



# **VOLLEYBALL IRELAND COMPETITION RULES**

## **(PREMIER DIVISION, DIVISIONS 1 & 2) 2025/26 SEASON**

**Correct as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**

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## 1 DEFINITIONS

<b>Club</b>	Defined as any organisation registered as a Club with Volleyball Ireland. There is a further category of Associated Club for Clubs with Teams not participating in the National League or Association Cup.
<b>Club Secretary</b>	Defined as the official Club representative/main point of contact whose responsibilities include liaising with Volleyball Ireland and the various Commissions on behalf of the club on all volleyball matters.
<b>Club Volunteer</b>	Defined as a designated Club volunteer willing to actively serve on a Volleyball Ireland Commission or be co-opted onto the Volleyball Ireland Board for a specified time-period.
<b>Competitions &amp; Development Commission</b>	Defined as the body delegated by the Volleyball Ireland Board to ensure that VI sanctioned competitions are held in accordance with the Competitions Rules. This responsibility may be in turn delegated to targeted sub-committees.
<b>FIVB</b>	Federation Internationale de Volleyball or the International Volleyball Federation. The FIVB is the governing body responsible for all forms of volleyball on a global level.
<b>Fixture List</b>	Defined as the timetable of League and/or Championship/Association Cup Fixtures issued by the National League Management Commission for the Season.
<b>Forfeit</b>	Defined as a situation where a Team fails to fulfil all its obligations for a Match and is reflected in a 25-0, 25-0, 25-0 loss and, in the case of a National League match, a penalty of one league point. Other sanctions, which may include financial penalties, may be imposed at the discretion of the National League Management Committee and/or PADACC.
<b>Indoor Season</b>	Defined as the period from 1 September to 31 May in the subsequent year over which indoor League and Association Cup competitions are run.
<b>Federation of Origin</b>	Defined as the National Volleyball Federation of the country in which a player first registered. The Federation of Origin changes after a player has established residence in another country for a minimum of two years and has obtained the nationality of that country.
<b>Match</b>	Defined as a game in which two registered Teams compete against each other and for the purposes of these Rules shall mean a Match in a sanctioned Volleyball Ireland Competition.
<b>Match Official</b>	Means the Referees, and shall include, when appointed, the scorekeeper(s) and any line judges for a given Match.
<b>Medical Personnel</b>	Means doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, and physical therapists who are professionally qualified and licensed to practice within the jurisdiction of Ireland permitted to be part of the authorised bench personnel as they have registered with Volleyball Ireland.

	<b>National League</b>	Means all divisions of the indoor National League, both men and women, comprising the Premier Division, Divisions 1, 2, 3 and other divisions/leagues, the number of which will depend on the number of Teams competing in each Indoor Season.
	<b>National League Management Committee (NLMC)</b>	A sub-committee of the Competitions & Development Commission, charged with administering the National League Competition programme, Association Cup (incorporating Shield) and the Junior Intermediate Championships and any other sanctioned competitions as determined by the Competitions & Development Commission or VI Board.
	<b>National Volleyball Federation</b>	Defined as the national governing body for volleyball, recognised in a country or territory to administer and govern all forms of volleyball, structured and organised.
	<b>Referee</b>	Means a person who is eligible to officiate a Match having registered with Volleyball Ireland, after meeting the necessary qualification criteria and listed on the register of referees held by Volleyball Ireland at the time of the match.
	<b>Rules</b>	Defined as the Volleyball Ireland Competition Rules as amended from time to time by the Volleyball Ireland Board or Commissions.
	<b>Season</b>	Defined as the period covered by the Volleyball Ireland Calendar in any given year.
	<b>Team</b>	Defined as the Team of a Club which has been duly entered into any Volleyball Ireland Competition(s).
	<b>Volleyball Ireland</b>	Defined as the Volleyball Association of Ireland and shall include, for the purposes of these Rules, the Commissions and Committees of Volleyball Ireland.
	<b>Volleyball Ireland Board</b>	Defined as the Board of Administration or Board of Directors of Volleyball Ireland.
	<b>Volleyball Ireland Calendar</b>	Defined as the calendar of events notified to members at the beginning of each Season and shall include all Volleyball Ireland Competitions and Tournaments, National Squad Training/Competition dates, International Matches involving the National Squads, Volleyball Ireland Board meetings and other events recognised by the Volleyball Ireland for Volleyball Ireland Calendar purposes.
	<b>Website</b>	Refers to <a href="http://www.volleyballireland.com">www.volleyballireland.com</a> .
	Note: The Appendices and Schedule of Fees form part of the Rules.	

## 2 VOLLEYBALL IRELAND COMPETITIONS

2.1	<p>Volleyball Ireland's competitions shall comprise the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) National League</li> <li>b) The Association Cup (incorporating the Association Shield)</li> <li>c) The Junior and Intermediate Championships</li> <li>d) All school competitions sanctioned by the Competitions &amp; Development Commission.</li> <li>e) All beach / outdoor competitions sanctioned by the Competitions &amp; Development Commission.</li> <li>f) Such other tournaments, competitions and/or matches as Volleyball Ireland shall determine from time to time to be bound by these rules.</li> </ul>
2.2	<p>The rules that follow cover all the above competitions unless exemptions or additions are approved in writing by the NLMC in advance.</p>

## VOLLEYBALL IRELAND INDOOR COMPETITION RULES

<b>1 ENTRY TO VOLLEYBALL IRELAND INDOOR COMPETITIONS</b>		Also refer:
1.1	Only a Club or School registered to and affiliated with Volleyball Ireland (VI) may enter Teams in a VI competition.	
1.2	<p>Club registration for National League competitions is by way of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lodgement of a one-off Club Bond payment (which is held by VI as security),</li> <li>• Payment of the appropriate annual fees, and</li> <li>• Completion of the annual club affiliation and national league entry form.</li> </ul> <p>As part of this registration process, the Club Secretary and Club Volunteer (to be active during the Indoor Season) must be identified and appointed by each Club and communicated to VI on the Club registration form.</p>	Schedule of Fees Clauses 1.6 & 1.7
1.3	<p>Club registration for all other competitions is by way of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payment of the appropriate entry fees,</li> <li>• Completion of the Associate Club Affiliation Form (for Clubs not participating in the National League), and</li> <li>• Completion of the relevant competition entry form.</li> </ul>	Schedule of Fees Clauses 1.6, 1.7, 9.1 & 10.1
1.4	Details of fees shall be confirmed in the Schedule of Fees, and any amendments to same will be advised to Clubs in advance of the competition to which they apply.	Schedule of Fees
1.5	Entry to VI competitions shall not be permitted unless all relevant fees, and outstanding fines have been paid, and the relevant Affiliation and entry forms have been completed by the Club on behalf of its Teams and submitted to VI, by any stipulated deadlines.	Clause 11.3
1.6	Any Club that has not fulfilled the obligations in clauses 1.1 to 1.5 above, prior to the arrangement of League fixtures for the season, can apply to the NLMC for a late entry, for which a late entry fee may apply. Late entry is deemed to occur once the expiry date set by the NLMC for the return of the relevant documentation has passed.	Schedule of Fees
1.7	Each Club must complete the relevant club registration form at the time of entry. The details contained within the form are presumed to continue to be correct unless and until notified to Volleyball Ireland in writing.	Clauses 1.2 & 1.3
1.8	By registering with VI, each Club agrees on behalf of itself, its players, officials, volunteers, and members to comply with the Rules and Regulations of VI (including but not limited to these Competition Rules, the VI Articles and Memorandum of Association) and the directions and decisions of VI (including the judicial bodies recognised under the Irish Anti-Doping Rules).	
1.9	<p>The rules of the game of volleyball that apply in all VI competitions shall be those currently issued by the FIVB and adopted formally by the VI Board and as amended by these Competition Rules.</p> <p>The NLMC reserves the right to update the competition rules during the season if there is a material change in the FIVB's annual rules updating process, but such changes will only</p>	

	apply in competitions that have not commenced prior to the date of the rule changes being introduced.	
1.10	Each Team entered in the National League should have a minimum of eight registered players, at least three working days before its first scheduled Match (unless exempted in writing by the NMLC). A Team shall not be allowed to compete unless in compliance with this clause, and any matches cancelled through non-compliance shall be deemed to be forfeited.	Clauses 3.2 & 3.6
1.11	Players must complete their own registration on VI's membership portal JustGo. The assignment of players to Teams by a Club's Secretary is taken as the player's agreement to be so assigned.	Clauses 3.1 & 3.2
1.12	Teams joining the National league will be entered into the lowest available division, unless the NLMC receives a written submission for consideration otherwise and agrees accordingly.	
1.13	<p>All official correspondence with VI in connection with these Rules must be conducted in writing (by email), addressed from the Club Secretary to VI, and marked for the attention of the NLMC.</p> <p>Emails should be marked for the attention of the NLMC and sent to <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a></p>	

<b>2 COMPETITION FORMAT</b>		Also refer:												
2.1	<p><b>Competition Structure</b></p> <p>The structure of each season shall be determined by the NLMC in advance of each season. VI shall prepare the VI Calendar for the season, having sought input from relevant bodies (other commissions, VI Board etc) and submit the VI Calendar to the VI Board for final approval.</p>													
2.2	<p><b>League Points &amp; Tables</b></p> <p>League points shall be awarded to Teams for each match played*, on the following basis:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>WINNER</th><th>MATCH SCORE</th><th>LOSER</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3 pts</td><td>3-0</td><td>0 pts</td></tr> <tr> <td>3 pts</td><td>3-1</td><td>0 pts</td></tr> <tr> <td>2 pts</td><td>3-2</td><td>1 pt</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In the event of two or more Teams in a Division having the same number of league points, positions shall be decided according to the following tie-breaks, applied in this sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matches Won</li> <li>• Set Difference</li> <li>• Sets For</li> <li>• Set difference based on Matches played against other Teams in the tie-break</li> <li>• Point Difference</li> <li>• Points Scored</li> </ul>	WINNER	MATCH SCORE	LOSER	3 pts	3-0	0 pts	3 pts	3-1	0 pts	2 pts	3-2	1 pt	Section 8
WINNER	MATCH SCORE	LOSER												
3 pts	3-0	0 pts												
3 pts	3-1	0 pts												
2 pts	3-2	1 pt												

