

# Madison Starlings Volleyball Club

2018-2019  
Athlete &  
Parent/Guardian  
Handbook

# *Welcome to Madison Starlings Volleyball Club!*

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## ***National Starlings Philosophy***

Starlings is a national Nonprofit. Madison Starlings is a local chapter of this National organization, and is now our own non-profit. Madison Starlings was started on Madison's East side at O'Keeffe Middle school in 2012 by Lauri Schwartz.

Starlings Volleyball Clubs, USA, believes every girl deserves the opportunity to play club volleyball, regardless of socioeconomic background or level of play. Starlings dues, if any, are a fraction of most junior club costs, with the goal that no girl is turned away because of inability to pay. Beginning in 1996 with a single inner-city San Diego team, Starlings has grown to become the nation's largest junior volleyball club, serving more than 2,500 girls in more than 50 clubs.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club continues the Mission of the National Starlings, offering a volleyball club experience to all girls, as well as boys as much as possible, regardless of income. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is a member of the Badger Region, and thus a member of USA Volleyball. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club pursues the mission of increasing opportunity and access to volleyball through partnerships with Badger region, USA Volleyball, all area clubs, service and vending providers, etc. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club attempts to educate, raise awareness, and negotiate changes, support, and options in existing systems to increase access to low income and underrepresented youth, as well as decrease barriers as they are encountered.

While the National Starlings organization provides guidance, and an initial set of basic guidelines, no funding is provided to local chapters. There is an annual meeting each year for the National organization, to provide ideas and best practices.

The National Starlings organization runs a National Tournament in June of each year, with Starlings teams across the United States being eligible for entry.

Local clubs are run by a volunteer director and staff, as well as minimally compensated/volunteer lead coaches and volunteer assistants and youth coaches.. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club has and continues to be fortunate to have highly gifted and qualified coaches. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is committed to growing youth coaches and increasing access to potential jobs within the current volleyball world.

## ***National Starlings Mission Statement***

To provide the equal opportunity for girls from diverse, lower socioeconomic environments to train and compete at USA Volleyball's Junior Olympic level; to encourage teamwork, health, positive life skills, and academic achievement; to establish member clubs throughout the nation that are community-based and self-sustaining.

## ***Madison Starlings Volleyball Club Philosophy***

Volleyball is popular in Madison, regularly having several successful University and small college nationally ranked teams. Many life skills and opportunities evolve from being involved in volleyball at the high school and middle school level. Those opportunities are enhanced for low income and underrepresented groups through involvement in Madison Starlings.

The disparate impact of many systems on minority and low income persons disproportionately impact the youth of those families, as well. As a community, Madison aspires to improve the under representation and increase access to positive opportunities for all.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club welcomes all families of all types who support this mission, whether those individuals fit any specific demographic or income. Madison Starlings is committed to positive access for all that is inclusive in practical application.

We are committed to performance coupled with enjoyment of the sport and personal accomplishment. Our staff recognizes and pledges to proactively assist players and their families to achieve our mission. Volunteerism of all people involved in Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is necessary for us to continue to exist and provide funds to keep "paying it forward". All participants and their families, friends, or supporters are expected to volunteer to assist Madison Starlings in obtaining funds from donations at designated events. New fundraisers are acceptable, with prior approval from the fundraising committee.

These volunteer efforts often earn funds, and these funds go toward the payment of gym rentals and other team expenses for the following year. Each year benefits from the previous year, and continues the circle of giving to maintain Madison Starlings Volleyball Club.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will attempt to assist persons who work hard and make efforts to work with us towards their involvement in the club. We believe the adults in the Madison community need to work harder to assist in solving the challenges that face low income and underrepresented youth in volleyball, and share our wisdom, experience and opportunities with those youth, to hopefully improve the situation for all to participate more equally.

## ***Club History***

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club, Inc. is a 501c3 nonprofit youth organization. Madison Starlings has tax exempt status in Wisconsin, and forms are available and should be utilized for expenses where taxes are charged.

Madison Starlings was founded by Lauri Schwartz in 2012 under the federal nonprofit status of Starlings National through San Diego.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club began as a continuation of the MSCR volleyball season at Madison O'Keeffe Middle school with 12-15 students attending. Boys and girls practiced this first season once a week and went on field trips in the area, playing in some scrimmages. The

program started with the support of Principal Kay Enright at O'Keeffe and Barry Davis, O'Keefe and Goodman Community Center Staff.

In the 2012-13 season Madison Starlings Volleyball Club started at O'Keeffe and moved to Goodman Community Center, 149 Waubesa St, where it was given the opportunity to work with youth staff to encourage kids in the after school program to participate as an extension of a youth fitness program. Goodman provided a van and Madison Starlings Volleyball Club transported those kids to tournaments and events who could not otherwise have attended. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club increased its activities, beginning to attend tournaments and gathering uniforms and other equipment through donations.

In the 2013-14 season, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club expanded to Wright Middle School and began a 2nd location and team. Two 14's teams developed and attended tournaments, some sanctioned and some informal. We began fundraisers as a tradition, having most of the players and families participate in the Color Run and Concessions at an Adult volleyball tournament at East High.

