



FAQ for the 2020-2021 Season

Are clubs allowed to hold a club volleyball season this year?

As of August 15, 2020, the State of Illinois has deemed volleyball a “Medium Risk” sport and allowed ONLY the following until further notice:

Level 1 No-contact practices, and trainings only

Level 2 Intra-team scrimmages allowed, with parental consent for minors; no competitive play

In accordance with these guidelines, we will be training our athletes in the safety of our own program until restrictions are modified, allowing volleyball activity into Levels 3 and 4 as below:

Level 3 Intra-conference or Intra-EMS-region or intra-league play/meets only; state- or league-championship game/meet allowed for low-risk sports only

Level 4 Tournaments, out-of-conference/league play, out-of-state play allowed; championship games allowed

What changes have been made to the program in response to the current pandemic?

During Level 1 and 2, our athletes will be training and conditioning in a competitive environment and will be fully prepared for competition, regardless of when that might be. Our program will remain flexible and maintain its high quality standards while doing everything in our power to keep our athletes safe and healthy.

Due to the unknown factors of this particular season, families will not be charged for tournaments or competition expenses until these restrictions have been lifted and we have the capacity to participate safely. We are maintaining an extremely flexible and open mind this season and we appreciate you trusting us with your athlete this year. We will continue to communicate with you as we receive pertinent information.

In addition the following COVID 19 precautions to be taken at Empower Volleyball this upcoming club season

1. All athletes will check in and have their temperature taken with a no-touch thermometer daily prior to participation.
2. An assigned coach or member of administration will inquire as to whether participant is currently exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. If participant does have symptoms, they should wait to enter premises for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset OR until feverless and feeling well (without fever reducing medication) for at least 24 hours OR confirmed to not have COVID-19 via 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart
3. An assigned coach or staff member will maintain daily attendance for contact tracing purposes
4. Participants should wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before participating
5. Activity sessions will be open only to pre-registered participants. No spectators and/or visitors allowed at any time.
6. Participants will sanitize hands regularly.
7. All participants and spectators must wear a face covering at all times, including on the court. Face coverings must fully cover the mouth and nose, and must fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps.
8. Participants will avoid touching facility accessories (e.g., posts, net, flags)
9. Participants will use their own equipment (e.g., knee pads, headbands, shoes) as much as practical. Volleyballs are an exception and will be sanitized before and after each session.
10. Participants will place personal belongings at least 6 feet away from others' personal belongings.
11. Participants should bring their own source of water and refrain from using any communal sources of hydration (e.g., team water or sports drink jug)

Why are there no tryouts this year?

Since we are not sure when we will have the capability to compete outside of our own program, Empower has made the commitment to give all athletes the opportunity to train and condition at the higher level. Once announcements are made about tournaments and competitions, Empower will select teams based on what will have already been observed and assessed by coaches throughout the training period.

This training period will also help Empower assess and evaluate the growth and needs of all athletes on an individual basis, facilitating the success of future teams

What will happen if someone in the program tests positive for Covid 19?

Empower is following all recommendations set forth by state and governing agencies. The infected athlete will be required to remain isolated for a minimum of 10 days plus 3 days of fever free with no additional symptoms. Families will be notified if their athlete would have been in direct contact with the infected player. The facility will be fully sanitized. If an outbreak were to follow, the program will shut down for self quarantining precautions and resume after 10 days. Empower will make every effort to make up any missed training due to a shut down.

How can I be sure my child won't come in contact with Covid 19?

Despite our efforts, there is no guarantee that an athlete won't come in contact with this virus. Empower will do everything in its power to ensure the safety of its families, athletes and staff throughout this pandemic, however participation in sports is to the liability of its own athlete. Empower is released of all liability (including but not limited to COVID-19) as a result of participation.

How will teams participate in competitive play in light of the current State restrictions?

Teams will focus on training, conditioning and positional advancement. We will scrimmage and train as much as possible within our own program until permitted to step outside of our gym.

As we receive news and information about being able to compete, we will communicate this with families. Once we know when competitions will begin, we will start the process of team selection and tournament sign ups.

Will my athlete be able to participate in tournaments this year?

As we receive news and information about being able to compete, we will communicate this with families. Once we know when competitions will begin, we will start the process of team selection and tournament sign ups.

As we begin offering spots on teams, we will formulate information on what teams will participate in what competitions. The spot your athlete is offered will have a direct bearing on what tournaments he/she will be participating in.

Will my athlete be allowed to play for their school team this year?

At this time we are unsure whether the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) will allow athletes to participate in club volleyball and High School volleyball simultaneously. In the event that this is not permitted, your athlete will be able to choose whether they want to take a "break" from club volleyball to represent their school team. Once the school season is concluded, they may return to their club team to finish off the season.

What happens if Illinois orders a lockdown again?

Due to the unknown factors of this particular season, families will not be charged for tournaments or competition expenses until these restrictions have been lifted and we have the capacity to participate safely. All training is being billed on a monthly basis so that if we are forced to suspend the program, families may simply cease payment at that time.

We are maintaining an extremely flexible and open mind this season and we appreciate you trusting us with your athlete this year. We will continue to communicate with you as we receive pertinent information.