

**Athens Elite Volleyball Club**  
**Handbook 2024-2025**  
**www.athenselitevbc.com**

**Introduction**

Athens Elite was born out of the necessity for top-tier coaching and training programs in southeast Ohio. The foundation of our program is designed to develop leaders through the sport of volleyball. Our core mission extends beyond athletic performance. We are committed to cultivating the complete athlete, nurturing their physical, mental, and emotional well-being for success on and off the court. We elicit passion, confidence, and respect by demonstrating the same in a positive and supportive environment where young athletes thrive.

**General Information**

[USA Volleyball](#) provides the opportunity for girls and boys who want to increase their knowledge, understanding, and skill playing the sport of volleyball. There are three levels of USA Volleyball juniors' competition in most age groups:

1. **A Regional team** (except for the 18s) is for the developing athlete.
2. **A National team** is for highly skilled athletes.
3. The **American division** is for teams that are very competitive, but that do not want all of the travel associated with the National level of play.

\*National teams can compete for a bid to go to the USA Volleyball Junior National Championships.

**Amateur Athletic Union (AAU)**

[The Amateur Athletic Union \(AAU\)](#) is a prestigious organization dedicated to promoting and developing amateur sports for girls and boys, including club volleyball. AAU volleyball offers various levels of play to accommodate different skill levels and competition needs. Here's a breakdown of the three main levels of play:

1. **Club Division** is for the developing athlete
2. **Premier Division** is for intermediate teams that are very competitive, but that do not want all of the travel associated with the Open level of play.
3. **Open Division** is for advanced athletes with teams competing at the highest levels of competition, with nation and elite tournaments.

\* Any team can pay the entry fee to compete and attend the AAU Nationals in Orlando, FL. The tournament does not require "a bid."

Athens Elite Volleyball Club is fortunate to be affiliated with [WellWorks](#) via [Ohio University](#). We are extremely proud of our relationship with the WellWorks training staff who are responsible for crafting our strength and conditioning program. In addition, our club also gets support from [Ping Recreation Center](#), Ohio University's main recreational facility, where our teams will practice.

Our teams will be based at Ping Recreation Center and WellWorks. We offer camps, clinics, private and small group lessons, as well as community volleyball events for adults.

### **Projected Teams Offered for the 2024-2025 Club Season**

15 & Under American

15 & Under Regional

### **USAV and OHSAA Rules and Regulations**

Athens Elite abides by all USA Volleyball and state high school athletic association rules.

#### **Some of these rules are:**

- Only 3 athletes from the same OHSAA member school can be on the same team for grades 7–11. Seniors do not count against this number provided they are not participating in other interscholastic sports.
- A high school coach in the state of Ohio can now coach up to three athletes from their school program. A middle school coach can also coach up to three athletes from their middle school program

\*Note: If this is your first experience with Club volleyball, please note that not all USA Volleyball rules are the same as high school rules.

### **Before the First Tryout Session**

Before stepping out on the floor for the first tryout session athletes must submit the following documents:

- Athens Elite [Google Form](#)
- USA Volleyball Tryout Membership Card from Sports Engine.
- USA Volleyball Medical Form
- \$20.00 Tryout Fee via our [Google Form](#)

The fee and the required documents can be submitted on the day of tryouts. Allow ample time for processing any paperwork submitted at tryouts. Athletes trying out for Athens Elite do so

knowing that they might be asked to play on an American, or Regional team. Athletes are placed on teams based on their skill level. We may use the first couple of practices to determine the composition of our youth teams.

### **Tryouts**

Any athlete from any school is welcome to try out at Athens Elite. Tryouts are closed to parents. The purpose for closed tryouts is to create a productive environment free from as many distractions as possible. Athletes aspiring to be a part of the Athens Elite Volleyball Club will first go through a series of physical tests including basic footwork, agility movements, shuffles, net jumps, and tests of endurance and stamina. Next, athletes are evaluated on skill execution. Athletes will be evaluated on their ability to pass, set, serve, and hit. Finally, they are watched during game play situations for their intrinsic traits and on court behavior. We base our selections on what the athletes do during the tryout period and what we perceive their potential to be. We select athletes based on the following criteria: ability to be trained and coached, willingness to be a team player, athletic ability for volleyball, athletic potential, work ethic, drive, competitive attitude, current skill ability, and/or experience, and their overall attitude.