Since 2014, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club has grown in numbers, locations and volunteers to its current largest size of over 20 volunteers coaches and many locations close to neighborhoods and accessible on bus lines for kids to attend who otherwise might not be able to. Due to grant losses at Goodman, transportation through a community center van is not possible. Madison Starlings is growing a list of adults who help to drive youth to necessary events. These drivers are backgrounded and must have memberships with Badger region.

In the 2015-16 season Madison Starlings Volleyball Club expanded to Warner Park Community Center and Abundant Life, and for a time, to East Madison Community Center. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club obtained, through a marketing donation, our first "Starlings" labeled uniform.

In the 2016-17 season, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club developed its first Board of Directors and became a stand alone organization, while remaining an affiliate with the National Starlings. We have increasingly highly qualified coaches and volunteers, and are developing youth coaches from within and outside Madison Starlings Volleyball Club. We hope to continue our growth in directions that all involved find beneficial for the mission and goals of all youth in our program.

In the 2017-18 season, Madison Starlings had over 70 regular player participants on 5-6 teams. The 15's and 16's teams raised additional funds during the later part of their season, assisted with writing grants, and continued practices into June to attend The Starlings National Tournament in San Diego, CA. 17 players, 4 coaches, 2 parent chaperones and 1 Director flew to California, participating in the opening ceremonies and tournament.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club Board of Directors guides decisions. The Board of Directors are committed to providing an opportunity to pay through volunteerism. Sub committees, such as Fundraising, are being developed.

## ***Club Contact Information***

The best way to find out information about our club is to visit our website at [www.madisonstarlings.com](http://www.madisonstarlings.com).

Club Address: 4014 Birch Avenue, Madison, WI 53711

Cell Phone: 608.335.3953

Email: [madisonstarlings@gmail.com](mailto:madisonstarlings@gmail.com)

Facebook: [@MadisonStarlingsVolleyball](https://www.facebook.com/MadisonStarlingsVolleyball)

## ***Board of Directors***

The Madison Starlings Volleyball Club's Board of Directors: The Board of Directors is comprised of three members, meets as needed, gives direction to the club, and helps set club policy. President: Kay Enright, Vice President Franco Marco, Secretary Andi Dedrick, Treasurer (vacant) UW Women's Club Team representative-Erika Hanson, coach representative- Alexis Middleton, parent representative- Stephanie Teal, and Director Lauri Schwartz. Please let the Board know if you are interested in serving on the board. Positions are 2 years, with alternating years of expiration for half of the positions each year.

## ***About Badger Region Volleyball Association***

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club belongs to the Badger Region Volleyball Association, one of the 40 Regional Volleyball Associations in USA Volleyball's nationwide network. Each member of Madison Starlings is also a member of Badger Region Volleyball Association and USA Volleyball.

A 501c3 non-profit organization, Badger Region Volleyball Association is comprised of more than 10,000 members across the state of Wisconsin and provides services and education to more than 100 junior clubs and scores of both junior and adult players, officials and coaches. Each club is an independently-run business under the umbrella organization of Badger Region Volleyball with regards to rules, policies, procedures and membership.

**Before any participation, you (the athlete) must sign up for a Badger Region/USA Volleyball membership online. This can be done by visiting [www.BadgerVolleyball.org](http://www.BadgerVolleyball.org) and clicking on the blue "Membership" tab at the top, and following the steps outlined in the instructions. When you setup your login and password, we recommend you write those down and keep them in a safe place so you can use them during the season and next year.**

All players must complete a membership online initially. Payment for those who are able to pay \$50 can be done online with a credit card, or by check made out to Badger Region, delivered to the club director, Lauri Schwartz.

Players paying \$25 or any other reduced rate must still set up a membership online at Badger Region, if they are a new player, but must pay the fee locally. The online option for reduced fees is not available, as the Badger Region Board approves a specific number of memberships for Madison Starlings Volleyball Club members at reduced rates and players must be designated one of those spots. Players receiving a reduced rate are identified by the Madison Starlings Volleyball Club Director to Badger Region, and their fee modified.

It is recommended that you print out your membership card and medical release and carry copies with you to all events. Your coaches will also need copies of these documents.

*Badger Region Volleyball Mission Statement:*

The Badger Region Volleyball Association promotes initiatives for safe, structured and fun lifelong volleyball experiences!

## ***About USA Volleyball & SafeSport***

USA Volleyball (USAV) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of volleyball in the United States and is recognized by the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). The vision of USAV is to be acknowledged as the world leader in volleyball. In order to accomplish this mission, goals are to be achieved, including the following:

- Competitive Success: To win gold medals in every international competition
- Sport Growth: To achieve full participation in volleyball at all levels and geographical areas
- Sports Enhancement: To improve support services necessary for the quality and conduct of programs to ensure recognition as the authority and expert for volleyball
- Administration: To develop and maintain a structure which will effectively and efficiently assist in achieving the vision and mission of the Corporation

USAV is committed to and works toward opportunity for all to participate. It is an advocate for all Americans – endeavoring to assure universal access to opportunities at all levels of the game.

USA Volleyball believes that volleyball has so many positive things to offer those who participate. First, and most importantly, whether one is a gifted athlete or recreational player, volleyball is FUN! It is a lifetime sport enjoyed by players from 5-80+. Participation in volleyball is not only good exercise, but also involves team cooperation and spirit. We are committed to introducing our sport to all of America.

