



Volleyball – Girls

Sport Handbook – Fall 2026

Section 1: Rules

- A. All contests under the jurisdiction of the RIIL shall be played according to the National Federation of State High School Association Rules, except for any special rulings adopted by the RIIL and listed in this handbook below.
- B. The RIIL strongly recommends head coaches/officials obtain a copy of the most recent NFHS Rulebook.

Section 2: Mandatory Coaches Certification & Continuing Education

- A. ALL Coaches must be appointed by their School Administration and upload their valid certificates to the Coaches' Certification website below. A coach is any adult with access to student-athletes through an education-based athletic program.
 - a. Including, but not limited to: Volunteer Coaches, Assistant Coaches, and Head Coaches.
- B. Coaching Requirements: Article 13
- C. Coaching Out of Season Rules: Article 7, Section 8
- D. Rules on Recruitment: Article 3, Section 11
- E. Sportsmanship Expectations for Coaches: Article 12, Section 3

Section 3: Medical Coverage/Emergency Action Plans

- A. Medical Coverage should be provided by the host school, be in attendance and on duty for the duration of all interscholastic scrimmages and games during the regular season and all tournament round games. The medical personnel must introduce themselves to both coaches and referee prior to the start of the game.
 - a. Pre-Game Safety Checklist
- B. Schools are responsible for providing Medical Coverage for their team throughout the playoffs, including the Semis and Finals/Championships.
- C. Home team medical coverage shall be responsible for both teams unless the visiting school provides its own medical coverage.

D. Levels of Medical Coverage:

<i>Medical Professional Legal Limitations</i>
A. <i>Education/Schooling/Training & Licensure</i> B. <i>Scope of Practice</i> C. <i>Able to Return to Play</i>
Medical Doctors-MD/DO or Advanced Practice Provider-NP/PA
A. Advanced degree (Medical School/Successfully passed the licensing board, and RI Licensed) B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play – Yes
Athletic Trainer (RI Licensed)
A. Minimum Bachelor's Degree (Successfully pass the BOC exam, and RI licensed) B. Preventative Care, On field Evaluation, Immediate Care, Assessment of injury, referral for further diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES
Physical Therapist (RI Licensed)
A. Degree varies from BS, MS to DPT (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed.) B. Preventative Care, Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO
Physical Therapist w/ Orthopedic Clinical Specialist (OCS) credential (RI Licensed)
A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the OCS exam, and RI licensed) B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On the field coverage - not qualified, no emergency training incorporated into initial certification or required to be annually updated. C. Can they Return to Play – NO (During a Game/Contest), Yes (In Clinical Setting)
Physical Therapists w/ Sports Certified Specialist (SCS) credential (RI Licensed)
A. Advanced Certification (Successfully pass the board exam, successfully complete requirements for and pass the SCS exam, and RI licensed) B. Rehabilitation, Orthopedic exam evaluation. On-the-field coverage – Qualified C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – YES
EMT - Basic, Intermediate & Paramedic
A. Successfully complete the EMT program, pass the board exam, and RI licensed) B. Emergency care C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? - NO, per RI EMS laws/regulations/protocols
School Nurse (RN)
A. Successful completion of a nursing program (Successfully pass the board exam, and RI licensed) B. Emergency care, referral for further treatment/diagnosis C. Can they Return to Play during a game/contest? – NO

- E. The judgment of the medical person will be final with regard to the medical condition of a player. No player may continue to play against the medical person's advice under any circumstance.
- F. An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practice protocols as required by RI General Laws must be developed and in place at every high school.
 - a. When possible, an athletic trainer should be present at all practices and games. An athletic trainer is a key component in any strategy to minimize injury risk and optimize safety for all participants.
 - b. *Rationale:* An effective emergency action plan (EAP) must be in place as a prompt and appropriate response to any emergency situation that can save a life. The EAP should be designed and practiced to address all teams (freshman, junior varsity, and varsity) and all practice and game sites.

Section 4: General Regulations for all Sports

- A. Heat Acclimatization: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 3
- B. Definition of a Game/Scrimmage: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 2
- C. Coaching Out of Season Rules: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 8
- D. Use of Equipment During the Summer: RIIL R&R Article 6, Section 13
- E. Sportsmanship Expectations for Coaches, Student-Athletes, & Spectators: RIIL R&R Art. 12, Sect. 3
- F. Loyalty to Home School: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 7
- G. National Events: RIIL R&R Article 7, Section 11
- H. Penalties for Ejections: RIIL R&R Article 6, Section 7
- I. Protest Procedure: RIIL R&R Article 5

Section 5: Sport Advisory Committee

- A. Each Sport Advisory Committee is comprised of Member School Administrators, Athletic Directors, Coaches, Officials, and other relevant individuals who work with and report to the RIIL on all matters concerning their sport.

