



Letter from Pittsburgh Elite Volleyball Association

We are thrilled to be continuing the PEVA Boys program at Pittsburgh Elite! While we strive for a high level of success on the court, we believe it is just as important for our athletes to enjoy their experience with their coaches and teammates throughout the season.

We have developed the Pittsburgh Elite Parent Contract to ensure all of our players will experience a safe and positive environment throughout the season. This requires a commitment from each athlete and family to abide by the principles stated in the attached contract.

Please take the time to read and understand the information in this contract before signing the signature page. We will be collecting the signed contracts at our annual kick-off meeting. Please let us know if you have any questions and we look forward to seeing you soon!.

PEVA - ALL IN!

Ashley Green and The Pittsburgh Elite Volleyball Association Staff



Parent Code of Conduct

Relationships

All adults involved in youth sports are role models for our athletes. Yes, this includes parents. Whether you are aware or not, your children internalize what you shout from the sidelines, the feedback you give after a tough match, and what you say about their teammates and coaches on the way home from a game or practice. Be a positive role model for your child and their teammates. Provide them with the encouragement and support they need before, during, and after practices and tournaments, including in the car on the way home.

It is vital that you help your child to embrace their role, no matter what it may be and even if you do not wholeheartedly agree with where or how much they play. In order for them to have the best possible experience, they will need encouragement to embrace and master their role. This sets a solid foundation upon which they can begin to expand their contribution to her team.

Winning is important, but so is promoting an environment that enables growth and learning. Your child's team will win. They will also lose. They will certainly make many mistakes. Your unwavering support and encouragement for your child and their teammates will teach the most important lesson and allow all athletes to learn from both success and failure.

Your child's coach

When you attended tryouts, you made it known that you were looking to hire a professional to coach your child. Show that you were wise with your investment and choice; let the coaches coach. By doing so you will be respecting the daily challenges coaches face and the time commitment and emotional investment they make to your child and Pittsburgh Elite.

Help alleviate undue stress on your child by supporting the coach's message. Imagine an athlete's confusion when the coaching staff and teammates have been practicing strategy A for weeks and are finally seeing success with it when her/his parent tells him/her that the whole idea of strategy A is ridiculous, coach knows nothing, and they've been wasting time learning it in the first place. Who does the athlete believe? How do they continue to respect both the coach and the parent? What happens to their enthusiasm for practice and for performing his/her best at games with the parent looking on?

You may not always agree with your child's coach, but please do not contradict the coach's message or make public complaints about your child's coach. Support the message. Become familiar with Pittsburgh Elite's culture and reinforce those expectations with your child. Under no circumstances should you "coach" your child, their teammates, or other athletes from the sidelines.



Parent Code of Conduct Continued

Training Standards

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. Please reinforce these standards with your athlete.

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

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.



Parent Code of Conduct Continued

Playing Time and Team Composition

Team and age-group placement are at the discretion of Pittsburgh Elite. Pittsburgh Elite does not guarantee equal playing time on any team. Coaches are entrusted to make decisions regarding playing time and team strategies. These decisions, as well as team composition and age-group placement, are non-negotiable with parents, guardians, family, friends, and fans. The Pittsburgh Elite Athlete Contract outlines a number of factors that influence playing time and team roles. Athletes uncertain about their role on their team or with questions concerning their performance are encouraged to speak directly to their coach. Coaches are available to their athletes and will embrace all conversations as a means by which to help athletes learn, grow, and mature.

Conflict Resolution

If a situation should arise where your child feels it necessary to have a discussion with their coach, please encourage your child to do so. Instead of complaining publicly, work to become part of the solution. No parent or family member may approach any Pittsburgh Elite coach at any tournament, scrimmage, or practice regarding any issue pertaining to coaching decisions, performance of athletes, or playing time.

Courtesy is required in all verbal and written communication. Do not criticize, harass, or verbally attack any coaches, staff members, board members, players, parents, opponents, opposing team coaches and staff, athletes and coaches refereeing matches, USAV/JVA/AAU staff, or officials.

If you encounter an uncomfortable situation involving inappropriate behavior from players, coaches, parents, fans, or anyone involved in our volleyball community, please contact one of the directors, Ashley Green or Lynda Scahill, immediately.

