow these Age Class Scouting and Recruiting Rules/Guidelines (“Rules/Guidelines”).

1.3 Athletes (and their families) are encouraged to:

- Be aware of these Rules/Guidelines and aid the recruitment process by ensuring that these Rules/Guidelines are followed, and where possible resolve minor (unintentional and intentional) violations.

1.4 All Stakeholders are responsible to:

- To be vigilant of violations of these Rules/Guidelines that put athletes in uncomfortable circumstances or threatens health/safety; and or provides a competitive advantage for one club versus another.
- Respectfully point out violations to an offending Team Representative, in efforts to self-manage, correct and resolve the matter quickly – before advising VM of the violation.
- Communicate to VM in writing, either by mail or email (to vm.ageclass@gmail.com) a detailed description of the offence and respective contact information of the offending Team Representative, the affected athlete (and parents names if athlete under 18), and individual communicating the alleged violation.

It is acknowledged that with limited staff and a volunteer Board of Directors that resources do not exist to actively monitor the recruitment practices of teams and clubs. Therefore VM calls

upon all Stakeholders involved Manitoba's Volleyball Community to abide by these Rules/Guidelines, self-monitor and self-correct, as most violations are unintentional.

2. General Recruitment Rules of Conduct for Team Representatives:

- 2.1 If the athlete being recruited is under the age of 18, the Team Representative must request and receive the consent from the athlete's parent (or guardian), prior to any Direct Communication. Identifying the athlete's parent can be done by speaking with the athlete's coach during the respective School or Club Season. If the prospective athlete is currently not on a team, the Team Representative may have a preliminary conversation with the athlete asking to speak with his/her parent.
- 2.2 Regardless of age of athlete, the Team Representative must advise the current coach of the athlete that he/she will be initiating Direct Communication with the athlete (if the athlete is currently on a team).
- 2.3 Indirect Communication does not require parental consent or notice to current coach.

3. Rules of Conduct for Team Representatives at a Competition

- 3.1 Regardless of circumstance, it is the responsibility of the Team Representative(s) to identify themselves (by name and address) and the institution they represent to the competition or tournament organizer.
- 3.2 The Team Representative(s) may not initiate Direct Communication with athletes during the athlete's involvement in a competition. Direct Communication can only begin after the athlete's team has concluded competition play. For clarity, in circumstances of a multi-day tournament – conclusion of competition is after a team has concluded play on the final day of competition.
- 3.3 If these rules of conduct are not respected by the Team Representative, the tournament organizer has the right to ask, and the Team representative shall be obliged, to leave the gymnasium.
- 3.4 Infringement of these rules of conduct may be reported to VM, and as appropriate the governing body of the offending Team Representative (ex. CIS, MCAC)

4. Timing of Direct and Indirect Communication with Athletes

- 4.1 During the School Season:
 - Indirect Communication by Team Representatives can occur at any time.
 - For athletes being recruited for club teams 15U and younger, Direct Communication can occur any time during the school season.
 - For athletes being recruited for club teams 16U and older, a Recruitment Blackout for each athlete shall begin on November 1 and conclude on the day after the athlete is eliminated from high school playoff and/or MHSAA Provincial playoffs. Restated athletes should not be receiving Direct Communication that will distract athletes from the playoff portion of their School Season.
- 4.2 During the Club Season
 - Direct and Indirect Communication by university, college, provincial and other Team Representatives can occur at any time during the Club Season, subject to Section 3.

5. Volleyball Manitoba Provincial Team Program

- 5.1 The Provincial Team Program should not be used as a vehicle for recruitment by clubs, colleges, universities and/or any other private agencies. Therefore during the Provincial Team training and competition periods, recruitment of any sort by anybody, including the Provincial Team staff, will not be permitted.
- 5.2 Coaches, administrators and others involved in the Provincial Team Program are also considered Team Representatives and accordingly are obligated to follow these Rules/Guidelines.
- 5.3 Any inquiries regarding recruiting infractions by Provincial Team Representatives should be forwarded to the Conduct and Ethics Committee and/or the President of Volleyball Manitoba.