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Points difference based on Matches played against other Teams in the tie-break</li> <li>• Play-off(s)</li> </ul> <p>This tie-break sequence shall be used in all VI competitions where league formats are used, unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, if at least three Teams are tied, and Teams drop out by applying the above tie-break sequence, the sequence continues from that point to break further ties and does not restart with matches won.</p> <p>Note * that matches include those involving the Ireland representative teams in Premier and Division 1 competitions.</p>	Appendix 2
2.3	<p><b>If a Division/League cannot be completed</b></p> <p>If not all matches can be completed in the National league competition (or a division within the National League) within a season, the NLMC, in conjunction with the Board reserves the right to conclude the league in a manner that is deemed appropriate.</p>	
2.4	<p><b>Team Withdrawal</b></p>	
	<p>2.4.1 Where a Team withdraws during the National League, all matches involving that Team will be declared null and void, unless the Team has played all the other Teams in the league once before withdrawing. Where this is the case, the result of the first meeting between the sides shall stand, with any second meetings being declared null and void. Please note that a match that is forfeited does not, in this situation, count as a match played.</p>	
	<p>2.4.2 A Team withdrawing from the National League after the closing date for Club affiliation and league entry shall be subject to a fine. Teams withdrawing from the National League within six weeks of the date that the fixtures have been issued may be subject to an additional fine. The Team may be subject to additional sanctions, as determined by the NLMC including, but not limited to, disqualification from future participation in further VI competitions.</p>	Schedule of Fees
	<p>2.4.3 Where a Team withdraws from a knockout competition (including but not limited to the Association Cup, Shield or Championships) following the scheduling of fixtures and/or the appointment of Match Officials, such Teams may be subject to a fine.</p> <p>A Team is deemed to have withdrawn from a knockout competition if they forfeit one or more matches (two or more matches in the Championships) in said competition.</p> <p>The Team may be subject to additional sanctions as determined by the NLMC.</p>	<p>Schedule of Fees</p> <p>Sections 9 &amp; 10</p>
	<p>2.4.4 If a Team withdraws from any VI competition, it may be required to pay any reasonable expenses unavoidably incurred by any of VI, any affected Teams and Match Officials for any scheduled match(es) that will not be played.</p> <p>Such matters and expenses will be considered by the NLMC on application by the VI Board, Teams and/or match officials, as relevant.</p>	Clause 4.4
	<p>2.4.5 if a Team withdraws from a fixture without authorisation, this shall be deemed a Forfeit, and the Team may be issued with a fine. In the event of this fixture being a National League fixture, additionally the forfeiting Team shall be deducted one league point.</p>	Schedule of Fees



<b>3 PLAYER REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY</b>		Also refer:
3.1	<p>Only players registered with VI may participate in VI Competitions and, in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To compete in Premier Division competitions, players must be 14 years or older on 1<sup>st</sup> June of the year in which the league commences.</li> <li>To compete in all other National League competitions, players must be 12 years or older on 1<sup>st</sup> June of the year in which the league commences.</li> </ul>	Clause 1.11
3.2	<p>Players must register with VI by fully completing all sections on the JustGo membership portal. To be fully registered, the player must have completed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed a player profile on the JustGo membership portal,</li> <li>Paid for a National League player licence on JustGo,</li> <li>Uploaded an appropriate head and shoulders photograph to their profile, to aid the pre-match ID process,</li> <li>Completed the Sport Ireland Anti-Doping module and uploaded the completion certificate as a credential on their JustGo profile (not required for players under 18 years),</li> <li>Agreed to abide by the Sport Ireland Code of Conduct (as a condition of securing their playing license).</li> <li>The Club must allocate that player to the team that they will be playing for in the National League on JustGo (teams will be labelled NL0, NL1, NL2 followed by the Team Name, depending on the playing division).</li> </ul> <p>Only uploaded anti-doping certificates are considered sufficient proof of compliance with this requirement. Players who have not uploaded their certificate will be considered non-compliant – and therefore unregistered – until they have done so.</p>	Clauses 1.10, 1.11, 3.3, 3.7, 3.9.2, 9.5
3.3	<p>When a player has completed the requirements outlined in 3.2 above, VI will issue the player with a Player Number for the season, and this number should be used to identify players on the Team lists on match scoresheets. Note that player numbers will change from season to season – so clubs should recheck these details.</p> <p>Please note that no additional player registrations will be processed within three working days of a match. For the avoidance of doubt, this means that for a match on a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday Monday, players and their club must have completed the steps in 3.2 above by close of business on the preceding Tuesday.</p> <p>For the 2025/26 season, player numbers will take the following form –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premier Division player numbers will start with a VLY0xxx,</li> <li>Division 1 player numbers will start with a VLY1xxx,</li> <li>Division 2 player numbers will start with a VLY2xxx.</li> </ul> <p>Where xxx is a unique number.</p> <p>In conjunction with rule 3.2 above, a player number cannot be issued until a club has allocated a player(s) to their respective team(s) on JustGo.</p>	Clause 3.2, 3.11 & Section 14
3.4	<p>If, during pre-match checks, a player is unable to provide proof of their VI player number, they may be permitted to play, but the referees should confirm the players identity and note the query on the E-Scoring platform, for subsequent post-match checking by VI. If it</p>	Clauses 3.2, 6.4.3

	transpires that the player was not eligible for a Player Number, then the player and/or club will be liable to sanction, to include forfeiture of the match (see definitions). The club may choose to exclude the player from the match and, if this is the case, the player will not be permitted to play, sit on the Team bench or coach in any capacity.	
3.5	Once the season has commenced, new players (i.e. those not registered to a National League Team) may register with a Team in a Cup / Championship competition, providing the registration is completed at least three working days prior to the Team's next match in the competition, and subject to the provisions of clause 3.6.	Clauses 1.10, 3.6
3.6	No new player may register for any National League Team after the last working day before 17 <sup>th</sup> March in the year that the competition concludes, unless sanctioned by the NLMC.  A player can register for a Team playing in the Association Cup or Shield up to three working days before the Team's Semi-Final match.	Sections 9 & 10
3.7	A player in a Club can be downgraded (i.e. moving from a Team in a higher division to one in a lower division) only if sanctioned by the NLMC. The Club Secretary or Player must outline in writing the circumstances and rationale for the downgrading at the time of registration.  Note that a player for whom a downgrade is approved by the NLMC in this manner cannot then play up for a team in a higher division (as outlined in 3.11 below) for the balance of the season.	Clauses 3.2, 3.10.3, 3.11.4
3.8	A player can only be registered with one Club and one National Volleyball Federation at any time.	Clauses 3.9.1 & 3.10.1
<b>3.9</b>	<b>International Player Transfer</b>	
	3.9.1 Players who have previously been registered with another National Volleyball Federation must provide evidence as required that they have: a) Obtained and completed the relevant documentation to enable them to register with VI (the FIVB Transfer Form is available from <a href="http://www.fivb.org">www.fivb.org</a> ) and b) Where relevant, that any applicable transfer fees have been paid. The FIVB rules governing international player transfers shall apply to such players in all circumstances. Please note that the provisions of Clause 3.8 still apply.	FIVB Sports Regs, Section II, Chapter I, Clause 1.6  Clause 3.2
	3.9.2 players who have lived outside Ireland and who wish to register with VI and who have not previously been registered with another National Volleyball Federation must, at the time of registration, certify same in writing. VI may, at its discretion, require the player to provide evidence to this effect. This may take the form of a letter from the National Volleyball Federation in the player's Federation of Origin stating that the player is not so registered.	Clause 3.2
<b>3.10</b>	<b>Player Transfers In and Out of Season</b>	
	3.10.1 A player must inform both National League Clubs (departing and receiving) of their intention to transfer and request a letter of release from the departing club. The departing	Clause 3.10.3

