

CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE  
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63<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL 2026 CIAC GIRLS VOLLEYBALL INFORMATION

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## 1. IMPORTANT DATES

Date of First Practice	Monday, August 24, 2026
Date of First Game	Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Team Roster Due	Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Officials Form Due	Thursday, October 22, 2026
Last Date to Count	Thursday, November 5, 2026
Rankings and Pairings	Friday, November 6, 2026
Play-In Date	Saturday, November 7, 2026
First Round – L & S	Monday, November 9, 2026
First Round – M & LL	Tuesday, November 10, 2026
Second Round	Thursday, November 12, 2026
Quarter-finals	Saturday, November 14, 2026
Semi-finals	November 17 or 18 – Site TBA
Finals	November 20 or 21 – Site TBA *

\*Sites for championships will be held at Bulkeley High School on November 20, or at East Haven High School on November 21 – 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

## 2. ALERTS

- 1) **New!** If a school plays an out-of-state school, the school will receive 0 points in its power rating. The win or loss will count on their record and be used in qualifying for the tournament and for breaking ties in the rankings. Out-of-state games will not be included in calculating the average power points.
- 2) CIAC member school athletes in the sport of volleyball may not participate in any outside unapproved tournament(s) or event(s) during the CIAC season. The season begins with the first scheduled game and ends with the state championship. CIAC rules permit a student-athlete to participate in non-school volleyball activities when their regular season concludes unless her team is in the CIAC tournament. Player's restrictions end when her team is eliminated from the CIAC tournament. This includes two on two, three on three, beach volleyball or other similar events/tournaments. Participation in such events will result in loss of eligibility for the athlete and possible forfeit of games played by the school in which the athlete played after participating in an outside event.
- 3) High School students are not permitted to serve as line judges for any CIAC match at any level. Schools may elect to use no line judges. Trained adults or CIAC volleyball officials may be hired by the school for matches. Line judges cannot be parents of players.
- 4) It is recommended that the first game (V, JV, F) of the day start at 4:30 p.m. Check with your officials' assigner.
- 5) Scorebooks must be NFHS compliant. Electronic scorebooks are permissible as long as they are NFHS compliant.
- 6) **REMINDER!** In season tournaments must be included in the schedule even though they don't count toward the tournament.
- 7) **New!** Textured game balls are not allowed in regular season or tournament play. The NFHS allows textured balls when approved by the state association. The CIAC has not approved play with textured balls.

### 3. RULE CHANGES

#### 2026-27 NFHS Volleyball Rule Changes

**4-2-1a, 4-2-1i(3) (New), 4-2-2** – Libero uniform bottoms may be any color and no longer must match the team uniform bottoms.

**Rationale:** Allows more flexibility in the libero uniform bottoms while ensuring that the libero uniform top continues to contrast with their teammates.

**5-5-3b(21)** – The second referee will provide a double whistle warning between sets at two minutes, 30 seconds (4:30 when intermission is used) instead of 2 minutes, 45 seconds.

**Rationale:** Improves pace of play between sets by notifying teams earlier to make their way onto the court for the officials to administer lineup checks before the final audio signal and resumption of play.

**5-7-3c, 5-7-3d, 6-4-2, 8-1-6, 9-8-2, 10-3-6c, 10-4, 11-4-1b** – A team may designate up to two liberos, but only one libero can be in the game at a time. When a team designates two liberos and one is injured/ill, a new libero may be re-designated. When a team designates two liberos and one is disqualified, the team must continue with one libero.

**Rationale:** Allows more student-athletes to participate by creating an additional opportunity for coaches without having to utilize a substitution.

**6-4 Penalties 1c (New), 12-2-8b Note (New)** – If non-playing teammate(s) (bench players) enter the court during play it is illegal alignment. It remains a conduct violation if a coach or team attendant (anyone not in uniform) enters the court while the ball is in play.

**Rationale:** More appropriately assesses illegal alignment (loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent) to non-playing teammates who enter the court while the ball is in play. A player who enters the court during play may still receive a conduct violation if they engage in disconcerting acts, disrespectful language, etc. This penalty realignment allows officials to appropriately penalize teams based on participant actions.

**6-5-1** – Players on the serving team are not permitted to raise their hands above their heads during service until the ball has passed beyond the net.

**Rationale:** Discourages player positioning during the serve that prevents the receiving team from viewing service contact and/or the flight of the ball and assists officials when evaluating the existence of screening. This change aligns with all other volleyball rules codes.

**9-2-1 Note 1 (New)** – Players shall not wear any audio or video devices during the match.

**Rationale:** Clarifies the prohibition of electronic communication with and by players during the match and aligns with other NFHS rules codes.

**12-2-8m (New)** – It is an unsporting conduct violation if coaches, non-playing teammates or team attendants use props on the bench during celebrations.

**Rationale:** Clarifies appropriate bench conduct for consistent enforcement by eliminating the use of props in bench celebrations while promoting sportsmanship and preventing disruption and potential safety concerns.