Committee Role	Member	School
Sport Director	Neil Nachbar	
Co-Director (RIIAAA)	Alex Butler	East Providence Athletic Director
Athletic Director	Paul Rao	Mt. Pleasant
Athletic Director	Dave Tober	North Kingstown
Head Coach	Brad Clarkson	PCD
Head Coach	Andrew Bevilacqua	West Warwick
Head Coach	Steve Simmons	

B. The 2026-27 and 2027-28 Alignment received the following endorsements & approvals:

- a. Sport Committee Approval: 02/05/26
- b. Survey of all Member Schools: 02/12/26
- c. RIIAAA Executive Board Endorsement: 03/20/26
- d. Principal's Committee on Athletics Approval: 02/23/26

Section 6: Regular Season:

A. Important Dates:

School Year	2026-27	2027-28
Season	Fall of 2026	Fall of 2027
Sport	Volleyball	Volleyball
Gender	Girls	Girls
Start Date	Monday, August 17, 2026	Monday, August 16, 2027
Days in the Preseason	10	10
Games Can Begin	Thursday, August 27, 2026	Thursday, August 26, 2027
Week #1 Begins On	Monday, August 31, 2026	Monday, August 30, 2027
Week #2 Begins On	Monday, September 7, 2026	Monday, September 6, 2027
Week #3 Begins On	Monday, September 14, 2026	Monday, September 13, 2027
Week #4 Begins On	Monday, September 21, 2026	Monday, September 20, 2027
Week #5 Begins On	Monday, September 28, 2026	Monday, September 27, 2027
Week #6 Begins On	Monday, October 5, 2026	Monday, October 4, 2027
Week #7 Begins On	Monday, October 12, 2026	Monday, October 11, 2027
Week #8 Begins On	Monday, October 19, 2026	Monday, October 18, 2027
Week #9 Begins On	Monday, October 26, 2026	Monday, October 25, 2027
Last Day of the Regular Season	Friday, October 30, 2026	Friday, October 29, 2027
Playoff Rounds/Events	4	4
RIIL Championships Concluded By	Sunday, November 15, 2026	Sunday, November 14, 2027

Girls Volleyball Playoff Schedule – Fall 2026 (tentative)	
Round	Date(s)
Preliminaries	Monday, November 2 nd - Tuesday, November 3 rd
Quarterfinals	Thursday, November 5 th – Friday, November 6 th
Semifinals	Tuesday, November 10 th – Wednesday, November 11 th
Championships	Saturday, November 14, 2026 at RI College

B. Divisions:

State Championship Division (Div. 1)	Division 2	Division 3
<u>15 Teams</u>	<u>15 Teams</u>	<u>17 Teams</u>
North Kingstown	Cranston East	Rogers^
LaSalle	Middletown	Central
Portsmouth	Lincoln	Tiverton
East Providence	West Warwick	Woonsocket
Coventry	Exeter/W. Greenwich	St. Raphael
South Kingstown	Pilgrim	Block Island
Chariho	Ponaganset	Narragansett
Mt. Hope	North Smithfield	Juanita Sanchez
Classical	St. Mary's Bay View	Hope
Prout	Scituate	Mt. Pleasant
Cranston West	Pawtucket Co-op	Providence Country Day
Cumberland	Central Falls	Davies
Barrington	Burrillville	North Providence
Westerly	Johnston	Blackstone Valley Prep
East Greenwich	Toll Gate^	Achievement First
		Times 2
		St. Patrick

A. Game Cap: 20 Regular Season Games prior to the start of the playoffs

- a. Game Cap includes all League and Non-League varsity competitions
- b. Assigned League Games:
 - i. Schools that select an 80% schedule will be assigned 12 league games vs. teams within their division
 - ii. Schools that select an 50% schedule will be assigned 8 league games vs. teams within their division

- B. Score Reporting for all Regular Season and Postseason League Games: In accordance with Article 6, Section 14, all contest scores are to be reported on-line on the RIIL Website. Coaches obtain access to the system through their Athletic Director.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of school officials/administrators/supervisors to provide a safe and secure environment for the teams and officials by ensuring the playing field and sidelines are continuously cleared of **everyone** except certified & appointed coaches, team managers/scorers, student-athletes, medical personnel, and school designated personnel. Media are allowed with prior permission of the host school.
- D. Home teams shall set a date/time for all contests.
 - a. If there is a conflict in the date/time of the contest with the visiting team(s) and mutual agreement cannot be reached, the visiting school Principal/Athletic Director shall submit **a written request** to the RIIL to review the circumstances of the disagreement and render a decision. **This must be done prior to the submission of the Home Confirmation Schedule.**
 - b. Once the Home Confirmation Schedule is submitted, changes will not be allowed unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- F. Postponement of Regular Season Varsity Games after the confirmation deadline:
 - a. Where unusual circumstances prevail or where weather conditions are unfavorable, a game may be postponed by mutual consent of the Principals and/or Athletic Directors
 - b. Postponed games shall be rescheduled to the next day when the teams, facility, and officials are available.
 - i. Includes weekends and/or school vacations.
 - ii. League games must take precedent over non-league games or lesser events
 - iii. Rescheduled games must be within all other guidelines contained in this handbook and the RIIL Rules & Regulations.
 - c. Additional Officials Fees for Games Changed within Two Weeks of original date/time:
Article 6, Section 5
- G. Practice Limitations:
 - a. Preseason Practice Limitations are also located in Heat Acclimatization: Article 7, Section 3
 - b. Scrimmages allowed after 5 days of practice
 - c. Games allowed after 10 days

