



2025-2026 Volleyball Alberta Signing and Tryout Process

We would like to thank everyone for their patience as we roll-out of the 2025-26 Signing & Tryout process. We were awaiting the outcome of the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA) non-school team participation policy following their AGM prior to finalizing VA's Signing and Tryout Process.

While the ASAA Executive Committee and VA Leadership reached consensus on a proposal, and believed the proposal would pass after Zone meetings, the ASAA Board of Governors chose to amend the proposal, without VA input. We have updated our Signing Policy below; please read the [Joint ASAA/VA Memo](#) for more information.

We would like to thank everyone for providing feedback on the process. The Signing and Tryout document has a list of Frequently Asked Questions for athletes/parents and clubs, which provides further context for the process.

Primary Objectives

1. To align with our values of transparency, integrity, and fairness.
2. To create a process aligning with long-term development considerations with a clear distinction of the dates of the Volleyball Alberta indoor club season, prioritizing rest periods over June-August.
3. To utilize club governance best practices by aligning with Volleyball Canada and Volleyball Alberta membership year, policies, and processes, while also providing early season options for clubs to begin organizing their teams.
4. Ensure athlete-club agreements are entered into with more complete information, including costs, coaches, tournament schedules, and competition rules. *(Please note that details regarding membership fees, tournament schedule, and competition regulations will have a target release date of August 29.)*

Definitions

- **LOI** - Volleyball Alberta (VA) Letter of Intent (LOI) is the formal recruitment process utilized by VA clubs.
- **(Early) Re-Signing** - The act of offering and signing a VA LOI to commit to a team for the upcoming membership year with the club that the athlete was registered with in the previous membership year. (Early) Re-Signing must occur within the prescribed time windows for the applicable age groups.
- **Signing** - The act of offering and signing a VA LOI to commit to a team for the current membership year.
- **Fall/Winter Tryout** - The prescribed time windows where clubs are permitted to host tryouts for the purpose of selecting athletes for teams and clubs. VA LOI's can only be offered during these tryout periods.
- **Open Gym** - Clubs may offer these sessions as an opportunity to see prospective athletes for future selection.

Best Practices Recommendations

- **Clubs may consider working with other club(s) in the area to host a group tryout. The benefits of a group tryout:**
 - Collaboration and shared resources, including facilities.
 - More coaches may be present for improved coach to athlete ratio and more effective athlete evaluations.
 - Improve athlete performance as athletes attend fewer sessions during the tryout process.
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- **Training Volumes:** We encourage all families to read the [Long-Term Development Resources](#). There are developmentally appropriate training recommendations for the Train to Train and Learn to Compete stages that outline appropriate season lengths, training volumes, and offseason recovery.
 - Any Indoor Programming offered outside of the Fall and Winter Tryout periods should align with Long-Term Development principles, prioritize multi-sport opportunities, and provide appropriate rest.
 - The 2024-2025 Indoor Club Season ends May 31, 2025, and the 2025-2026 Indoor Competitive Club Season starts November 30, 2025. VA recommends clubs and athletes follow a Yearly Training Plan that allows for periods of rest from volume, intensity, and competitive pursuits.

Letter of Intent (LOI)

- The only form VA will recognize is the 2025-2026 VA LOI for signing to a club. The maximum number of LOI offers that can be distributed at any given time is equal to the number of athletes a team is committing to carry.
- It is recommended to deliver LOI's via email the day following the tryout to reduce time pressure on athletes and allow coaches time to reflect to make informed decisions.
- All LOI offers must be honoured for a minimum of 48 hours. Athletes can request an extension to any deadline, but that would be at the discretion of the club and must be documented.
- Financial commitments can be made upon signing with a non-refundable amount that is clearly defined on the LOI.
- Athletes register to their club as a Youth Competitive Player upon signing an LOI.
- Clubs and families are responsible for maintaining copies of all signed letters of intent.
- Athletes sign the LOI with their LOI club and not with a particular individual. They agree to remain bound to the terms except due to extenuating circumstances.
- Volleyball Alberta will post an updated LOI registry on our Club General Info page for the Re-Signing Periods.
- VA LOI's can only be offered in the Re-Signing and Tryout Periods as listed below.

