

CATS Parent/Player Handbook

Welcome to the CATS Volleyball Club. We are proud to be part of the United States Volleyball Association. The USAV has divided the nation into 40 geographic regions. Each region's goal is to offer the USAV experience. We are part of the Evergreen Region, which is comprised of the geographic area of Eastern Washington (all counties east of the Cascade Mt. range), Northern Idaho, and the state of Montana. We adhere to SafeSport Policies (Please see the full SafeSport Handbook here: https://www.volleyballreftraining.com/SafeSport/includes_resources/SafeSport_Handbook_6_14.pdf)

Introduction

Our player/parent handbook is designed to educate you about our club, our coaching philosophy, and how to be successful within the CATS Volleyball Club. It is an accumulation of rules, regulations, policy, and facts at the time of its latest revision. Our CATS Volleyball Club handbook is intended to be used in conjunction with the Evergreen Region Participants' Handbook/Operating Code, the USAV Domestic Competition Regulations, and the USAV Guide Book. We hope this handbook will provide you information that will be useful to your decision on whether to play for CATS during the upcoming season.

Mission Statement and Coaching Philosophy

"We are a sanctioned Evergreen Region USA Volleyball Club striving to give youth an opportunity to excel in the sport, while learning valuable life skills based on teamwork, respect for self and others."

CATS Administration

The Club's leadership is composed of a Director and a Board of Directors.

Coaching

All of our coaches have provided the Club with their biographies and undergone a review by the Board of Directors. Head coaching staff shall comply with Evergreen Region Policies and:

- Be registered with the Evergreen Region as a member/coach;
- Have attended and completed an IMPACT Clinic and be so certified;
- Attend a referee/scorekeeper clinic annually;
- Be SafeSport Certified;
- Have satisfactorily passed a background check; and
- Sign the Coaches Code of Conduct/Ethics

Tryouts

CATS Volleyball Club will hold open tryouts each year to select players for our teams. Our tryouts will comply with Evergreen Region policies.

Tryout Preparation

If possible, download and fill out all the needed paperwork before you come to the tryout.

Be sure to get there early. Arrive 30 minutes prior to check in. Contact us to let us know if you will be arriving late because you are coming from another tryout.

Great effort turns heads and is remembered. Avoid being tentative in your play but know the difference between being aggressive and playing recklessly. Let the lead tryout coach/tryout coordinator know if you are trying out while injured or have to leave early for whatever reason.

Notification of Selection

All players will be notified of their placement (either on the team or as an alternate) no later than **24hrs** after their tryout through a **face to face meeting, phone call or email**. With this first contact, we will let you know what team you have been chosen for. We will ask you if we are your first choice, one of several choices you are actively considering, or if you have decided to play for another team. Please be honest with us as it does not affect our desire to have you play for CATS, but it does help us communicate accurate information to our alternates. Finally we will ask you and your parents to complete the Acceptance Agreement and online non-refundable deposit in order to commit to the team. You will have 72 hours to complete this binding commitment or your spot may be offered to another player.

Items required for complete commitment:

- USAV Membership
- USAV Medical History and Release Form
- USAV Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct Form
- USAV Concussion Form
- USAV Cardiac form
- Signed letter of acceptance and a non-refundable deposit.

Parent Meeting

All CATS teams will have a mandatory parent meeting. Location and times will be posted for each team on the club website. We have several tasks that need to be completed during this meeting:

- Uniform sizing
- Coaches expectations
- Dates for practices and prospective tournaments
- Parents Q & A about upcoming season

Chaperone

The **chaperone** position is required for all USAV teams and they are listed on the team roster. The Cats will make every effort to fill this position with a member of their staff. **Assistant coaches can be chaperones** as long as they are at least 25 years old and are not the head coach of another team. The chaperone's duties shall be solely to supervise and chaperone the players outside of competition, as safety of the players is a prime concern. **All chaperones must sign the Chaperone Responsibilities Form and Parent/Spectators Code of Conduct upon registering. The \$25 Chaperone registration fee and background screening fee will be paid for by the CATS VBC.**

Scorekeeper Clinic

Every player and coach is required to attend a scorekeepers clinic. It is the players responsibility to check with the region for the local clinics and sign up. Players will not be put on a roster until they have attended a scorekeeper clinic.

Practice

CATS competitive teams strive to practice a minimum of 2 times per week. Team practices are usually 1.5-2 hours in length depending on age group. Some teams may have additional specialty practices based upon coach preferences for their teams. Coaches will sometimes schedule additional practices in preparation for major tournaments. There are times when our practice schedule will change based on weather conditions or school events.