	<p>club must agree to or decline the release of the player within five working days of receipt of the written request from the player.</p> <p>The player should then apply in writing to the NLMC on a Player Transfer Form (available on <a href="http://www.volleyballireland.com">www.volleyballireland.com</a>), attaching the written agreement from the departing club, and details of the receiving club.</p> <p>A player who has not been registered with a club in the preceding two seasons does not require any NLMC approval to transfer Clubs.</p> <p>In the event of a dispute between the player and their departing club, the player has a right to protest the refusal to agree the transfer, in accordance with Clause 12.2.</p> <p>Please note that the provisions of Clause 3.8 still apply.</p>																					
	<p>3.10.2 The transfer will take effect on the morning of the date specified in writing by the NLMC to the player, the receiving club and VI. No transfer shall take effect until that letter has been received and the player’s licence and registration details have been updated on JustGo (which should only be done by VI and not the receiving club or the player).</p>																					
	<p>3.10.3 A transferred player can only play at the same or higher level at their new Club, unless otherwise approved by the NLMC.</p>	Clauses 3.7, 3.8, 3.10.1, 3.10.4																				
	<p>3.10.4 A transferred player cannot play for their receiving Club in a competition in the same season if they have already played for their departing Club in the same competition.</p> <p>This means that a player who has already played matches for a team in the National League during the season cannot transfer to a new club to play in a team in the National League in the same season, whether in the same division or not.</p>	Clause 10.5																				
	<p>3.10.5 A player may transfer from a National League Club to an Associate Club and vice-versa.</p> <p>The following table outlines what transfer procedures need to occur when transferring from one club to another.</p> <table><tr><th>Departing Team</th><th>Receiving Team</th><th>Requirements</th><th>Restrictions</th></tr><tr><td>National League</td><td>National League</td><td>3.10.1</td><td>3.10.3 &amp; 3.10.4</td></tr><tr><td>National League</td><td>Associate Club</td><td>3.10.1</td><td>3.10.4</td></tr><tr><td>Associate Club</td><td>National League</td><td>3.10.1</td><td>3.10.3 &amp; 3.10.4</td></tr><tr><td>Associate Club</td><td>Associate Club</td><td>N/A</td><td>3.10.4</td></tr></table>	Departing Team	Receiving Team	Requirements	Restrictions	National League	National League	3.10.1	3.10.3 & 3.10.4	National League	Associate Club	3.10.1	3.10.4	Associate Club	National League	3.10.1	3.10.3 & 3.10.4	Associate Club	Associate Club	N/A	3.10.4	
Departing Team	Receiving Team	Requirements	Restrictions																			
National League	National League	3.10.1	3.10.3 & 3.10.4																			
National League	Associate Club	3.10.1	3.10.4																			
Associate Club	National League	3.10.1	3.10.3 & 3.10.4																			
Associate Club	Associate Club	N/A	3.10.4																			
3.11	Players playing up and/or down																					
	<p>3.11.1 in National League competitions only, a player aged 18 years or older on 1<sup>st</sup> June of the year in which the league commences may play nine sets for a higher division Team at the same Club without affecting their own grade. Upon playing their 10<sup>th</sup> set, the player is automatically upgraded to the higher Team. For the remainder of the season, the player may not play for the lower division Team in any VI competition.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, stepping on court for all or part of a set shall count as a set for the purposes of this clause.</p>	Clauses 3.3, 3.11.3 3.11.4, 3.11.5, 3.11.6																				

	If a player is automatically upgraded to a higher Team on this basis, the player will be issued with a <u>new</u> VLY Player Number on the JustGo platform, and Clubs should note this new number for future use – see clause 3.3 above.	
	3.11.2 Responsibility for counting sets, as outlined in clause 3.11.1 rests with the Club, and VI and the NLMC accept no responsibility for any oversight by the Club in this area. The Club Secretary may contact VI to check details in relation to clause 3.11.1.	Clause 3.11.6
	<p>3.11.3 In National League competitions, players aged under 18 on 1<sup>st</sup> June of the year in which the league commences may play an unlimited number of sets for a higher division Team in their Club without affecting their own grade.</p> <p>Please note, however, that any player already allocated to a youth team – and therefore with a 4xxx or 5xxx player number – will need to also be allocated to the relevant team they will play up in by the weekly registration deadline as indicated in 3.3 above (in addition to any youth competitions they may already be allocated to). This will ensure that the player has been uploaded to the relevant team on the e-scoring software in advance of the relevant match. Failing to do this may result in complications arising at the match when the player uploads to teams take place.</p>	
	3.11.4 Players may only play up for one Team in any season, irrespective of whether that Team is one or more grades ahead of the player's initial grade.	Clauses 3.7, 3.11.1
	3.11.5 No registered player may play down into a lower division National League Team, with the exception of players aged less than 18 years on 1 <sup>st</sup> June of the year in which the league commences, who may play down in Division 3.	Clauses 3.7 & 3.11.1
	3.11.6 If a Libero from a lower division Team is named on the scoresheet, they are deemed to have played every set in the Match unless indicated on the scoresheet by the Match Officials.	Clauses 3.11.1 & 3.11.2

<b>4 FIXTURE PLANNING</b>		Also refer:
4.1	<p>The NLMC will plan the dates of all National League competition fixtures. These fixtures will be sent to all Club Secretaries at least four weeks prior to the commencement of the National League programme.</p> <p>All Clubs will then have two weeks to finalise the dates and times of their home fixtures, details of which must be shared with VI.</p> <p>An additional window will then be given to clubs if they need to amend such dates for their away matches, in conjunction with the host club. This may include flipping home and away hosting and/or changes of dates and/or times but, in all cases, the final details must be confirmed in writing between clubs and communicated to VI as soon as possible.</p> <p>At the end of that window, the fixture change procedures laid out in section 5 below, shall be followed in all cases.</p>	
4.2	Club Secretaries should ensure that all details relating to their home fixtures, as stated on the VI Website ( <a href="http://www.volleyballireland.com">www.volleyballireland.com</a> ), are correct, particularly if a match is	

	<p>rescheduled. In the case of any dispute over fixture arrangements (or rearrangements), the details as they appear on the VI website shall be deemed to be correct. If a change of fixture details is approved by the NLMC, it shall not be deemed to be completed until updated on the VI website.</p> <p><b>Note that the time stated on the website is the start time for the match.</b></p>	
4.3	For all VI Competitions, matches must be played at venues that the standing Match Officials consider acceptable on the day of the match. Failure to provide a venue that is of an acceptable standard shall not constitute grounds for a match to be postponed – in such situations that match shall be considered a Forfeit by the home side.	Schedule of fees
4.4	<p>A Team withdrawing from a fixture for any reason (save in truly exceptional circumstances) shall explain in writing to the NLMC the specific reasons for so doing, copying in the opposing Team/club at least five working days before the scheduled day of the Match. Such withdrawal from a Match shall constitute a Forfeit by that Team, with penalties as laid out in the definitions above.</p> <p>Where a Team fails to fulfil a Match fixture, it may be required to pay any reasonable expenses unavoidably incurred by any of VI, the opposition Club and Match Officials. Such expenses will be considered by the NLMC on application by the VI Board, Club and/or match officials, as relevant.</p>	<p>Clauses 2.4.4</p> <p>Schedule of fees</p>

<b>5 FIXTURE CHANGES</b>		Also refer:
5.1	<p>It is the objective of VI and the NLMC that no changes to the Fixture List, as it appears on the VI website, shall take place. However, if a change is unavoidable (as determined in the first instance by the NLMC), then the following rules shall apply. For the avoidance of doubt, no changes of fixture shall be deemed to take effect until the relevant amendments have been published on the VI website.</p> <p>Note that the time stated on the website is the start time for the match.</p>	
5.2	<p>Once the fixture list has been confirmed by the NLMC and uploaded to the VI website, any changes must be requested in writing to VI on the agreed Fixture Change Request form, for approval, at least 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the fixture. In exceptional cases, the NLMC may consider a fixture change within 10 working days of the scheduled date of the match.</p> <p>Whilst approval from the opposing Team is always welcome, the agreement of both Teams to a change of fixture does not, of itself, mean the change will be approved by the NLMC.</p>	
5.3	Where VI approves a fixture change, the Club seeking that change must liaise with the Club Secretary of the opposing Club (or Team contact if the Club Secretary is unavailable), to reschedule the fixture within the timeframes confirmed by the NLMC. In other words, the NLMC will determine the deadline for such discussions between clubs to be concluded.	

	Once the details of the rescheduled fixture have been agreed, the home club/team shall be responsible for rescheduling the logistics for the match, including venue and Match Officials, and shall confirm same in writing with the opposition Club, VI, and Match Officials at least 5 working days prior to the rescheduled date of the fixture.	
5.4	<p>If no agreement can be reached between the Teams involved on a rescheduled fixture date by the deadline stipulated by the NLMC in 5.3 above, the Club seeking the change shall advise NLMC of same.</p> <p>At that point, the NLMC will select three dates (and times) for the match to be played and will ask both teams to select their two preferred dates and times from the three offered, within 48 hours. The NLMC shall confirm the match will be played on the common date that both teams choose or, in the event of unanimous agreement between the teams, one of the two preferred dates and times. If one or both team(s) fails to respond by this deadline, the NLMC shall select the date and time for the match from the three options provided.</p>	
5.5	<p>No Match can be rescheduled beyond the closing date for matches in the relevant VI competition, unless approved in writing by the NLMC. For the 2025/26 season, the closing date for NL matches is Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April.</p> <p>If catchup dates are allocated in the VI Calendar and alternatives cannot be agreed by the clubs/Teams these weekends should be utilised for rescheduling such matches and, as such, Clubs should ensure that their players are available to play on catchup dates. For the avoidance of doubt, the only reason a Team should have for not being able to play on a catchup date is that a match has already been rescheduled for that date.</p> <p><b>In respect of rescheduling matches, clubs are asked to approach discussions in a proactive manner, with the priority being to getting matches rescheduled and played.</b></p>	
5.6	Where the rescheduling of a fixture is approved by the NLMC, the Team initiating the rescheduling may be required to pay any reasonable expenses unavoidably incurred by any of VI, the opposition Club and Match Officials. Such expenses will be considered by the NLMC on application by the VI Board, Club and/or match officials, as relevant	
5.7	<p>A fixture rescheduling will be permitted by the NLMC in the event of one or more players/coaches from a Team (or both Teams) are required by the Irish National Team (s) for an international tournament, competition or training camp. The same dispensation shall also apply in the event of a Club Team playing in an international fixture or competition approved by VI.</p> <p>Clubs affected by either scenario should notify VI and include evidence to support this, of the fixture(s) to be rescheduled at least 20 working days before the original date of the fixture(s). The Club concerned should indicate the personnel who have been selected.</p> <p>Only the match involving the team that the player has been allocated to by their Club can be rescheduled under this rule. For example, if a player with a 2xxx player number is called up for an international competition, then only that club's Division 2 team can seek a reschedule of a match. If a coach is called up in the same manner, only the team who the coach is regularly the head coach of (as determined by the scoresheets from the season</p>	