(Early) Re-Signing & Club Approval Process

Note: Clubs are not obligated to (early) re-sign athletes or run tryouts.

June 9-11: Early Re-Sign 17U-18U age groups only to your club from last season using a VA Letter of Intent (LOI) Form. Re-signed athletes to be posted on club website or social media page by Monday, June 16. Upon receipt of LOIs, athletes must register in the Club's portal as a Youth Competitive Player by Friday, August 29 (2025-26 membership opens August 6). Clubs must apply for preapproval* for the upcoming season to Re-Sign 17U-18U athletes early; clubs can also wait until September to Re-Sign 17U & 18U athletes.

August 6-26: All returning clubs must register in Sportlomo by August 26. Clubs must register by Aug 26 to Re-Sign athletes from the prior season and/or to participate in the Fall and Winter Tryout Period.

September 2-4: Opportunity to Re-Sign 17U-18U age groups only to your club from last season using a VA Letter of Intent (LOI) Form. Upon receipt of LOIs, athletes must register in the Club's portal as a Youth Competitive Player by September 5 at noon. Additionally, club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo Club portal and post names on club websites or social media page by September 6.

September 6: Club Open House (Information Day). Facilitated in one large space separately in Calgary & Edmonton, and by request/need in other regions (Lethbridge/Grande Prairie). VA to arrange and pay for the facility. Attendance at this event is optional, and a minimum number of clubs must register. Clubs may also choose to host their own open houses (this would not be arranged or paid for by VA).

September 8-10: Opportunity to Re-Sign 15U-16U age groups only to your club from last season using a VA Letter of Intent (LOI) Form. Upon receipt of LOIs, athletes must register in the Club's portal as a Youth Competitive Player by September 12 at noon. Additionally, club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo Club portal and post names on club websites or social media page by September 13.

September 15-17: Opportunity to Re-Sign 13U-14U age groups only to your club from last season. Upon receipt of LOIs, athletes must register in the Club's portal as a Youth Competitive Player by September 19 at noon. Additionally, club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo Club portal and post names on club websites or social media page by September 20.

September 30: New clubs for the upcoming season must register in Sportlomo by September 30.

Fall Tryout & Signing Process

Athletes must have the minimum membership requirement, Youth Development Player-Tryout role for the current season and complete the Volleyball Alberta membership consent package prior to tryouts.

17U & 18U Signing Period (all signings are to the club's age group and team): Clubs may offer LOI's **starting on Sunday September 7 and ending September 21***. Athletes register to their club as a Youth Competitive Player by September 21. Club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo portal by November 19.

**ASAA policies stipulate tryouts may only occur on Sunday Sept 7 and Sunday September 14. Clubs may offer LOI's without hosting a tryout (e.g. identification via school games/tournaments, previous skills sessions/open gyms, etc.) **

15U & 16U Signing Period (all signings are to the club's age group and team): Tryouts may be held **starting on Sunday September 14 and ending September 28****. Athletes register to their club as a Youth Competitive Player by September 28. Club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo portal by November 19.

ASAA policies stipulate athletes who play on their School's **Senior Varsity team** are not eligible to participate in tryouts after September 14

13U & 14U Signing Period (all signings are to the club's age group and team): Tryouts may be held **starting on Sunday September 21 and ending October 5**. Athletes register to their club as a Youth Competitive Player by October 5. Club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo portal by November 19.

12U Signing Period (all signings are to the club's age group and team): Tryouts may be held **starting on Sunday November 2 and ending November 9**. Athletes register to their club as a Youth Competitive Player by November 16. Club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo portal by November 19.

Winter Tryout Process

- Clubs are not obligated to offer Winter Tryouts. Teams may be fully selected by Re-Signing and Fall Tryout period.
 - Athletes must have the minimum membership requirement, Youth Development Player-Tryout role for the current season and complete the Volleyball Alberta membership consent package prior to tryouts.
 - 12U-18U Tryouts can all begin on Sunday, November 30, 2025.
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- Initial offers must be honoured for a minimum of 48 hours. Offers provided on Wednesday, December 3 or later are honoured for a minimum of 24 hours. Athletes can request an extension to any deadline, but that would be at the discretion of the club and must be documented. The maximum number of offers that can be distributed at any given time is equal to the number of athletes a team is committing to carry. Financial commitments can be made upon signing with a non-refundable amount that is clearly defined on the LOI.
- Upon signing an LOI, athletes must register in the Club's portal as a Youth Competitive Player within 7 days. Additionally, club administrators must add signed LOI athletes to their team's roster sheet in their Sportlomo Club portal as soon as possible.