USA Volleyball is committed to creating safe and fun environments for youth.

Therefore, it requires the reporting of abuse of any kind (sexual, physical, emotional, bullying, etc.) through the SafeSport program. USA Volleyball has developed a handbook intended to be a central location for all the policies and procedures that are designed to protect youth participants from all types of misconduct. That information is shared with all coaches as part of IMPACT training or can be done online if a coach was IMPACT certified prior to 2014.

## ***Our Program Options and Fee Information***

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club offers programs for many different age and skill levels. We offer programs for both boys and girls from ages 12 to 18. Your AGE GROUP is based on how old you are on August 31 (ex.: for the 2017-18 season, a player born on August 30, 2003, would be "15 and Under" while a player born Sept. 2, 2003, would be "14 and Under").

There are two options, with time and travel commitments varying, along with price:

- Regional Player:
  - o Cost: \$400 to Madison Starlings AND \$50 Badger Region Membership Fee or \$25 Badger Region Membership Fee for those that qualify for free/reduced lunch at your respective school.
  - o Features:
    - October through April or May season
    - Two dedicated team practices per week, as well as other open practices players should attend

- Positional training when possible
- Minimum 4 tournaments
- Some travel to the greater Madison area, Whitewater, or Waukesha areas (depending on tournament schedules)
- Local Team Player:
  - o Cost: \$100 to Madison Starlings AND \$50 Badger Region Membership Fee or \$25 Badger Region Membership Fee for those that qualify for free/reduced lunch at your respective school.
  - o Features:
    - October through April or May season
    - 1-2 practices per week
    - Scrimmages at various locations as we are able to schedule them
    - If team is committed and practices regularly with most/all members, then a tournament can be entered. If a local team is entered into a tournament, an additional \$50 or 2 additional volunteer hours will be due.

The Badger Region Membership Fees cover:

- The Badger Region Membership Fee
- Insurance

The Regional and Local Team Player fees cover:

- Tournament entry fees (for Regional Team Player)
- Practice facility expenses
- Equipment
- Uniform expenses of uniforms that are maintained and kept by Madison Starlings Volleyball Club (does not include the deposit for a uniform)
- Administrative fees and supplies

Additional fees that will be covered by the player\*:

- Travel expenses, including hotel, food and transportation
- Shoes and socks
- Uniforms or other clothing that a team decides collectively to purchase, with known pricing prior to group purchase

*\*please contact club director Lauri Schwartz if you need to make arrangements regarding these items*

### Payment Structure

1. Because our club submits payment for many items and tournaments prior to collecting any money from participants, it is important that you stay on track with your payments.

Available payment options:

- o Payment in full for the \$50 or \$25 free-reduced lunch membership fee with Badger Region is due for **all players** by the Parent/Guardian meeting on December 2nd, 2018.
- o 1/ or \$200 Payment of the **Regional Team Fee** of \$400 is due by **January 5th, 2018, or 13 volunteer hours must be completed, or if not available, signed up for by this time.** 1/2 or \$50 Payment of the **Local Team Fee** is due by **January 5th, 2018, or 3 volunteer hours must be completed by this time.** This is payable to Madison Starlings. Players not making payment by the due date nor completing the sufficient volunteer hours or scheduling sufficient hours will NOT



be allowed to play in the first tournament and their ability to remain on the team will be considered based on the player's self initiated explanation to the Coach and Director.

- The remaining ½ or \$200 of the **Regional Team Fee** is due by **February 9th, 2018, or completion of 26 hours of volunteer time, or signed up for, if 26 hours are not available before this date.** ½ or \$50 Payment of the **Local Team Fee** is due by **February 9th, 2018,** or 6 volunteer hours must be completed by this time.
  - When a **Local Team** determines they are going to a tournament, they shall have 1 month from the time of the tournament to complete 3 additional hours of service or \$50
  - For all players on all teams, 13 hours of volunteer time must be accomplished by the player, the other half can be accomplished by a parent/guardian, other family member, or friend.
2. On an individual family/player basis, dues and fee structures can be modified to accommodate family/player circumstances. Please speak with the Club Director regarding this matter. The club director will not discuss specific arrangements with anyone other than the family.
  3. All payments can be handed directly to the Club Director in person at the parent/guardian meeting, pool party, or any other Madison Starlings event the athlete is attending. Payments may also be mailed to the Club Director at the following address: 4014 Birch Ave., Madison WI, 53711.
  4. As part of this handbook, players and guardians/parents are asked to indicate their intentions to pay cash or check in writing at the Player/Guardian meeting, or their intention to do volunteer hours, and what amount of hours they intend to volunteer. This will allow the Club to plan financially, as well plan sufficient fundraising opportunities. Changes to a player/family's plan must be discussed and a new sheet submitted, after the initial decision has been made. Changes in status have negative impacts on planning and decisions that are made based on available funding. Changes need to be minimized and due to exceptional circumstances.
  5. Athletes planning on earning their full membership fee through volunteering need to actively volunteer for events offered at the parent/guardian meeting. **Additional volunteer events will not be created simply because players did not make volunteering a priority.** Volunteering is the responsibility of the player to initiate, and not wait for additional volunteer events created by the club. Vacancies in volunteer opportunities developed is unacceptable when individuals have volunteer hours to serve. A player can initiate a discussion with the Club Director and/or Fundraising committee, on other suggestions for volunteer work that the player creates and conducts that is helpful to the Club, if the offered volunteer options are not sufficient.

