

What's New 2026 - 2027

FORMATS AND RULES OF THE GAME

DIVISION SPLIT (6V6G – 16UG)

- Over the past two years, a full competition review has been completed by Sport for Life, a third-party consulting firm. This review ultimately resulted in splitting the 6v6G – 16UG age groups into two divisions each (i.e. Division 1 and Division 2) starting in the 26/27 season.
- All aspects of this review and the plan for the 26/27 season can be found on the Youth Competition Review page located [HERE](#) including but not limited to:
 - Statement of Preference Form (15UG/16UG) – September 20, 2026 Deadline
 - Exceptional Request for Division Change Form (15UG/16UG) – September 20, 2026 Deadline
 - Division 1 & Division 2 draft team lists (15UG/16UG)
 - High level overview of each age group and their specific division placement policy
- The Division Split Handbook can be found [HERE](#) and provides more detailed information

NEW RULES IMPLEMENTED ACROSS THE OVA AND VOLLEYBALL CANADA

- Double Contact:
 - Double contact will be permitted on 2nd contact, as long as the ball does not cross the net (All Age Categories).
- 15U Libero
 - One libero will be permitted at the 15U age category.
 - *Volleyball Canada will pilot the 15U libero rule at the 2027 National Championships. A decision on whether to permanently adopt the rule will be made following the event in the summer of 2027.
- 18U Libero
 - Two liberos will be permitted at the 18U age category ONLY.

4V4 RALLYBALL

- The MIKASA VUL500 volleyball (white) will no longer be used for OVA competition starting in the 26/27 season. The MIKASA VQ200 (green/white), currently used in 6v6–15U, will be used for 4v4 Rallyball.
- The 4v4 Girls and 4v4 Boys/Co-ed net height will now be 2.10m to align more closely with the Volleyball Canada Long Term Development net height recommendations. A lower net will allow athletes to play above the net and improve their net-play skills in a developmentally appropriate way.

PLAYING UP AT OVA EVENTS

- Teams can only play up one (1) age group during the regular season and at the Ontario Championships (15U-18U).
 - For example, a registered 15UG team can only play up in the 16UG age group, not the 17UG age group. If this team would like to play up at 17UG, they must register as a 16UG team and play at 16UG as their primary age group, meaning they are no longer eligible to play at the 15U age group.

NEW FORMATS

- Fall Classic – Cohere Centre Ottawa (November 6 - 8, 2026)
 - Event 1 (Friday & Saturday)
 - 16UG Division 1 – 48 teams (Pools of 4)
 - 16UG Division 2 – 48 teams (Pools of 4)
 - Event 2 (Saturday & Sunday)
 - 16UB – 24 teams (Pools of 4)
 - 18UB – 24 teams (Pools of 4)
 - 18UG – 48 teams (Pools of 4)
 - Please click [HERE](#) for more information around the 16U/18U Fall Classic event at the Cohere Centre
 - *The 17U Fall Classic Events will remain as the traditional 24 team format (Pools of 6) and will be hosted in a central location (i.e. within 1hr from the GTA).
- Grand Prix
 - 16UG Division 1 and 16UG Division 2 Grand Prix events will each consist of 16-team draws.
 - The 16UB, 17UB & 17UG Grand Prix events along with the 18U Grand Prix Qualifier will still feature a 12-team format. The 18U Grand Prix will remain as an 8-team format.
- Ontario Championships
 - With the new division splits for 6v6G – 16UG, all Ontario Championship events will be named in this manner to stay consistent across all age groups:
 - Division (1 or 2)
 - 6v6G – 16UG will be the only age groups with a Division 2
 - All other age groups will be considered Division 1
 - Flight (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8)
 - Typically, there will be 32 teams in each flight
 - Tier (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5)
 - Typically, there will be 8 teams in each tier (i.e. brackets of 8)
 - The 2027 Ontario Championships will prioritize 8 team tiers on Day 3 wherever possible, rather than the combination of 8 team and 16 team tiers used in previous years. Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals will be awarded in every tier. In some cases, tiers of up to 12 teams may be used to accommodate uneven Flight sizes that fall outside the standard 32 team Flight format.

SPORT COURT RULE – CLARIFIED WORDING

The playing area includes the playing court and the free zone. Each team must play within its designated playing area.

NO PURSUIT ON SPORT COURT: A Player may not cross the centre line inside or outside the net post at any time to pursue the ball beyond the antenna.

- The No Pursuit Rule will be in effect for all Ontario Championship venues, even if Sport Court is not being used.

The area beyond the edge of the sport court is designated as a non-playing zone. Therefore, the last point of contact between the player and the playing surface prior to contact with the ball must be on the sport court. The last point of contact is determined by both feet. If the player contacts the ball while in the air, the last point of contact must be with both feet on the sport court before momentum takes the player off.

- If any part of the foot is in contact with the concrete it is not considered to be on the sport court. For example, if 90% of the foot is on the tile and 10% of the foot is on the concrete, the athlete is not considered to be fully on the sport court.