### **Early Offers**

While we hold tryouts to select talented athletes for our teams, we also make early offers to players we scout or recruit throughout the year. This approach allows us to:

- **Identify Top Talent:** By scouting and recruiting, we can recognize standout players who demonstrate exceptional skills and potential
- **Build Strong Teams:** Early offers help us secure committed athletes early on, allowing us to form cohesive and competitive teams.
- **Provide Opportunities:** We give promising players the chance to join our club and develop their skills, even if they can't attend the scheduled tryouts.

### **After Tryouts**

After tryouts, the coaching staff will meet to determine which girls will be offered a contract to participate in our program. Athletes will be notified of their status via an email from the club director. The parents/guardians of each accepted athlete will be asked to accept their offer in the form of an email to the director at [athenselitevbc@gmail.com](mailto:athenselitevbc@gmail.com) by 9 pm on the signing deadline for their age group or the offer may be withdrawn. Once you accept the offer, you may not play for any other USA Volleyball or AAU juniors' program during this indoor season.

**Tryout/Acceptance Timelines**

15s-17s Saturday, July 13th - Tuesday July 23rd at 9 PM

**Athens Elite Fees**

Athens Elite's fees are as follows:

<b>American Team</b>
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<b>Team Name</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Deposit August 1st</b>	<b>Oct. 1st</b>	<b>Jan. 1st</b>
<b>15 American</b>	\$1,800	\$400	\$700	\$700

<b>Regional Team</b>
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<b>Team Name</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Deposit August 1st</b>	<b>Oct. 1st</b>	<b>Jan. 1st</b>
<b>15 Regional</b>	\$1,200	\$400	\$400	\$400

Fees are to be made payable to Athens Elite Volleyball Club LLC. We accept cash, check, and money orders for club fees. Please email [athenselitevbc@gmail.com](mailto:athenselitevbc@gmail.com) for additional questions or if you are in need of financial assistance.

- Do not give any fee money to a coach. Coaches have been instructed not to accept fees. *All fees must be paid to the club director before participating in your first tournament.*
- Fees are non-refundable and you are responsible for paying the entire fee, regardless of any circumstance (injury, illness, no longer participating, etc.), once accepted to a team.
- Each athlete must come to the tryouts ready to compete for a position on one of our teams. An athlete who cannot participate in tryouts because of a limiting physical or medical condition or absence should talk to the Club Director prior to the start of the tryout period to determine the status of their ability to play on one of the teams.
- Players should never assume because they were on a previous Athens Elite team that they will automatically be on a future team.

### **What if I Play Other Sports?**

School sports and other activities are an integral part of the scholastic experience and we will make every effort to schedule practices around some of these other activities. However, it is recommended that if an athlete is going to miss more than 15% of practices and tournaments, those families reconsider participation in our program. Missing such a significant amount of time does not make it cost effective for the families and makes it very difficult to build team chemistry and team cohesion at a competitive level. If an athlete participates in another non-interscholastic sport, we expect them to make Athens Elite a priority when there is a conflict between the two sports. This means we expect the athlete to attend all Athens Elite practices, unless there is a scheduled competition for the other sport at the same time as an Athens Elite practice. If a game for the other sport conflicts with an Athens Elite practice, the athlete will be excused from the Athens Elite practice. If an Athens Elite competition conflicts with another sport competition, the coach and the athlete will decide, on a case-by-case basis as to which event takes priority.

All Athens Elite teams require dedication on the part of the athlete for the team to be a success. This means that missed practices could result in forfeiture of playing time. Furthermore, an athletes' best performance will occur when they are on the top of their game physically and mentally. In order to maintain the body and mind at a peak performance level, an athlete must learn to handle various stresses and deal with the recovery process following workouts. These stresses can be any one or a combination of the following;

- poor nutrition
- illness
- fatigue (i.e. lack of sleep)
- insufficient rest between workout sessions
- emotional stress from schoolwork, friends or family situations
- other extracurricular activities

It is imperative that you take these factors into account when scheduling your time and activities. The body can only handle a certain amount of stress within a given time period before illness and injuries occur. The practice schedule and workouts designed throughout the season by our Athens Elite coaches and training staff have taken into account the need for adequate rest and recovery in avoiding excessive stress.

### **Playing Time**

We do not guarantee equal playing time on any team or at any event. Playing time for athletes is determined by attendance, attitude, effort, performance, the athlete's potential, the team's needs at the moment and is left solely to the discretion of the Athens Elite coach.

The “coaching decisions” are not up for debate or question. Athletes are encouraged to ask what they can improve on to get more playing time (see Grievance Procedure).

### **Rules and Regulations**

1. While representing Athens Elite, all athletes are expected to behave in a responsible manner. Determination of what is responsible lies solely with Athens Elite. Athens Elite is proud of our image. We provide our athletes with competitive apparel packages that includes a ball, backpack, two jersey's, warm-up pants and top, and 2 practice t-shirts.

