

2026 Volleyball Canada Senior Indoor Open Competition Guide



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2026 Senior Open

In 2026, we will be hosting the Senior Open at the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre located just outside the city of Toronto, Ontario.

Date	City	Categories	Facility
April 3-5	Scarborough, Ontario	Open Men & Open Women	Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre

Health and Safety Considerations

In order to ensure the continued safety of participants, VC will follow Governmental and Public Health guidelines regarding current health precautions and mandates, including Covid-19 and smoke inhalation from forest fires. Changes to event protocols may be required leading up to the Opens to ensure the health and safety of all participants; any changes will be noted on the event webpage and shared with all participating teams.

Eligibility & Registration

This section deals with the registration, certification, and eligibility requirements for all Senior Opens. These requirements are in place to ensure an equal competitive structure.

1.0

Team Registration

1.1 Players: A team in any age category must have a minimum of 7 players and a maximum of 15 players registered on their official roster. A maximum of 15 players can be in uniform, participate in the warm-up, sit on the bench, and may participate in any given match.

In order to be eligible to participate in an Open, each athlete on the official roster must be registered as a member with their respective PTA and with VC. **Important!** Players can only appear on one roster (one age category) per event.

1.2 Team Personnel/Person in Authority: These are the individuals responsible for the coaching and management of the team; all team personnel must have the appropriate Leader membership with VC.

- Please note the following guidelines for the official roster for the Senior Open: **No team personnel are required,**
- If team personnel are to accompany a team, the following are maximum allowances:
A maximum of four (4) team personnel
 - A minimum of one (1) individual who must be the Head Coach
- Only those listed on the official roster are eligible to be on the score sheet and/or bench for any given match.

The following is a list of the team personnel roles that are recognized at the Open and who may be listed on the Official Roster:



- **Head Coach:** The person who is primarily responsible for coaching the team. This individual must meet all eligibility requirements in accordance with the VC Coach Certification Policy (See Section 3).

Important Reminder! An individual is not permitted to be designated as Head Coach for two teams in the same tournament. The same individual may be designated as a Head Coach for one team and a different team personnel role for another in the same tournament.

- **Assistant Coach:** The person(s) responsible for assisting in the coaching of the team. The assistant coach may only act in the role of Head Coach in extenuating circumstances and with prior approval of VC. Each team may have a maximum of three (3) assistant coaches on their official roster.
- **Team Trainer:** The person(s) responsible for assisting the team with any medical issues.
- **Team Manager:** The person(s) responsible for pre-event and on-site administrative duties for the team and who acts as a liaison between the team and other parties (ex. VC, hotels, restaurants, etc).

1.3 Team Contact: Each team must list a team contact during the registration process. This person will be responsible for ensuring communication between the team, their club, and VC. The Team Contact will not be listed on the Official Roster unless they have a dual role as an athlete and they are listed on the official roster.

1.4 Annual Membership: All participants (athletes and team personnel) must complete their membership registration process with their respective PTA. By registering with their PTA, these participants will automatically become registered members with VC. Only individuals that are properly registered and in good standing are eligible to take part in competitions sanctioned or hosted by a PTA or VC.

1.5 Province/Territory of Residence: A player/team must purchase their annual membership(s) within the province/territory in which they reside. No player/team is allowed to register with a PTA outside their province of residence without the prior approval of VC and the two (2) PTAs involved. In addition, no player/team is permitted to register with more than one PTA at the same time; players who wish to change PTAs mid-season must receive approval from VC and the PTAs involved.

1.6 Official Roster: Teams will be required to submit their roster into SportLoMo by the registration close date, March 4th, 2026. After this time, all Open rosters will be locked and verified by VC. Please note that changes or additions cannot be made during Coach Check-in, all changes must be made pre-event via the Roster Exemption Request form, see section 1.7 for more details.

Note: Membership purchases are not instantaneously uploaded to VC. Please purchase memberships at least 1 week prior to the roster lock date.

1.7 Minimum Age: All athletes, coaches and team personnel members that are on the official roster for Open must be a minimum of 19 years of age.

1.8 Registration Dates:

Age Category	City	Registration Date	Registration Time
Open Men's & Women's	Scarborough	December 4th, 2025	12:00pm EST (noon)

Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. The registration closing date is March 4th, 2026 at 11:59pm EST. Registration is limited therefore teams are encouraged to register early.

1.9 Registration fee:

Senior Open \$950 (taxes are not charged on registration fee)



1.10 Waitlist: If an age/gender category for the Senior Opens are full at the time of registration, it is strongly encouraged that you register your team onto the waitlist. If additional spots become available in that age/gender category or if a team cancels, waitlisted teams will be notified based on their position on the waitlist. Only those on the waitlist will have an opportunity to participate in the event.