### Refund Policy

1. When an athlete accepts an offer to participate, they accept the financial obligations for the entire club fee for that season. When teams are comprised, monies immediately go directly into uniforms, tournament entry, facility expenses and other fees.

2. ***Due to our nonprofit status and budget requirements, we do not offer refunds for our Regional or Local Team players.*** Refunds will not be given to athletes who choose not to play because of conflicts, team, or coaching assignments, or an individual's amount of playing time. Prorated refunds for cash payments only will be considered for extenuating circumstances. No funds will ever be paid out for volunteer hours worked towards fees. One example could be an athlete who suffers a season-ending injury while playing on a Madison Starlings Volleyball Club team, on a case-by-case basis with a physician's letter. Injuries occurred outside of Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not be considered for a refund. Volunteer hours will not be "refunded" or ever "paid" in monetary form as general volunteer hours to maintain the club have been asked of all players since near the beginning of the club. Numerous fundraisers, including adult volleyball tournament concessions, UW Concessions, candy bar sales, and more have always been an expectation of players of the club in order to pay for the start of the next season's gym costs. Each year's players support the next year's first portion of the season and practices.
3. Badger Region membership fees are NON-REFUNDABLE for ANY reason, even in the event that your daughter/son quits, is suspended, or injured at any point in the season.

#### *Badger Region Volleyball Association's Policy On Unpaid Player Dues*

A Junior Club player must remit all club fees as specified by their Club/Team, within the club's scheduled time frame. If fees are unpaid at the end of the Club's season, the Club Director may use any legal means necessary to obtain payment, i.e. collection agency. Nonpayment will result in the athlete's name being submitted to the Badger Region Office, resulting in the athlete being restricted from registering or participating with the Region until the fees are paid. A letter requesting payment that includes the parent's name, player's name, player's age level and notification of this policy must be sent to the family and a copy to the region office. Club directors must notify the region office immediately when payment has been made and the hold will be taken off the player's membership in Webpoint.

#### *Coach Status with Badger Region*

Coaches who volunteer with Madison Starlings Volleyball Club are members of Badger region, and IMPACT certified. Volunteer coaches who receive benefits, such as IMPACT training, membership dues in the Badger Region paid, training, etc. are also expected to repay those benefits through agreed upon volunteer hours, throughout the season. Disputes can be brought to the Board of Directors, and contact with Badger Region can be made if Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is unable to resolve issues with individuals who leave or are removed from Madison Starlings Volleyball Club.

#### *Volunteer Opportunities*

1. Each player will have an opportunity to pay their Tournament or Local Team fee through various volunteer opportunities Madison Starlings Volleyball Club sets up. All of these volunteer opportunities are evolving and result from some previous as well as new opportunities that come to Madison Starlings Volleyball Club staff's attention. Additional volunteer ideas are welcome to Club Director Lauri Schwartz, the Board of Directors members, or fundraising committee members for consideration.
2. These volunteer opportunities have the potential to earn a player's entire \$400 or \$100 Tournament or Local Team fee. No monetary funds will ever be paid out to anyone for

hours volunteered. Extra hours volunteered are a benefit to all involved in the club and deserve appreciation, praise, and potentially other approved benefits by the Board of Directors, such as extra or spare equipment, supplies earned at events such as t-shirts, socks, etc.

3. Pre-approved adults or other family/adults are able to fundraise with the Madison Starling Volleyball Club's athlete, but those hours are limited to a maximum of 13 hours and can not surpass the player's total.
4. 1 hour of fundraising by the athlete or adult equals to approximately \$15 of club fees. The adult's hours of volunteering only count if the athlete has at least that many hours as well. They do not have to be in the same volunteer activity.
5. Cancellations are discouraged. Prior to 72 hours, individuals can cancel but are **encouraged** to find a replacement to sign up. Canceling out of volunteer spots one signs up for causes work for the club to find another volunteer and may have prevented someone else from planning for this spot. With less than 72 hours, cancellations are not allowed, as finding volunteers is very difficult. Anyone canceling less than 72 hours prior to the start of a volunteer activity, is **required to find their replacement. The canceling player will also be required to complete an additional 4 hours of volunteering.** Concessions or other volunteer events are businesses counting on people to provide a service. If the volunteer is not there, that sales or service work is not accomplished and causes a financial loss, as well as negative impact on the reputation of Madison Starlings.

## ***Tryouts***

Each year we evaluate a large number of athletes during tryouts, and every athlete is evaluated every year, even if they are returning. Each athlete must come to the tryouts ready to compete for a place on one of our teams. An athlete with a limiting physical or medical condition should contact the club prior to tryouts. Players should never assume because they are on a team one year they will automatically make a team the following year. Each year athletes skills improve and each year the pool of athletes to choose from will change. Some athletes have extensive playing experience while others do not. Athletes go through a physical evaluation; coaches evaluate their potential as well as intrinsic traits. We base our selections on what the athletes do during the tryout period and what we perceive their potential to be.

### *Tryout Procedure*

All players of the same age group will be evaluated by several members of the club staff. Even if these coaches aren't standing directly on the court, there are people watching for skills and also leadership and communication skills from each athlete, on and off the court.