#### 2026-27 Volleyball Editorial Changes

1-5-1, 5-2-1b, 5-4-3c(1), 5-4-4a, 7-1-1a, 7-1-1 Penalties 3, 7-1-2a, 7-1-4 Penalties 1, 9-9-1h, 12-2-8

## 2026-27 Volleyball Points of Emphasis

- 1) Host Management Best Practices
- 2) Electronic Devices
- 3) Bench Personnel – Non-Playing Teammates
- 4) NFHS Authenticating Mark

### 4. **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Member schools are expected to conduct their relations with each other at all levels of competition in a spirit of good sportsmanship. The school administration is responsible for the athletic program, including the policies and procedures relating to sportsmanship and the conduct of activities in the school. The CIAC “Class Act” standards will be used in all CIAC contests.

**CIAC Sportsmanship Guidelines** -- The CIAC Standards for Sportsmanship as defined in the Class Act program are found at [http://ciacsports.com/site/?page\\_id=10438](http://ciacsports.com/site/?page_id=10438).

All coaches who are disqualified at any level will be suspended for the next two games (see the CIAC Handbook), take two NFHS coaching courses (“Teaching and Modeling Behavior” and “Sportsmanship”) and the school will pay a \$50 fine. In addition to the two-game suspension and fine, the CIAC reserves the right to review any incident that results in a coach’s disqualification and may assess additional game suspensions up to and including a one-year ban. The fine and proof of taking the coaching courses must be submitted to the CIAC office before the coach can resume their coaching responsibilities.

### 5. **CIAC REGULAR SEASON**

- 1) **Scrimmages** - Teams must have a minimum of three (3) days of practice prior to scheduling a full team scrimmage. Uniforms may only be worn during the final scrimmage of the preseason (may not be worn in earlier scrimmages).
- 2) All sports teams and individual athletes must have a minimum of ten (10) physical/exertional practice days with their school before the date of the first scheduled competition. No team/athlete shall practice/compete with their school more than six (6) consecutive days to provide a day of rest. Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays may be used unless prohibited by local board policy. Sunday practices may be counted to fulfill the ten (10) day requirement.
- 3) Teams may schedule twenty (20) games. Three of those games may be multi-event tournaments. Multi-event tournaments do not count for CIAC tournament qualification. Tournaments count as one of the twenty permitted games.
- 4) Schools are required to have flags available for lines people.
- 5) High school students are not permitted to serve as line judges for any CIAC match at any level. Schools may elect to use no line judges. Trained adults or CIAC volleyball officials may be hired by the school for matches. Line judges cannot be parents of players.
- 6) Students with Special Needs – Coaches are reminded to inform contest officials prior to each competition of any student(s) with special needs who could be competing in the contest when his/her disability could impact the individual’s performance or the conduct of the competition.

- 7) Electronic devices in any form may not be attached to any piece of volleyball equipment during CIAC volleyball contests, nor may those devices be in any area near play. Game officials' decisions on the location of electronic devices are final.
- 8) **Forfeits** – Forfeits are determined by regulations articulated in the CIAC by-laws. Schools cannot determine a forfeit between them without CIAC approval. If a situation arises where the game cannot be continued coaches should contact their athletic director.

## 6. **DIVISIONS**

Only institutional members of the Conference may enter this tournament which will be in four (4) divisions – LL, L, M and S. Placement of schools has been based on the October 1, 2025 girl enrollment (9-12).

LL – 589 and over

L – 368-588

M – 261-367

S – Up to 260

## 7. **TOURNAMENT ENTRY PROCEDURE**

- 1) **Regular Season Scores** – All regular season meet scores MUST be entered online on the day of the game as soon as possible following the game's completion.
  - Scores must be entered on the new CIAC website at <https://ciac.fpsports.org/>
  - Dropdown the left hand column select “Schedules – High School”
  - At the top of the page select the school and “Girls Volleyball Varsity” as the sport, then the team's schedule will be displayed
  - Click on the green score entry button to make the entries
  - Only logged in users with security permission to enter scores for this sport will see the score entry button for their school's meets
  - The system will display a score entry screen that is specific for girls' volleyball
  - Enter the team scores

**Member schools must make every effort to complete their season as scheduled, including make-up games. Any effort to gain an advantage in tournament play by not playing a game is unacceptable and is subject to action by the CIAC Board of Control. Cancellation of any regular season contest/make-up to play in a league tournament will not be allowed.**

- 2) **Tournament Officials** -- By the date listed under “Important Dates”, each varsity head coach, regardless of won or loss record is invited to submit a list of six (6) officials who are judged to be competent to officiate tournament games. In addition, two (2) officials may be listed who you judge should not work tournament games. From the suggestions a Master List of Officials will be developed which will be used to hire available officials.

In order to complete the official's selection process:

- Go to [casciac.org](http://casciac.org)
- In the left hand column click “Eligibility Center”
- Click “Officials Voting”
- At the top of the page select girls' volleyball

3) Entry Fee – There is a \$100 entry fee per school. Checks are to be made payable and mailed to CIAC, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410. If a team does not qualify for the tournament the entry fee will be returned.

- **Important – Schools who have overdue expenses will not be allowed to participate in the state tournament.**

## 8. QUALIFYING FOR THE TOURNAMENT

- 1) To be eligible for consideration in the tournament, a team must play a minimum of twelve (12) matches AGAINST VARSITY OPPONENTS and have **won 40%** of games against member schools, and eligible out-of-state schools.
- 2) Only the first two games played with any single opponent will count for tournament purposes.
- 3) Only matches played with Conference member schools, or Region I out-of-state schools who are members of their state athletic association shall be considered.
- 4) Matches played with non-member Connecticut secondary schools shall not be considered in the rating of teams.