\*We do require the purchase of socks, knee pads, and spandex.

2. Any athlete damaging equipment owned by Athens Elite or any facility used by the club during practices, tournaments or other functions, or at lodging facilities will be required to reimburse the club and/or facility for the damages before continuing with the club. In some cases, the athlete may be dismissed from the club.
3. The athlete's account must be paid up to date before the athlete will be allowed to participate in any tournaments. In case of inclement weather, please check our facebook page for any announcement of practice or tournament cancellations. Athletes and families will also be notified via an email or text.
4. We strongly encourage athletes who make an Athens Elite team to take this participation seriously. This means we expect Athens Elite practices and tournaments to be of the highest priority.

### **Practice Rules**

- Coaches determine whether or not their practices are open or closed. Coaches must get approval from the Director to have closed practices.
- Scheduled practice time is starting time and not arrival time. Please plan on arriving at least 15 minutes prior to the start of each practice. There may be a consequence for arriving late to practice and competitions.
- Volleyball shoes are to be carried into practice and tournaments and only worn for practice and tournaments. They are never to be worn outside! This is to ensure that the shoes last longer and our facility surfaces remain clean and safe.
- Horseplay by athletes or coaches at practice or tournaments is strictly prohibited.
- All athletes are expected to make every effort to attend every practice. Only an illness serious enough to keep the athlete home from school or a genuine family emergency are legitimate excuses for missing practice. Regardless of the reason, if an athlete is absent from practice, their playing time may be affected. The athlete may arrange to attend the practice of another team with the approval of both coaches.

- If an athlete cannot be at practice, the athlete is expected to call the coach. It is the athlete's responsibility (not the parent's) to reach the coach before the practice starts.
- Athletes are encouraged to bring water, in an unbreakable container, to practices and tournaments. Absolutely no glass containers are allowed in the gym.
- Chewing gum at practice or tournaments will be left to the discretion of each coach.

### **Tournament Rules**

- All athletes are expected to be in the gym, ready to warm-up, at the scheduled arrival time. This usually means the athlete needs to arrive at the site 15 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. Earlier is always better.
- Proper conduct is expected for all members of the club at all times. This includes athletes, coaches, parents, and spectators. This also means treating fans from other teams, other parents, and officials with respect.
- Facility rules and regulations are to be obeyed at all times by athletes, spectators, and coaches.
- Athletes and/or parents are expected to provide transportation for their athlete to and from tournament sites and practices.

\* If an athlete cannot be at a tournament, the athlete is expected to call the coach as soon as the athlete knows they will be absent. It is the athlete's responsibility (not the parent's) to reach the coach before the tournament starts.

- Athletes are not to leave the tournament site until excused by the coach. Except in cases of true emergency, an athlete whose team has an officiating assignment may not leave a tournament before the assignment is completed.

### **Officiating and Electronic Devices**

- Officiating is the shared responsibility of the entire team. All Athens Elite athletes are required to attend a scoring or second referee/line judge clinic and help with the line judging, scorekeeping, scoreboard, and officiating at assigned matches. Each coach will determine a procedure their team will follow for officiating assignments. Every athlete is required to stay until the entire team can leave. Please do not ask the coach if you can leave early. You are expected to stay! The use of electronic devices by the support officiating crew is prohibited at tournaments hosted by the Ohio Valley Region. The penalty for the guilty team is the loss of 10 points in the first set of their next match, or a fine imposed on the club. The team will not be permitted to compete until the fine has been paid. Athletes found in violation of this regulation will be assessed a one-match suspension imposed at the discretion of the coach. The family of the offending athlete will be assessed a penalty of \$100 also.

- Cell phones are not permitted at practices. In cases of a potential emergency situation where it may be imperative that the athlete does have their phone with them, the athlete should inform the coach of the situation.

### **Grievance Procedure**

- Competitive team athletics, by its nature, creates situations where everyone may not be happy all the time. Knowing when to communicate and how to communicate with your athlete's coach may be a concern for parents at some time during the season. Most often the concern is how to inquire about issues surrounding playing time.
- At Athens Elite, we encourage the athlete to take full responsibility for their participation. For this reason, we expect the athlete to talk to the coach first when they have a problem concerning their playing time, or if they are unclear about what the coach expects from them either in practice or competition. The appropriate way to do this is for the athlete to ask the coach what they need to do to get more opportunities to play in matches. Most of the time, the athlete knows why they may not be playing as much as a teammate when the parent may not. Parents can best help their athlete by helping them set some goals to achieve more opportunities.
- When a parent has a problem that is specific to their own athlete, we also expect them to first talk to their athlete's coach. Coaches have been instructed not to discuss coaching decisions with a parent. These coaching decisions include, but are not limited to specific match decisions, substitution patterns, etc.

