



# **PARENT & PLAYER HANDBOOK**

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Congratulations on accepting your position on an NYC Juniors club team!

## General Information

Playing on an NYC Juniors team is typically a far more competitive experience than on a school or recreational team. The time and financial commitment is significant, and should be carefully considered before accepting a spot on a team. We expect all NYC Juniors teams to be regionally competitive and to play with the goal of earning a bid to USAV Junior National Championships. Playing time in tournaments is not guaranteed. Some players will play more than others. Practices are the place where players have the opportunity to improve their skills, strength, and strategic understanding of volleyball, and to earn appropriate playing time.

## Time Commitment

- ❖ The regular season for travel teams runs from November into May.
- ❖ Teams that have earned a place in a national tournament will play an extended season into late June or early July. Players that earn a spot on a travel team commit to the entire extended season when they accept a position on the team.
- ❖ Teams will have three mandatory team practices each week during the season.
- ❖ Each team will be scheduled for 6-10 tournaments during the season. This includes single day tournaments on Saturday or Sunday, and several multi-day, overnight tournaments.
- ❖ Many of the multi-day tournaments take place during holiday weekends (MLK Day, President's Day, Easter, etc.) so you will need to plan your vacations accordingly.
- ❖ Teams that travel to National Qualifiers or other large events may occasionally miss a day of school. When you accept a position on a team, you are committing to the entire season schedule.
- ❖ Except in extreme extenuating circumstances, missing even one tournament day is unacceptable, and may result in significant forfeiture of playing time or, with repeat absences, possible dismissal from the team.

## Included in Fees

- Training - practice facility rentals & coaches' stipends
- Administration and equipment
- Tournaments – registration fees, travel and hotel costs for coaches
- Practice shirts
- ***"National" Teams only:*** Extended season costs to attend Nationals

## NOT Included in Fees

- Transportation to and from practices and tournaments (typically within a 4-hour drive)
- Costs for travel, hotel, meals and snacks during events.
- ***"Travel" Teams:*** Extended season costs for teams who qualify for Nationals
- Uniforms (as needed each year) - backpack, warm-ups, jerseys, spandex, kneepads, socks

# **PARENT INFORMATION**

## **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents, guardians, or persons connected to an NYC Juniors participant must abide by and uphold all NYC Junior rules and standards of conduct at all times. They will respect the decisions of coaches and officials made in the course of performing their duties, and assume full responsibility that the athlete they are responsible for does the same. If the parent/guardian fails to do so, they and/or the athlete may be removed and barred from NYC Junior practices, games, or events.

## **PAYMENT OF DUES**

Fees are due according to the schedule outlined in the online team acceptance, which parents must complete when committing their child to play on an NYC Juniors team. Payments are accepted via online credit card payment or checking account, or offline by personal check (payable to "NYC Juniors").

Please remember that the club cannot operate and meet financial obligations if any member defaults on the payment of dues. **If a club member is delinquent in her dues, she will not be allowed to participate in practices and or tournaments until payments are up to date.**

### **➤ Financial Aid**

*NYC Juniors has NEVER turned an athlete away due to an inability to pay. Any family that is seeking financial assistance must fill out a **Financial Aid Application** during their acceptance registration. We want EVERY athlete who earns a spot on a team to have the opportunity to play regardless of their financial situation. Applications will be reviewed in a timely manner, and appropriate aid awarded, or extended payment plan settled upon.*

## **TRANSPORTATION**

*Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to all practices and tournaments. All practice facilities are easily accessible by car and/or public transportation.*

**Single day tournaments** are held within the GEVA (Garden Empire Volleyball Association) Region. GEVA's junior tournaments are held on weekend days at various venues throughout the region and typically last all day. Plan to travel up to two hours, arriving by 7:00 or 8:00am and staying until 6:00pm (times may vary considerably based on tournament format).