### *Team Composition and Placement*

- Teams typically will consist of between 9 and 12 players. Total team participants are left to the discretion of the club director and team coach.
- The number of teams within each age group is dependent upon:
  - o The number of players trying out
  - o The number of available coaches
  - o The number of available practice courts
- Teams will be chosen in an effort to maximize the advancement of ALL players

- It is up to the discretion of the coach and club director if they would like to move a player to a different age group ("playing up"). Players may ask to be moved between teams, but it is up to the coach and club director.
- Teams will be divided into single age groups: 11s, 12s, 13s, 14s, 15s, 16s, 17s, and 18s.

### Offer Process

All offers to play with Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will be made via email, unless a different means is agreed upon in writing by the player and evaluating coach.

### Badger Region Commitment Policy

Directly from the Badger Region Website:

<http://badgervolleyball.org/tryoutcommit-policy-dates/>

Specific dates and times available at Badgervolleyball.org website

### Acceptance Process

After you have received an offer and have decided to commit, the official acceptance policy is to respond to that coach and offer in writing/email as well as go into their Badger volleyball login and select "Madison Starlings" as their designated club. All free or reduced lunch scholarship athletes are designated with Madison Starlings Volleyball Club through our membership lists sent to Badger Region. Free or Reduced lunch athletes still need to go into badger region membership and select "madison starlings" as their team.

## **Practices**

Only IMPACT-certified adults with current USAV memberships and properly background-checked club volleyball personnel are allowed to provide instruction and have on-court contact with players during practice or tournaments.

Parents/Guardians are allowed to attend practice if they so choose (or not), however, parents are not allowed to "shag" balls during practices or tournaments unless they are registered with USAV/Badger Region. Parents/Guardians will be asked to leave the gym if they are disruptive to the practice.

We expect players, parents/guardians, and coaches to keep all our practice facilities clean while we use them. If we abuse these locations, we risk losing them. Players are asked to turn their cell phones off during practice. Any player who is using their phone without permission will face consequences at the discretion of the coach.

### Locations and Schedule

Practices will include basic and advanced volleyball techniques and scrimmage time. Practices vary between age groups. Please visit Madison Starlings Club Volleyball website to view the most up-to-date practice times and locations for each age group, including Team Practices for Tournament Players as well as Open Practices for all players. MADISON STARLINGS VOLLEYBALL CLUB'S CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY POINT DURING THE SEASON. Changes will be made on the website, Facebook, and via email, so please be sure to check all of these points prior to practice. Presence by spectators or family members at a practice are at the discretion of the Coach, lead of the practice that day, or the Club Director.

### Pick-Up & Drop-Off Information

Parents/Guardians of players age 12 and under are asked to come into the facility to pick up your athlete. This is for all of our players' safety, as various organizations use the facility at the same time. We do not know all of these people and want to err on the side of caution.

Parents/Guardians are reminded to pick your athlete up timely at the end of practice. If this is a consistent problem, parents/guardians of the player(s) will be contacted by the Club Director.

### Practice Structure & Attendance

Scheduled practice time is start time. Please arrive early enough to be dressed and completely ready for practice by designated start time, which usually requires 15 minutes before start time.

IF A TOURNAMENT OR LOCAL TEAM PLAYER CAN NOT BE AT THEIR REQUIRED PRACTICE, THE ATHLETE IS EXPECTED TO CONTACT THEIR COACH. It is the athlete's responsibility (not the parent/guardian) to reach the coach before the practice starts. If unable to attend due to a previous commitment, let your coach know at least a week in advance.

All athletes are expected to attend every practice for their Tournament or Local Team. Only an illness serious enough to keep the athlete home from school or a genuine family emergency are legitimate excuses for missing practice. Regardless of the reason, if an athlete misses practices, playing time may decrease and roles may be reviewed. Club dues will not be refunded for missing practices.

### Practice Cancellations – Weather-Related Cancellations

Please be aware that Madison Starlings Volleyball Club may have to cancel practice at the last minute due to weather, coach unavailability, personal emergencies and scheduling conflicts.

WEATHER-RELATED CANCELLATIONS: If schools are closed or school events are cancelled, so are our practices. If the morning/afternoon forecast calls for bad weather late in the day, keep an eye on your email. Any cancelled practice will be announced on the website, Facebook, and via email.

Players are encouraged to use their best judgment when attempting to travel to practice. The safety of the athlete and their family is our first concern and priority. If you will not be making practice due to weather, please contact your coach ASAP.

## ***Playing Time***

### Determination of Playing Time

The expectations of coaches for each team will be communicated at team meetings. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is strongly supportive of commitment demonstrated through attendance at practices, both required and not required practices. Attitude at all times, on and off the court, along with commitment, effort, and skills will be considered by coaches.

Players approach to suggestions, feedback, and homework such as "goals setting", reflect commitment. While we recognize volleyball is only one of many demands on a youth and family's life, communication with coaches and staff are important so that appropriate team

building can occur. Flexibility will be a standard, but coaches have to make decisions on best information available and provided.

### Communication regarding playing time

Please do NOT talk to the coach about playing time during or immediately following a tournament. If you have a concern about playing time, it is best to set up a meeting with the coach, club director, and the athlete to discuss, if the first contact between the athlete and coach alone is not sufficient. Please see the full communication policy below.