	<p>to date) can seek a reschedule. If the coach is not listed on any scoresheets, no rescheduling is permitted.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, Clubs should not assume that a match will be rescheduled automatically and needs to alert the NLMC to the issue in the first instance, and the onus rests with the Club affected by such call-ups to make good on the rescheduling of the fixture. In addition, Clubs are reminded that the NLMC does not have knowledge of player call-ups, so Clubs <u>must</u> lead on this process.</p>	
5.8	<p>If either Team deems the weather or other conditions too dangerous to travel to a Match, and an appropriate national authority has issued a weather/travel/safety warning, the opposing Team and Match Officials should be informed as soon as possible. The Match should be postponed, and details sent to the NLMC for consideration, including details of the official advice.</p> <p>If it subsequently transpires that no such advisory was issued, the Team who refused to travel shall be deemed to have forfeited the match, and clause 2.4.5 shall apply.</p>	
5.9	<p>A change in the time of a Match, on the same scheduled day, does not constitute a change of fixture. However, in such situations, the Team requesting the change must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written confirmation of the change in times have been agreed by the opposing Team and Match Officials (where applicable),</li> <li>• The new time has been correctly updated on the VI website.</li> </ul>	

<b>6 MATCH PROCEDURES</b>		Also refer:
6.1	<p>All matches shall start between 1100hrs (i.e. 1030hrs warm-up) and 1800hrs (i.e. 1730hrs warm-up) on Saturdays and Sundays unless agreed in writing in advance with the opposition Team and the NLMC.</p> <p>In any situation where four NL matches are scheduled on the same day at the same venue, the first match can be scheduled for a 1030hrs start (i.e. 1000hrs warm-up) where the travelling team agrees the change, without the need for approval from the NLMC. However, consideration must be given by the home team to ensure that the team playing first and last are not the teams travelling the furthest to that venue on that day, unless those visiting teams agree to do so.</p>	
6.2	<p>Clubs should book a minimum of 2 hours playing time plus 30 minutes warm-up time for each match.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, this means that for a day where multiple matches are scheduled, <u>each match</u> must be allocated a 2-hour 30-minute window. In the event of fixture confirmations from clubs failing this rule, those clubs will be asked to revisit their schedule and amend accordingly to ensure compliance.</p> <p>Matches abandoned due to the facility having to close or to fulfil subsequent bookings are deemed to be a failure to fulfil a fixture, and will be forfeited by the Home Team, unless the</p>	



	timings outlined above had been booked by the Club and written proof can be provided to that effect.	
<b>6.3</b>	<b>'Home Team' Responsibilities</b> The Home Team or, in the event of a match at a neutral venue the designated home Team (unless otherwise stated) is responsible for the following actions on a Match Day:	
	<p>6.3.1 To set up the venue and equipment prior to the official warm-up time for each match. This includes but is not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A net system (with appropriate height per FIVB rules),</li> <li>• Referee's Stand,</li> <li>• VI approved Match Ball(s) – these are currently blue and yellow Mikasa V200W balls,</li> <li>• Court markings sufficiently clear and to the Referees' satisfaction,</li> <li>• Scoreboard located on a scorekeepers table,</li> <li>• Rotation Slips,</li> <li>• Team Benches,</li> <li>• Net Antennae (required for all National League and Association Cup Matches).</li> <li>• A laptop for electronic scoring of matches,</li> </ul> <p>Teams should also ensure that paper scoresheets are available, in the event of a failure of the E-Scoring platform.</p> <p>In the event of any queries, the First Referee's decision as to the suitability of any of the above shall be final.</p>	
	6.3.2 To ensure that the venue is sufficiently clean, heated and safe and that all equipment is in place such that warm-up can commence on time. In the event of any queries, the First Referee's decision as to the suitability of any of the above shall be final.	
	6.3.3 To ensure that the rules and regulations laid down by the venue are always adhered to by all participants and spectators in that venue.	
	6.3.4 To provide all Match Officials not independently appointed by VI. A competent scorekeeper able to operate the E-Scoring software is a mandatory requirement, and assistant scorekeeper and line judges are optional.	
	6.3.5 Failure to adhere to the above by the Home Team or Designated Home Team will be subject to sanction and/or fine by the NLMC.	Schedule of fees
<b>6.4</b>	<b>Pre-Match Procedures</b>	
	6.4.1 Teams and Match Officials should arrive at the Match venue at least 30 minutes prior to the Match start time.	
	<p>6.4.2 In the event that the First Referee deems the venue and/or equipment unfit for play, he/she shall advise VI and the NLMC in writing of the reasons for this decision no later than 5 working days from the date of the match, including details of who the matter was discussed with from the Home Team or Designated Home Team at the time.</p> <p>The NLMC shall decide within 10 working days of receipt of that notification as to whether the Match(es) should be forfeited or replayed and decide on any related costs.</p>	Schedule of fees



	<p>6.4.3 The Referees must check the registration cards/printouts showing the registration number for all players and coaches, and the credentials of any medical personnel. In addition, they must also check sufficient Match Officials have been appointed, in addition to ensuring that Team kit is compliant.</p> <p>If a player cannot provide details of their player number, then the Referee may permit the player to take part in the match. If it subsequently transpires, however, that there was no valid cause for the player not having a registration number, the player's Team may be subject to forfeiting the match, as laid out in the definitions (page 3).</p> <p><i>By way of an example, a player is not provided with a player number if they have not uploaded a suitable head &amp; shoulders photograph on their JustGo profile, the absence of which would make the referee's checks impossible.</i></p>	
	<p>6.4.4 Late Arriving Players</p> <p>Note Team members (players and staff) not present in the venue before the captains validate the scoresheet pre-match can be included on the scoresheet. The scoresheet entry must include shirt number (where applicable) and registration number. Should this person arrive while the match is in progress they will be eligible to take part in the match providing the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a note that there is a potential late participant included in the remarks section of the scoresheet (if the person is a player this remark should include a shirt number that must match the number the player intends to play in)</li> <li>• On arrival and during a break in play they make themselves known to the match officials</li> <li>• The scorekeeper acknowledges to the second referee that there is a late participant included on the scoresheet and their shirt number (where applicable) matches that of the late arriving player.</li> <li>• The second referee informs the first referee that the participant is on the scoresheet and the first referee signals the individual join their team.</li> <li>• The late participant's identity should be checked and confirmed before the referees sign the scoresheet at the end of the match.</li> </ul>	
	<p>6.4.5 Coaches are not permitted to coach a Team if they are not registered as a coach with VI or cannot provide details of their coach registration number. No coach is considered registered until they have been issued with a registration number, which may require them to upload documentation to JustGo.</p> <p>From the 2025/26 season, the first digit of a coach's registration number indicates their level of qualification – 0 for Foundation level, 1 for Level 1, 2 for Level 2 etc.</p> <p>At Premier &amp; Division 1 levels, coaches must have, as a minimum, a Level 1 Coaching Qualification, and at Division 2 level and below, as a minimum, a Foundation Coaching Qualification.</p> <p>Coaches who coach juniors or vulnerable adults must also be Garda Vetted and cleared for this activity. In addition, they must have completed a Safeguarding 1 course as required by VI (evidence of both must be uploaded to JustGo). Coaches who only coach</p>	

	<p>adults are not required to successfully complete Garda Vetting (GV) and Safeguarding 1 but are encouraged to do so.</p> <p>Coaches are required to have paid for a valid coach license for the current season, and as a condition of securing this licence, agreed to abide by the Sport Ireland Code of Conduct (as a condition of securing their playing license).</p> <p>If it transpires that there was valid cause for the coach not having a registration number, the player's Team may be subject to forfeiting the match, as laid out in the definitions (page 3).</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, failure to upload required documents to JustGo shall be deemed the same as not having a valid registration. VI will be guided solely by documentation uploaded to JustGo, or lack thereof, when assessing the validity of a registration.</p>	
	<p>6.4.6 For every match, a Team may consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 14 players (which includes a maximum of two liberos),</li> <li>• One Head Coach,</li> <li>• A maximum of two assistant coaches,</li> <li>• One Team therapist,</li> <li>• One medical doctor.</li> </ul> <p>Only those listed on the scoresheet may enter the Competition/Control area and take part in the official warm-up and the match itself.</p> <p>The above stipulation replaces the relevant requirements of FIVB Rule 4.1.1.</p>	
	<p>6.4.7 Medical personnel will not be permitted to sit on the Team bench unless permission has been granted by VI or, in their absence, the Match Referees. Any medical personnel who do not have their documentation with them may sit on the Team bench, but may be subject to sanction by the NLMC, and such lack of documentation should be noted by the referees on the scoresheet.</p>	
	<p>6.4.8 In all matches the Referee shall ensure that, while normal warm-up times and breaks are permitted to Teams, there is no deliberate time-wasting by either Team. In the event of a Team being involved in a preceding Match (either playing or officiating), an additional break of 15 minutes may be granted, at the Referee's discretion, prior to the start of the next match warm-up period.</p>	
	<p>6.4.9 In the event of a Team failing to appear on court to play when the Referee calls the first six players on court, that Team shall forfeit the first set 0-25. In the event of a Team failing to appear on court to play within 15 minutes of the Referee calling the first six players on court shall forfeit the match, as laid out in the definitions (page 3).</p>	Schedule of fees
	<p>6.4.10 Any reasonable verified expenses incurred by a Team or appointed Match Officials, due to the late arrival of the opposing Team shall be paid by the opposing Team. Where the delay is due to the late arrival of the Match Officials (or replacement Match Officials), any such costs shall be met by the Home Team, unless the appointments were made by VI.</p> <p>Any such expenses must be submitted in writing to the NLMC for approval.</p>	Schedule of fees