Practice Rules:

Our focus with practice is to improve the skills and techniques in every aspect of volleyball to each player. To achieve that, certain rules are required by all teams as detailed below:

Every practice is important. It is expected that each player will exercise good time management skills so that scheduling conflicts are kept to a minimum. All athletes are expected to make every effort to attend practice. If a player must miss a practice, **a telephone call, text, or email to their head coach is expected at least 4 hours before practice.** Only after attempting and failing to reach your head coach, can a player contact a teammate to relay the message to the head coach. Advanced notice is expected if the missed practice is due to vacation, school function or another event scheduled in advance. **Missing practice may result in loss of playing time** based upon whether the absence was excused and the expectations set up by the coach..

Excused absences are for family or school events in which the player cannot control the scheduling of that event (concerts, plays, or games.) Players who can only attend a half hour or 45 minutes of a practice because of another event should still come to practice. It is much better to get some practice time rather than miss the whole practice.

Injured athletes who can attend school are expected to attend practice to support their team and be available to help where they can, even if they cannot physically participate in practice. Players with fever or

stomach flu (diarrhea and/or vomiting) should not come to practice. Scheduled practice time is start time. Please arrive early enough to be dressed and completely ready for practice by start time. This usually requires arriving not less than 15 minutes before start time.

Parents may not coach or offer instruction to their daughter or another team member at any time during practice. Parents are not permitted on the court, unless requested by the coaching staff. There will be no jewelry allowed at practice.

Playing Time

Playing time, for many players and parents, is a central concern that can distract from our focus on the team's success and can often create divisions within the team. **AT CATS WE BELIEVE THAT PLAYING TIME IS EARNED.**

In any case, every player will have an opportunity to compete for playing time within their position during practice, but playing time during tournaments is not guaranteed. A player's court time will be affected by the following:

- A player's practice attendance

- A player's ability to perform at the necessary level for a skill or position

- How a player's attitude adds to or detracts from the chemistry or performance of the team

- A player's past performance during the tournament or the last week of practice

- A player's effort and work ethic

- The importance of the match

- The needs of the team in the present as well as later in the season

- Not being in good standing with respect to team fees

Some generalizations can be made with regards to playing time issues. It is our goal that all players have some on-court role every match. There may be exceptions with players recovering from injuries, problems with adherence to team rules/policies or when teams are trying to win a bid/move to the gold bracket of tournament

- Play in a multi-day tournament.

- Playtime is generally more equal at the younger age groups (Developmental)

- Playtime will vary by position with some positions playing all the way around the court and some playing only front or back row.

- Playtime is more equal during pool play than in tournament play.

- Playtime may be more equal earlier in the season as coaches are exploring different lineups and identifying starters.

- Playtime may be more equal in one-day regional tournaments compared to multi-day tournaments, qualifiers, or regional tournaments.

- Position and time on court are determined by the needs of her current club team, not her history from past seasons or the current needs of her school team.

ALL PLAYING TIME IS DECIDED BY THE COACHES AND IS NOT NEGOTIABLE. Coaches have the right to play whomever they think is best suited for a position and who helps contribute to the team's development and success. Here are some suggestions on how to talk with your coaches about playing time. Avoid language that is demanding or accusatory. Instead ask, "what can I do to play more..."

Avoid seeking to talk to your coach when you are emotional. We seek to utilize the **24-hour** rule if at all possible.

Parents may participate in the conversation with the coach but the player should always be present when discussing playtime issues. We will not discuss other players on the team but will focus on what you, the player, needs to do to have opportunities to play more.

While email or a phone call can start a discussion we prefer that all playtime discussion be in person with the coach and the player and scheduled before or after practice.

Tournaments

Most tournaments that CATS teams enter, take one day, either a Saturday or a Sunday. The typical one-day tournament schedule starts at 8:00 AM with pool play consisting of three or four matches followed by bracket play in the afternoon. A few tournaments (Pacific Northwest Qualifier, President's Day Tournament, and other travel tournaments) involve two days of pool play, followed by single elimination bracket play.

Parent Guidelines:

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their daughter to and from tournaments. Many gyms prohibit food or drink other than water in the court areas. Teams may be penalized by the tournament site director if parents or team supporters ignore this rule.

Player Rules:

If a player knows that she will miss a tournament, be late or have to leave early from a tournament it is her/his responsibility to notify the coach as soon as a conflict is identified.

All athletes are required to be in the gym, ready to warm-up, at the scheduled start time set up by their head coach. Usually this will be when the gym opens, one hour prior to the start of the first match.

