

2026 MHSAA Girls Volleyball Rules Interpretations & Updates

2026 TOURNAMENT DATES	COMPETITION LIMITATIONS
Districts – Week of Nov. 2-7	18 days of competition
Regionals – Nov. 10 (Semis) and 12 (Finals)	Maximum of 18 sets per day
Quarterfinals – Nov. 17	ALL dual varsity must be 3/5
Semifinals – Nov. 19-20	ALL levels must use rally scoring
Finals – Nov. 21	

*A student shall not play for two or more teams on any level (varsity or subvarsity, scrimmage or contest) in the same sport on the same day.

PRE-MATCH PROTOCOL FOR POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT MATCHES

20 minutes should be on the clock and the clock should be running:

- 20 – 16 min. Shared time on the court, no volleyballs crossing the net.
- 16 – 12 min. Home team takes the court.
- 12 – 08 min. Visiting team takes the court.
- 08 – 04 min. Home team takes the court.
- 04 – 00 min. Visiting team takes the court.

Immediately after timed warm-ups, teams report to the appropriate end line.

Pre-match activities then begin:

- National Anthem
- Introduction of players

Players stay on or near end line – do not shake hands with opposing coach or referee.

After introductions and the National anthem, R1 whistles and motions (first) the captains and then the rest of the team, to the net. After the handshake, the non-players go to the team bench. The starters go to their floor position. Then the R2 moves to the sideline beside the court and checks the lineups for each team (from the lineup card). First set begins.

UNSPORTING CONDUCT

- a. Warning (yellow card) for first minor offenses.
- b. Unsporting penalty (red card) for first serious offense or second minor offense and loss of rally/point awarded to opponent.
- c. Disqualification (yellow and red card) for first flagrant offense, second serious offense; or third minor offense and loss of rally/point awarded to opponent. Offender is disqualified from further participation in match and may be removed from the vicinity of the team bench.
- d. Forfeit results when:
 - 1. Disqualified individual violates conduct rules following disqualification.
 - 2. Coach is disqualified and removed from premises and no other authorized school personnel is available to take the bench.
 - 3. Team refuses to play when directed to do so by the R1.

All cards carry over from set to set throughout the match.

26-27 MHSAA POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Ball – A (royal) blue/grey/white, smooth-textured volleyball must be used at all girls high school level matches (regular season and post-season).

ART. 4...Flags shall be used by line judges for signals and should be red in color. Host school provides flags.

NOTE: ART. 1... Line judges shall be provided by the host school.

*[Best practices for Line Judges](#) should be studied in advance of the match.

Arm/Elbow Guards/Terry Cloth Wrist Bands – We allow a sleeve/guard with an elbow pad or “terry cloth” wristband as long as there is nothing hard or unyielding in the sleeve. Currently the NFHS says they should be the same color as the predominant color of the uniform but we will allow a solid white or black (similar to basketball). If more than one player wears such, they all have to wear the same color. In other words, whatever one wears (color-wise) all that choose to wear sleeves would have to be the same color.

LETTER OF PERMISSION REQUIRED FROM MHSAA

Coaches & officials are reminded that players with special equipment (artificial limb, hearing transmitter, heart monitor, insulin pump, helmet for concussion management, etc.) must have a letter of permission from the MHSAA. Coaches will be responsible to have this letter with them to present to officials at each contest. To receive letter from MHSAA: send request & description of device/how secured, name/grade/age of athlete, etc.

REMINDERS: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NFHS & OTHER RULE CODES

1. Net fault occurs when:
A player contacts any part of the net, including the net cable or net antennas
Net fault = loss of rally/point
2. No Pursuit Rule
3. No Extended Intermission:
The time period between sets of a match shall be no more than 3 minutes. Host management may use the intermission between the 2nd and 3rd sets for a special promotion or recognition ONLY; if this option is exercised, the intermission shall not exceed 5 minutes.
4. Teams remain on the same team bench for the entire match, unless the R1 determines that one side of the court has a distinct disadvantage, in which case teams shall switch benches between each set.
5. Center line (more restrictive)

26-27 NATIONAL FEDERATION RULES CHANGES

4-2-1a, 4-2-1i(3) (NEW), 4-2-2: Libero uniform bottoms may be any color and no longer must match the team uniform bottoms.

Rationale: Allows more flexibility in the libero uniform bottoms while ensuring that the libero uniform top continues to contrast with their teammates.

5-5-3b(21): The second referee will provide a double whistle warning between sets at two minutes, 30 seconds (4:30 when intermission is used) instead of 2 minutes, 45 seconds.

Rationale: Improves pace of play between sets by notifying teams earlier to make their way onto the court for the officials to administer lineup checks before the final audio signal and resumption of play.

6-4-2, 10-4-3a, 10-4-3d: A team may designate up to two liberos, but only one libero can be in the game at a time. When a team designates two liberos and one is injured/ill, a new libero may be re-designated. When a team designates two liberos and one is disqualified; the team must continue with one libero.

Rationale: Allows more student-athletes to participate by creating an additional opportunity for coaches without having to utilize a substitution.

6-4 PENALTIES 1c (NEW), 12-2-8b NOTE (NEW): If non-playing teammate(s) (bench players) enter the court during play it is illegal alignment. It remains a conduct violation if a coach or team attendant (anyone not in uniform) enters the court while the ball is in play.

Rationale: More appropriately assesses illegal alignment (loss of rally/point awarded to the opponent) to non-playing teammates who enter the court while the ball is in play. A player who enters the court during play may still receive a conduct violation if they engage in disconcerting acts, disrespectful language, etc. This penalty realignment allows officials to appropriately penalize teams based on participant actions.

6-5-1: Players on the serving team are not permitted to raise their hands above their heads during service until the ball has passed beyond the net.

Rationale: Discourages player positioning during the serve that prevents the receiving team from viewing service contact and/or the flight of the ball and assists officials when evaluating the existence of screening. This change aligns with all other volleyball rules codes.

9-2-1 NOTE 1 (NEW): Players shall not wear any audio or video devices during the match.

Rationale: Clarifies the prohibition of electronic communication with and by players during the match and aligns with other NFHS rules codes.

12-2-8m (NEW): It is an unsporting conduct violation if coaches, non-playing teammates or team attendants use props on the bench during celebrations.

Rationale: Clarifies appropriate bench conduct for consistent enforcement by eliminating the use of props in bench celebrations while promoting sportsmanship and preventing disruption and potential safety concerns.

26-27 NFHS VOLLEYBALL MAJOR EDITORIAL CHANGES

1-5-1, 5-2-1b, 5-4-3c(1), 5-4-4a, 7-1-1a, 7-1-1 PENALTIES 3, 7-1-2a, 7-1-4 PENALTIES 1, 9-9-1h

26-27 NFHS VOLLEYBALL POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Host Management Best Practices
2. Electronic Devices
3. Bench Personnel – Non-Playing Teammates
4. NFHS Authenticating Mark