Penalty for Breach

- Clubs are independent organizations, however when a club applies annually for membership with Volleyball Alberta, they accept all policies, processes, and procedures.
- The LOI is subject to Volleyball Alberta regulations and failure to abide by its terms by any parties (clubs, athletes and their guardians) could result in a review by Volleyball Alberta through the [Discipline and Complaints Process](#).

FAQ- Athletes & Families

We advise all athletes and families to do research prior to signing with any club, and recommend reviewing the [Considerations for Selecting a Club Document](#) to help guide your decisions.

1. Why did Volleyball Alberta change the re-signing dates to September?

- a. Rest: rest is critical to recovery, and often can provide us with more perspective on appropriate next steps.
 - b. Academic requirements: June means final exams for many athletes, and we want our athletes to be students first and focus on their studies.
 - c. Long-term development studies show that athletes benefit from playing multiple sports; many spring/summer sports are starting to complement indoor volleyball. This is also the start of [Beach Volleyball](#) season and a chance for athletes to develop their skills in different ways.
 - d. Youth athletes are still developing – a lot of changes can take place over the summer months. These development changes may mean a shift in what team may be the best fit – from both the club and the athlete perspective.
 - e. Interests and realities change. For example: if an athlete does not make their school team, they may lose interest in pursuing the sport as seriously.
 - f. Coaches: the coach/athlete relationship is a special one. We know how impactful a coach is - both from a performance perspective and psychological well-being. Providing clubs with more time to secure coaches helps ensure coaches can be part of team selections and hopefully results in a better fit for all parties.
 - g. While VA would love to be able to have details on the upcoming season ready in May, we simply have not secured enough facilities to be able to share the details on tournament weekends, locations, etc. We are also still working on analyzing our budgets as we pass our Draft budget at our June SAGM. Without a budget, we can't pass along tournament or memberships costs.
 - h. We are trying to improve our governance – which means ensuring we are doing our best to have everyone registered prior to participating in their role. For clubs & leaders, this means completing appropriate checks, training, and accepting policies. For athletes, this means understanding our code of conduct and policies.
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2. Our current club/team has offered the opportunity to re-sign before the Fall re-signing date. Could there be a consequence if I sign to a club that isn't following the VA Guidelines?

Clubs/Teams that are found in violation of Volleyball Alberta's Tryout and Signing Processes may be subject to review, which may include sanctions, disqualification from future Volleyball Alberta events and/or membership as outlined in our [Discipline and Complaints Policy](#). The outcomes of this review are not pre-determined and would depend on the specific circumstances of the reported violation.

If an athlete/family chooses to make a financial commitment to a club/team, whether or not it aligns with VA Signing and Tryout process, Volleyball Alberta will not be able to offer support for financial disputes. Volleyball Alberta does not have jurisdiction over a club's financial or refund policies as they are separate and independent organizations; financial disputes must be resolved between the parties involved. We recommend asking for more information before making any financial commitments.

Volleyball Alberta only recognizes the VA LOI, signed at an appropriate time per the Signing and Tryout policy. Making an agreement with a club/team outside of the VA Signing and Tryout process would not impact an athlete's ability to be a VA member.

3. Can I make a verbal commitment to a club?

The Fall re-signing date gives the time and opportunity for athletes and their families to reflect on the past season and make an informed decision on any future seasons. We encourage coaches and clubs to have a post-season debrief with individual athletes to provide feedback and indication on a future role with the club or team.

Any verbal commitment would not be recognized by Volleyball Alberta. The only agreement recognized is the VA LOI in the appropriate signing period.

4. What should I expect at an Open House?

Club Open Houses will be available in Edmonton, Calgary, and other cities upon request, should there be sufficient interest from clubs to participate. The Open House format would allow athletes and families to see the prospective clubs in their area and learn more about what each may offer. A club may also choose to offer their own Open House night. These occur before any tryouts begin for information sharing.