Players are expected to avoid displaying negative emotions during matches. Arguing with the officials will not be tolerated.

All athletes are required to stay at the tournament until the team has been released by one of the coaches.

Typically, teams are required to ref after their tournament play has ended. **We play & ref as a team, and we will leave the event as a team.**

Officiating:

All USAV tournaments are at least partially self-officiated. Officiating at tournaments is the shared responsibility of the entire team, including coaches. All players are required to help with the line judging, scorekeeping, score flipping, and down officiating. The coach may rotate officiating responsibilities but will often only use the most experienced scorekeepers.

No headsets or cell phones are to be used during officiating assignments. This also includes cell phones at the scorekeeper's table. All players and coaches will be responsible for providing their own whistles at every tournament.

Team Area & Cooler:

Upon arrival, the team will identify a team area where the girls can leave their bags and hang out between playing and officiating. The area may be a room, table or simply a spot in a hallway. Either way, the team area represents our club and should be kept neat and organized at all times. The team area is not secure and valuables left unsupervised will be at your own risk. Also, be sure to properly dispose of any trash and leave the area as we found it when the tournament is over. Most tournaments do not offer concessions. Each team will be responsible for organizing their area.

Food and Drink Policy:

Many gyms prohibit food or drink other than water in the court areas, including gum. Teams may be penalized by the tournament site director if parents or team supporters ignore this rule.

Travel:

CATS' travel policy places the responsibility of travel to tournaments and supervision of players on their parents. Parents are responsible for all costs of travel and meals for themselves as well as their daughter. Please read the safe sport guidelines:

Travel Policy for CATS as adopted by SafeSport

CATS has some teams that travel regularly to play in tournaments, has some teams where travel is limited to a few events per season, and some teams where there is no travel other than local travel to and from our own area. CATS prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Volleyball SafeSport Handbook. CATS has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase player safety and improve the player's experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local tournaments ("local travel") and team travel involving an overnight stay ("team travel").

Local travel occurs when CATS does not sponsor, coordinate or arrange for travel.

- Players and/or their parents/guardian are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for arranging or coordinating local travel. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including but not limited to: a valid driver's license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state laws.
- The employees, coaches and/or volunteers of CATS or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player.

Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when CATS or one of its teams or designees sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our team can compete locally, regionally or nationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with the players.

- When possible, CATS will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Travel notice will include dates of tournament and if available, designated hotels for that tournament.
- Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangements with a minor player (unless the coach is the parent, guardian or sibling of the player).
- The coach or his/her designee will establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location. Regular monitoring and curfew checks will be made of each room by at least two properly background screened adults. At no time should only one adult be present in a room with minor players, regardless of gender.
- Team personnel shall ask hotels to block adult pay per view channels.
- Individual meetings between a coach and a player may not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and must be held in public settings or with additional adults present, with at least one of those adults being the same gender as the player.
- Family members who wish to stay in the team hotel are permitted and encouraged to do so.
- The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. If any special arrangements are necessary for your child, please contact the team personnel who can either make or assist with making those arrangements.
- No coach or chaperone shall at any time be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their coaching and/or chaperoning duties.
- In all cases involving travel, parents have the right to transport their minor player.
- Prior to any travel, coaches will endeavor to make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Coaches will also support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of the players for adherence to curfew restrictions and other travel rules.
- If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken, or immediately after.

Code of Conduct / Honor Code

- Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrator, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times.
- Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.
- The possession, use or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden.

- Team members are reminded that when competing in tournaments, traveling on trips and attending other club-related functions, they are representing both themselves and [Club]. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the club.

Team Fees/Tuition:

Team fees/tuitions vary within the club based on how much a team practices, how many tournaments that are selected, and how many players are on the team. A player's tuition includes:

Administration Fees- covers staff, all equipment, dues, tax preparation, website, medical kit supplies, ERVA Fees, insurance fees, etc.

Coaching Fees- covers coaching pay throughout the team's regular season, for both head and assistant coaches.

Gym Fees- covers costs for practice gyms.

Coaching Staff's travel- covers hotel, air fare if needed, and meal per diem for coaching staff including chaperone (not for players.)

Uniforms- will cover the costs of 1-2 jerseys, practice shirt/s, and warm-up shirt for players.

Other equipment may be available for purchase throughout the season.

WHAT IS NOT COVERED IN TEAM FEES/TUITIONS:

Any travel expenses or meals for players.

Additional uniforms & accessories for special tournaments such as PNQ.

Each player is responsible for their own spandex.

