

FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club Guide

Welcome to the FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club!

Congratulations on your commitment to the FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club. We have a great season ahead of us and are so excited to have you be a part of our Firecrackers family. Within this guide, you will find important information about our policies and operations. Some items are for information only, while others require completion and submission by certain dates. Timely completion of those requirements is requested. Parent(s) and players will be required to sign the signature page at the end of this document acknowledging that they have read and will follow the guide accordingly.

One of the most important items for you to accomplish as soon as possible is to login to or register for an online Sports Engine account at fcfirecrackersvbc.org. Here you will need to review, verify, and/or update both player and parent information. A parent should be the Primary Account Holder and the player should be listed under that account as the Player. This will help ensure that we are able to communicate with you in a timely manner and ensure memberships and rosters are current and complete.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your coach, a Board Member (our website has a listing of Board members) or the director, Tom Harris, at director@fcfirecrackersvbc.org or 919-612-4071. We are looking forward to a great season!

Required Paperwork

- FC Firecracker Club Guide Acknowledgment Page (signed) – last page of this document
- USAV/Carolina Region Letter of Commitment (signed by player and parent) on or after 9/1/24
- FC Firecrackers AAU/JVA Commitment Letter (signed by player and parent)
- Statement of Financial Responsibility (signed by parent)
- FC Firecrackers Parent Code of Conduct (signed by parent)
- FC Firecrackers Social Media Policy (signed by player and parent)
- FC Firecrackers Participation Release (signed by parent)
- USAV Code of Conduct (signed by player and parent)

Dues and Payments:

The initial player dues payment, as indicated on the Team Guide, is due no later than our Season Kickoff Day and may be paid by check, or credit card. We will accept remaining payments by check, credit card, or automatic debit. The primary method of payment will be through the player's online Sports Engine account. Please be aware that online credit card payments will have a standard card processing (or convenience) fee added.

Payment in full Discount: Accounts paid in full by signing day will receive a 5% dues discount.

Sibling Discount: A sibling discount will be offered. The first sibling will be the full price for the highest-level club team. The second sibling and beyond will qualify for a 20% discount.

Important Notes regarding dues, payments and refunds:

- Players will not be allowed to practice or participate in any Club related events until the initial dues' payment is received.
- Players will become ineligible to practice or play in any tournaments if accounts become 30 days past due and will remain so until the account is brought current.
- Payments are due on the 1st of the month. Failure to make a payment prior to the 15th of the month will result in a 5% late fee.
- If a player is facing financial hardship, please contact the Club Director or Treasurer, prior to being delinquent, to discuss available options.
- After our Signing Day, there is no refund for players not willing to complete the season.
- Injury-related issues will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Practice, Tournament and Season Disclaimer: Practice, tournament, and travel schedules have been established. Various considerations are made during the schedule process. Please note they are all subject to change by events and decisions beyond the Club's control. Efforts will be made to adapt in a manner that has the least impact on all, while continuing to provide a quality program. If tournaments are canceled, the club will try to reschedule for a similar tournament.

Uniforms and Parents Apparel: The uniform packages will be done through an online store by each individual player. Players will order and pay online and the vendor will ship directly to the individual. To avoid jersey number conflicts, each player needs to submit their top 3 preferred jersey numbers to the coach. If there are conflicts, the priority goes to returning players. If there remains a conflict, the tiebreaker goes to whoever has been at the club the longest. If still tied, it goes to who played on the highest team last season. After that, a coin toss will decide.

Each player will receive two (2) practice t-shirts which will be worn for each practice session. All accessory items (knee pads, elbow pads, and socks) must be white. Athletic leggings and spandex, whether purchased through the online store or elsewhere, must be Navy. Shoes are preferred white but are not required. Spandex must fit properly, covering the buttocks in entirety. Undergarments should be of neutral colors that are not readily apparent when worn under the uniform. Pajama bottoms and sleep pants as cover-ups are not permitted at practices, clinics, tournaments and/or tournament-like events.

All players will be required to wear cover-up items:

- When traveling to/from all practices and tournaments.
- All practice and tournament activities (unless changing into regular street clothes).
- When the team is not actively playing on the court.

There will be opportunities for parents and supporters to purchase Firecracker apparel items through an online store. Any leftover practice t-shirts will be available to purchase through the Club Board of Directors at a cost of \$15.00 each. The club hopes everyone will be proud to wear Firecrackers apparel to tournaments and venues to promote their team and the club.

USAV and AAU Memberships: All players are required to have a USAV membership prior to the first regular practice. USAV memberships will be available for renewal after September 1st. USAV memberships can be renewed or new ones started by going to the Carolina Region website or going to the Firecrackers website and selecting the Quick Links USAV registration link. Please take the time to verify that all membership information is correct. Players that are 18 years of age or will turn 18 during the season must select the Juniors 18's membership. All others will select the Junior membership.