<b>6.5</b>	<b>Post-Match Procedures</b>	
	<p>6.5.1 If a dispute arises during the Match, and a Team captain wishes to have a comment or objection recorded on the scoresheet, he/she must inform the Referee of same when the incident occurs. The First Referee will enter a short note about the incident on the scoresheet at the conclusion of the Match. The Team captain must, through their Club Secretary, submit a written report to VI within 10 working days of the date of the match if they wish any action to be considered or taken.</p> <p>Failure by the Referee to enter a note on the scoresheet shall not prevent the Referee from later providing a report to VI on any matter.</p>	
	<p>6.5.2 Where the First Referee is of the opinion that any of the Match Officials provided by the Home Team falls short of acceptable standards for the Match, or insufficient officials were provided as required in the rules, then the Referee will note same on the scoresheet – the NLMC may issue a fine to the Home Team in these circumstances, depending on the circumstances of the Match.</p>	
	<p>6.5.3 At the end of the match, both referees are required to validate the match detail on the E-Scoring software and will need to know their login and password details to do so. They should ensure, prior to validating the match, that any comments relevant to the match are included in the comments section of the scoresheet on the software.</p>	
	<p>6.5.4 After the Match is completed:</p> <p>At the end of the match, the scoresheet and result shall be validated by the scorekeeper, both referees and captain/coach from each team on the E-Scoring software. Once validated, the match detail will be submitted automatically into the competition management software, and teams need take no further action in reporting the result. All matches should be validated and uploaded by 2200hrs on the day of the match and, for midweek matches, by 1200hrs on the day following match.</p> <p>Clubs must ensure that a match has been successfully validated and uploaded before closing their laptop.</p> <p>Any non-compliance in this regard, including the submission of paper scoresheets, shall be subject to a fine by the NLMC, as outlined in the Schedule of fees.</p> <p>The Home Team shall ensure that the Referees appointed to the Match are remunerated appropriately. Any additional expenses accrued by referees in this regard will also be reimbursed by the home Team but only if agreed in advance of the Match taking place.</p>	Schedule of fees
	<p>6.5.5 Paper Scoresheets</p> <p>If the match is scored on paper scoresheets, the winning Team shall notify the result of the match to VI (by emailing a photo of the scoresheet to <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a> or via WhatsApp to 0858725946) before 2200hrs on the day of the match. For midweek matches, the deadline shall be 1200hrs on the day following the match.</p> <p>However, please note that in such circumstances, the home team shall be liable to sanction, as laid out in 6.5.4 above.</p>	Schedule of fees

	6.5.6 A Team reduced to 5 players or fewer during a Match, due to player injury or disqualification shall be determined to have lost the Match but shall retain any points and sets won.	
	6.5.7 If a Team wishes to make a complaint that does not constitute an official protest (see section 12) they must submit their complaint, through their Club Secretary, to VI using the appropriate report form, available from the VI website.	
<b>6.6</b>	<b>Clothing Regulations</b>	
	6.6.1 VI permits players to wear skin-tight undershirts beneath their jerseys and/or leggings under shorts. However, these must be the same colour as the predominant colour of the player's jersey or shorts respectively. Notwithstanding the above restrictions, players may wear compression pads at the discretion of the Match Referee.	
	6.6.2 Premier Division players <u>must</u> wear shorts matching in style and colour, those worn by their teammates.  Any non-compliance must be noted by the Referee on the scoresheet, and the team(s) concerned shall be subject to a fine by the NLMC.	Schedule of Fees
	6.6.3 Clause 6.6.2 shall also apply in the Semi-Finals and Final of the Association Cup, irrespective of the teams playing in these matches.	
	6.6.4 Teams in Division 1 and below are permitted to wear irregular shorts (defined as shorts not matching in style and/or colour those worn by teammates) without penalty, unless they are playing in the Semi-Finals and Final of the Association Cup, where clause 6.6.2 applies.	
	6.6.5 No player shall be permitted to play without a jersey numbered both front and back. The font and colour of the numbers must be uniform across the whole Team (except the Libero, who may have a different coloured jersey). Jerseys can be numbered from 1- 99 inclusive. Shorts need not be numbered, but must conform with rules 6.6.2 to 6.6.4 above, as appropriate.	Clause 6.6.2, 6.6.3, 6.6.4
	6.6.6 All Support Staff involved in a match must be wearing branded clothing of their participating team or neutral, unbranded clothing. For the avoidance of doubt, this means that Volleyball Ireland clothing, or clothing of another team, is not permitted.	
<b>6.7</b>	<b>Referees &amp; Refereeing</b>	
	6.7.1 All Clubs must have at least one qualified, active, registered Referee per Team defined as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Qualified</i> – the referee has attended the minimum of a VI Level 2 referees' course and, within the last three seasons, attended a VI referee refresher course.</li> <li>• <i>Active</i> – the referee has officiated in more than three National League matches at their level (as either First or Second Referee) during the immediately preceding 12 months.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Registered</i> – the referee is in possession of a current VI referees’ number, which is issued to those who have a current referee’s licence for the season in progress.</li> <li>• Agreed to abide by the Sport Ireland Code of Conduct (as a condition of securing their playing license).</li> </ul> <p>Failure to officiate in more than three matches in a season may result in a regrading or reassessment, although VI will consider such matters on a case-by-case basis.</p>													
	<p>6.7.2 Any Team with a non-playing, non-coaching active Referee registered with the Club may apply to VI for exemption from Rule 6.7.1 above. In this instance, such a Referee can be considered as adequate cover for two Teams.</p> <p>However, this exemption would only apply if the Referee has officiated in more than 10 matches at their level (as either First or Second Referee) during the immediately preceding 12 months, has attended a VI referee refresher course within the last 3 seasons, and meeting the “Registered” requirements in 6.7.1 above.</p> <p>Applications for exemptions under this clause must be submitted in writing to VI, and each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If this exemption is granted, the expectation is that this referee will officiate in at least 10 matches in the coming 12-month period. Failure to do so without good reason may result in future exemptions being withheld.</p>													
	<p>6.7.3 Where not centrally appointed by VI’s Referees’ Management Committee (RMC) it is the responsibility of the Home Club to appoint appropriately qualified registered Referees. Home Teams must notify VI by email on <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a> of their Referee appointments three working days before the Match. Failure to appoint suitable referees may result in the Home Club being subject to a fine.</p> <p>The RMC shall note the appointments made but may liaise with clubs in relation to switching appointments with other matches in situations where promotion and/or relegation implications are directly in play, where a Team(s) may achieve certain objectives with particular results, for disciplinary reasons or any other situations where referees not affiliated to the competing Teams may be more beneficial to the running of the match.</p>	<p>Clause 6.7.4</p> <p>Schedule of fees</p>												
	<p>6.7.4 Appropriately qualified referees should be appointed to matches as follows, according to their level:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th><th>First Referee</th><th>Second Referee</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>Premier Division</b></td><td>Level 4 or above</td><td>Level 3 or above</td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Division 1</b></td><td>Level 3 or above</td><td>Level 2 or above</td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Division 2</b></td><td>Level 2 or above</td><td>Level 2 or above</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Please note that a National Level Referee has the authority to permit a Referee that is one level lower than the required match level (as indicated above) to officiate under their supervision. The National Level Referee must arrange with the Home Team for this arrangement to be made, in accordance with 6.7.3 above. This initiative is intended to place more value on the status of National Level Referees and to encourage the opportunity to develop, mentor and coach Referees under their guidance in a competitive match environment.</p>		First Referee	Second Referee	<b>Premier Division</b>	Level 4 or above	Level 3 or above	<b>Division 1</b>	Level 3 or above	Level 2 or above	<b>Division 2</b>	Level 2 or above	Level 2 or above	<p>Clause 6.7.3</p>
	First Referee	Second Referee												
<b>Premier Division</b>	Level 4 or above	Level 3 or above												
<b>Division 1</b>	Level 3 or above	Level 2 or above												
<b>Division 2</b>	Level 2 or above	Level 2 or above												

	<p>6.7.5 If the Home Club is unable to find a suitable level of Referee for a match and has exhausted all options, they must notify the RMC <b>a minimum of three working days prior to the fixture</b> with details of all those who have been contacted and when, and a proposed lower-level Referee who is available and willing to officiate. If the RMC is unable to assist with finding a Referee of a suitable level it may permit an exemption to be granted in allowing this lower-level Referee to officiate, as a one-off. Both Teams will be advised of this decision.</p> <p>Clubs are advised that any dispensation being granted on this basis by the RMC should be considered as a one-off, and not considered as grounds for setting a precedent, and that postponing a match based on not being able to find suitable Referees is not a valid reason.</p> <p>The RMC can be contacted on <a href="mailto:referees@volleyballireland.com">referees@volleyballireland.com</a></p>	
	<p>6.7.6 Where a Referee issues a card, records an objection on the E-Scoring software or a Match is Forfeit, he/she must note the circumstances in the comments section of the scoresheet at the conclusion of the match, and notify VI in writing on <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a> within three working days of the match. This correspondence should give details and relevant circumstances of the incident(s).</p> <p>In the event of a card(s) being issued, the details <u>must</u> be accurately and legibly recorded on the E-Scoring software, including details of whether the card should apply to a player or Team. Failure to do so may result in such cards not being logged against the offending player(s) or team. This should be included as part of the First Referee's post-match checks, before validating the scoresheet.</p>	
	<p>6.7.7 All Referees officiating in National League matches must be over 16 years of age on the date of the match.</p>	