## **Competition and Tournaments**

### Scheduling and Objectives

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will work to make a competitive schedule possible with the athletes on each team. Each Tournament Team will be entered into a minimum of 4 tournaments between January and April or May. These tournaments may be in the greater Madison area, or places such as Whitewater, Wisconsin Dells, or Waukesha, where many tournaments are held.

Non-refundable tournament fees are paid by Madison Starlings Volleyball Club on or around December 1 to the respective tournament hosting clubs. Tournaments are RARELY, if ever, cancelled because of weather. We are expected to make every effort to attend. However, if we decide that the safety of the participants is at risk, a recommendation will be made not to attend. However, we will NOT be refunded for this fee, hence, the participants will not be refunded in money or volunteer time.

### Day-Of Schedule

Each tournament format is determined by the organization hosting the event. Tournament hosts will provide actual day-of scheduling details no later than the Wednesday or Thursday prior to the tournament date. This will be emailed out, posted on our Facebook page, and posted on our website. The hosting club may post it on their website as well.

Your coach or the club director will send you the tournament information as soon as we receive it. PLEASE DO NOT REPEATEDLY CONTACT US ABOUT THE SCHEDULE as we do not have this information prior to Wednesday or Thursday. Plan on being at the tournament early in the morning and remaining there all day. Teams do one of three things at a tournament: play, officiate, sit out (time to eat and watch other teams, especially those in our club). Players are expected to participate and stay with the team for all three of these events. Players should not leave the grounds of the tournament until the tournament and our entire team has completed its duties. Tournaments can run ahead of schedule or (more often) behind schedule. Please be prepared. Please also be aware that there could be additional charges for spectator entry and/or parking, and many facilities have rules regarding outside food and beverage. We as a team/club can/will be penalized for breaking these rules.

### Uniforms

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club has provided uniforms to players in the past, due to the expense of purchasing a uniform set. The practice of each player purchasing or paying for their

own uniform was prohibitive monetarily for some players. To allow all to participate equally, uniforms were collected through donations, and maintained by Madison Starlings Volleyball Club's parent volunteers and Club Director.

Prior to each Regional Team's first tournament, a uniform deposit of \$25 will be collected from each player. This money will be returned at the completion of the season when the full uniform is turned in. Each athlete will receive a uniform for that tournament.

If a parent committee is able to determine there are sufficient uniforms for players to be assigned a uniform for the season, uniforms MAY be issued to players to keep for tournaments. Uniforms are to be worn only on that tournament day. Should a player forget or lose their uniform, or not have it available on the day of a tournament, they would not be able to play. The permanent loss of a uniform could impact the ability to use an entire uniform set in the future, thus negatively impacting all players. A fee/fine for loss of the uniform will apply.

The practice in the past, which may continue, is that players are issued a uniform the day of the tournament. Once the tournament is concluded, the uniform will need to be returned to the Team Parent/Guardian(s).

Uniform sets are dependent upon players being responsible and returning them. Failure to return a uniform may mean an entire set of uniforms will no longer be usable, due to insufficient numbers for a team.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club is grateful to teams and organizations who have donated uniforms, and we have only been able to participate in tournaments because of these generous donations. Care and return of uniforms is essential to future Madison Starlings Volleyball Club teams. This includes shirts and shorts, as both are regulated specifically by Badger Region.

Uniforms are required to be returned within 14 days of the end of their season. Uniforms are to be turned in at that team's season ending event to the team parent or designated uniform collector. Deposits for uniforms will be available after return of both shirt and shorts. Any uniform not delivered to the team parent or staff in charge of collecting uniforms after 14 days will be subject to a loss of uniform deposit, as well as fine up to \$75 or 6 hours of volunteer time. Failure to pay these fines will result in a not good standing with Madison Starlings and appropriate actions listed in

### *Scorekeeping and Officiating Duties*

*All players are expected to help officiate in one of these capacities:*

- *2 Line judges*
- *Scorekeeper (visual and paper)*
- *Libero tracker*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> referee (down)*

Training will be provided to all club members prior to the first tournament to be able to do each of these positions, and online tools are also available to help you learn. Madison Starlings Volleyball Club believes all players need to learn or try all positions at some point during the

season, as this provides you with a learning opportunity and skill that can benefit you in your growth within volleyball. NO PLAYER IS EXEMPT FROM OFFICIATING DUTIES!

It is also important to note that oftentimes when you lose your last match of the day, you will be expected to officiate the next match. NO PLAYER MAY LEAVE THE TOURNAMENT IN ADVANCE OF THE ENTIRE TEAM, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY ARE ASSIGNED AN OFFICIATING DUTY OR NOT. Under certain extreme circumstances, permission may be granted by the coach for a player to leave early.

No cell phones or electronic devices will be at the scorekeeping tables or used by any player with a reffing assignment. If seen by the coach, they will be confiscated and turned over to the parent/guardian(s). If a parent/guardian is not present, the phone or device will be held by the coach until the end of the day.

### Travel

Many tournaments require travel time. It is the responsibility of the athlete to get to the tournament on time. This may mean traveling as a family or making arrangements with teammates. Coaches are NOT allowed to transport players, unless that player is their child. These trips are for the player's volleyball experience and training as a member of a team, not a family vacation.