## 9. TOURNAMENT RANKING AND SEEDING

1) Teams will be ranked in each division based on power rating divided by number of games played.

- \* Step 1 – Determine the power rating for each school in the division.
- \* Step 2 – Determine the number of games played by each school.
- \* Step 3 – Divide the power rating by the number of games played.
- \* Step 4 – Rank schools by power rating/games played.

Power ratings will be rounded to the third decimal. Example: 17 wins and 1 loss with a power rating of 145. Games played = 18. Power rating/games played is 8.056 (8.0555 rounded up to 8.056).

- First tie break is head-to-head competition. (Based on match(s) won not score or sets.)
- Second tie break is win percentage
- Third tie break is number of wins.
- Final tie break is by lot.
- If a school plays an out-of-state school, the school will receive 0 points in its power rating. The win or loss will count on their record and be used in qualifying for the tournament and for breaking ties in the rankings. Out-of-state games will not be included in calculating the average power points.

a. **Most Wins** – Example: A 10-10 team would secure the higher ranking over a 9-9 team.

b. **Power Rating** – Each school is assigned a power rating based on the records of the school(s) that they beat. Schools receive one point in their power rating for each win each of the opponents they have defeated has during the season. The total number of wins of all the opponents you defeat will be your power rating.

For example: If Team A wins 10 games during the season and those 10 opponents have 13, 12, 11, 10, 10, 7, 7, 7, 6 and 4 wins, Team A's power rating would be 87. The team with the higher power rating will secure the higher ranking.

Notes:

- If a school defeats a team twice, it will receive the number of wins that opponent has twice in its power rating.
- The maximum number of power rating points a school can receive for a win is 19, which is the maximum number of victories a CIAC school can have in a season given that they lost to your school.

c. **By-lot Tiebreaker Number** – If a tie remains, the team securing the higher ranking will be determined electronically by lot using computer assigned random tiebreaker numbers to be set at the start of the season. The team with the greater tiebreaker number will secure the higher ranking.

2) A team maintains its initial ranking throughout the tournament.

3) Pairings will be made as follows:

<u>First Round</u>	<u>Second Round</u>	<u>Quarter-finals</u>	<u>Semi-finals</u>	<u>Finals</u>
1 vs 32				
16 vs 17	1 vs 16			
8 vs 25		1 vs 8		
9 vs 24	8 vs 9			
4 vs 29			1 vs 4	
13 vs 20	4 vs 13			
5 vs 28		4 vs 5		
12 vs 21	5 vs 12			
2 vs 31				1 vs 2
15 vs 18	2 vs 15			
7 vs 26		2 vs 7		
10 vs 23	7 vs 10			
3 vs 30			2 vs 3	
14 vs 19	3 vs 14			
6 vs 27		3 vs 6		
11 vs 22	6 vs 11			

If more than 32 teams qualify, the following qualifying pairings shall be as follows. These pairings will be in effect for the 2026 tournament.

If 33 teams	If 34 teams	If 35 teams	If 36 teams
32 vs 33	32 vs 33	32 vs 33	32 vs 33
	31 vs 34	31 vs 34	31 vs 34
		30 vs 35	30 vs 35
			29 vs 36

If fewer than 32 teams qualify, the higher ranked teams will draw byes for the first round.

4) **Ranking and pairing information** will be posted on the CIAC web site on the date listed under “Important Dates”.

5) **Change of Division Form** – Optional – Athletic Directors wanting to change divisions must send a letter (email) to the CIAC liaison of the committee. Teams can only apply to move up in division. Teams cannot move down. Teams, if approved to move up, must stay in that division for a minimum of two (2) years. Teams must apply by the date listed in “Important Dates”

## 10. TOURNAMENT DATES / SITES / MEET DIRECTORS

- 1) For first round, second round and quarter-final matches the higher ranked school will provide the site.
- 2) If the higher ranked school does not have an available site or a site which conforms to National Federation Rules the higher ranked team must secure a site. If a site cannot be secured, the tournament director will assign a site.
- 3) For semi-final and final games – Semi-finals will be scheduled at a neutral site. If needed the higher ranked team will be the home site for the semi-finals. All division finals will be announced. The higher ranked team will be declared the home team in all situations.
- 4) **Team Roster** – Rosters must be submitted by the date listed under “Important Dates”. **Each school will be allowed eighteen (18) girls maximum on the team roster.** Active Team Rosters can be updated at any time within CIAC eligibility rules.

Coaches need an access log in from your athletic director to complete the form. To complete the Team Roster form:

- Go to the CIAC website at [casciac.org](http://casciac.org)
  - In the left hand column select “Eligibility Center”
  - Select “Team Roster / Tournament Roster”
  - Check off each player that is on your roster
- 5) **Last Date to Count** – Regardless of regular season postponed games, the date listed under “Important Dates” **MUST BE THE FINAL DAY TO COUNT FOR THE TOURNAMENT.** All schools are obligated to report all scores regardless of qualifying for the tournament.
  - 6) **Complete Regular Season** – Member schools must make every effort to complete their season as scheduled, including make-up games. Any effort to gain an advantage in tournament play by not playing a game is unacceptable and is subject to action by the CIAC Board of Control. Cancellation of any regular season contest / make-up to play in a league tournament will not be allowed.