There is no cost to register onto the waitlist for an event. You will only be charged once you accept your invitation to join the event.

1.11 Withdrawal Policy:

Teams who withdraw from the Senior Open will be eligible for a refund as per the following timelines:

Date	Refund
Team is replaced by a waitlisted team	Registration fee less \$150 admin fee
Team is NOT replaced by a waitlisted team	No refund
Within 2 weeks of event	No refund

1.12 Participation Eligibility: All teams (including each individual on the official roster) must meet the following minimum criteria in order to be eligible to attend the Senior Opens:

- Be a registered member, and in good standing, with their respective PTA and with VC.
- Any foreign team looking to participate in an event must be registered and in good standing with their own National Federation (See Section 2).
- Meet all additional registration requirements of their PTA and VC.

2.0

Foreign Participation

2.1 Participation Restrictions: A foreign team that wants to participate in a Senior Open must receive approval from their National Federation in order to participate. Each foreign team must provide Volleyball Canada with an official letter from their National Federation that states the team is registered and in good standing. Each Foreign Team's participants must purchase health and travel insurance and comply with Volleyball Canada's registration protocols.

2.2 Registration: Foreign teams will be required to register for the event in which they wish to participate via the Volleyball Canada website. The registration process will only be complete once Volleyball Canada provides final confirmation of the foreign team's acceptance into the event. Confirmation will be provided in writing within thirty (30) days of registration.

**Volleyball Canada reserves the right to deny the registration of a foreign team based on the registration capacity of the competition.*

For further information regarding provincial registration for foreign teams please consult the [Foreign Team and Foreign Player guide](#).



3.0

Coach Certification Policy

Volleyball Canada's Senior Open Coach Eligibility Requirements are to ensure that all coaches participating in a Senior Open have the knowledge and training necessary to provide every athlete with a safe, inclusive and responsible sport experience.

Guiding Principles:

All athletes have the right to NCCP Certified Coaching Staff.

Coaches' responsibilities include:

- provide an environment that is physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially safe for all athletes and participants.
- provide a learning environment that incorporates teaching methodologies, technical guidelines, and long-term development principles.
- Ensure that all training is current and updated, as required.

Mandatory Eligibility Requirements for Head Coaches in 2026:

All Coaches listed on a Senior Open roster must complete the requirements in Section A (below) to be eligible to participate. These requirements are mandatory for all Coaches regardless of certification status. PTAs will verify requirements for all Coaches through their registration system.

DEADLINE: Senior Open registration deadline.

SANCTIONS: Coaches who are missing any or all the requirements in *Section A* will be ineligible to participate with their team in a Coach capacity at a Senior Open for that year and will not be listed on the final team roster.

A	Canadian Record Check (CRC)	Cost varies	CPC completed within the last 3 years Screening Process completed annually
	<u>Coaches Association of Canada (CAC) Safe Sport Training</u>	Free	Credit will also be given for equivalent programs recognized by Sport Canada, i.e. Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders.
	<u>Making Head Way in Sport eLearning</u>	Free	The Making Head Way eLearning provides coaches with the latest information specific to Concussion Management

4.0

Age Categories

4.1 Competitions will be offered for both Male and Female participants. Age will be recognized as of December 31st, 2025.

4.2 Open Division: All participants in the open division must be at least 19 years of age. There is no max age in this division. NCAA, CCAA and U-Sport athletes are eligible to play in this division.

**Exemptions may be made for 18-year-old athletes by the discretion of Volleyball Canada. In the event of an exemption, only one 18-year-old will be permitted per roster. 18-year-old athlete cannot be competing at 18U PTA/National events.



Competition Regulations

This section outlines the rules and regulations which govern the Senior Opens beyond the Indoor Rulebook. In addition, general information and guidelines for participants and spectators is covered here.

5.0

Hosting Guidelines

5.1 A minimum of 4 teams per category is required to run a Senior Open. Volleyball Canada reserves the right to create Masters divisions if there are enough teams to meet the minimum requirement. VC will notify teams prior to any changes being made.

5.2 Pool/Power Pool matches will be officiated by 1 referee, and Semi-Finals and Final will be officiated by 2 referees. 2 Officials will be added when possible.

5.3 Consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited in the building by any participant listed on the roster during competition. Consumption of alcohol will be met with disciplinary action.