Section 7: Postseason Qualification & Format:

- A. League Games Required to Qualify for the Postseason: 16 league games
- B. Teams will be ranked according to their RPI in all league games
- C. Postseason Qualification:
 - a. Division 1: Top-12 Teams qualify for the State Championship Tournament
 - b. Division 2: Top-11 Teams qualify for the D2 Championship Tournament

c. Division 2: Top-11 Teams qualify for the D3 Championship Tournament

i. Preliminaries - Quarterfinals – Semifinals – Finals

E. Postseason Tiebreaker

a. Playoff Seeding will be determined by a team's RPI as calculated on the RIIL website.

b. RPI Tiebreaker:

- 1) Head-to-Head result(s) in League Games between the tied teams
- 2) Winning Percentage in all League Games vs teams in your division
- 3) Total Wins in all League Games vs teams in a higher division
- 4) Highest-rated win in Division (according to the final RPI standings)
- 5) Next-highest-rated win (exhaust all possibilities)
- 6) Coin Toss

Section 8: RIIL Rules & Regulations Specific to Volleyball

A. **Rosters** shall be completed via the RIIL website and made available to the public no later than 10 days after the start of practice. Rosters must be updated when students are added/removed from the team. Rosters must include: full name, grade, and jersey number.

B. Uniforms:

c. Schools shall consult the NFHS Rulebook for specific regulations pertaining to uniforms

C. RI Interscholastic Injury Fund:

a. The Injury Fund is a non-profit organization separate from the RIIL.

i. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.injuryfund.org/>

b. The purpose of the nonprofit Injury Fund is to establish, raise, maintain and distribute funds to the athletic departments of high schools participating in the Rhode Island Interscholastic League. Distributions will be made to assist athletes, coaches or officials injured in sanctioned interscholastic competitions and practices with their medical expenses that exceed the amount paid by the injured party's primary, required medical insurance. Any and all financial assistance rendered by the RI Injury Fund to RIIL Member Schools shall be given purely on a voluntary basis and in such amounts and in such manner as the Board of Directors in its sole discretion shall determine.

c. Non-League competitions scheduled to spread awareness of and benefit the Injury Fund are allowed by RIIL Rules in addition to any stated game caps contained herein.

d. Students, Coaches, and Officials whose teams participate in an Injury Fund event in a given sport are covered by the Injury Fund

e. **Injury Fund Format:** Teams will schedule one regulation Volleyball game in the pre-season to provide schools the opportunity to participate. Double or triple headers at a single location are preferred.

D. **Game Ball:** The official volleyball game ball shall be Mikasa through the 2027-28 school year.

- E. In the event a “playoff game” must be suspended because of conditions which make it impossible to continue to play, the game will be rescheduled and restarted from the exact point of the suspension of play.
- F. **Playoff Warmup:** Teams must be allowed no less than 30 minutes to warm up on the field prior to the start of any playoff game unless specific warmup procedures are contained elsewhere in this handbook.
- G. The home team shall make the playing area available to the visiting team at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the game.
- H. If there is an obstruction or facility disadvantage unique to one side of the volleyball court which is being used by the home team to gain a competitive advantage, the Director has the authority to allow the away team to choose their side for the first set of the match.

Section 9: Officials

- A. RIIL assigned official’s authority extends to pre- and post- game oversight. Fighting and unsportsmanlike penalties will be within the authority of the officials at all times at the contest site.
- B. Police protection, when necessary, must be provided by the home school. The home school is responsible for all crowd control measures. There is an urgent need for increasing vigilance in this matter. Schools must make every effort to ensure that players, officials, and spectators are protected. Duties of the police will be determined and outlined by the home school.
- C. With the assistance of the home team supervision, it shall be the responsibility of the officials to see that benches are cleared of everyone except certified & appointed coaches, team managers, scorers, players, medical personnel, and school designated personnel.
- D. The home team should provide an adult game supervisor at all home events. In particular, an adult game supervisor must be present at ice hockey, basketball, field hockey, lacrosse, baseball, softball, football, soccer, volleyball and wrestling contests. The supervisor shall not be a student nor a coach involved with the game. The supervisor shall identify himself or herself to the game officials thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the game. The supervisor shall be responsible for game administration and crowd control. They should notify police, and rink representatives to seek appropriate assistance when applicable. In the event of a problem, the Principal/Athletic Director must notify the RIIL office the next day and submit a written report detailing the incident(s).