

USAV SafeSport Model Policy:

Team Travel



Model Policy For Junior Club Volleyball Programs

USA Volleyball junior clubs are now required to implement a team travel policy. The following is a model team travel policy and is provided to assist USA Volleyball member clubs with developing their own policies. If a club chooses not to, or is unable to, create a written travel policy, the following model policy will become the default policy for that club. Once a customized set of policies is developed and approved by the club, the default policy will no longer apply. Each member club has the responsibility for approval and implementation of its own set of travel policies, and to provide these policies to all players, parents, coaches and other adults who will be traveling with a team. It is strongly recommended that a signature by each adult acknowledging receipt of and agreeing to the travel policy be obtained by each club.

Some travel involves only local travel to and from local practices and events while other travel involves overnight stays. Different policies should apply to these two types of travel. The form of policy below is a sample only but may be modified by the local program to meet its specific needs and travel.

Travel Policy for NVL Academy

[Insert name of the club] has some teams that travel regularly to play in tournaments, has some teams where travel is limited to a few events per season, and some teams where there is no travel other than local travel to and from our own area. [Club] prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Volleyball SafeSport Handbook. [Club] has established policies to guide our travel, minimize one-on-one interactions and reduce the risk of abuse or misconduct. Adherence to these travel guidelines will increase player safety and improve the player's experience while keeping travel a fun and enjoyable experience.

We distinguish between travel to training, practice and local tournaments ("local travel") and team travel involving an overnight stay ("team travel").

Local Travel

Local travel occurs when NVL Academy does not sponsor, coordinate or arrange for travel.

- Players and/or their parents/guardian are responsible for making all arrangements for local travel. The team and its coaches, managers or administrators should avoid responsibility for arranging or coordinating local travel. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to ensure the person transporting the minor player maintains the proper safety and legal requirements, including but not limited to: a

valid driver's license, automobile liability insurance, a vehicle in safe working order, and compliance with applicable state laws.

- The employees, coaches and/or volunteers of NVL Academy or one of its teams, who are not also acting as a parent, should not drive alone with an unrelated minor player.

Team Travel

Team travel is overnight travel that occurs when [NVL Academy] or one of its teams or designees sponsors, coordinates or arranges for travel so that our team can compete locally, regionally or nationally. Because of the greater distances, coaches, staff, volunteers and chaperones will often travel with the players.

- When possible, [NVL Academy] will provide reasonable advance notice before team travel. Travel notice will also include designated team hotels for overnight stays as well as a contact person within [NVL Academy] or the team. This individual will be the point of contact to confirm your intention to travel and to help with travel details.
- Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangements with a minor player (unless the coach is the parent, guardian or sibling of the player).
- The coach or his/her designee will establish a curfew by when all players must be in their hotel rooms or in a supervised location. Regular monitoring and curfew checks will be made of each room by at least two properly background screened adults. At no time should only one adult be present in a room with minor players, regardless of gender.
- Team personnel shall ask hotels to block adult pay per view channels.
- Individual meetings between a coach and a player may not occur in hotel sleeping rooms and must be held in public settings or with additional adults present, with at least one of those adults being the same gender as the player.
- Family members who wish to stay in the team hotel are permitted and encouraged to do so.
- The team will make every effort to accommodate reasonable parental requests when a child is away from home without a parent. If any special arrangements are necessary for your child, please contact the team personnel who can either make or assist with making those arrangements.
- No coach or chaperone shall at any time be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while performing their coaching and/or chaperoning duties.

- In all cases involving travel, parents have the right to transport their minor player.
- Prior to any travel, coaches will endeavor to make players and parents aware of all expectations and rules. Coaches will also support chaperones and/or participate in the monitoring of the players for adherence to curfew restrictions and other travel rules.
- If disciplinary action against a player is required while the player is traveling without his/her parents, then except where immediate action is necessary, parents will be notified before any action is taken, or immediately after.

Suggested Additional Policies

The following policies are additional guidelines for developing a travel policy based on the club's preferences and needs.

- Players are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Players are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, restaurant or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone.
- When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc., players will stay in groups of no less than three persons. Athletes 12 and under will be accompanied by a chaperone.
- Safety Policies
 - Additional guidelines to be established as needed by the coaches;
 - Supervised team room provided for relaxation and recreation;
 - Respect the privacy of each other;
 - Only use hotel rooms with interior entrances;
 - Must wear seatbelts and remain seated in vehicles;
- Behavior Policies
 - Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in the hotel;
 - Be prompt and on time;
 - Develop cell phone usage guidelines;
 - Develop computer usage guidelines including social media;
 - Respect travel vehicles;
 - Establish travel dress code;
 - Use appropriate behavior in public facilities, including language;
 - Establish two different curfews – in own rooms and lights out;
 - Must stay in assigned hotel room; and
 - Needs and well-being of the team come first.

- Financial
 - No room service without permission
 - Players are responsible for all incidental charges
 - Players are responsible for any damages or thievery at hotel;
 - Players must participate in contracted group meals; and
 - Communicate travel reimbursement information and policies.

- General
 - Establish fair trip eligibility requirements;
 - Establish age guidelines for travel trips;
 - Parent(s) responsible for getting player(s) to stated departure point; and
 - Requirements for families to attend “Team Travel Tournaments.”

Code of Conduct / Honor Code

USA Volleyball strongly suggests clubs to create a Code of Conduct or Honor Code as a companion document to team travel policies.

Recommended:

- a. Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrator, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times.
- b. Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- c. The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.
- d. The possession, use or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden.
- e. Team members are reminded that when competing in tournaments, traveling on trips and attending other club-related functions, they are representing both themselves and [Club]. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the club.

For Consideration:

- a. Failure to comply with the Honor Code as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline by include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete’s expense;
 - ii. Disqualification from future tournaments, either local or traveling;
 - iii. Financial penalties;
 - iv. Dismissal from team; and/or
 - v. Penalties set forth in the USA Volleyball Participant Code of Conduct, which may include a lifetime ban.
- b. Players are to refrain from inappropriate physical contact at team activities.
- c. Players are to refrain from the use of inappropriate language.