5.4 Coolers are not permitted inside the facility during competition.

6.0

Rules of the Game

Please consult the [2025-2026 Indoor Rulebook](#) for a complete list of rules or the 2025-2026 Indoor Rules & Policies [Updates document](#) for a list of this year's major rule changes/updates.

6.1 Warm-Up Protocol:

a) Team warm-ups will be conducted using the 2-4-4 format, which is as follows:

- 2 minutes for players to warm-up on their respective side of the court,
- 4 minutes to use the full court (traditionally used for spiking and serving practice), and
- 4 minutes for on or off the court preparations (use the space behind the opposite baseline, retrieve balls for the hitting team, etc). See item 'c' below for warm up recommendations.

b) In an effort to reduce the incidence of injuries and concussions during warm-up, Volleyball Canada has developed the following warm-up protocol. This protocol is to be followed by all teams during the designated-on court warm-up time;

1. Athletes must remain on their side of the net immediately following an attack and only move to the opposite side of the net from outside of the court. Athletes are not permitted into the receiving court.
2. Any ball from the receiving side of the court, entered to the attacking side, must be entered from outside of the court.
3. Retrieved balls must be returned along the sidelines of the court and not through the receiving court.
4. If the team is using both sides of the court, i.e. full court game type activity - only one ball can be in play at any given time.
5. Opposing teams are not permitted to use volleyballs in the free zone during the other teams allocated court time. It is recommended for the opposing team to support the retrieval of volleyballs for the team on the court.



Teams who do not follow the protocol will be notified by the referee that they must follow the above stated regulation. Teams must adjust their warm-up accordingly or may choose not to continue their hitting warm-up. Time for the hitting warm-up will not stop during the notification and adjustment period. The referee will note on the scoresheet any teams who do not follow the warm-up protocol. Teams may be eligible for further review and / or disciplinary action if multiple infractions are noted on the scoresheet.

c) Warm Up recommendations:

- Hitting should be directed away from courts with active games and from spectator seating areas whenever possible.

6.2 Playing Area

formerly Sport Court Rule

The playing area includes the playing court and the free zone. Each team must play within its designated playing area. See *Rule 1 - Playing Area*, in the Volleyball Canada Rule Book, for further details.

Sport Court:

The area beyond the edge of the sport court is designated as a non-playing zone. Therefore, the last point of contact prior to contact with the ball must be on the sport court and the player must always play the ball with at least one foot on the sport court.

Examples:

- One foot on the sport court, one foot on the cement while playing the ball = play continues;
- Jump in the air, play the ball, and land off the sport court = play is whistled dead;
- Play the ball on the sport court, momentum of athlete carries them off the court = play continues;

Any service action must be initiated with at least one foot in contact with the Sport Court.

A Player may not cross the centre line inside or outside the net post at any time to pursue the ball beyond the antenna.

Non-Sport Court (ie - gymnasium):

A player may not enter any other court space or interfere with play in another game to play a ball. A player may not step on any equipment outside of the playing area to play the ball.

6.4 Cameras and Tripods

Teams are permitted to record matches throughout the Opens tournaments however please note:

- Tripods are not permitted on the sport court nor can they be placed in any team or player areas (Team bench, warm up zone, serving zone).
- Tripods cannot be placed in areas not permitted for spectators,
- VC is not responsible for any damage to the camera or related equipment
- VC reserves the right to restrict/deny the filming of any matches for safety and/or other reasons



6.4 Score Keeper

Each team may be required to provide a volunteer for scoring. Teams will be assigned these responsibilities via the competition schedule. Assigned matches will be either directly before or directly after a team's own match.

7.0

Team Check-In

7.1. The Team Check-In process will take place prior to the first match for each team.

7.2 Only individuals on the official team roster can check-in their team; preferably the Team Captain or Coach.

7.3 The individual completing check-in will be required to perform the following duties:

- Remove all team personnel and players from the official roster who are not participating in the event.
- Sign off on the roster confirming its accuracy for the duration of the competition.
- Provide written acknowledgement that the participants understand the following:
 - 2026 VC Senior Indoor Open Competition Guide
 - 2025-2026 VC Rule Book
 - VC Code of Conduct
 - VC Concussion Guidelines
 - VC Nationals warm-up protocol
 - Safe Sport training requirements

7.4 The individual completing check-in will receive an approved roster upon the completion of check-in. The Head Coach/team captain must carry this at all times for verification by tournament officials. If this roster is lost, a new roster sheet will be provided at a cost of \$20.00.

8.0

Competition Ball & Uniforms

8.1 Official Game Ball

The official supplier for the Senior Opens game ball is Mikasa. All teams will use the Mikasa V200W.

