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## TRYOUT GUIDE

### FOR ATHLETES, COACHES, AND FAMILIES

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**COLUMBIA EMPIRE VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION**  
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## **WHAT ARE TRYOUTS?**

Tryouts are specific activities that clubs use to evaluate the level of play for athletes prior to offering them an opportunity to join a team. Most clubs hold tryouts prior to forming their teams, but several clubs hold additional tryouts after teams are formed to fill remaining spots on their rosters.

## **ARE CLUBS REQUIRED TO RUN A TRYOUT?**

No – clubs are not required to run tryouts. Most clubs do run some sort of in-person tryout, but there are no CEVA policies that specifically mandate that a club runs tryouts.

## **WHEN CAN TRYOUTS HAPPEN?**

For junior girls, tryouts may legally begin on Sunday, November 8 for all players defined as a 14 & under participant. Tryouts may begin on Sunday, November 15 for all other junior female players. For junior boys, tryouts may begin on Saturday, September 12.

## **WHAT HAPPENS ON THE DAY THAT TRYOUTS OPEN?**

Many of our clubs – but not all – will run some sort of tryout activities on these dates. However, as noted above, they don't have to. **This is also the date that athletes may sign letters of commitment to their club of choice. Even if a club doesn't run a tryout, they may still sign athletes on the date that tryouts open.**

## **ARE CLUBS REQUIRED TO RUN TRYOUTS ON THE FIRST DAY THEY'RE OPEN?**

No. The tryout dates posted by the region are when tryouts may legally begin. Clubs are not required to hold tryouts on these dates. Contact clubs in advance to ask what their plans are for tryouts.

## **DOES MY ATHLETE NEED TO BE A MEMBER OF CEVA TO ATTEND A TRYOUT?**

Yes – all participants in tryouts, including athletes and coaches, must be CEVA members. Athletes have a discounted "tryout" membership available to them. **Remember – membership fees are non-refundable, so we strongly encourage athletes to purchase the tryout membership** unless they are certain they will make a team. Learn about purchasing a membership [on our website](#).

## **WHY DOESN'T CEVA MANDATE THAT CLUBS STAGGER THEIR TRYOUT START TIMES?**

The simple answer is that having such a policy would be unenforceable. CEVA's staff cannot be at every club tryout, nor can we easily define what constitutes the "start" of a tryout? (Is that when players can check in? Is that when players can start warming up? Is that when drills & evaluations can start?)

Keep in mind, also, that for many clubs, facility access is challenging. If we mandate a specific start time for clubs to begin their tryouts, some clubs may not be able to access their preferred facilities due to other scheduled events. Also, how would the region choose which clubs run their tryouts at certain times?



### **HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT CLUBS MIGHT BE ABLE TO OFFER MY PLAYER?**

Call or e-mail the club director and ask them any questions you wish! All club contact information can be found on our website. Don't hesitate to ask questions, even if they may seem like obvious ones.

**You need to do your homework prior to the start of tryouts!** Research what clubs offer and learn about where & when they practice, what their philosophies are, how many teams they plan to form, etc.

### **IF MY ATHLETE IS OFFERED A SPOT ON A TEAM, WHAT HAPPENS?**

If your athlete is offered a spot on a team, they'll be asked to sign a CEVA Letter of Commitment (LOC). That document binds your athlete to the club for the season. Clubs must use this document.

They may also be asked to sign club-specific contracts and/or financial agreements – these are at the discretion of the club. CEVA does not get involved with any contractual disputes or questions.

### **IS MY ATHLETE GUARANTEED TO BE OFFERED A SPOT IF THEY TRY OUT FOR A CLUB?**

No. Many of our clubs do not take all players who try out. They may limit the number of teams they offer due to available coaches, facility space, or other constraints.

### **DO ALL CLUBS RUN THEIR TRYOUTS THE SAME WAY?**

No. Every club operates tryouts in their own way and selects players using their own methodology. CEVA has no control over how a club selects players or forms teams. Some clubs may form teams on the day tryouts happen. Some clubs may wait to form teams until after official practices begin. This is an important question to ask a club **before** you go to a tryout. Players and families should discuss tryout philosophies and methodologies with the clubs prior to tryouts so they have a good understanding of what to expect on tryout day.

### **DOES MY ATHLETE HAVE TO ACCEPT THEIR SPOT WHEN IT'S OFFERED?**

That's up to the club. Some clubs allow athletes to attend other tryouts. However, some clubs may have a policy that if your athlete doesn't accept the spot when it's offered, that spot will be gone. Each club has their own policies, and you should ask the club what their acceptance policies are prior to tryouts.

### **DOES AN ATHLETE HAVE TO ATTEND AN IN-PERSON TRYOUT TO SIGN WITH A CLUB?**

Not by CEVA policy. The dates that tryouts begin are also the dates that athletes may legally sign commitment letters with their club of choice. CEVA policy does not mandate that this happens in person, however some clubs may still require it. If an individual club requires an in-person signing, that is their choice.

### **WHY DOESN'T CEVA HAVE A "WAITING PERIOD" THAT ALLOWS ATHLETES TO CONSIDER THEIR OFFERS BEFORE HAVING TO ACCEPT?**

The simple answer is a waiting period is unenforceable and often would turn into a "he said/she said" type of dispute. Some regions of USA Volleyball mandate that clubs allow athletes a specific amount of time (e.g., 48 hours) to decide if they want to accept a club's offer. CEVA staff do not attend tryouts and cannot verify when a club makes an offer to a player. Additionally, CEVA's staff cannot verify when/if an athlete accepts or declines an offer, and when that happens. CEVA has nearly 8,000 junior athletes playing club volleyball in the region and tracking each athlete's offer is something that we simply do not have the bandwidth for.

**Once again – it's critical that athletes and families research clubs prior to tryouts to determine what might be a best fit. Never walk into tryouts without having researched the club first.**

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK A CLUB**

Check out club websites, talk to classmates and friends, call the club directors and coaches. Some questions to ask a club director or administrator during your research:

- Who are the coaches and what are their credentials?
- What is the club's philosophy? (To have fun? To improve? To win?)
- When, where and how often are practices?
- How far will teams travel?
- Do athletes have to sign a Letter of Commitment immediately (e.g., at tryouts), or can athletes leave the tryout and still sign afterwards?
- Can athletes attend multiple tryouts without losing their offer?
- Is the club a "no cut" club?
- Cost? Monthly dues? Due up front? Is there an itemized report of costs?
- What is expected of players in the club?
- Do they have fundraising opportunities?
- Do they make allowances for multi-sport athletes?
- How many teams does the club plan to create in each age group?