



Letter from Pittsburgh Elite Volleyball Association

To Our Pittsburgh Elite Athletes:

We are gearing up for another great season at Pittsburgh Elite! Our club is dedicated to developing you as an athlete to consistently compete at the highest level, promote lifelong fitness, and create a positive and rewarding athletic experience for all involved.

To support our goals this season, please take time to read and understand this Athlete Contract, which outlines our expectations for a positive experience and successful season for you and all Pittsburgh Elite athletes. Once you have read and understand the Contract, sign and return the signature page at our Meet & Greet Event in August. Please let us know if you have any questions and we look forward to seeing you at practice in December!

PEVA - ALL IN!

Ashley Green and The Pittsburgh Elite Volleyball Association Staff



Program Standards and Expectations

A single athlete's attitude and actions can have a big impact on both their team and training environment. In order to help shape the Pittsburgh Elite training environment and reward athletes for their positive choices, we ask all athletes to abide by the following standards and expectations as they strive to become the athlete everyone wants on their team.

Actions and Behaviors

1. Athletes must adhere to the USAV/KRVA Participant Code of Conduct.
2. Athletes will be examples of good sportsmanship at all times.
3. Athletes will act with respect toward opponents, officials, spectators, teammates, coaches, and all involved in any event.
4. Each disciplinary case will be judged individually. The team coach, with the assistance of the administration as necessary, has the final decision in disciplinary situations.

Training Standards

1. Athletes are expected to adhere to the following training standards and may be excused from a portion or all of practice, scrimmages, and/or tournaments for failure to do so.

PREPARATION & PERFORMANCE- These two training standards go hand in hand. If you practice the way you perform, then you will be prepared. Our vision is to be an elite performing club. In order to achieve that goal, we must prepare our minds and bodies to compete at a high level by developing a consistent routine of healthy habits. These include self-care (eating healthy, getting enough sleep/rest, drinking plenty of water, etc.) physical strength and fitness, and positive self talk. This isn't just a once in a while thing, it is a lifestyle and a commitment to excellence.

Results are important, and the scoreboard matters, but we must continue to expand our thoughts on performance beyond simply winning and losing. By preparing ourselves through dedication and hard work, we will accept challenges more confidently, reduce fear, and continue to grow as athletes, competitors, and people. In order to perform at our best, we must believe in ourselves and work hard to prepare to compete. This is the recipe for success.

"Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is." Vince Lombardi



Program Standards and Expectations Continued

EFFORT- Effort allows teammates and coaches the opportunity to see how invested you are. All athletes have complete control over the amount and type of effort they put out. It is what you are made of, your physical hustle (internal motor and drive) and enthusiasm (passion). Great effort is a decision you must make, and consistently bring every day to become better. This makes a huge impact on a team.

VALUES- Strong moral ethics and values are the core of our organization's culture, and are reflected in our behaviors and actions. We take pride in modeling and teaching teamwork, responsibility, work ethic, respect, passion, and equality. Playing team sports can teach and promote positive character and life values on and off the court. Our coaches and staff, and our student athletes and their families are the primary focus of Pittsburgh Elite. A large part of growth and success is providing a place where our volleyball family feels valued and an important part of a team. We value the relationships we form, built on respect and trust.

ATTITUDE- The right attitude and positive thinking are necessary mental skills for maximizing athletic potential and performing well in sports. This is one of the training standards that separates good players from great players. Athletes who are upbeat, love the game, have a tremendous appreciation for when their teammates do something well, are the types of people we want to surround ourselves with at Pittsburgh Elite. Volleyball is a game and you have to make sure you are having fun and enjoying the process along the way. Things might not always go our way, but we will practice using positive affirmations to control our emotions, overcome adversity, and become better.

Practices and Training

1. Safety is our first priority. Athletes will follow directions as given and behave appropriately for the competitive environment.
2. Athletes will be on the court in practice attire (including practice t-shirt, shoes, and knee pads) at their designated start time for practice.
3. Minimum jewelry is to be worn during practice or training sessions.
4. Cell phones should be kept in the athlete's bag for the duration of the practice and/or training session.



Program Standards and Expectations Continued

Competitions

1. Athletes must bring their full uniform to all competitions. This includes both jerseys, spandex/shorts, kneepads and the club issued warm-up.
2. Minimum jewelry should be worn in the gym or on the courts.
3. Athletes are to limit cell phone and device use so as to not interfere with team responsibilities.
4. During work assignments and/or breaks, athletes are expected to remain together wherever possible. Teams should be watching and engaging with volleyball.
5. If you are required to work the final match of a day, no athlete regardless of work assignment may leave until the match is completed unless there is an approved extenuating circumstance.

Absences

1. The absence of one person affects the entire team.
2. All practices, scrimmages, and tournaments are mandatory unless otherwise specified.
3. If you have a conflict with a Pittsburgh Elite practice, scrimmage, tournament, or other event, you must alert your coach to your absence before the scheduled event.
4. Continued absences, including excused absences, may impact your participation at scrimmages and tournaments at the coach's discretion due your failure to practice with your team, learn your team's strategy, and gain the necessary skills to compete.
5. All absences due to injury will be handled on a case by case basis.
6. Athletes who are returning from an injury may be asked to provide a doctor's note.

Playing Time

1. Many individual factors influence athlete playing time. These include your commitment to training, presence and execution at practice, skill set, anticipated contribution to the team, performance under pressure and body language.
2. Many game-time and team-level factors influence athlete playing time. These include the opponent's strategies, player matchups, limits on substitutions, team chemistry, and anticipated offensive options.
3. Many intangibles also influence athlete playing time. These include your ability to inspire others, resolve conflicts, and the support you give your teammates.
4. All players in good standing are given a chance to contribute wherever possible during competitions. These opportunities cannot be guaranteed. Be aware that your idea of when these opportunities should occur may not coincide with the perception of the coaching staff.