USAV membership for player

Apparel or accessories such as spandex, kneepads, shoes, socks, gym bags, or whistles.

Billing and Payment Policies:

Responsible Party- The parent or guardian who signs the participation agreement and the ERVA Offer and Acceptance is liable for any and all fees, dues, and charges for goods and services incurred by the player. By signing the agreement, the responsible party accepts liability and agrees to be bound by the terms of the agreement. The agreements for all sibling participants, regardless of which parent or guardian signs as the responsible party, will be treated as one account for the purposes of liability.

Late Fees or Returned Item Fees- A **\$15 late fee** will be assessed to any account if the payment is not received by the **10th** of each month that payment is due on payment plan accounts. In the event a check used to pay fees is returned to the CATS VBC or refused for payment regardless of the reason for refusal, a \$30 service fee will be assessed to the player's account and a cashier's check, credit card, or cash will be required for all further payments.

Statements- CATS does NOT send out written statements of amounts payable for fees or services used by the participants. It is the responsibility of the parents to make scheduled payments on time or late fees will be applied.

Payments- Accounts may be paid on the **CATS website** by filling out the provided form and using a credit card via pay pal. This must be received by the 10th of the month to avoid a late fee.

Payment Schedule:

All players will have to pay a **non-refundable deposit** by **November 7th @ midnight (U12-U14) & November 14th @ midnight (U15-U17)**. The remaining balance can be paid in full by the 10th of December or be made in the form of monthly payments due on the 5th of each month for 3-4 months depending on the team that such player is on.

Delinquent Payments- All actions are left up to the discretion of the board. Because there is the **OPTION TO PAY ONLINE WITH PAY PAL**, we will strictly enforce the **"NO PAY NO PLAY"** policy. The policy will

work as follows: **PAYMENTS DUE on the 5th of each month.** If payments are not received by the due date, a **reminder email will be sent by the 7th of each month.** You will then have until the **10th of the month to complete your payment.** If the director has not received communication, then the coach will be notified that your daughter will be **ineligible to practice or play** until there is something worked out with the director. Accounts that remain unpaid for three or more weeks will be considered “Not in Good Standing” and reported to the Evergreen Region office of USAV which may affect a player’s participation during the subsequent club season.

Communication:

Routine Team Communication:

Good communication between Player, Coach, Parents, and Club is very important. It is critical that you provide the club and your team’s coaches with all email addresses where you want information sent as well as cell phone numbers for both parents and player. The primary way that you will receive communication from your coach will be established at your team meeting in the beginning of the season. If a last minute change occurs with a practice or with a tournament, the club will contact the team representative to spread the word among parents on the team, as well as post it to our website, so be sure to check the club’s website regularly.

Parents to Coach:

CATS wants to encourage appropriate communication between our parents and the coaching staff of their daughter’s team. What is appropriate communication?

Any information about your daughter’s health. Recent illnesses, medical restrictions relative to practice, allergies, medication needs are all examples of important information that we want you to communicate to your coaches.

Any information about your daughter’s emotional health. It may be important for your coach to know if your daughter is struggling in school or had a recent death in the family or is dealing with another emotionally charged issue. Without this context, your daughter’s behavior in practice or during tournaments may be interpreted as being lazy, unfocused or disrespectful.

Poor Sportsmanship:

The club will not tolerate aggressive parent behavior toward any of coaches, players, coaches of other clubs, parents, or officials. If a parent exhibits this type of behavior, they will be appropriately sanctioned, which may include being asked to not attend tournaments in the future or even dismissal from CATS.

Finding the Best time to talk:

Do not try to address the coaches during practices or tournaments. Please contact them to set up a time convenient to both parties in a private setting.

Provide a little prep for your coach but not too much before the meeting. Let your coach know why you want to meet but don’t send a lengthy email. Emails or long phone messages tend to be too emotional and accusatory. Avoid that with just a brief note or conversation.

There are topics of communication with your daughter’s coaches which are not appropriate, including playing time.

Website: www.catsvolleyball.com

The Cats website is the main form of communication between players, coaches and parents.

Grievance Procedures:

Competitive athletics by its very nature will not allow all players and their parents to be happy at all times. In the event that a player or parents has a grievance, please know when and how to resolve the issue. In those situations, it is not acceptable to approach coaches on tournament days to discuss playing time or coaching decisions. If a parent wants to discuss their grievance, they should follow the steps listed below.

- 1 The player should speak with the coach about the problem (not on tournament day). If this does not resolve the situation, go to the next step.