Examples of FAULTS:

- One foot on the sport court, one foot on the cement while contacting the ball = play is whistled dead.
- One foot on the sport court and the second foot in the air while contacting the ball, with momentum carrying the player off the court before the second foot fully makes contact with the sport court = play is whistled dead.
- Jump in the air, contact the ball, and land off the sport court = play is whistled dead.
- Leave the playing area, step on a chair, and contact the ball = play is whistled dead.

Examples of legal plays:

- Both feet are fully on the sport court while contacting the ball, momentum carries you off the court AFTER contact.
- Jump in the air, contact the ball, and both feet fully make contact with the sport court before momentum carries the player off = play continues.
- Any service action must be initiated with at least part of one foot in contact with the Sport Court.

These rules are in place to minimize the risk to athletes.

SITTING VOLLEYBALL ONTARIO CHAMPIONSHIPS – SAVE THE DATE

The 2027 Ontario Youth Sitting Volleyball Championships will be held at RIM Park in Waterloo as part of Event 1. This single-day championship will take place on either Saturday, April 3, 2027, or Sunday, April 4, 2027 (subject to change). Additional information, including registration details, competition information, and event updates, will be posted on the OVA website during the 26/27 season. We look forward to welcoming athletes of all abilities, coaches, officials, and supporters for another exciting Youth Sitting Volleyball Ontario Championship.

ADMINISTRATION

PRINTED ROSTER AT ALL REGULAR SEASON EVENTS

The head coach will continue to show their MRS team roster, either printed or electronic, for all matches at regular season events. There will be a couple of minor tweaks to this printed roster, which will be reflected in the What's New Admin 2.0 document posted in August.

YOUTH APPRENTICE COACH

In an effort to encourage more young athletes to experience coaching during their own club careers, the OVA is excited to announce the additional role of "Youth Apprentice Coach" for the 26/27 season! Youth Apprentice Coaches are current club athletes who are permitted to assist younger teams within their club at both practices and OVA competitions.

To be eligible to become a Youth Apprentice Coach, you must meet the following criteria:

- Be a current OVA athlete born in 2011 or earlier with a OVA competitive membership for the 26/27 season.
- Apprentice Coach for a team within the same club they are registered with as an athlete for the 26/27 season.
- Apprentice Coach for a team aged 15U or younger.
- Complete the Coaches Association of Canada [Safe Sports Training](#) (Free)
- Complete the Screening Disclosure Form in MRS

Apprentice Coaches are permitted to:

- Attend any team practices and/or OVA competitions at the discretion of the Head Coach.
- Sit on the bench with their team at OVA competitions (included as one (1) of the four (4) Assistant Coaches allowed on the bench)

Apprentice Coaches are NOT permitted to:

- Be solely responsible for the team at practices or competitions without the supervision of another fully registered member of the Coaching Staff.
- Clubs should consider Rule of Two requirements when assigning Youth Apprentice Coaches, as the Youth Apprentice Coach role does not replace the need for screened and eligible adult coaches.

The Apprentice Coach role is free and can be added to any athlete with an OVA Competitive Athlete membership for the 26/27 season once they have completed the eligibility requirements.

If you have any additional questions about this role, please contact Jacob Barker (jbarker@ontariovolleyball.org).

OVA CLUB FEE & MEMBERSHIP FEE INCREASE

- The OVA club fee has been increased to \$500, which includes Club Directors and Officers Liability Insurance coverage
- The OVA membership fee has been increased by \$3 (Competitive Athletes, Club Personnel, Coaches & Referees) and the Volleyball Canada fee has increased by \$1. The OVA membership fee for competitive athletes, club personnel, coaches is now \$60 and the VC membership fee is \$38 + 2.5% (VC admin fee). The total membership fee including HST is \$106.75 (OVA fee \$60 + \$7.80 HST + VC fee \$38.95).
 - There will be no increase in membership fees for recreational athletes

REGULAR SEASON TOURNAMENT FEES

- The updated tournament fees will be reflected in the What's New Admin 2.0 document posted in late August. Due to increased costs, please plan for a 5-10% increase in regular season tournament fees to help with creating your club/team budgets.

ONTARIO CHAMPIONSHIP REGISTRATION DEADLINE

- The registration deadline for all 2027 Ontario Championship events, including all underage waitlists, is Sunday, December 6, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.

Submission process for 6v6 and TLS Self-Declare Events (Tiers ONLY)

It is each team's responsibility to complete the self-declare form (Tier ONLY), as OVA staff will not be sending out the link for each event. The link can be found in the What's New document, the Youth Competitions Manual, and on each event page on the OVA website under "Upcoming Indoor Events." 6v6G and TLSG teams will self-declare Division 1 or Division 2, which will be locked for the entire season, by registering for that specific event in MRS (i.e., 6v6G Provincial Cup – Division 1 or 6v6G Provincial Cup – Division 2). The self-declare link below is for teams to self-declare into a specific tier within the division.

