



# **Special Olympics**

## **Massachusetts**

### **SUMMER GAMES**

#### **VOLLEYBALL RULES AND MODIFICATIONS**

The complete set of Special Olympic rules, which govern the Special Olympics Massachusetts volleyball competition, are in the Official Special Olympics Summer Rules Book and can be found at <http://www.specialolympics.org/uploadedFiles/volleyball.pdf>. Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) and the rules of each individual country's National Governing Body (NGB) shall be employed except when in conflict with Special Olympics Sports Rules and SOMA modifications. The SOMA modifications, as well as some pertinent general rules are noted below. (The numbers do not correspond with the rules book numbers.)

#### **I. GENERAL RULES NOTES**

##### **A. COMPETITION:**

1. Rally point scoring will be used in all matches at Summer Games.
2. The referee will have full authority to interpret the Rules. Ball handling will be called in accordance with the ability of the athletes involved. The ball is dead any time the referee blows his/her whistle.
3. Each line judge shall be responsible for judging whether a ball is in or out for their assigned lines. Only the referee can over turn the call of a line judge, if s/he determines that the call was incorrect.
4. Substitutions may be made on a dead ball. When one team makes a substitution, the other team must be given an opportunity to substitute as well. Players entering the game must report to the scorer's table and tell the scorer whom they are entering for. The player must be beckoned into the game by the referee.
5. Substitution rules WILL be enforced at Summer Games. There will be a maximum of 12 team substitutions per set. An unlimited number of players may substitute into a single position. A player in the starting lineup may start a set and re-enter, but only in the same position s/he started the set. Likewise, a substitute who has left the set, may re-enter, but must do so in the previous position.  
(**Note:** Libero Player will not be utilized at Summer Games.)
6. All athletes on a roster MUST compete in a minimum of 1 set per match. The athlete must remain in the game for at least 1 rotation. Teams that do NOT play all of their athletes in a match shall be forced to forfeit that match.
7. Unified matches will consist of 3 athletes and 3 Unified Partners. At no time may a team exceed 3 Unified Partners on the court. Also, Unified Partners can ONLY be substituted into the game for other Unified Partners. Exceptions can be made where the number of athletes on the court exceeds 3.  
(**Note:** In a position where a athlete starts the game, ONLY an athlete can be substituted into that location. Likewise, in a position where a Unified Partner starts the game, a Unified Partner should be substituted into that location. However, in the event an athlete is substituted for a Unified Partner, said Unified Partner is only allowed to substitute for the athlete that s/he replaced or for another Unified Partner in a different position.)

8. Each team **MUST** have a non-playing HEAD coach on the bench at all times. Coaching from behind the end line is prohibited. A coach is permitted to assist an athlete to move into position for substitutions and serving.  
(**Note:** The HEAD coach may NOT play at any time during the competition at Summer Games.)
9. Coaches may be ejected from the day's competition after first receiving a verbal warning from the referee, the head official, or the venue director.
10. In Unified matches, once a server has scored 3 consecutive points, the team shall rotate to the next server. In Traditional matches, the serving team shall rotate after 5 consecutive points.
11. In order for an athlete to be a **modified server** at Summer Games, s/he must be tested at the Assessment Round Competition. Those athletes who are not tested prior to Summer Games will **not** be allowed to use the modified server's line at the event. As part of the assessment, it may be decided that after an athlete's serving skill has been evaluated, s/he may not need to be a modified server at Summer Games. Coaches will be notified which athletes may participate as modified servers before arriving at Summer Games. High skill level teams will not be allowed modified servers.
  - In Juniors Divisions Age 8-12 / 8-15 Unified partners may be tested for modified serve

## **B. COMPETITION MODIFICATIONS:**

Following are adaptations of FIVB and NGB Rules, which may be used when conducting Special Olympics volleyball team competitions. These adaptations are optional, and it remains the responsibility of each individual program to determine whether they will be employed during Training. *Please note that these adaptations will be employed at Summer Games. Competition modifications are subject to change due to circumstances present during competition. These modifications are at the discretion of the Volleyball and Competition Directors.*

1. Matches will be the best 2 out of 3 games. If a team wins the first 2 games, then the match is over and the third game is NOT played.
2. Each match will last 30 minutes. This time may be adjusted based upon number of teams participating at the competition.
3. Teams will switch sides at the conclusion of each set.
4. Equipment - In Juniors Age Group 8-12 and 8-15 a modified softer and lighter ball will be used as long as it meets the official USA Volleyball size requirements.
5. Rally point scoring to 15 will be used for all matches. If time expires before completion of the set, the set will be played out until one team has 9 points. In the event that the set played to 9 points squares the match at 1 set apiece, a decisive third set will be played to five. In the medal round games will be played to completion. The current six players on the court will play the deciding set. NO substitutions will be allowed and teams will not switch sides due to time constraints.  
(**Note:** If BOTH teams have more than 9 points, the set will be played until one team has 15 points. At the completion of this set, the above conditions will be followed.)
6. Complete rosters, with player numbers, **MUST** be submitted to the VENUE DIRECTOR one week prior to the competition. Unified Partners and modified servers must be clearly identified on the roster.

Please submit a copy of the roster with designated Unified Partners and modified servers to **Matt Ruxton, Asst Vice President of Sport Mgt, matt.ruxton@specialolympicsma.org**