<b>7 COMPETITION WINNERS</b>		Also refer:
7.1	Trophies and/or medals shall be presented to the winners of each National League Division, Championship and Cup Competition (incorporating shield competitions).	
7.2	Premier Division winning Teams may be nominated by VI to participate in an International Tournament or Competition. Entry to such tournament or competition shall be a matter for discussion and agreement between VI and the respective Clubs/Teams. If a winning Team cannot participate, such invitation may be reallocated at the discretion of VI.	
7.3	<p>Perpetual trophies must be engraved at the winning Club's expense. Trophies must be returned to VI cleaned, engraved and in the condition in which they were presented at the request of VI in a timely manner. Clubs should make best efforts to ensure trophies are cleaned and engraved by the end of March, in preparation for the end of the season.</p> <p>Should such a trophy become damaged or lost whilst in the Club's possession, the Club shall be required to meet the full cost of repairs and/or replacement.</p>	Schedule of fees

7.4	<p>All-Star Awards are presented to the best players from each position in both the Men's and Women's Premier Division. The format of voting is at the discretion of the NLMC but is subject to players having played a minimum number of National League matches during the season.</p> <p>In the event of an All-Stars match being scheduled, the All-Star winners will be expected to make themselves available for selection.</p>	
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<b>8 PROMOTION, RELEGATION &amp; END OF SEASON ARRANGEMENTS</b>		Also refer:
8.1	At the end of the National League season, placings will be determined as per clause 2.2 above.	Clause 2.2
8.2	<p>At the end of each National League season, where appropriate, a process of promotion and relegation shall operate.</p> <p><b>Promotion</b> – The top Team in a division at the end of the National League competition shall be promoted one division for the following season.</p> <p><b>Relegation</b> – The Team finishing last in a division at the end of the National League competition shall be relegated one division for the following season.</p> <p><b>Play-off</b> – The team finishing second last in the higher division shall play off against the team finishing second in the division below, with the winner of that match obtaining a place in the higher division for the following season.</p> <p><b>Please note that the D1/D2 Promotion/Relegation Play-offs will be played over the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> May 2026 – the weekend after the Grand Finals.</b></p>	
	<p><b>8.2.1 Premier Division Play-Offs – 2025/26 Season</b></p> <p>At the end of the league stage in the Premier Division, the top four teams will advance to the play-offs. The team finishing first will play the team finishing fourth, and the team finishing second will play the team finishing third in semi-finals, with the winners advancing to the Final. The team winning the final will be Premier Division Champions for 2025-26. Note the provisions of Appendix 2 below, in that matches against Ireland U20 teams shall count towards the final league standings, and that Ireland teams cannot participate in the Play-Offs.</p> <p>The Semi-Finals will be played over the weekend of 25<sup>th</sup> &amp; 26<sup>th</sup> April, and VI will advise of the venues for those matches in due course. The Final will be played over the weekend of 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> May.</p> <p>Players can only play in the Premier Division Play-Offs if they have played four matches for their team during the league stage of the competition. Any player who has played fewer than four games may seek an exemption from the NLMC but must be able to provide medical evidence of their incapacity to play the number of matches by which they fell short of the four-match threshold.</p>	Appendix 2



	Any player who has played up in a team qualifying for the Premier Division Play-Offs is only eligible to play if they have played up for that team for four or more matches.	
	<p><b>8.2.2 Division 2 End of Season – 2025/26 Season</b></p> <p>The top eight teams will progress to knockout Quarterfinals, made up of the top three teams from the two 8-team groups along with the top two teams from the 7-team group.</p> <p>Over the play-off weekend, two quarter-finals will be scheduled for the same venue, followed by the Semi-Final on the same day at the same venue. In other words, the schedule for the day will be QF, QF, SF.</p> <p>The group winners will be ranked 1-3, the runners-up ranked 4-6 and the third-placed teams ranked 7 and 8. The Quarterfinals will be played as 1 vs 8, 2 vs 7, 3 vs 6 and 4 vs 5, with the Semi-Finals being played as 1/8 vs 4/5 and 2/7 vs 3/6.</p> <p>To overcome the issue of teams playing 12 or 14 matches, team records from the 7-team groups will be multiplied up by a factor of 14/12 to compare with records from the 8-team groups.</p> <p>The Division 2 Finals will be played over the Grand Final weekend, and as noted in clause 8.2, the Division 1/Division 2 Promotion/Relegation matches will be played over the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> May.</p> <p><b>31/8 Update - The NLMC will update clubs in relation to the D2W Play-offs asap.</b></p>	Clause 8.2
8.3	In extraordinary circumstances, VI reserves the right to cancel any post-season arrangements. This may include for disciplinary reasons, because of delays to the completion of the league season and any other such matter.	

<b>9 ASSOCIATION CUP</b>		Also refer:
9.1	Clubs wishing to enter Teams for the Association Cup must complete the approved application for, and pay the required fee by the closing date, as advised by VI.	Clause 1.3 Schedule of fees
9.2	Association Cup Matches will be played in accordance with sections 1 to 7 of these Competition Rules, unless otherwise stated.	Sections 1 to 7
9.3	Clubs will be required to submit a Team list for each Team they enter, on the appropriate entry form, sent to VI on <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a> no later than five working days prior to its first Match in the competition.	
9.4	Any player to be added to a Team list must be notified in writing to VI at least 3 working days before the next round of Matches. If the player is not already registered to play for the Club, all relevant forms and documents must be completed and uploaded to JustGo (if applicable) before the player is eligible to participate in the Tournament. Responsibility rests with Clubs to ensure that Team lists held by VI are up to date.	



9.5	A Team may comprise any players registered with that Club, provided that those players are in possession of a valid VI player registration number and have been allocated to a Team (on JustGo).	Clause 3.2
9.6	<p>Referee Appointments for Cup &amp; Shield Competitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For Cup matches – The first referee in all Cup matches must be a Level 4 or higher, and the second referee must be a Level 3 or higher.</li> <li>For Shield matches – The first referee in all Shield matches must be a Level 3 or higher, and the second referee must be a Level 2 or higher.</li> </ul> <p>The home team is responsible for appointing referees to all matches prior to the Semi-Final stage, and the referee fees should be shared 50:50 between the two teams. However, any additional costs (e.g. travel) agreed for referees to stand in those matches remain the responsibility of the home team.</p>	
9.7	<p>Prior to the Semi-Final stage of either the Cup or Shield competitions, teams may elect to play matches <u>prior</u> to the stated weekend of the match in the fixture calendar.</p> <p>Any such date must be agreed by <u>both</u> competing teams, and confirmation from the away team must be submitted to NLMC along with the fixture change request form.</p>	
9.8	If a team forfeits from the Association Cup, for any reason, any place that the forfeiting team would otherwise have been entitled to in the Association Shield (as loser of the match) shall also be forfeited. That place in the Association Shield shall become a “bye”, and no other team shall be offered that place.	

<b>10 JUNIOR &amp; INTERMEDIATE CHAMPIONSHIPS</b>		Also refer:
10.1	Clubs wishing to enter Teams for the Junior and/or Intermediate Championships must complete the approved application, and pay the required fee by the closing date, as advised by VI.	Clause 1.3 Schedule of fees
10.2	Matches in these competitions will be played in accordance with sections 1 to 7 of these Competition Rules, unless otherwise stated.	
10.3	Clubs will be required to submit a Team list for each Team they enter, on the appropriate entry form, sent to VI on <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a> no later than five working days prior to its first Match in the competition.	
10.4	Any player to be added to a Team list must be notified in writing to VI at least 3 working days before the competition begins. If the player is not already registered to play for the Club, all relevant forms and documents must be completed and uploaded to JustGo (if applicable) before the player is eligible to participate in the competition. Responsibility rests with Clubs to ensure that Team lists held by VI are up to date.	
10.5	Players may only play with the Club with which they are registered. If a player wishes to play for a different Club/Team in the Championships, the player must complete the	

	<p>necessary Player Transfer protocols and receive approval in writing from VI before the Championships commence.</p> <p>If approval is received, the player will henceforth be ineligible to play in any future National League or Association Cup Fixture with their former Club.</p>	
10.6	<p>The following restrictions apply in relation to player eligibility for the Championships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junior Championships – No Premier League or Division 1 players are eligible to play.</li> <li>• Intermediate Championships – No Premier League players are eligible to play.</li> </ul> <p>Any player(s) who have “played up” in the NL but not yet reached the 10-set threshold to move up shall still be eligible to play as a player for their original team.</p>	

<b>11 SANCTIONS, FINES &amp; PENALTIES</b>		
11.1	VI must, as soon as reasonably, practicable, investigate every alleged breach of the Rules of which it has knowledge. Following such investigation, it shall take appropriate action.	
11.2	VI is empowered, where there is an alleged breach of these Rules, to consider the matter and impose as appropriate the sanctions set out in this section of the Rules, and the penalties and fines set out therein. All fines may be increased in the event of failure to pay by the specified dates, or where there are repeat/aggravating offences.	Schedule of fees
11.3	VI shall exclude from a Season’s competitions any Team failing to pay outstanding fines or penalties. All fines must be paid before the end of the Season in which they are imposed. No Club shall be permitted to register for any competitions for the following Season if any fines remain to be paid.	Clause 1.5
11.4	Penalties will take immediate effect and fines are payable within seven days of the date of the decision. In the event of an appeal, any reversal or amendment to the decision taken or fine imposed shall result in the appropriate refund being made to the Club concerned.	
11.5	Sanctions relating to disciplinary action against Teams, coaches, players and/or medical personnel are covered in Appendix 1 of these Rules. Clubs must be familiar with these sanctions and the implications thereof.	Appendix 1