**Overnight Tournaments** generally include a two or three-night hotel stay and two or three days of competition. Travel teams can expect to travel to various locations in the Northeast, including Washington, DC, Baltimore, Boston, and various locations in Pennsylvania.. Parents are responsible for securing supervised transportation and housing for their athlete, including airfare for National teams.

***Athletes should always plan to arrive by 10pm the night before competition begins.***

**Carpooling** is always acceptable and highly encouraged. NYC Juniors recognizes that parents may have conflicting obligations, which make it difficult to provide transportation for their child. Please appoint a guardian for your child if you are unable to attend a tournament.

To assist you with making carpool arrangements, all parents and players will receive a team roster with the contact information for each family on their team. If you have any questions or difficulty coordinating transportation, please contact your team's Point Parent.

## PRACTICES

For liability reasons, **all NYC Juniors practices are CLOSED to parents and/or spectators.** The facilities in which we practice take security very seriously and each has specific rules about who can and cannot enter the premises. We have also found that the level of focus and productivity at practices is much higher when players are left to the direction of only their coaches. Please be courteous and respectful of all coaches and facility employees by adhering to this rule.

## TOURNAMENTS

- **Hotel Stays**
  - Most tournaments have a “**Stay and Play**” policy which dictates where teams must stay. Teams must book with designated hotels, through a third-party housing agency.
  - NYC Juniors will book a block of rooms for each tournament at an approved hotel.
  - Booking information will be released to parents, who are highly encouraged to book at team hotels to help facilitate team meetings and activities.
- **Snacks/Meals**
  - Healthy food may be scarce at tournament venues. Most teams come up with a system to provide shareable snacks for the team during competition. You will want to send your athlete with snacks/lunch, especially to long single-day events.
  - Teams are encouraged to plan meals together at overnight tournaments at their discretion
- **Dismissal-** Teams are generally required to referee the first match after losing in a play-off round. **ALL players on the team must stay until the team is finished and dismissed by the coach.** While we realize that families are often anxious to get on the road home, staying together until dismissal is part of the team experience and commitment.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Website

The best source for general NYC Juniors information is our website. Practice and tournament schedules are posted at the beginning of the season, and updated as necessary.

### Email

Coaches, Point Parents, and NYC Juniors Administrators will frequently disclose important information about upcoming events via email. Please make sure your email address is correct on your team roster, and contact your Point Parent if you need to update any contact info.

Play schedules for tournaments are often released a few days before the event. Details will be sent out via email as soon as they become available.

## POINT PARENTS

Each team needs one parent volunteer to take on the role of “Point Parent.” This person will act as a liaison between team parents and coaches/NYC administration. The main responsibility of a Point Parent is simply communication, and they can choose to delegate parent responsibilities as needed.

## COACHING STAFF

### SELECTION OF COACHES

NYC Juniors staff is a highly-qualified group of professionals that are dedicated to teaching the sport of volleyball. They include former and current college coaches, high school coaches, and current and former collegiate and professional players.

Coaches are carefully selected and assigned to teams based on who we feel will best meet the goals and needs of specific teams, and the club as a whole. All NYC Juniors Coaches have successfully completed USA Volleyball IMPACT and SafeSport training and many possess CAP (Coaching Accreditation Program) certification through USA Volleyball. All coaches must also pass an annual background screen.

### INFORMATION COMMUNICATION

Coaches are responsible for enforcing all NYC Juniors rules, making sure that their respective teams understand what is expected of them as members of the club, and ensuring that all pertinent information is passed along to the team personally, or via Point Parent. **Athletes and parents should take all questions, comments, or concerns during the season to their team coaches or Point Parent directly.** Especially with older teams, coaches encourage players to be responsible for as much of their own communication as possible.