- 2 The parent should make an appointment with the coach for a meeting (not on a tournament day) with the player being present.
- 3 The parent should make an appointment with the club director and coach for a meeting (not a tournament day) with the player present.
- 4 If the issue is not resolved in the previous steps, it shall be brought to the attention of the Club Director who will act as liaison to the Board. The Board of Directors decision on all grievances is final.

Parents are asked to refrain from negative comments around their daughter and other players. Negative comments about a coach, or the coach's style or Club policies can have an adverse effect on a team's performance and attitude of the player.

Prohibition against harassment & discrimination:

It is the goal and intent of CATS to promote an environment for players and chaperones that is free from harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin & religion.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, as well as all forms of sexually connotated jokes and comments.

Any Player, coach or chaperone who believes he or she has been subjected to any sexual harassment or discrimination as described above should immediately report it to the Club Director.

Upon receipt of a complaint about alleged sexual harassment or discrimination in violation of this policy, CATS will conduct an investigation in to the allegations. To the extent reasonably possible, CATS will attempt to maintain the confidentiality of the investigation and allegations. CATS will take the appropriate action to remedy any complaints that are determined to have merit. No player, coach or chaperone shall be subjected to any reprisal or retaliation as a result of making a complaint under this policy.

CATS Athlete Code of Conduct:

My primary goal is to become the best player that I can be. I am responsible for my own actions and behavior. I am fully committed to CATS and agree that:

Attitude:

I will conduct myself in a manner that is respectful to me, my team and to CATS.

I will commit to my team by getting adequate sleep, eating a healthy diet, and abstaining for alcohol, illegal drugs or tobacco during the course of the club season.

I will play with full effort and intensity.

Communication:

I will avoid criticism of my teammates, as I believe no one is trying to make a mistake.

I will avoid giving unsolicited coaching tips to teammates and defer responsibility to my coaches.

I will refrain from posting or communicating negative comments about other players, coaches, parents or the club via texting, email or social media.

Coachability:

I will accept decisions by my coaches knowing that everyone cannot start. I will accept my role on the team and do what it takes for the team to succeed.

Practice:

I will manage my time to meet my commitments to my team, my family, my classes and my other commitments.

I will proactively contact my coach as far as ahead of time if I am unable to make it to practice or a tournament.

I will commit to being ready to step on the floor at the scheduled practice start time. That means I will have to get to practice at least 15 minutes ahead of time so that I can change and get ready.

The following section is what you are authorizing when you submit the online commitment form. Thank you.

Athlete/Player Agreement & Consent:

I, _____, have read, understand, and agree to the policies, procedures, and code of conduct requirements as set forth in the CATS Parent/Player Handbook. As evidenced by my signature, I certify that I have read and understand all of the foregoing and consent to abide by the rules set forth therein.

Player Name (printed) _____

Player Signature _____ Date _____

CATS Parent Code of Conduct:

Parents are crucial to the success of CATS and their daughter's club volleyball experience. The CATS Volleyball club requires that the parent(s) of any player in our club sign this code of conduct contract. I therefore agree to the following:

Safe Play:

I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my daughter or the safety of others.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and I will refrain from their use at all tournaments and practices.

Sportsmanship:

I will respect the officials and their authority during games. I understand that many of our officials are coaches or junior players. I will not yell or scream at officials and leave it up to my daughter's coach to resolve issues with the official or scorekeeper.

I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to sulking, being passively aggressive, showing hostility or resorting to violence.

I will teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning.

Coaching:

I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices unless I am the official coach. I will avoid yelling instructions to the players during the game.

I understand that playing time will be afforded to all players, but not necessarily in equal proportions. Playing time is the sole decision of the coach and may be influenced by attendance, tardiness, discipline, and ultimately by ability in playing well in pressure situations.

Communication:

I understand that my daughter should approach the coach if she has problems or concerns first and I will encourage her to do so.

I hereby authorize CATS to post her name, picture, present school, year of graduation, height, uniform number and position on the CATS website or with any recruiting materials.

Parent/Guardian Agreement & Consent

I, _____, have read, understand, and agree to the policies, procedures, and code of conduct requirements as set forth in the CATS Parent/Player Handbook. As evidenced by my signature, I certify that I have read and understand all of the foregoing and consent to abide by the rules set forth therein. In addition, I certify that as a parent/guardian of this athlete/player, have explained to my daughter the aforementioned stipulated conditions and their ramifications, and I consent to her participation in this program under the Evergreen Region of USA Volleyball in which she is a member. I agree to pay the team fees set forth by CATS, allowing my daughter to participate in the program.

Parent Name (printed) _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____