In the Carolina Region software platform, players and coaches do not select a club to be affiliated with. Instead, the club will "invite" players and coaches to affiliate with the club. Once you receive the invitation via email, please ensure you complete it in a timely fashion. Note: Please ensure that the email address and Player name used to create/update your USAV membership is the same as the one used in your club account in the Sports Engine system. Otherwise, the "invite" may not transmit properly.

All players on Red (National) and Blue (Regional+) teams are required to have an AAU membership as well. Memberships can be obtained by going to the AAU Volleyball site and selecting "Join AAU". Players will select the Athletes (Individual) membership. The Firecrackers Club Code is: **W37EE3**. Note: Memberships must be obtained by November 1st so the membership information can be submitted when registering for tournaments.

Any parents that plan to function as a Team Rep, a chaperone, or in any capacity that involves dealing with players other than their own, will be required to have USAV adult non-coach and AAU non-athlete memberships, including a successful Background Screening.

Practices and Clinics

Pre-Season:

There will be periodic practices scheduled in August, September, and October to allow our players and coaches the opportunity to get to know each other and start on some initial work.

Pre-season position clinics (August through October) are included at no additional cost for players from all teams. These clinics are optional but players are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the individual skills training.

Regular Season: Regular season and the normal practice schedule starts after the regular high school volleyball season ends. During November and December, position clinics will be mandatory for players on all Red teams. Times for each position will be forthcoming – coaches will have more details closer to November. Position Clinics are the prime opportunity to work on specific positional and individual skills as well as make sure each player gets maximum reps at their position. This allows the coach to spend more time and focus on team drills at practices.

Efforts are made to maintain the practice schedules, but they are subject to change. The Club reserves the right to make those changes as necessary to provide the most advantageous training for each level of team.

Practice, Tournament and Travel:

Practice and Tournament Attendance: Volleyball is a team sport and requires an entire team to be successful. Club volleyball is a significant commitment in time and resources and everyone plays a part in achieving team success. It

is expected that players will attend all scheduled practices, clinics, and tournaments. Absences from these not only affect the absent player but also the rest of the team. The Club recognizes that conflicts will occur. It is important for parents and players to do their very best to minimize these conflicts and when they cannot be resolved, to communicate them with the coach as early as possible so the coach can adjust and plan accordingly. Last minute absences are very detrimental to team preparation and performance. Absences the practice before and the week prior to a tournament will impact a player playing or starting in the first set of the tournament. Repeated unexcused and/or uncommunicated absences from practice can have a major impact on playing time.

FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club is NOT a pay-to-play club. Players earn their playing time based on practice, performance, attitude, and work ethic. Only the coach will decide who plays when, where and how much. She/He will also work with every player to ensure that player knows what they need to work on or achieve to get more playing time. Parents help best by being supportive of the coach and encouraging the player to ask questions and work hard to achieve the goals set by the coach. Parents and coaches have the same goals in wanting each player, and the team, to improve and to be successful.

Officiating: All players and coaches are required to become Carolina Region certified as a referee and score keeper prior to participating in tournaments. All certifications will be done online through the online Junior Scorer/Referee Clinic. For our youngest players and those that have not gone through this training before, it can be a bit overwhelming. It might be beneficial for parents to sit in on the training or for teams/teammates to coordinate a "Clinic Party" and work through the clinic together. More information can be found through your individual USAV/Carolina Region membership page on the Sports Engine account. Note: Players and coaches must complete this certification prior to December 17th.

Family Travel:

Player travel to and from tournaments and events is a family responsibility and is not included in our club's dues. When traveling to tournaments where overnight stay is needed, the Club strongly encourages a team to stay in the same hotel, if possible. Our most successful teams are ones that stay together and have frequent bonding events. Some tournaments, although not Stay-to-Plays, do offer travel services where hotel bookings can be cheaper than booking individually. The Club Travel/Team Rep coordinator will work with the Team Reps to pass this information to their respective teams.

All teams have at least one one-day tournament on their team's schedule. These Regional tournaments are coordinated by Carolina Region and will typically be located within a 1-1/2 to 2-hour drive. The competition sites will vary and Carolina Region does not release locations until two weeks prior to the tournament.

Stay-to-Play Tournaments:

All Red (National) and Blue (Regional +) teams will be attending tournaments that require "Stay-to-Play". This means that for a team to participate in that tournament, they must use a block of hotel rooms contracted through that tournament. Note: Each family on these teams agrees to book at least one of their rooms in the team block for each "Stay-to Play" tournament. This is a requirement for being on that level of team. Failure to meet a team's minimum number of rooms can disqualify a team from that tournament and cause the Club to be barred from that tournament in succeeding years. The Club travel/Team Rep coordinator will work with Team Reps and families regarding these types of reservations.