### COACHES' CONDUCT

Each coach must maintain high standards of conduct and sportsmanship. NYC Juniors coaches are expected to be good role models for players and to maintain personal conduct that is a credit to NYC Juniors and the sport of volleyball. Coaches must refrain from any conduct or display that may encourage athletes or spectators to engage in unsportsmanlike behavior. At all times coaches must respect game officials, opposing players, coaches and spectators

Coaches answer directly to the NYC Administration for coaching performance and conduct during NYC Juniors activities. If a coach displays attitudes, actions, or conduct contrary to NYC Juniors rules, regulations or philosophy, it should be reported to the Administration, who will take the appropriate action at their discretion.

### TALKING TO THE COACH

Parents may discuss the following with their player's coach:

- How you can best support them/the team
- Team rules and requirements
- Concerns about their child's behavior or team experience
- The college recruiting process

Parents should NOT discuss the following with their player's coach:

- Playing time\*
- Strategies / line-ups used during play
- Other players or teams in a negative light

*\*Athletes are encouraged to discuss these issues with their coach directly. This is the best way for them to gain an understanding of what they need to do to achieve personal goals. It is very difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you hope she would, but coaches must make judgments and decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interest of the team as well as each player's personal development.*

# ATHLETE COMMITMENT AGREEMENT

## Athlete Commitment

NYC Juniors is dedicated to improving the volleyball skills of each and every athlete in the club and to compete at the highest possible level. This goal cannot be met unless each team member fulfills her obligation to attend all practices and tournaments on a consistent basis.

## Attendance and Absences

NYC Juniors understands that family obligations, school functions, and illness are a part of life, and that in the event of conflict, personal choices must be made. However, as team sports rely on the dedication of all those involved, and the players who are best prepared in practice will be the best equipped in games, NYC Juniors urges all members to not take their commitment to this program lightly. Please familiarize yourself with the attendance policy below, and consider all outside obligations before committing to a team.

### Attendance Policy

- Players are permitted **TWO** excused absences from practice without consequence.
- Players are NOT excused for any missed tournament days, or practices in excess of two. (exception for illness)
- In the event that a player must miss practice or a tournament they **MUST** inform their coach in advance and as early as possible.
- Any unexcused absence from practices or tournament days will result in reduced playing time at the next attended tournament.
  - The player will be prohibited from playing the first match of the tournament as a consequence for an unexcused absence at practice, and one additional match for each additional missed practice.
  - Players who miss a tournament day will sit out AT LEAST two matches of the next tournament.

## Playing Time

Playing time is based on attendance, attitude, and skill, not necessarily in that order. While all team members will generally play at some point in all events, court time will NOT be equal. The coaches' primary responsibility is to the needs of the team as whole, over any given individual. **No one is guaranteed playing time.** Athletes (not parents) should discuss issues regarding playing time with the coach, and only at appropriate times. It is best to set up a time before or after a practice, or discuss via phone, text, or email at least 24 hours after the conclusion of a tournament.

## Practice Rules

- **Schedule** for practices is set at the beginning of the season. On occasion it is necessary to make a temporary change or emergency cancellation. Schedule changes will typically be communicated via email or group text. Be sure to stay connected to your team and communicate regularly.
- **Punctuality** is extremely important in order to make the most of practice time. Players are responsible for arriving at least 15 minutes prior to the start of practice and are expected to be ready and on the court at the scheduled start time.
- **Appropriate attire** is required at all times consisting of club issued practice shirts, shorts or leggings, and sneakers (preferably volleyball shoes). Court shoes should NOT be worn outside, and minimal jewelry should be worn during play (large earrings, bracelets and watches are prohibited)
- **Cell phones** should remain in bags for the duration of practice, and should not be used during breaks except in emergencies. This rule is important for team interaction and maintaining focus during training.
- **Illness and Injury** are an unfortunate part of volleyball season.
  - Players who are ill and contagious should NOT attend practice.
  - Players who are injured **SHOULD** attend practice even if physical participation is limited, because there is still much to be gained from observation and listening to the coach's instructions.

Athlete signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_