## 11. EXPENSES AND TICKETS

- 1) Expenses for all **first and second round matches** will be borne by the participating teams. The host team will pay all game expenses including officials and shall provide the site director, who should be someone other than the coach of a participating team and an athletic trainer. The visiting team will pay its own traveling expenses.
- 2) Expenses for **quarter-final, semi-final and final matches** will be paid by CIAC. CIAC will require admission to be charged at quarter-final games.
- 3) Schools will bear all traveling expenses.
- 4) The host school will pay all official and linesperson fees for first and second round matches. CIAC will pay all official and lines person expenses for quarter-final, semi-final and final matches.

- 5) Charges for admission (Subject to change)
  - Free – Children five (5) and under and Military in uniform or with ID
  - \$5 – Senior citizens (age 65 and older) and Students (grades 1-12)
  - \$10 – Adults (All others not in the above categories)

**ALL TICKET SALES FOR CIAC TOURNAMENT GAMES WILL BE SOLD AND REDEEMED VIA DIGITAL TICKETING.**

- 6) If in the first round and second round games schools wish to charge admission, they should notify the principal and athletic director of the visiting school in advance.
- 7) During the tournament, the following passes will be honored at all games where an admission is charged.
  - Principal and/or Athletic Director (or designee) of participating schools
  - Press Card
  - CIAC head varsity girls' volleyball coach's tournament pass (must be requested in writing)
  - CIAC volleyball officials' only membership card
  - No other complimentary admissions will be permitted.

## **12. TOURNAMENT PLAY / RULES / PROCEDURES**

- 1) The CIAC Girls Volleyball Championships will be played using an Open tournament format and rally scoring.
- 2) Each team must bring a competent scorer and libero tracker for each match. For first and second round games the higher seed may provide adult lines people who are experienced and competent. Officials may be used if they are available. Parents with players on either team may not be used. Certified volleyball officials will be used as linesmen for all quarter-final, semi-final and final matches.
- 3) In the interest of crowd control and proper supervision the CIAC Board of Control has approved the tournament regulation requiring the principal of the participating schools or his/her designee to attend all tournament matches. The school administrator or designee should identify him/herself to the site director.
- 4) When a member school's coach is ejected from a game for an infraction as prescribed by the rules, the game may not continue until the member school replaces the ejected coach with a certified coach. If this cannot be accomplished within 15 minutes after the ejection, the official in charge will declare a forfeit win for the opposing team.
- 5) Use of any form of tobacco or a similar product or possession of alcoholic beverages of any kind, including champagne, are not permitted at any of the sites. The principal or his/her designee at the match shall see that this rule is enforced and adhered to by the teams.
- 6) **Sportsmanship** – Member schools are expected to conduct their relations with each other at all levels of competition in a spirit of good sportsmanship. The school administration is responsible for the athletic program, including the policies and procedures relating to sportsmanship and the conduct of activities in the school. The CIAC "Class Act" standards will be used in all CIAC contests. The CIAC Standards for Sportsmanship as defined in the Class Act program are found at [http://ciacsports.com/site/?page\\_id=10438](http://ciacsports.com/site/?page_id=10438).

- 7) **Bench Conduct**
- **Personnel** – Only coaches, rostered players, and other team members, will be allowed in the bench area.
  - **Conduct** – Follow all applicable rules. In addition, no unnecessary items at the bench that can be a distraction or safety issue.
- 8) Team members in uniforms as well as sub varsity members identified by the coach, coaches, managers and cheerleaders accompanying the team will be admitted free of charge to each game. Bands and other musical groups, noisemakers that might interfere with the performance of the match, and banners or streamers are prohibited and each school principal is responsible for compliance with this regulation.
- 9) **Time of Games** – All first round, second round and quarter-final tournament match starting times will be at 6:00 p.m. – exceptions made by tournament director only. The starting times for semi-final and final matches will be announced.
- 10) **Students with Special Needs** – Coaches are reminded to inform contest officials prior to each competition of any students with special needs who could be competing in the contest when his/her disability could impact the individual's performance or the conduct of the competition.
- 11) **Tournament Coaches Attire** – The following dress requirements are in effect for the CIAC volleyball tournament. NO jeans are permitted during pre-game warm-ups or while on the bench; no head wear is permitted; no shorts are to be worn and t-shirts as an outer garment are not permitted. Warm-up suits (with the exception of sweat pants) are permitted. Team branded attire is acceptable.
- 12) **Athletic Trainer** – Each school is expected to supply a trainer at all neutral site games. In the event a school is unable to provide a trainer, contact the opposing school to make arrangements for coverage. For the first two rounds and the quarter-finals, the home team is expected to supply athletic trainer coverage.
- 13) All contests shall be governed by the National Federation volleyball rules. All matches will be the best three-out-of-five in duration. **HOME TEAM CALLS IN SCORES.**
- 14) Each team qualifying for the tournament will be required to furnish a **Spalding TF-VB5 leather game ball**. No other ball may be used for tournament play. For the first round, second round, quarter-finals and semi-finals the higher seed team will provide the tournament ball which can be multi-colored or white. **The CIAC will provide two balls (red, white and blue) for all Final games.**
- Teams are expected to call the host school at neutral sites to see if practice balls will be provided.
- 15) The decisions of the CIAC Volleyball Committee relative to the operation of the tournament shall be final.
- 16) Padding, as specified in the National Federation rules, must be on standards, wall cables and referee's platform.
- 17) **NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES MAY BE ATTACHED TO ANY PIECE OF VOLLEYBALL EQUIPMENT DURING REGULAR SEASON OR CIAC TOURNAMENT GAMES, NOR MAY THOSE DEVICES BE IN ANY AREA NEAR PLAY. Game official's decisions on the location of electronic devices is final.**