Parents/Guardians must understand (as indicated in the forthcoming Agreement at the end of this handbook) and agree that when the team is traveling to tournaments, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not act in place of a parent/guardian or assume any duty of supervision including at hotels or in the course of transportation to or from the event.

There are different types of events that we will travel to:

- Scrimmages that last a couple of hours on a Saturday or Sunday, times varying
- One-day event held on a Saturday or Sunday, with play generally starting around 8:00a.m.
- Two-day events held on Saturday AND Sunday

Two-day tournaments may require overnight lodging that is not included in the team fee. Players are required to stay with a parent/guardian or other designated adult (unless team rooms are reserved). You will need additional funds for food, t-shirt purchases, etc. Players who show necessity may be allowed to return home, returning the next morning to play.

Although we will provide site directions given to us, please double check with other sources. Please make sure you know where you are going and allow more than enough time to get there. Getting lost is not an acceptable excuse for being late and could jeopardize playing time.

All Madison Starlings Volleyball Club players will demonstrate good behavior at tournaments, which includes:

- No discussion with officials concerning calls
- Help officiating when asked by your coach
- Return balls to ball bag after warm ups and keep track of medical bag



- Food is to be eaten in the designated area
- Clean up the bench area of empty bottles after every match
- No stealing or vandalism
- No smoking, drugs, or alcohol
- If staying at a hotel, players must adhere to the lights-out policy (as established by the coach), even if staying in a room with adults
- An adult needs to be present at any time that multiple players are congregated in a hotel room - any guests must be pre-approved by the coach(es)
- Do not leave the gym or tournament until the coach releases you

Any violations of these policies may result in suspension of play and possible dismissal from the club. Serious offenses will also be reported to the appropriate authorities, the Badger Region, and middle and high schools.

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not be responsible for any athlete's personal items while participating in an event. All athlete's personal items will be their own responsibility while playing or during hotel lodging. It is advised that no jewelry be brought to tournaments as it cannot be worn. It is also advised that cell phones be left at home or turned off, as tournaments are a time for competition, not texting.

## ***Communication***

### ***Club Communication Policy & Guidelines***

Parenting/Being a Guardian and coaching are important and complementary vocations and by working together we are able to better provide benefits to the athlete. Since the athlete is beginning to move into the adult world, one of our goals is to make them responsible for their own actions.

- Communication Coaches Expect From Parents
  - o Advanced notification of any schedule conflicts. Preferably an email or phone call
  - o Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectation, only after the concern has first been discussed between the coach and athlete outside of practice
  - o Injury notification and progress updates

Since our goal as a program is to move each athlete forward in their development as a player and a person, it is our request that you encourage your athlete to discuss any of the issues first with their coach. If your athlete is unclear of the resolution, please feel free to contact the coach or Club Director with your athlete present.

- Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With Coaches
  - o The treatment of your athlete – both mentally and physically
  - o Ways to help your athlete improve
  - o Concerns about your athlete's behavior

Our coaches are professionals who make tough decisions based on what they believe to be the best for the team and athletes involved. Certain things can and should be discussed with

coaches. Other things, such as those in the following section, must be left to the discretion of the coach and will not be discussed, either in person or via phone or email:

- Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches
  - o Team Strategy
  - o Play Calling
  - o Other Athletes or Coaches
  - o Playing Time (unless framed such as “what can my athlete do to earn more playing time?”)

Situations may arise that may require a conference between the coach, the Club Director, and a parent/guardian. These are to be encouraged, and it’s important that both parents/guardians of the player have a clear understanding of the other’s perspective.

### Grievance Procedure

The following guidelines have been established to protect the athletes, coaches, and parents/guardians from awkward and inappropriate situations when it comes to the professional discussion and handling of grievances. The coaches within Madison Starlings Volleyball Club have been instructed to adhere to these guidelines to better maintain the club/player/parent/guardian relationship.

The procedure to discuss concerns about policies and actions are as follows:

1. The athlete should speak with the coach regarding the matter
2. If the matter remains unresolved and there is a legitimate concern, the parent/guardian AND athlete should request to meet with the coach. Coaches will ONLY meet with parents/guardians when the athlete is present, and not at a tournament or in the middle of a practice.
  - a. Please do not confront a coach before, during, or after an event. Arrange to meet with your coach at a convenient time for all parties, including before or after practice.
  - b. If a parent/guardian approaches a coach during a tournament, we have instructed our coaches to refuse to discuss the situation, to refer the parent/guardian to the Club Director, and walk away.
  - c. We also instruct our coaches not to get involved in a texting conversation.
3. If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent/guardian can request a meeting with the Club Director, along with the coach and the athlete. THE ATHLETE MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING.

It is important that athletes and parents/guardians alike understand that conversation with a coach is allowed and encouraged at any time throughout the season as long as it is civil and respectful. However, when problems arise, we will all need to be rational and calm before discussion occurs.

Also please note that Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will not acknowledge or act upon any negative emails. While convenient for conveying details, email can also leave room for

interpretation of feelings and misunderstandings. To initiate the grievance process, please contact the coach by phone or schedule an in-person meeting.

### *Reporting Inappropriate Behavior of Club Staff or Other Clubs*

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club vigilantly maintains a policy that places the safety of the young athletes entrusted to our care and instruction as our highest priority. We watch team activities and interactions closely to try to prevent miscommunications that cause discomfort to any of the athletes or parents/guardians.