Other tournaments may add the requirement as tournament season gets closer to starting.

Team Representatives:

Each team will have a volunteer Team Representative (team parent) who will serve as a liaison between the coach and parents. The Team Rep is NOT an assistant coach and is not involved in any decisions that involve the team, such as line ups, playing time, etc. Historically, the most successful teams are those where the chemistry between parents, players and coaches is the strongest. Team Reps are a critical component of helping that happen. A Team Rep needs to be a leader who can coordinate, communicate effectively, and delegate responsibilities when needed. Strong organizational skills are preferred as this will avoid any headaches for you, the coach, and other parents. The Team Representative should have a positive outlook on the team and every parent and player associated with their team. They are expected to treat everyone with respect and raise any questions or concerns to the coach as soon as possible. A Team Representative is expected to be supportive of the team dynamic set by the coach and be a positive sounding board for players and parents.

Team Representative Responsibilities

- All Team Reps must have a USAV membership. USAV memberships can be started or renewed by going to the Carolina Region website or going to the Firecrackers website and selecting the Quick Links USAV registration link. Select the “Adult with Junior Club Membership” option. Team Reps must also pass the USAV screening.
- Team Reps for all Red/Blue teams will also need an AAU membership and pass the background check. Memberships or Renewals can be obtained by going to the AAU Volleyball site.
- Generate a team contact list for coaches and parents. This roster will include names of players and parents, jersey number, phone number, and emails.
- Set up an email/text distribution list for parents.
- Communicate regularly with the coach and/or assistant coach.
- Assist coaches in distributing practice and/or tournament information to parents.
- Coordinate and/or help organize team bonding activities.
- Send reminder email before each tournament This email should include: Team hotel and address, tournament venue and address, spectator admission information and links (if applicable), parking information, any concession and seating information, tournament schedule information and links, and what time the team should arrive.
- Responsible for coordinating STAY TO PLAY hotel accommodations as well as hotel blocks for non-Stay to Play. This also includes coordinating with other Team Reps who are traveling to the same location.
- Recruit parents to assist with activities for FC Firecrackers events including possible team outings during tournaments, food/snack setup for one-day tournaments, etc. · Recruit parents for club events.
- Monitor spectator sideline behavior during tournaments. The FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club expects players, coaches, and parents to create a positive environment and have a positive attitude during tournaments. Work with the coach to help parents not be overcome with the emotion of competition.

Social Media/Digital Media:

The club understands that advancements of technology are enabling new forms of social interaction and that social media is a popular communication tool for players, parents, and coaches. Social media is a venue that can be extremely positive and beneficial but it can also be a forum where inappropriate behavior and misconduct can

occur. Online activities and photography by coaches, staff, parents, and players that are related to the FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club are an extension of the club and are subject to all club expectations. Coaches, staff, parents, and players' online behavior should reflect the individual, the team, and the club in a positive manner and must adhere to all volleyball organizations' Codes of Conduct. Each player and their parent(s) will be required to sign the FC Firecrackers Social Media Policy prior to participating in their first practice. Violations of this policy can lead to disciplinary actions including suspension and dismissal from the team.

Player Expectations:

- Players must sign the USAV Code of Conduct and submit prior to Season Kickoff Day.
- Attend all practices and tournaments, bringing a strong work ethic.
- Be mindful of your surroundings at practices and tournaments – be responsible for your own trash and belongings.
- Be a good team player – stay positive for and supportive of your team. · Be respectful to all coaches, officials, opposing teams, and parents. Represent your team and club well.

Parent Expectations:

- Parents will sign and submit FC Firecrackers Parents' Code of Conduct.
- Assume financial responsibility and make timely payments for dues, memberships, etc.
- To be mindful of all practices, clinics, information deadlines, and tournament dates/times.
- Encourage your player, her team, and her coaches.
- Cheer for your player and her team – leave the coaching to the coach.
- Do not approach the bench, sideline, officials, or officiating table during game play or timeouts.
- Refrain from criticizing officials, opposing players or teams, other parents, coaches, player's teammates, and your player. Represent your players team and club well.
- Provide support for the Team Rep and share responsibilities among team parents. A good team parental unit makes for a good team unit.
- Build cohesion by ensuring that you only approach a coach when you are able to have a respectful and constructive conversation. Should the situation need an immediate conversation, contact the Club Director directly as soon as possible.

FC Firecrackers Volleyball Club – Club Guide Acknowledgement Form

We, the undersigned, have read and agree to all the information and requirements contained within the Firecrackers Club Guide. We understand that we are key partners in helping the player, team, and club have a successful season.

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Signature Page

Player Printed Name	Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian Printed Name	Signature	Date