- 18) **Tournament Regulations Violations** – If a school fails to comply with tournament regulations and such requires the CIAC tournament sports committee, central office staff, or the CIAC Board of Control to redo any portion of the tournament pairings or such non-compliance adversely impacts the management of the tournament, an administrative violation fee of \$500 may be imposed upon the school before entry into the tournament will be allowed.
- 19) **CIAC Tournament Site Media Policy** – The CIAC places tremendous value on the role the media plays in promoting and highlighting high school sports. CIAC tournament venues and hosts should make every effort to provide a working environment conducive to all media (print, broadcast and internet based) covering our events. The following are **minimum standards** developed in consultation with the CIAC Media Advisory Committee, which should be provided for working media at all CIAC tournament sites.
- a. A minimum of one hour following the conclusion of post-game interviews to write in the press box, press area or a suitable facility in close proximity to the site of the event (i.e. office, classroom, etc.).
  - b. Access to electric power (shared power strip, etc.).
  - c. Access to wireless internet service.

Site directors should communicate these requirements to any staff person who may be responsible for the administration of the event. If for some reason a site will not be able to provide these items for a contest, a site representative should inform the CIAC in advance and work with the media on site before the game and work to provide a reasonable solution to the issue. Members of the media who will be covering events are directed to contact the appropriate site as far in advance as possible to inform them they will be at the event and discuss what arrangements will be made for working media at the site.

- 20) For finals, only certified officials will be used for scorekeeper and assistant scorekeeper (libero tracker) at the score table. No one else will be allowed at the table.
- a. The official scorer shall provide a copy to both teams at the conclusion of the finals match.

### 13. **TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS**

- 1) **The CIAC Officials Coordinator will hire game officials for tournament games starting with the quarter-final, semi-final and final matches.** Home schools must schedule with their assigner for first and second round games. For the first and second round games the same procedure that is used for regular season is in effect. The CIAC Officials Coordinator will hire lines persons for the quarter-final, semi-final and final matches.
- 2) For all finals contests, officials will be used for scorekeeper and assistant scorekeeper (libero tracker). Schools' regular scorekeepers will not be needed at the score table.

### 14. **PROTESTS**

- 1) Each sports committee will establish a protest committee whose purpose will be to adjudicate all protests relating to the operation of the tournament, including the application and administration of tournament regulations. National Federation or CIAC games rules interpretations and judgments by the game officials cannot be protested. The Protest Committee for each sport shall consist of the Associate Executive Director for CIAC, the Chair of the Tournament Committee, an administrator member of the sports committee, the tournament director, and the coaches' chairman of the sport committee. All protest committee decisions are appealable to the CIAC Board of Control as provided in the CIAC bylaws.

- 2) On the eve of a tournament when there is not sufficient time for normal administrative procedures and Board of Control hearings, if a question of interpretation of tournament regulations or the operation of the tournament arises, the Chairman of the CIAC Board of Control, the Executive Director of CIAC, and the Chairman of the Tournament Committee in question will make an appropriate ad hoc decision in consideration of the best interest of the tournament as a whole.
- 3) **Decisions by Game Officials** – Protests arising from the decisions, interpretations and misapplication of the National Federation or CIAC game rules by officials during the contest will not be considered. The decisions and interpretations of the rules by the officials are final.
- 4) The record of the official scorekeeper at the conclusion of the contest is final unless an error is discovered. Such error shall be corrected as covered by specific contest rules.
- 5) Any team leaving the contest area before the conclusion of the contest because of dissatisfaction with the officiating will render the school liable to disciplinary action by the Conference.

## 15. **COACHES MANUAL FOR CIAC VOLLEYBALL CONTESTS**

### 1) **Match Play – CIAC**

- a. Follow NFHS Rules ([www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)) and CIAC Rules.
- b. Varsity – Best three (3) out of five (5) sets. Four sets to 25 points, deciding set to 15 points.
- c. Sub-varsity (JV, FR, MS) – Best two (2) out of three (3) sets. All sets to 25 points.
- d. All levels, all sets are win by two (2) points.
- e. If a visitor arrives late and the first match would likely start 30 minutes or more after the scheduled start time, then the coaches, officials and the host school athletic director may abbreviate the JV and/or Freshmen matches by agreeing to shorten the sets and/or reduce the warm-up time.
  - o If at all possible, every effort should be made to complete all varsity and sub varsity matches as scheduled.
  - o A courtesy call from the visiting coach/school to the home coach/school is expected.
  - o The Athletic Director or their designee will make the final decision when altering the games for sub varsity matches.