Program Standards and Expectations Continued

Conflict Resolution

1. For athletes needing clarification regarding their role on a team or any other items, the following procedure will be followed
 - a. Athlete and Coach - Athletes are to first approach their coach directly
 - b. Athlete and Parent with Coach - If the athlete's concern was not answered to their satisfaction, the athlete and their parent may meet with their coach to discuss the issue.
 - c. Athlete and Parent with Coach and Mediator (when necessary) - For items requiring further discussion and clarification, the athlete, their parent, and the coach will meet with a Pittsburgh Elite mediator.
 - d. Athlete and Parent with Coach, Mediator, and Administrator - If the item has not been satisfactorily resolved through any prior steps, the athlete, their parent, the coach, a Pittsburgh Elite mediator, and a Pittsburgh Elite administrator will meet and bring the issue to resolution. Any decision made by the administrator will be final.

Athlete Code of Conduct

1. I will be truthful in my interactions with teammates, coaches, my parents, staff, and trainers.
2. I will appreciate and show respect to those who work on my behalf (team managers, administrators, support personnel, and officials), those who coach me, those who train with me, and those who compete against me.
3. I will learn how to set goals, live by them, and develop a lifestyle where I am committed and focused putting forth my maximum effort with a positive attitude.
4. I will maintain my academics on a solid foundation throughout my career, never creating problems for my team because I failed to take care of my academic responsibilities.
5. I will be loyal to my teammates and my program. I will overcome the urge to complain, think negatively, backstab, take part in cliques, or act in any manner that negatively disrupts team chemistry.
6. I will be a positive ambassador of our program making my teammates, staff, friends, and the community feel great about being around Pittsburgh Elite volleyball.
7. I will learn to anticipate upcoming responsibilities and raise my voice to address problems at their onset.
8. I will accept the decisions of the coaching staff regarding team management, playing time, and training techniques and support my teammates as we train and compete regardless of whether I am on the court or on the bench.



Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy

PURPOSE

The Pittsburgh Elite Volleyball Association (the “Club”) recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our student-athletes use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors as well as when club members post/share inappropriate and/or offensive behaviors, language or photos on social media platforms.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION CONTENT

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Volleyball Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- Drugs or alcohol use;
- Sexually-oriented conversation; sexually explicit language, sexual activity
- The adult’s personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
- Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete’s personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, staff member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff, the board or other athletes?”

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with athletes is **Transparent**, **Accessible** and **Professional**.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.



Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy Continued

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choice, tone, grammar and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the **T.A.P.** criteria, then it is likely your method and manner of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

FACEBOOK, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, BLOGS AND SIMILAR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Coaches may have personal pages, but they are strongly encouraged not to have or accept any athlete's "friend" request. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "private message" or "instant message" each other through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter and Instagram, however, coaches cannot retweet an athlete message or post nor comment on an athlete's picture or post. Athletes are strongly encouraged not to comment on coaches' and/or staff members' pages.

The club has official Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts that athletes and their parents can "like" or "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches and athletes are encouraged to set their pages to "private" to prevent others from accessing personal information.

TEXTING/MESSAGING SERVICES (WhatsApp, etc)

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 10pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities. Best practice is to have your Team Coordinator in any team group message or the parent in any coach to player message.

EMAIL

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach or a board member should also be copied.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communications. Immediate compliance without repercussion must be granted.



Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy Continued

MISCONDUCT

Social media and electronic communications can be used to commit misconduct (e.g. emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment and hazing). Such inappropriate and offensive behaviors on social media platforms and electronic communications by coaches, staff, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of the USA Volleyball Participant Safety Handbook.

Examples of inappropriate and offensive behaviors concerning participation in online communities and electronic communications may include depictions or presentations of the following:

- Photos, videos, posts or comments showing the personal use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco (e.g. no holding cups, cans, shot glasses, tobacco products, etc.).
- Photos, videos and comments that are of sexual nature. This includes links to websites of a pornographic nature and other inappropriate material
- Pictures, videos, posts or comments that condone drug-related activity. This includes but is not limited to images that portray the personal use of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.
- Online content that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning or threatening toward any other individual or entity (examples: derogatory comments regarding another individual or team within or outside of our club; taunting comments aimed at a student-athlete, coach or other team within or outside of our club; derogatory comments against race, sexual orientation and/or gender).
- No posts should depict or encourage unacceptable, violent or illegal activities (examples: hazing, sexual harassment/assault, gambling, discrimination, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, underage drinking, illegal drug use).

VIOLATIONS

Violations of the Club's Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy should be reported to the Associate Director of Pittsburgh Elite. Complaints and allegations will be addressed following the appropriate procedure.

A USA Volleyball participant (player, coach, administrator) or parent of a participant who violates this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include verbal or written warnings, suspension, release from a team, termination of employment, referral to KRVA, USAV and/or law enforcement authorities.



Acknowledgement

I have read and understand the Pittsburgh Elite Athlete Contract. I agree to follow these expectations and policies and cooperate fully with the other members of the team and coaching staff.

Athlete's Name: _____
(Last) (First)

Athlete's Signature: _____

I have read and understand the Pittsburgh Elite Athlete Contract. I agree to support these expectations and policies.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please sign and return only this page to Pittsburgh Elite. Retain a copy of the Athlete Contract for your records.