<b>12 PROTEST PROCEDURE</b>		
	<p>In relation to Protests, Clubs are advised of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Protests <u>must</u> be submitted on the appropriate VI Protest Form, which is available on the VI website, along with payment of the relevant Protest Deposit Fee,</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Protests should be submitted to <a href="mailto:info@volleyballireland.com">info@volleyballireland.com</a> in the first instance, including any relevant documentation or information, and these will be directed to relevant commission for further action,</li> <li>If the relevant commission determines that, in its opinion, a Protest falls beyond their remit to consider, it reserves the right to escalate the matter to the VI Board.</li> </ul>	
<b>12.1</b>	<b>Protests relating to the Competition Rules, or their interpretation</b>	Also Refer:
	<p>12.1.1 If a Club/Team wishes to lodge a Protest relating to the Competition Rules, their interpretation, a refereeing matter or any other matter, in addition to the guidelines above, the following will apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Team must lodge its Protest to VI through the Club Secretary or Club President, and this must be indicated on the Protest,</li> <li>Upon receipt of the Protest, VI will confirm receipt and forward the details to the Protests, Appeals, Disciplinary and Complaints Commission (PADACC) who, in turn, will notify all relevant parties, including the opposing Club,</li> <li>The Protest must be received by VI no later than 5 working days after the incident, as must the Protest Deposit Fee*</li> <li>The Protest must include relevant evidence to validate their submission, and this evidence must be easily located within the submission. If video footage forms a part of the submission, the data file must be properly labelled and the timestamp for the relevant footage/incident must be clearly stated in the protest,</li> <li>Note that it is not the role of PADACC to re-referee matches, and competition-related protests should be based on rule interpretations, and not genuine refereeing errors.</li> </ul> <p>Note * The only exception to this rule is that any protests arising from matches on match weekend 14 or the play-off weekend must be lodged, in accordance with the PADACC protocol, by 5pm on the Monday immediately following the relevant match. In other words, for match weekend 14 matches, the deadline is 5pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April and for the play-off weekend, the deadline is 5pm on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April.</p>	Schedule of fees
	12.1.2 The PADACC shall acknowledge receipt of the Protest, in writing, within 5 working days. In turn it shall provide all parties concerned with details of the protest and afford all parties a reasonable opportunity to make representations and present their case.	
	12.1.3 The PADACC shall appoint a Hearings Committee, which will convene to decide on the matter within 10 working days of the acknowledgement (ref. 12.1.2) of the Protest. This Hearings Committee shall constitute at least three members, one of whom shall be nominated by the Protest Committee to be its chairperson.	Clause 12.1.2
	12.1.4 No members of the Hearings Committee shall have had prior personal involvement with the case or ongoing involvement with the Clubs involved and must declare same if required to take part in the Hearing Committee process. If there are insufficient Commission members available owing to conflicts of interest, then suitable alternates may be co-opted to Hearings Committee by the Committee's chairperson, subject to approval by the PADACC. All Committee members must be familiar with the relevant Rules that they are adjudicating on.	
	12.1.5 The decision of the Hearings Committee shall be by a simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the chairperson shall have a casting vote.	

	The minutes of the Hearings Committee meeting and decision shall be sent by the chairperson to the PADACC, and to VI for the official record.	
	12.1.6 All parties will be informed by VI, in writing, of the decision of the Hearings Committee, within 5 working days of the decision. This communication will be copied to VI for the official record.	
	12.1.7 The Protest Deposit fee shall be returned if the protest is successful and forfeited otherwise.	
	12.1.8 Any sanction or penalty imposed (or revised or reversed) by the Hearings Committee shall not, ordinarily, take effect until the period permitted for an appeal has elapsed, or the appeal has been determined.	
	12.1.9 A decision made by the Hearings Committee can be appealed, in accordance with the procedures outlined in 12.3.	
<b>12.2</b>	<b>Transfer Dispute Resolution</b>	
	12.2.1 If a player wishes to lodge a protest relating to the blocking of a transfer by their former Club, the player may deal directly with VI – noting that at this stage the player effectively has no Club.	
	12.2.2 Details of the dispute must be lodged in writing to VI (with accompanying Protest Deposit Fee), before the case can be considered.	Schedule of fees
	12.2.3 The PADACC shall acknowledge receipt of the case, in writing, as soon as is practicably possible, and shall provide all parties concerned with details of the case and afford all parties a reasonable opportunity to make representations and to present their case. For example, the former Club may provide evidence that the player owes monies to the Club or the player asked to provide evidence that they have paid all monies owed.	
	12.2.4 The PADACC shall appoint a Hearings Committee, which will convene to decide on the matter within 10 working days of the acknowledgement (ref. 12.2.3) of the Protest. This Hearings Committee shall constitute at least three members, one of whom shall be nominated by the Protest Committee to be its chairperson.	
	12.2.5 No members of the Hearings Committee shall have had prior personal involvement with the case or ongoing involvement with the Clubs involved and must declare same if required to take part in the Hearing Committee process. If there are insufficient Commission members available owing to conflicts of interest, then suitable alternates may be co-opted to Hearings Committee by the Committee's chairperson, subject to approval by the PADACC. All Committee members must be familiar with the relevant Rules that they are adjudicating on.	
	12.2.6 The decision of the Hearings Committee shall be by a simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the chairperson shall have a casting vote. The minutes of the Hearings Committee meeting and decision shall be sent by the chairperson to the PADACC, and to VI for the official record.	

	12.2.7 All parties will be informed by VI, in writing, of the decision of the Hearings Committee, within 5 working days of the decision. This communication will be copied to VI for the official record.	
	12.2.8 The Protest Deposit fee shall be returned if the protest is successful and forfeited otherwise.	
	12.2.9 A decision made by the PADACC in such matters can be appealed once, in accordance with the procedures outlined in 12.3.	
<b>12.3</b>	<b>Appealing a decision of a Protest Committee or the PADACC in relation to a player transfer</b>	
	<p>12.3.1 If a Club or Team wishes to appeal a decision made by a Hearings Committee in accordance with clauses 12.1 or 12.2 above, the following procedures shall apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Club/Team must submit the appeal through its Club Secretary or Club President.</li> <li>• The appeal must be submitted in writing on the Report Form, available on the VI website, to the PADACC, through VI. The appeal must state the grounds for appeal, and contain all the relevant evidence and correspondence relating to the original protest/dispute,</li> <li>• The appeal must be received no later than five working days after notification of the decision of the Hearings Committee to the Club Secretary or Club President,</li> <li>• The appeal must be accompanied by payment of the Appeal Deposit Fee,</li> <li>• The PADACC shall acknowledge receipt of the appeal, in writing, within five working days and shall provide all concerned details of the protest in question, affording all parties a reasonable opportunity to make representations and to present their case.</li> </ul>	Schedule of fees
	12.3.2 The PADACC shall appoint members of the Appeals Committee upon receipt of an appeal. This committee shall constitute at least three members, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairperson. No person who was part of the original Hearings Committee who made the decision being appealed may be part of the Appeals Committee. All Committee members must be familiar with the relevant rules upon which they will be adjudicating.	Clauses 12.1 & 12.2
	<p>12.3.3 The Appeals Committee shall be appointed within 10 working days of the date of the acknowledgement of the appeal and finalise their decision within a further 10 working days, in accordance with the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the appeal/hearing will be conducted – e.g. in person, via teleconferencing, etc – in any event, all hearings shall take place in private.</li> <li>• It shall be entitled to request such further information or clarity as it considers necessary,</li> <li>• It shall be entitled, at its discretion, to rehear the whole or any part of evidence given before the original Hearings Committee.</li> </ul>	
	12.3.4 No members of the Appeals Committee shall have had prior personal involvement with the case, or the Clubs involved and must declare same before taking part in this process. If there are insufficient Committee members available owing to conflicts of interest, then suitable alternates may be co-opted to the Appeals Committee by the Committee's chairperson, subject to approval by the PADACC.	

	12.3.5 The Chairperson of the Appeals Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members to assist in adjudicating on any case where relevant specialist skills and/or experience might be required, subject to the approval of the PADACC.	
	12.3.6 The non-attendance of a party at a hearing of which they have been notified shall not prevent the matter from being dealt with in their absence.	
	12.3.7 The Appeals Committee shall have the power to: 1 – Allow, reaffirm or dismiss the appeal, or 2 – Vary the original decision of the original Hearings Committee as it sees fit, including to reduce, uphold, increase or cancel any penalty or fine.	
	12.3.8 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be by simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson of the Appeals Committee shall have a casting vote. The decision and the minutes of the Appeals Committee meeting(s) will be sent by the Chairperson to the PADACC and stored on file by VI.	
	12.3.9 All parties to the appeal will be informed, in writing, within 5 working days of the decision of the Appeals Committee, copy of which will be held on file by VI.	
	12.3.10 The Appeal Deposit fee shall be returned if the appeal is successful and forfeited otherwise.	
	12.3.11 A decision made by the Appeals Committee may be appealed through <i>Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland</i> , and details of that process may be found on <a href="http://www.sportdisputesolutions.ie">www.sportdisputesolutions.ie</a>	

### 13 MEDICAL PERSONNEL

13.1	Medical personnel, including doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and physical therapists who are professionally qualified and licenced to practice within the jurisdiction of Ireland shall be permitted to enter the playing area during Matches, providing they have written approval from VI to do so. Applications for approval should be submitted to VI, along with a copy of the relevant qualification credentials. All such personnel shall be registered with and/or represent a Club.
13.2	The Referee is entitled to request that Medical Personnel produce their documentation prior to consent being given to enter the player area and/or be a part of the permitted bench personnel for a match.
13.3	A maximum of two Medical Personnel (a doctor and a therapist) is permitted per Team at a Match and authorised to be a part of the permitted bench personnel.