### 2) **Pre-Match**

- a. Home team determines their bench and side of the court.
- b. When a home team enters the gym to music and fanfare, they must do so from their side of the gym to avoid contact with the visitor's side of the court/gym. Teams are not allowed to enter gym from opponent's side and run around or through their court area. (This is to prevent intimidation, taunting or unsporting behavior from either team.) ALL levels.
- c. Courts with center logos that do not have a clearly marked center line MUST be taped with 2" wide floor tape. (Court tape preferred.)
- d. For the pre-match conference/coin toss – In the absence of the head coach, a designated assistant or administrator may serve in that capacity. Upon arrival, the head coach will inform the officials that they will take over all privileges granted to a head coach.
- e. During the pre-match conference a clock operator, scorer and tracker must be present at the officials' table.

### 3) **Equipment / Net**

- a. Properly assembled and safe.
- b. Net standards and officials stand padded per NFHS rules, up to about six feet.
- c. Stand padding on all structures up to six feet, the platform strong and as level as possible.
- d. Net top and bottom should be secured tightly with as little give as possible.
- e. Antennas should be easily adjustable – easily removed and easily attached.
- f. Antennas line-up with the outer edge of the court sideline. Any 2” strap/support goes on the inside to line-up with the 2” court sideline. (Any sharp or loose areas should be taped.)

### 4) **Score Table**

- a. The table should be centered with respect to the net/center line when possible and at least six (6) feet from the sideline. (Ten foot minimum preferred.)
- b. The front of the table should be in-line with the front of the team benches/chairs when able to establish a clear straight line for determining playable and non-playable areas.
- c. The table must be long enough to accommodate chairs for: a clock operator, home scorer and tracker, visitor scorer, and announcer. No other people should be at the table.
- d. A clock operator must be present for all timed intervals during warm-ups.
- e. A back-up, flip scoreboard immediately available in the vicinity of the score table.
- f. Two leather game balls with NFHS approved logo. (Large gym please provide ball helpers.) Textured balls are not allowed.
- g. Please provide one large towel for the \$2 to administer moisture mitigation on the game balls or court surface.
- h. Flags available and provided by host school.
- i. No cell phones, earbuds, food, or open liquid containers at the score table. A device for music is acceptable.

### 5) **Score Books**

- a. NFHS approved score books/sheets are required for all tournament and regular season contests.
- b. Approved scorebooks are in order of preference: Cramer/NFHS, Big Red, or Scott’s.
- c. The head referee can designate the visitor’s scorebook as the official match record if necessary.
- d. Coaches are responsible for training scorekeepers and libero trackers prior to the first contest using the NFHS Rules Book, NFHS Videos, and the instruction page at the beginning of the score book.

### 6) **Team Benches**

- a. The bench starts from the attack line extended and may continue beyond the end line.
- b. There should be enough seating primarily for coaches and rostered players. Student manager(s) with specific duties may sit on the bench if seating is available, otherwise they must move to the team’s designated bleacher.
- c. Players/students are not allowed to sit or stand on the floor at the end of the bench, nor stand behind the bench during play.
- d. Creating a second row of chairs behind the bench is prohibited.
- e. During Varsity contests, JV players should be seated in their designated bleachers and vice versa.
- f. No cell phones, earbuds, hats, posters, signs, noisemakers, or props of any kind allowed at the bench area.
- g. Proper decorum is expected at the bench throughout the match.

## 7) Standing Coaches

- a. Only the head coach may stand in the *Coaching Zone* during play as defined in the Rules Book. (Closer to the bench than the sideline when space is limited.)
- b. When line judges are used, coaches should avoid standing near them.
- c. One assistant coach at a time may stand in the coaching zone to provide instruction during *dead ball situations only*.
- d. If a head coach receives an unsporting conduct yellow card, it is a warning and the coach retains their standing privilege during play.
- e. If the coach receives a red card, they must be seated during play for the remainder of the match. It is advised the coach takes the first seat on the bench for communication with the R2.

## 8) Safety

- a. Footwear – All students assisting during pre-match warm-ups, during match play, and at the bench area must wear proper athletic footwear. (No flats, heels, boots, flip-flops, slippers, bare feet, etc.)
- b. Concussion Prevention – It is advised that players/students during warm-ups are not put into situations where they can easily get hit in the head. It's suggested that ball handlers be completely off court during hitting and serving warm-ups. Please adjust your routines to minimize this potentially serious injury.
- c. Water – It is advised that water bottles be kept behind the bench and out of harm's way.
- d. Gum / Candy – It is advised that players not compete with anything in their mouth to avoid possibly choking or spitting out the matter on the court during play. Both cases could cause stoppage of play and a team delay penalty.

## 9) Warm-ups / Playing Area

- a. During warm-ups, it is recommended that players have a visible uniform number for officials to check against the roster. (Warm-up gear with a uniform number visible is acceptable.)
- b. During announcements, starting line-ups and national anthem, all players must be in proper uniform and not in warm-up gear.
- c. The area behind the score table and benches is technically a non-playable and a restricted area. No ball warm-up activities in this area.
- d. When a team has their six (6) minute unshared warm-up period, they are afforded the entire playable surface not just the outlined court area.
- e. The off team should be at their bench area. Teams **MUST WAIT** for the HORN at 13 and 7 minutes on the count-down clock before crossing the centerline into the opponent's side to take the full playing area.