5. Won't Fall Tryout Dates conflict with School Season?

Two age groups have been combined in a tryout period to reduce impact during the school season. Athletes may also be re-signed and would not be required to tryout. Clubs are not obligated to run Fall tryouts and may choose to participate in the Winter tryout period alternatively.

6. My child did not make a club team, what are other options?

We are actively working to offer more programming outside of Club – and some of our clubs and facilities in Alberta are also improving programming levels.

Please check back on our website for updates on Fall programming. We also encourage you to reach out to the club in your area about alternative program options.

FAQ- Clubs

1. Why is there a Fall Tryout Process?

- a. Survey respondents (coaches, club leaders, athletes, parents) overwhelmingly requested it. For our younger athletes, the June timeframe was too soon after the previous season and disruptive to academics. Selections during the summer months conflicted with summer activities and holidays. September gives clubs the option to start tryouts early, should they wish, as many clubs are challenged to coordinate and organize all the requirements for their teams for when utilizing the Winter Tryouts. This also avoids the concerns of tryouts in June through August. Clubs are not obligated to use the Fall Tryout Process, the Winter Tryouts at the end of November can be utilized if preferred.

Clubs can re-sign athletes in June for the 17U & 18U age group, this is an option should either party wish to make an earlier commitment. This is an alternative consideration as the athletes and families in this older context are familiar with other clubs and they have an established relationship with their club should this choice be made. Clubs or athletes are not obligated to do an early re-sign in June. There is a second opportunity to re-sign 17U & 18U athletes September 2-4 or they can utilize the Fall Tryout Process September 7-14.

- b. We are trying to improve governance in the Association. We open Club Approval and Registration in August, which means all clubs signing athletes in September have been approved, Person In Authority checks completed, and policies can be accepted.
- c. By the fall, we typically have secured enough facilities to be able to share the details on tournament weekends, locations, etc. We have passed our Draft budget at our June SAGM and therefore can pass along projected tournament and memberships costs. Clubs can therefore set fees appropriately and have more time/information to determine coach availability and plan for their seasons.

2. What activities are permitted outside of the Club Indoor Season of Play?

Clubs are encouraged to refer to athlete development principles and be very deliberate with any indoor volleyball programming offered during the summer and fall. School volleyball places large demands on athletes and additional training places athletes in a position to develop overuse injuries and burnout.

Any open gyms or programming offered should be optional and not a condition for selection to a future team.

[Beach Volleyball](#) is an excellent option to get out with athletes and train in a new environment. The variations in skill execution, physical demands and mental break are a great way for athletes to stay connected with teammates while also broadening their abilities.

Any club that holds tryouts outside of the Fall and Winter Tryout dates will be subject to the [Discipline and Complaints Policy](#), and any subsequent sanctions resulting from that process.

Clubs that are in violation of Volleyball Alberta and Volleyball Canada policies may also lose their standing to compete in [International Events](#).

3. **Our club would like to offer as many teams for as many athletes as possible and we need more time to plan. How do we meet the needs of the athletes who are interested but can't accommodate them on our teams?**

Having high interest in your club tryouts can be challenging as many clubs do not have sufficient resources (facilities, coaches) to meet the high demand for volleyball. We encourage clubs to offer House League and Skill-based training programs to supplement their club development as a lower cost and commitment option to athletes entering volleyball, should your club have the capacity to do so.

4. **I am a starting a new club for the upcoming season, how does the Signing and Tryout Process work for new clubs?**
New clubs can apply for approval starting August 6 when club registration opens. Approved clubs would be eligible to participate in the Fall and Winter Tryout periods. New clubs are not able to utilize the re-signing period, as that is only for clubs that were active in the previous season.

***Club Pre-Approval Information**

- 17U or 18U Head Coach must be assigned to a team: contact information, must be currently active and approved in Sportlomo
 - Club President/Owner: contact information
 - Primary Club Portal Administrator: contact information
 - PIA Screening Designate: contact information
 - Business Number or Not for Profit Number
 - Board of Directors or Third-Party Liaison: contact information
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