#### 14 ANTI-DOPING REGULATIONS

14.1	VI condemns the use of prohibited substances and prohibited doping methods in volleyball and has adopted Sport Ireland's Anti-Doping Rules. Those Rules apply in conjunction with these competition rules, and by registering on JustGo as a volleyball player, all players agree to be bound by Sport Ireland's Anti-Doping Rules.
14.2	Any breach of Sport Ireland's Anti-Doping Rules shall be administered in accordance with the provisions set out in those Rules.
14.3	<p>The Sport Ireland Anti-Doping Rules can be found on the following link:  <a href="#">Anti-Doping Rules   Sport Ireland</a></p> <p>Volleyball Ireland recommends that these be read and understood by all those involved in the game of volleyball in Ireland.</p>

#### 15 CODE OF CONDUCT

15.1	<p>Sport Ireland Code of Conduct</p> <p>All players, coaches and referees, as a condition of being eligible to take part in Volleyball Ireland competitions, have agreed to abide by the terms laid out in Sport Ireland's Code of Conduct (released August 2023) and, in matters of discipline, Volleyball Ireland shall be guided by that document.</p> <p>In order to ensure compliance in this area, the above users will need to click to confirm acceptance of same when taking out or renewing their Player, Coach and/or Referee License.</p> <p>The Sport Ireland Code of Conduct document can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>
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## APPENDIX 1 – PLAYER, TEAM, COACH AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL DISCIPLINARY ACTION

### 1 Sanction Scale

1.1 The following disciplinary points will be accrued against a Team, Player, Coach or Medical Personnel, according to the penalties imposed by a Referee at any VI competition, as listed on Page 5 of these Rules.

SANCTION	DISCIPLINARY POINTS
Yellow Card	2½ Points
Red Card	10 Points
Yellow and Red Card Jointly (Expulsion)	15 Points
Yellow and Red Card Separately (Disqualification)	20 Points

### 2 Penalties

2.1 The following sanctions will apply when cumulative disciplinary points reach certain thresholds:

#### *Players, Coaches & Medical Personnel*

CUMULATIVE POINTS	SANCTION
Upon reaching 15 points (not through disqualification), and subsequent multiples thereof.	1 Match Suspension
Upon reaching 15 points (due to disqualification), and subsequent multiples thereof, if due to disqualification.	2 Match Suspension

Details of how suspensions are dealt with are covered in Section 3 below.

If Player, Coach or Medical Personnel passes 40 cumulative penalty points in a season, VI may require the individual and their Club Secretary to attend a disciplinary meeting, with representatives of VI.

#### *Teams*

CUMULATIVE POINTS	SANCTION
For reaching 20 cumulative points, and for each multiple thereof	Fine (as outlined in the Schedule of Fees)
For reaching 50 cumulative points	A deduction of one league point
For reaching 100 cumulative points	A deduction of two league points (in addition to the fine triggered for reaching 100 points)



	<p>If a Team passes 100 cumulative penalty points in a season, VI will review the matter and may apply additional penalties on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Match Suspensions</b></p>
	<p>3.1 Suspensions apply to the next match(es) in all VI competitions. It is the responsibility of each Team to monitor disciplinary points accumulated by each player and Team.</p> <p>In the event of a suspended Player taking part in a match, that match will be forfeited by the player's Team, with the forfeit dealt with as laid out in the definitions above. Please note that ignorance of these Rules in relation to disciplinary matters is not a sufficient defence to play a player who has passed a suspension threshold and has not served the relevant suspension.</p> <p>Teams are encouraged to seek clarification, if necessary, on the disciplinary status of any players within their Club, and such queries should be sent to VI in the first instance no later than 3 working days prior to a match if a player's suspension is in question.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt, if a player earns a suspension for conduct in a National League match, they are suspended for a Cup match if that is the next scheduled match for that player's team.</p>
	<p>3.2 Suspensions will be confirmed to the Club Secretary and the Player by VI in due course.</p>
	<p>3.3 Disciplinary points are not carried forward from one Indoor Season to the next. However, if a Player, Coach or Medical Personnel has any unserved match suspension at the end of a season, then such suspension shall be carried forward to the following Indoor Season.</p> <p>In this scenario, the Club <b>must</b> inform VI in advance of the match(es) in which the suspension will be served. Failure to do so will result in the Player/Team/Medical Personnel being suspended from the point at which the Club alerts VI to this fact.</p> <p>Please also note that a match in which the individual is not available for selection through injury, being outside the country or similar reason, <u>does not</u> count as a match served.</p>
	<p>3.4 In addition to Clause 3.3, if a player should move clubs from one Season to the next, any unserved match suspension shall move with the player. This should be highlighted on the Player Transfer form, which will be checked by VI prior to approving that Transfer.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Misconduct</b></p>
	<p>4.1 A Player, Coach, Medical Person or supporter whose actions prior to, during or after a Match are considered to bring the game into disrepute should be referred to VI in the first instance, who may escalate the matter to the PADACC.</p>

## APPENDIX 2 – IRELAND TEAMS PLAYING IN NATIONAL LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

As agreed at the 2025 Competitions Workshop, Ireland's national teams will take part in the National League in 2025/26, and will play in the following divisions, on a trial basis for one season.

Ireland U20 Men's & Women's teams will play in their respective Premier Divisions.

Ireland U18 Men's & Women's teams will play in their respective Division 1s.

The contact for all logistics relating to these teams is Gabriel Akinwande – [gabriel@volleyballireland.com](mailto:gabriel@volleyballireland.com)

The following will apply in all matches involving the Ireland teams.

1	<p><b>Number of Matches</b></p> <p>Ireland teams will play one match against each team in their respective Division. These matches will be scheduled on squad weekends. Matches may be played on National League weekends if both competing teams agree, and such changes must be notified to the NLMC at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Rule 5.1 applies in all situations.</p>	
2	<p><b>Eligibility of Players</b></p> <p>Ireland players will remain eligible to play for their own Club in such matches. If the club chooses not to select their player for such a match, then the player is permitted to play for the Ireland team in that match.</p> <p>Players playing for the Ireland U20 teams must be born in 2007 or later, with a maximum of two players born in 2006 permitted.</p> <p>Players playing for the Ireland U18 teams must be born in 2009 or later, with a maximum of two players born in 2008 permitted.</p>	
3	<p><b>Results of Matches</b></p> <p>Match points gained by Club teams in these matches will count towards their league position, as will sets and points gained and conceded.</p> <p>Ireland teams cannot win their respective divisions, nor are their eligible to play in play-off or promotion or relegation matches or be relegated.</p>	
4	<p><b>Hosting of Matches</b></p> <p>Clubs will be given the opportunity of choosing to be the home or away team in matches.</p> <p>If they choose to be the home team, they will be liable for all venue hire costs and be responsible for appointing the scorekeepers. If they choose to be the away team, the Ireland team will assume these responsibilities.</p>	

	In addition, if the club agrees to be the home team, they are also required to provide a 2-hour training window for the Ireland team at their venue in advance of the match, the cost of which will be met by the Ireland team.	
5	<p>Appointment of Referees</p> <p>All referee appointments will be made by the Ireland team, as will the cost of meeting same, irrespective of the venue of the match.</p>	
6	<p>Player Discipline</p> <p>A player who accrues disciplinary points playing for an Ireland team in these competitions will have those points count towards their cumulative disciplinary points total. In addition, and in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 1, if a player reaches a disciplinary points threshold that requires a suspension to be served, a match for or against an Ireland team shall count as a Volleyball Ireland match for which the suspension may be applied.</p> <p>Similarly, if a player reaches a disciplinary points threshold that requires a suspension to be served whilst playing for an Ireland team, and their next match chronologically is for their club, the suspension must be applied for that club match.</p>	
7	<p>Competition Rules</p> <p>In all other aspects, the Competition Rules shall apply.</p>	

### APPENDIX 3 – DETAILS OF AMENDMENTS & UPDATES TO THESE RULES

#### CHANGES FROM 2024-25 COMPETITION RULES

2.2 – A note has been added to confirm that matches in Premier and Division 1 that involve the Ireland teams will count towards league positions.

3.10.4 – Clarification has been added that a player who has already played in the National League during the season cannot transfer to another team to play in the National League in the same season.

3.11.3 – Clarification added that a youth player (with a youth player number) who is playing up in an adult team needs to be added to that adult team by the Tuesday 5pm registration cutoff. If that doesn't happen, there may be issues on a matchday with the player not appearing on the e-scoring team list.

5.3 – 5.5 – As agreed at the Competitions Workshop, a new method of resolving fixture change disputes. Clubs are encouraged to read these sections carefully to understand how this will now work. Of particular note is the comment in 5.5 that asks Clubs to work collaboratively to ensure matches are played.

5.7 – Amendment to the rule regarding rescheduling matches for international callups. Only the team that the player has been allocated to by their club (and as indicated by their player number) can seek a reschedule. Players who can play up in different teams do not impact on the number of matches that can be rescheduled.

6.2 – Each match must be allocated a 2 ½ hour window in which the match is to be played. Clubs cannot now book a block of, say, 7 ½ hours for three matches and decide when matches will start within that longer block.

6.5.4 – A note has been added to remind clubs to ensure that a match has been validated and uploaded before closing down the laptop. We cannot access the match data until the upload is complete.

8.2 – Please note that the D1/D2 promotion/relegation play-offs will take place the weekend after the Grand Finals in May 2026. VI will make the arrangements and will liaise with clubs accordingly.

8.2.1 & 8.2.2 – Confirming end of season play-off arrangements for Premier and Division 2 competitions.

9.8 – A new clause, confirming that any team forfeiting in the Association Cup also forfeits their place in the Association Shield (if applicable).

12.1.1 – Clarification on the timelines for submitting protests to PADACC – for matches on weekend 14 or the play-off weekend, the timelines have been shortened to allow for consideration of the protest(s) in advance of the next round of matches.

Appendix 2 – covers off the inclusion of Ireland teams in the Premier and Division 1 competitions. Teams in these competitions are encouraged to read this appendix so as to understand the ramifications of these matches.