***\*The coach will not be required to defend his/her thought process or conclusions in the determination of playing time, and it is improper for a parent to request that. Parents are never to confront a coach at a tournament.*** Specifically, the procedures to follow if you as a parent, or your athlete as a member of an Athens Elite team, have concerns about Athens Elite policies or a coach's actions are, in this order:

1. The athlete will speak or meet with the coach to discuss the matter. If the matter remains unresolved, or if the athlete has reasonable concern that speaking to the coach will not resolve the matter,
2. The parent should speak to or meet with the head coach. Parents should call or email the head coach to set up a meeting. Meetings are to be at times and locations other than tournaments. If a coach is approached by a parent during a tournament, we have instructed the coach to refuse to discuss any controversial matter, to refer the parent to the Club Director and to walk away from the situation. The recommended time for a parent and/or athlete to talk to a coach about a problem is a previously arranged meeting time either before or immediately after a scheduled practice.



3. If the matter remains unresolved, or if the parent has reasonable concern that speaking to the coach will not resolve the matter, the parent may speak to the Head Coach and the Club Director.
4. In certain situations, Athens Elite may ask the athlete to attend the meeting also. Meetings should be previously arranged. Meetings will not be scheduled during a tournament or during practice time.
5. The Head Coach or the Club Director will not engage in discussions about "coaching decisions." If the problem remains unresolved, the final resolution will be a committee of 3 members of the program consisting of the director, coaches and/or parents that have been in the program a minimum of 2 seasons.

### **Other Policies Regarding Grievances**

- Athens Elite will not tolerate hostile, aggressive confrontations between a parent and any official, or a parent and any coach, or a parent and any athlete, or a parent and any other parent, whether the coach, athlete or other parent is a member of Athens Elite or not. Violation of this policy may result in the athlete being dismissed from Athens Elite without refund.
- It is inappropriate for an athlete or a parent to approach other Athens Elite members about a problem the athlete or parent is having with an Athens Elite coach, about objections to coaching decisions, or about disagreement with an administrative decision. Asking uninvolved people to take sides in an issue is unfair to the third party and to the club. For the psychological health of the teams and the club as a whole, grievances need to be handled between the parties involved and in the proper manner.
- If an athlete or parent is approached and asked to listen to, or express an opinion about matters between two other parties in the club, it is strongly encouraged to refer the complaining party to take the matter up with either the coach in question, the Head Coach, and/or the Club Director.
- Any member who, as a third party, hears remarks or stories about Athens Elite, its employees or its policies, that cause the member to be concerned, is encouraged to contact the Head Coach and/or the Club Director immediately to determine the facts, or to alert the club administration to a situation it may be unaware of. It is detrimental to everyone involved to repeat complaints you hear or overhear to other uninvolved parties. By the time a story gets to the third or fourth party, it frequently bears little resemblance to the truth or the facts of the situation.
- Please refrain from negative comments around your athlete or other athletes. Young athletes are vulnerable and if they hear complaining about the coach, the coach's style or Athens Elite policies, this can have an adverse effect on their performance and/or attitude. If you, as a parent, are unhappy about something, you should follow the grievance procedure of this guide to resolve the matter. Repetitive complaining to the athlete(s) or

other third parties that interferes with the club's efforts to pursue its stated mission and purpose may be cause for dismissal from the club.

### **Tournaments**

- Tournaments can be 1–4 days in duration. Teams normally play in events where they will play each team in their pool with the winning teams advancing to a Gold bracket and other teams advancing to a Silver or Bronze bracket.
- Most tournaments use a best 2 out of 3 sets format.
- Seating is sparse in most of the gyms so we recommend that you bring your own chairs.
- We strongly advise that you pack a cooler for your athlete for the day(s) of a tournament because they can run long. Leave all coolers in your vehicle because they are not permitted in facilities at Ohio Valley Region events, some AAU events do allow coolers.
- Some athletes bring pillows and sleeping bags so they can rest between rounds. Games, homework, books, etc. are all recommended for some of the longer tournaments.
- Arrive early so you can help set up your team area and get ready to warm-up. Except for starting times, most tournaments do not follow a set time schedule. Matches will begin 10 minutes after the end of the previous match. If the tournament is conducted efficiently, it should be over around 6:00 p.m., but to be on the safe side, expect to be there all day.