The following is our conflict resolution procedure:

1. Athlete and Coach - Athletes are to first approach their coach directly.
2. Athlete and Parent with Coach - If the athlete's concern was not resolved with the initial meeting, the athlete and their parent may meet with their coach to discuss the issue.
3. 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.



Parent Code of Conduct Continued

4. Athlete and Parent with Coach, Mediator, and Administrator - If the issue 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.

Sportsmanship

Your behavior is a model for your child and their teammates. You should serve as a positive role model at all practices, scrimmages, and tournaments. Behave in a way that exudes sportsmanship, respect, and grace. Parents and guardians are expected to represent the best of Pittsburgh Elite by conducting themselves in an appropriate and respectful manner toward all coaches, staff members, board members, players, parents, opponents, opposing team coaches and staff, athletes and coaches refereeing matches, USAV/JVA/AAU staff, and all officials at all times.

You are responsible for your own behavior and that of your family members and friends at games and practices. Please help us foster a positive community where our athletes are encouraged to work hard, learn from mistakes, and strive for excellence. Our practices and tournaments are open for you to watch, but players are expected to be committed, focused, and attentive to their team and coaches. No one is permitted to “coach” athletes from the sidelines, ever.

Travel Season Policies

Season Fees

By accepting your offer you are securing a place on a Pittsburgh Elite team and prohibiting others from taking that spot. With your acceptance you agree to pay the total tuition due by the dates specified in the Active registration system. Injury, conflicts, or quitting for any reason does not remove or lessen your financial obligation to Pittsburgh Elite. Unless otherwise specified in writing and agreed to by a Pittsburgh Elite Director and/or Comptroller, your financial obligation is as follows.

Failure to make a payment or arrange for a mutually agreeable payment schedule by the date indicated could result in your account being turned to collections and/or your athlete being unable to participate.

Financial Assistance

Pittsburgh Elite Volleyball Association offers assistance for athletes with demonstrated financial need. If athletes face a financial barrier, please consider completing an application for financial assistance. The initial round of applications will be considered in October/November, but Pittsburgh Elite will continue to evaluate demonstrated need requests on a rolling basis throughout the season.



Travel Season Policies Continued

Families interested in making a charitable donation are encouraged to choose the Pittsburgh Elite Financial Assistance Fund. Pittsburgh Elite is 501(c)(3) and all Financial Assistance donations assist families with demonstrated financial need.

Fundraising

All Pittsburgh Elite travel team members are asked to sell four calendars. Additional calendars can be sold for an account credit per calendar sold. The calendar fundraiser supports the hardship fund. Lottery calendars are passed out in November, and the calendar stubs are DUE by the end of January.

Athlete Eligibility

Pittsburgh Elite may be required to submit certain information to verify athlete and team eligibility for tournaments. Failure to provide the requested documentation may impact athlete eligibility. Required forms and documents may include, but is not limited to: a copy of a birth certificate, signed USAV medical release, signed Athlete Contract, signed Parent Contract, facility waivers, and Lindsay's Law verification.

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

Tournament Hotels

Pittsburgh Elite teams may compete in tournaments that are multi day events and require overnight stays. If this is the case and hotels are necessary, our travel/hotel coordinator, April Blankenship, will provide some options that you could choose from. We try to offer hotels that are close to the venue, budget friendly, etc., but you are more than welcome to find accommodations on your own as well.

Tournament and Practice Schedule

Pittsburgh Elite shares each team's practice and travel schedule as soon as possible each season. There are many variables that influence your child's team's schedule including coach availability, court availability, holiday schedules, training patterns, rest periods, standardized testing, and tournament availability, to name a few.

In the event that inclement weather forces the cancellation of a practice, the first two practices are not rescheduled and are considered "snow days". This buffer is built into the tuition cost for each team.



Tournament cancellations due to weather or other extenuating circumstances are rare, but may occur. Those instances will be handled on a case by case basis based on the team, tournament availability, and other various factors.

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/family, 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 (GroupMe, 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 an administrator of the club 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.

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 a 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 Parent Contract. I agree to follow these rules and policies and I will do everything within my control to make this a positive experience for my child, other athletes, families, and coaches.

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

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

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