- The 6v6G, TLSG and TLSB self-declare Cognito form link can be found [HERE](#)
- Teams entering their first event without submitting a self-declare form will be placed in the lowest tier. If a team has already competed in an event in the age group and does not complete a self-declare submission, they will be placed in the same tier as their previous event.
- If there are multiple submissions for a team for a specific event, the most recent submission will be used.

Self-Declare Submission Deadlines (Tier ONLY)	
6v6 Girls Provincial Cup	October 18, 2026
6v6 Girls Challenge Cup	November 29, 2026
TLS Girls Provincial Cup	October 4, 2026
TLS Girls Challenge Cup	November 15, 2026
TLS Boys Provincial Cup	October 25, 2026
TLS Boys Challenge Cup	December 6, 2026

REGISTRATION FOR “WEEKENDS” WILL CONTINUE FOR THE 26/27 SEASON

To accommodate the continued growth in division sizes and our facility needs, the OVA will be increasing the number of events to include **ALL** single-day events that register for the weekend, as opposed to a specific date. Teams will be assigned to a specific day on the weekend once the team splits have been posted. Team splits are posted on the OVA website once the event registration deadline closes and the results from the most recent event have been received to complete the realignment.

*The 18UB Challenge Cup on December 12, 2026 and the 18UG Challenge Cup on December 13, 2026 will be the only single-day events that are locked to a specific day of the weekend to avoid scheduling conflicts with the Canadian University Volleyball Showcase.

SANCTION ADDED FOR THE THEFT OR ATTEMPTED THEFT OF OVA PROPERTY AND SUPPLIES

Over the past two seasons, the OVA has experienced a significant increase in incidents involving the theft and attempted theft of OVA property. Items involved have included court numbers, A-frames, Sport Court tiles, wall decals, blade flags, scoreboards, apparel, equipment, event supplies, and other OVA assets.

To protect OVA property and ensure the effective delivery of programs and events, the following sanctions will apply to any individual who steals, attempts to steal, unlawfully possesses, or removes OVA property without authorization.

Individual found responsible for theft or attempted theft of OVA property

- Fine
 - A minimum fine of \$1,000, and the full replacement value of the stolen item(s), will be assessed to **BOTH**:
 - The individual involved; **AND**
 - The individual's club
- Sanction
 - The individual will be immediately removed from the current event, activity, or OVA program, where applicable.
 - The individual will be suspended from participation in the next **two (2) OVA-sanctioned events**. Where applicable, the suspension may include National Championships and may extend into the following season.
 - The sanctions outlined above represent the minimum penalties for theft or attempted theft. The OVA reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary measures based on the circumstances of the incident, the value of the property involved, and the findings of any subsequent review.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

STAY TO PLAY POLICY

The Stay to Play Policy is in effect for all regular season convention centre events and the Ontario Championships. Please refer to the Regular Season Convention Centre page on the OVA website, available [HERE](#), for hotel booking timelines and related information. Details regarding Ontario Championships accommodations and hotel booking requirements will be posted [HERE](#).

CARD TRACKING THROUGHOUT ENTIRE 26/27 SEASON

All cards issued during the 26/27 season (Regular Season, Provincials & Nationals), with the exception of Delay of Game Warnings, will be recorded in the master card tracking database. Following each event, individuals who receive a card will be sent an email outlining the applicable warning or sanction based on their current card accumulation. Please refer to the Youth Competitions Manual sanction chart for the fines and sanctions associated with each card total.

Improving sportsmanship and conduct is a key focus for the 26/27 season. At the 2026 Volleyball Canada National Championships, Ontario represented 20% of participating teams but received 40% of all cards issued. This highlights the need for a province-wide commitment to respectful behaviour and greater accountability on and around the court.

TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS FOR OVA REGULAR SEASON TOURNAMENTS

- To create a competition stream that provides competitively balanced matches along with serving the entire province of Ontario, travel is required for events.
- The Youth Competitions team keeps track of all kilometers travelled by each team for OVA-sanctioned events throughout the season. This data is used as one of the criteria when creating team splits (i.e., proximity to the venue along with past travel).
- All teams across the province should expect to make at least one 400+ km one-way trip for a regular season event, whether they are a Trillium or Premier team in each age group in which they are participating. This means that if a 15UB team is playing in both the 15UB and 16UB age groups, they can expect to make a long trip at both 15UB and 16UB, as each age group is treated separately. Greater Toronto Area (GTA) teams typically do not see more than one of these larger regular season trips per season in each age group. The OVA will take turns between GTA teams, when possible, filling these satellite tournament locations due to kilometer tracking.

VC NATIONAL COMPETITIONS - UNIFORM REGULATIONS

- As per rule 4.3.3 of the Volleyball Canada Rulebook: *"Players' jerseys must be numbered from 1 to 99"*.
- Jerseys identifying players as "0" or "00" are not permitted at national competitions.

FIRST AID KIT AND SUPPLIES

- Medical supplies and on-site medics are not provided for regular season OVA events. Coaches/teams must have their own first aid kits and/or supplies.
 - The only regular season events that provide this service are the Cohere Centre, International Centre, Niagara Falls Convention Centre and Grand Prix events.