



2025-2026 RULE MODIFICATIONS FOR CEVA TOURNAMENTS

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2025

This document outlines some key differences in regulations for sanctioned play in the Columbia Empire Region. This list is not exhaustive. Please see the Junior Handbooks for a more thorough overview (specific sections of that document are referenced).

12s DIVISION STEP-IN RULE

- For the 12-and-under age level, players are allowed take one step into court to serve, starting behind the end line.
- If a player is utilizing a jump serve of any kind (e.g., jump float or jump topspin), the player must serve behind the end line.
- In Power League Qualifier, this rule applies to all teams in all divisions. All players, regardless of team or division, may step in (except players utilizing a jump serve of any kind).
- After the Power League Qualifier, this rule will not apply to Flight 1 or Flight 2. Players in these two divisions must serve from behind the end line.
- At the CEVA Regional Championships, this rule will not apply to the top 16 teams.

MATCH PROTOCOL

- There will be no switching sides in a match, either between sets or in the middle of a deciding set, unless the official on site, in their sole discretion, determines there to be an unfair advantage between the two sides of the court. If an advantage is determined to be present, teams will switch sides at the conclusion of each regular set, and after a team reaches 8 points in a 15-point deciding set (or 13 points in a 25-point deciding set).
- If a match is being played as “3 sets guaranteed,” the 3rd set is not considered a deciding set, regardless of the outcome of the first 2 sets. The pre-match coin flip winner has choice of serve or side.

QUALIFIED REFEREE & SCORERS

- Teams are expected to be proficient in their officiating duties. This means work crews should be able to efficiently score and facilitate a match without unnecessary delays. Work crews must be attentive to their duties. It is recommended that each roster have at least two individuals that are certified for each work crew position (e.g., scorer, assistant scorer, R1, R2, line judge).
- Junior players may officiate in the R1 position in the CEVA region, upon completion of referee training through the region and with approval from the CEVA office.
- For all CEVA sanctioned tournaments at the 12s level, teams are required to provide either a score-certified, rostered adult or a score-certified junior player at least 15 years of age to help the table crew. This is in addition to providing the required R1. This individual can be a coach or older player from another team and must be able to provide proof of membership and completion of eligibility requirements.
- Teams who exhibit low proficiency as a work team at a CEVA-sanctioned event may be reported to the office by their head officials. This serves as the team’s only warning and they may be required to engage in additional training to increase proficiency. Teams who continue to exhibit low proficiency after being reported may be subject to a \$100 fine per incident in addition to further training requirements.

AGE WAIVERS

- CEVA can grant age waivers for players who need to play in a younger age group for developmental purposes, or who, because of their geographical location, have limited opportunities to participate.
- Age Waivers are only valid at CEVA-sanctioned events.
- Age waived players may not participate in the CEVA Bid Tournament, a National Qualifier, Open Power League, or USAV GJNC.
- The region may, in rare circumstances, restrict how an age waived player may participate with their team (e.g., the player is restricted to playing only back row).

FAILURE TO COMPLETE OFFICIATING ASSIGNMENT

- Teams failing to fulfill their officiating assignments will be charged \$50 per match.
- A rostered coach or adult team representative must be courtside or serve as the R2 for each match their team is the work team at a CEVA-sanctioned tournament.
- Teams who are late to their scheduled officiating assignments may be penalized one point per minute, beginning at the start of the receiving team's warmup period in the subsequent match. Penalties are applied to a team's next played match, up to a maximum of 25 points.

CUTOFF TIMES

- At Power Leagues and Power League Qualifiers, matches that have not started default to 1-to-25 one hour after the scheduled start time of the last match in the bracket. For the purposes of this policy, a match starts at the time of the first serve.
- An individual match may be played as a 1-to-25 prior to a cutoff time if both coaches agree. If an agreement is not reached, the match defaults to the standard format.

TIEBREAKER POLICIES

- As of the 2020-2021 season, tiebreaking matches in Power League and Regionals have been eliminated. Tiebreaking matches may still be played in the CEVA Bid Tournament. The full policy is outlined in Appendix D of the Junior Girls' Handbook.