8.2 Net Heights

Women	Men
Senior: 2.24m	Senior: 2.43m

8.3 Athlete Uniforms

- A player's equipment consists of a jersey and shorts.



- The colour and the design for the jerseys and shorts must be uniform for the team (except for the Libero). The Libero player(s) must wear a uniform which clearly contrasts with the rest of the team. (Please refer to the Uniform Guidelines).
- All jerseys must be uniquely numbered (1 to 99) and must be on the front and back.
- Shoes must be non-marking.
- For more information on athlete uniforms please review section 4.3 and 19.2 of the Indoor Rulebook and the Uniform Guidelines.

8.4 Coaches and Team Staff Attire

All coaches and team staff should follow the dress guideline below during all of their matches:

- Must be dressed to represent their team in a professional manner.
- Secure shoes (including both toe and heel straps) are encouraged for any team personnel who are on the sport court for both warm up and match play.
- Hats are permitted.

These guidelines are strongly recommended for anyone acting as a line judge or score keeper during an Opens.

9.0

Schedules & Seeding

9.1 Draw

VC strives to provide a minimum of 4 matches per team at a Senior Open.

All matches are best-of-three or best-of-five. Please review the schedule for final details.

9.2 Schedule

VC strives to release the draft schedule 2 weeks prior to the event start date. Please note that draft schedules are subject to change and teams are required to verify the final schedule to ensure they are on time for matches.

9.3 Seeding

The seeding format for the 2026 Senior Open will be determined based on the number of teams registered for each category. If participation numbers are low, a draw will be made to seed the teams and a full round robin will be played. If sufficient teams register to create pools, teams will be placed in pools that allow teams to play others from throughout the country. Returning teams will be seeded using their finish from the previous year.

9.4 Wave Times

If registration is large enough, Day 1 and Day 2 will have waves.

- A morning wave which runs from approximately 7:30am to 2:15pm
- An afternoon wave which runs from approximately 2:30pm to 8:30pm

NOTE: This seeding plan is not final and may be adjusted closer to the tournament.



10.0

Medical

Medical services will be provided to all participating teams free of charge via certified athletic therapists. Services for athletes includes first aid response, concussion management, as well as athletic taping.

Concussion Management

All teams participating at Nationals are required to follow the Volleyball Canada Concussion Protocol. Further details on the protocol can be found in the [Policy section](#) of the VC Website.

Any athlete who has a suspected concussion is strongly encouraged to visit the onsite medical team to complete a concussion assessment via the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT 6). Should an athlete fail the assessment they will be removed from play.

Athletes are permitted to follow-up their initial assessment with a medical professional. If the athlete is deemed as safe to return to immediate sport participation they may do so with submission of the Medical Assessment Letter to the on-site medical team and/or competition staff.

If there is a medical professional on site designated to manage concussion assessments, athletes are not permitted to seek an assessment from an off-site medical professional.

11.0

Awards

11.1 Senior Open will distribute the following awards:

Prize Money: Maximum purse valued at \$3,500 (\$1,750/gender/event) * Based on a minimum 12 team draw.

12.0

Sanctions

12.1 A team or an individual may be sanctioned, including fines, if any of the following infractions occur while the team is participating at a Senior Open:

- The tournament equipment is deliberately damaged by any member of their team.
- The Volleyball Canada Code of Conduct is violated in any way.
- The [2025-2026 Indoor Rulebook](#) is violated in any way.
- A team does not fulfill its competitive obligations to an event. If for some reason your team is unable to attend an event that they have registered for or is unable to attend a game that they are scheduled for, it is the team's responsibility to notify a VC representative as soon as possible.
- Any other infraction that the Competition Officials deem to be detrimental to the event and/or its participants.

12.2 In addition to performance bond related sanctions listed above, Volleyball Canada also has the following sanctions/payments in place for all Senior Opens:



- \$150.00 for Withdrawal prior to the registration deadline, see section 1.14 for a full list of withdrawal fees;
- \$100.00 cash for assembling the Competition Jury to assess an official protest

12.3 A team or club that is sanctioned in any way because of an infraction related to a Senior Open will be placed in bad standing with VC and their respective PTA. The team or club will remain in bad standing until the sanction has been removed or paid in full to Volleyball Canada. While a team or club is in bad standing, they will not be able to register for any events sanctioned by their PTA or VC.

13.0

Protest & Appeal Process

13.1 Any protest or appeal at a Senior Open will be overseen by a Competition Jury, composed of the following:

- A member of the NIC or an approved designate.
- A member of the Competition Staff.
- A member of the Referee Development Team or approved designate.

A Competition Jury member or an approved designate will be present at all venues.