6. Education

- 6.1 VM shall provide all relevant Rules/Guidelines on the VM website.
- 6.2 VM is prepared to advise coaches, athletes and parents on proper recruiting procedures. Furthermore, the VM office will have available up to date information on the recruiting guidelines from University and College associations in Canada.
- 6.3 Provincial Team players will be educated on the issue of recruitment by a Volleyball Manitoba representative during their training with the team.

7. Age Class Try Outs and Commitments

- 7.1 The primary recruitment method for VM Age Class Volleyball is team tryouts.
- 7.2 The "Tryout Period" for VM Age Class Volleyball is two week period, beginning the day following the Graduating All-Star Match. VM shall post the Tryout Period dates annually in the Age Class Handbook by September 15, on the VM website.
- 7.3 Athletes are free to tryout for one or more club teams that offer open tryouts or extend an invitation to a closed tryout -- during the Tryout Period and have the ability to freely demonstrate their skills to clubs they are interested in. This in turn allows athletes to gather information about various clubs and make an informed decision on which club is best suited for their needs. Clubs are expected to respect the Tryout Period and wait until the process is complete before expecting commitment from an athlete.
- 7.4 VM does not recognize an athlete's commitment to a club program until:
 - The athlete (and parents where the athlete is younger than 18) has completed and signed the VM Individual Registration Form;
 - After the final day of the two-week tryout period.

Restated, an athlete has until the final day of the Tryout Period to change his/her mind, regardless of any documentation signed to date (including VM Individual Registration Form).

After the two-week tryout period, if an athlete has completed a VM Individual Registration Form, and desires to play for another team/club, he/she must follow the VM Transfer Policy process, which includes the releasing club's consent (which could be withheld).

Note: Athletes should not sign more than one VM Individual Registration Form. In the event the athlete has signed a form and want to change his/her mind, and it is prior to the end of the Tryout Period, then the athlete should request and receive the signed form

(prior to signing a form for a different club) – to ensure that two clubs do not have an active form or a single athlete.

7.5 Athletes are committed on a season to season basis only and are free to play with another team the next Club Season.

8. Training and Complete Blackout Periods

8.1 Acknowledging that some club teams desire to recruit athletes by offering off-season training sessions, VM reminds club Team Representatives that a Training Blackout exists from June 1 until the commencement of the 2-week Tryout Period.

8.2 In addition, a Complete Blackout shall exist beginning the day after the conclusion of 2-week Tryout Period, until the day school resumes after the Christmas School Break.

9. Consequences

9.1 For a First Offence, VM has the right to:

- Issue a letter of reprimand to the Team Representative, with and a copy sent to the appropriate club, university, college, or other organization they represent;
- Impose a \$200 fine that must be paid by the offending party within 15 days of notice from conclusion of the investigation; and/or
- Initiate a 1-year probation to the Team Representative or club beginning the date of the conclusion of the investigation regarding the offence.

9.2 For a Second Offence, VM has the right to:

- Issue a letter of reprimand to the Team Representative, with and a copy sent to the appropriate club, university, college, or other organization they represent;
- Impose an additional \$350 fine that must be paid by the offending party within 15 days of notice from conclusion of the investigation.
- Initiate a suspension for 1-year from all VM activities (including, but not limited participation as a coach, player, official, VM Board/Committee member etc) for the offending Team Representative

With regards to 9.1 and 9.2, if payment is not received within 15 days, the member will no longer be a member in good standing, and membership shall be suspended until fee is paid.

9.3 For a Third Offence, VM has the right to:

- Issue a letter of reprimand to the Team Representative, with and a copy sent to the appropriate club, university, college, or other organization they represent;
- Advise the offending Team Representative that he/she is no longer a member in good standing with VM. Resulting suspension from all VM activities (listed above).
- A \$500.00 reinstatement fee must be paid by the offending party to be considered for reinstatement. Reinstatement as a member in good standing requires approval from the Executive Committee of VM.

9.4 Any club that uses a member this is not in good standing or a suspended member will be subject to additional financial penalty or suspension.

Approved at the VM Board of Director's (August, 2013)