## 10) Uniforms

- a. Illegal uniforms found prior to or during match will be dealt with according to NFHS rules.
- b. Visible undergarments may be the same as the predominant color of the jersey – preferred. There are three (3) undergarment options available to a team: black, white, or gray. In all cases, team members must wear the exact same color undergarment during the match.
- c. Knee pads, elbow pads, and pull-on sleeves do not have to be the same color of the uniform.
- d. Dig pink or similar type uniforms **MUST** meet Rules 4-2 requirements for both the team and libero jerseys.
- e. Coaches, when ordering new uniforms, take advantage of your state rules interpreter for a pre-purchase design review. Also, make sure your vendor is fully aware of the NFHS uniform rules. Any questions best to check with your rules interpreter.

11) **Hair Devices**

- a. Soft stretch material up to 3” wide maximum are allowed.
- b. Bobby pins or flat barrettes without sharp edges, are allowed.
- c. Hair adornments are allowed provided they are securely fastened and do not present a safety hazard. Any such items that delay play may be subject to a delay penalty.

12) **Jewelry**

- a. Jewelry – not allowed. Rule 4-1-7.
- b. Piercings – Only secured small studs or posts above the chin are allowed.
- c. Any of the above taped or Band-aid over – not allowed.
- d. The above goes for all players, student helpers.

13) **For Officials**

- a. If available, please provide a changing or meeting room that officials can use pre- and post-match.
- b. Please provide two chairs behind score table in the restricted area for the officials and their belongings.
- c. Introduce officials to any host management or security personnel on site.

14) **Line Judges (If using line judges)**

- a. Line judges are not required for regular season contests.
- b. Per conferences, adults may be used. High school students may not serve as line judges.
- c. Schools are responsible for providing video instruction and on-court training prior to the first contest.
- d. High school students may not serve as line judges.

15) **Substitutions**

- a. A substitution request may be signaled or verbalized. It is recommended a hand signal be used to get the officials attention quickly especially in noisy gyms.
- b. A substitution will be recognized when a head coach makes a request or when a legal bench player enters the sub-zone.
- c. Only one request per dead ball and all subs must be up at the same time.
- d. Officials prefer the substitute does their best to center themselves in the sub-zone.
- e. Next sub(s) should be ready and waiting just outside the sub-zone.
- f. A player on court standing or yelling sub across from the sub-zone will not be recognized as a substitution request.

16) **Time-Outs**

- a. A time-out request may be signaled or verbalized. It is recommended a hand signal be used to get the officials attention quickly especially in a noisy gym.
- b. Only the head coach or playing captain can request a T-O.
- c. During T-O, teams are limited to the area between the attack and end lines, in front of their bench or on their court within those limits above.
- d. No water bottles on the court at any time. (Team delay sanction if water is spilled on court or in front of bench.)
- e. Team must be on court by the end horn. Please start moving to court after 15s warning whistle.

17) **Electronic / Video Devices**

- a. Allowed in non-playable areas and at the discretion of the head referee.
- b. Allowed at team benches for team purposes only.
- c. Not allowed in restricted areas as deemed by host management or head referee.
- d. Not allowed on any volleyball equipment as the equipment is considered a restricted area, a neutral area to both teams in which neither team should gain from it.

18) **Roster / Line-up Sheet**

- a. Please use the approved NFHS combination roster and line-up sheet for all levels.
- b. A customized or MaxPreps version may be used as long as it meets the above format requirements.
- c. All eligible players must be listed on the roster, all levels.
- d. Changes to the roster can be made prior to the time limit for submission of first set line-up.
- e. All coaches, paid or volunteer, should be listed on the roster.
- f. Coaches must fill out each set's line-up completely so there is a match record. (Coach can't just tell scorekeeper or R2 to "use same line-up as last set".)
- g. Roster / Line-up sheet is due at the pre-match conference and submitted to the R2. The R2 manages this sheet throughout the match.
- h. Edits to the roster by the head coach can be made up until the 11:00 minute mark on the pre-match countdown clock. Any changes after that is a penalty – loss of rally/point to the opponent.
- i. Line-ups shall be submitted to the R2 by the 03:00 minute mark on the pre-match countdown clock, and by 01:00 minute mark on the set interval countdown clock.
- j. Late line-up submissions are subject to an unnecessary delay penalty.

Note: Every school program should be using a NFHS type roster / line-up combination sheet, or one that is customized but encompasses all the layout requirements of the NFHS R/L sheet.

16. **PRE-MATCH PROTOCOL**

Officials are to arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to match start time. Upon arrival, officials will identify the match host (home team coach) and introduce themselves. Inspect the court and equipment for safety issues. Determine facility playing rules to be addressed in the pre-match conference. The scoreboard clock is set to 20 minutes. *(19 minutes is the warm-up period, followed by a 1 minute grace period.)*

Approximately 25 minutes prior to the scheduled start time, the R1 standing in front of the score table *shall raise a coin in the air and double-whistle* to summon the captains and head coaches for the pre-match conference. Coaches shall submit their Roster/Line-up sheet to the R2. After the coin toss result, the R1 requests the clock be started and tells the scorer who will be serving first.