13.2 The Competition Jury has the highest level of authority at the Senior Opens and its decisions take precedence and cannot be appealed. They are in place to evaluate complaints and render decisions regarding issues that arise about the event organization and all technical matters. The Competition Jury may be called upon to make decisions on, but not limited to, any of the following matters:

- Competition Protests
- Player Eligibility
- Uniforms
- Spectators
- Playing surface/area
- Schedules and Draws

13.3 The following types of issues can be protested or appealed:

- An improper decision by the referee who did not apply the rules or regulations.
- An improper decision of the scorer who made a mistake on the rotational order or on the score.
- Please note that judgement calls cannot be protested. A referee's decision regarding a playing action (ie. ball handling or misconduct) cannot be protested.
- The protest will be accepted or rejected prior to the resumption of play by the tournament jury.

13.4 To officially protest or appeal a decision, the captain must launch the protest immediately to the referee who will then indicate to the scorekeeper that a protest has been lodged.



A fee of \$100 must be provided in cash immediately in order to assemble the Competition Jury to assess the protest. The funds will be returned if the protest is upheld; however, if it is overturned, the funds will go towards referee development.

13.5 In case of an incident during a match, the protest has to be requested at the moment the incident occurs, before play resumes. Please remember that NO match will be replayed, as protests have to be placed at the moment of the incident. For further explanation, please refer to Protest Procedures in Section IV of the Indoor Rulebook.

In the event of a protest, the following will occur:

- The referee will notify both teams that there is a protest.
- The coach of the protesting team will be asked to provide the \$100 cash protest fee and to record the protest.
- Both teams will be asked to stay on the court until the final decision is rendered.
- The chairperson of jury will convene the jury.
- The jury will interview the coach of the protesting team.
- The jury will interview all involved parties, as they see fit (e.g.: opposing coach, officials, captains, athletes, etc.)
- The jury will deliberate and render a decision.
- The chairperson of the jury will inform all parties involved of the decision made.

14.0

Code of Conduct & Discipline

15.1 The [2025-2026 Indoor Rulebook](#) details the Code of Ethics for Referees, the Code of Conduct for all participants, Anti-Doping Policy and Disciplinary Action. Any breach of these policies are subject to fines and/or sanctions as outlined on in the [Volleyball Canada's Discipline and Complaints Policy](#).

15.0

Safe Sport

VC is committed to a sport environment free from abuse that is safe for all participants. For more information, our policies, and resources, [please click here](#).



Safe Sport Reporting

VC maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of abuse. If you witness or suspect abuse, it is your responsibility to report it promptly to the appropriate organization so that action can be taken. To file a safe sport complaint, please visit the [Reporting Super Highway](#). This platform is designed to assist athletes, coaches, parents, officials, and others in the volleyball community by helping them identify the correct organization to report concerns related to maltreatment or inappropriate conduct in sport. Based on your location and the nature of the concern, the Super Highway will guide you to the appropriate organization with jurisdiction to handle your complaint.

Education - As of April 1, 2020, all individuals affiliated with a Sport Canada-funded organization are required to complete training on conduct to prevent and address maltreatment in sport. This includes: coaches, referees, parents of youth athletes, high-performance staff and contractors, officials, and administrative staff and volunteers - regardless of whether they have direct contact with athletes.

To meet this requirement, Volleyball Canada mandates that all participants across the country complete an approved Safe Sport e-learning module every three years. Members are responsible for staying current with this training.

The Coaching Association of Canada Safe Sport Course is an approved module and can be accessed here: [Safe Sport Training](#).

Background Screening

Volleyball Canada requires that all coaches, referees, team staff, volunteers, Integrated Support Team (IST) members, and other personnel involved in domestic competitions complete a **criminal record check** issued within **36 months** of the event they are attending.

Volleyball Canada has partnered with Sterling Talent Solutions, a Canada-wide online criminal record check service. These checks can be shared with other organizations as needed.

If you are registering through SportLoMo, you will have the option to purchase and complete your Sterling background check directly within the platform.

For individuals in provinces that **do not** use SportLoMo, you can access the background check service through the following link: [Sterling Backcheck](#).

Disclosure Form

All coaches, referees, team staff, volunteers, Integrated Support Team (IST) members, and other personnel involved in Volleyball Canada domestic competitions are required to complete the annual Screening Disclosure Form (SDF). This form is part of VC's commitment to maintaining a safe and accountable sport environment.

The SDF must be completed when registering in SportLoMo.

To complete registration you must complete:

- Safe Sport Training
- Criminal Record Check
- Screening Disclosure Form