Clock            Protocol (7-6-6-1)

20:00	Court available for shared warm-up (7 minutes)	
13:15	Warning – R2 double whistle	
13:00	HORN – Serving team warm-up (6 minutes)	*Roster changes deadline at 11:00 minutes
07:15	Warning – R2 double whistle	
07:00	HORN – Receiving team warm-up (6 minutes)	*Line-up deadline at 3:00 minutes
01:15	Warning – R2 double whistle	
01:00	HORN – LAST team huddle/meeting prior to start	
00:15	Warning – R2 double whistle	
00:00	HORN – Starting teams to end lines OR:	

- Announcements - starters (6 + libero) at the end line or move to it from the bench
- National Anthem – non-starters may join starters on the end line.
- R1 signals starters only to enter their court via right sideline. Non-starters to the bench.
- Teams are required to take their starting positions without delay
- Officials move to their positions.
- Line-up checks and start the match.

Note: 1) Teams are not allowed to take the full court until the Horn sounds at 13 and 7 minutes.  
 2) Should the scoreboard clock malfunction or become unusable, the R2 will use a double whistle for both “Warning” and “Horn” above.

## 17. OFFICIALS BOARDS

CBVO-N	CT Board of Volleyball Officials – Southern Board President – James Wildman – <a href="mailto:james.wildman@gmail.com">james.wildman@gmail.com</a> Northwest Assignor – Candy Perez – <a href="mailto:Perezcandywinsted@gmail.com">Perezcandywinsted@gmail.com</a> Northeast Assignor – Heather Kursman – <a href="mailto:hkcbvo@hotmail.com">hkcbvo@hotmail.com</a>
S-CBVO	Southern CT Board of Volleyball Officials (S-CBVO) President – John Triana – <a href="mailto:jtriana1@sbcglobal.net">jtriana1@sbcglobal.net</a> Assignor – Tom Digiovanni – <a href="mailto:thmdig@aol.com">thmdig@aol.com</a>
CFVO	CT Federation of Volleyball Officials President – Scott Sabo – <a href="mailto:scsabo32@gmail.com">scsabo32@gmail.com</a> Assignor – Marie Lavin – <a href="mailto:marie.lavin405@gmail.com">marie.lavin405@gmail.com</a>
CIAC VB Liaison	Joe Velardi – <a href="mailto:jvelardi@casciac.org">jvelardi@casciac.org</a>
State Rules Interpreter	James Borbas – <a href="mailto:jamborjr@gmail.com">jamborjr@gmail.com</a>

## 18. CERTIFICATIONS/COACHING CERTIFICATIONS

For a list of all coaching certifications and links to form go here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KnzXy81GK9x88bY1-5JBSuP-8SY34sdc/edit?usp=sharing&oid=104830910406558409235&rtopf=true&sd=true>

**Volunteer Coaches** – The State of Connecticut Department of Education does not distinguish between volunteer or paid coaches when considering certifications or responsibilities. All coaches who are responsible for or instruct students in any way must follow Connecticut State Law for certifications and responsibilities. Therefore, volunteer coaches are required to obtain the same certifications as all other coaches.

## **19. CIAC TOURNAMENT SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS (INCLUDING PARENTS)**

### **Positive Cheering and Behavior**

- Spectators will cheer positively to support their team, not negatively against the opponent. “No Negatives, No Names, No Numbers”.
- Spectators will show respect for the game officials and their decisions.
- Spectators will respect CIAC tournament/site directors, tournament staff, and security when behavior is addressed and if asked to leave the event.

### **Dress Code**

- For CIAC tournament contests, all spectators should be appropriately attired according to their school’s policy. No attire with visible degrading or demeaning writings/logos is permitted.

### **Signs, Banners, Flags and Powder**

- Any signs must be positive in nature, reference only the school supported by the sign maker, be small enough not to obstruct the view of other spectators and be pre-approved by the school’s athletic director reference in the sign. Spectators are not permitted to bring flags for safety reasons. When asked to remove a sign, banner, or flag, participating schools will respect and follow the direction of any CIAC tournament/site director, tournament staff, or security personnel.
- All signs, banners, and flags may be restricted pending facility usage requirements or at the discretion of the CIAC tournament director. CIAC tournament directors/staff will notify the athletic director when such restrictions are necessary.
- Powder or powder-like substances are prohibited at all visiting and neutral sites.

### **Noisemakers**

- Outdoor Sports – No air horns, horns of any kind, or whistles will be used. Any other noisemakers may be allowed with approval from the host athletic/site director and the spectator’s school athletic director. Noisemakers can only be used during “dead ball” situations to celebrate good play.
- Indoor Sports – No noisemakers will be allowed. Pep bands are allowable with the prior approval of the CIAC tournament and site director, provided the school band has adult supervision, and the band only plays during “dead ball” situations.

### **Tailgating**

- Tailgating is prohibited on the grounds of any CIAC tournament or championship event.

### **Streaming**

- CIAC championships are streamed on the NFHS Network. Any streaming, broadcasting, or reproduction of a CIAC tournament game or championship without the expressed written consent of the CIAC is strictly prohibited.