If you see behavior of a Madison Starlings Club Volleyball coach/volunteer that you believe to be inappropriate, report it immediately to the Club Director. All complaints will be investigated. Any coach/volunteer found to be in violation of the club's policy would be subject to discipline, which may include dismissal. There will be no retaliation against any complainants and/or witnesses who participate in an investigation. If you have any questions regarding the Madison Starlings Volleyball Club policies or procedures, please do not hesitate to contact the Club Director.

If you see what you believe to be inappropriate behavior of another club (player, coach, or anyone associated with it) while attending a tournament or other function, report it immediately to the coach and/or Team Parent/Guardian(s). Do not engage in this behavior. The Club Director will be informed of what occurred, if anyone was contacted, and what the resolution was, or what is in process. If the Club Director is involved, then the Board of Directors or Designee will be informed.

### *Team Contact List, Website and Other Communications*

A master roster of players attending tryouts is developed at tryouts. List of individual teams will be developed and maintained by the Coaches, for season long communications. Corrections can be made directly to the Club Director, the spreadsheet if the individual has authority rights, or sent to the club's email address, as soon as they are noticed or available.

Regularly check out the Madison Starlings Volleyball Club website ([www.madisonstarlings.com](http://www.madisonstarlings.com)) as this is where a majority of the answers to questions will be posted – locations, dates, and times of practice and tournaments, etc. We also urge members to make sure we have a regularly-used and correct email address on file as information will be communicated that way as well.

Phone calls and text messages between athletes and their coach may occur to get information out in a timely manner. All of these communications will be free of any abusive, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate language by all parties involved. If an athlete or coach receives inappropriate communications, report it directly to the Club Director.

Social media is also popular, however, we urge coaches not to accept "friend" requests from their players, nor any other current players under the age of 18. We will utilize our Madison Starlings Volleyball Club Facebook page, however, official communication and information will be via our website.

At events, we encourage all players to leave their phones at home or in the car, or at least in their bags. Cell phones are not allowed at the scorer's table and can be a distraction throughout

the day. Face-to-face team communication and bonding are favored over texting or playing games during off times.

### Team Parent/Guardian(s)

The role of the team parent/guardian(s) is to assist the coach with administrative duties as assigned by the coach. We will ask for at least one parent/guardian to volunteer for this role on each team. Other duties of the team parent/guardian:

- Organize team dinners or meals at tournaments
- Make sure that everyone has a ride to/from a tournament or practice
- Distribute directions to a site, and site rules (no coolers, etc.)
- Special events (team-bonding on overnight/weekend trips, birthdays, etc.)
- Uniform distribution, cleaning (if needed)
- Collection of Uniform deposit, return of uniforms and facilitate deposit return
- Get hats to or coordiantes players on their team for UW Concessions events to get hats, to reduce cost of having to purchase hats for all players

## ***End-Of-Season Items***

### Player End-Of-Season Release

At the end of your team's season, Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will release you to another club to continue play at a season-ending event should the opportunity arise. The other club director should contact Madison Starlings Volleyball Club to request permission. We will then discuss this with you, and alert the Badger Region that you have fulfilled your financial obligations to us and that you will be allowed to play with them.

### Season-Ending Functions

Madison Starlings Volleyball Club will have club fundraisers that all athletes are invited to volunteer for after the playing season has ended. Some of these fundraisers will provide funds to support late season events or tournaments. These after season fundraisers may also support the funding to start the next season, as each year supports the upcoming year with their efforts.

## ***How To Be A Supportive Parent/Guardian***

Youth programs cannot be successful without the support of parents/guardians. The following guidelines are for concerned parents/guardians as they strive to be supportive of their young athletes without being pushy.

1. Supportive parents/guardians focus on mastering sport skills and strategies rather than competitive rankings. Sport mastery focuses on performance, which can be controlled by the athlete, while competitive ranking focuses primarily on winning and losing, an outcome, which is frequently outside the athlete's control. An overemphasis on competitive rank and an under emphasis on sport mastery is a primary cause of a dramatic drop out rate in competitive sports by 12 to 18 year olds.

2. Supportive parents/guardians decrease the pressure to win. Supportive parents/guardians realize that sport creates its own pressure to succeed. Additional pressure from the parent is likely to be counterproductive, particularly, in the long run. Supportive parents/guardians avoid making the outcome of the game bigger than life. As a game or a competition becomes blown out of proportion, a youngster's self-esteem can become tied to winning or losing. A child should not feel less valuable or less loved when a match is lost.
3. Supportive parents/guardians believe that sport's primary value is the opportunity for self-development. The probability of achieving lasting fame and glory via sport is low. Many outstanding athletes never achieve professional status. However, their sports experiences have allowed them to develop life-long values and self-respect.
4. Supportive parents/guardians understand the risks. Competition places the athlete on center stage. Anytime competing is willingness to chance failure. Giving your best is what athletics is all about.
5. Supportive parents/guardians communicate their true concerns directly with the coach/teacher. A positive working relationship is based upon clearly communicated mutual goals among parents/guardians, coaches and athletes. While a parent/guardian cannot control the behavior of a coach/teacher, they can communicate with the coach/teacher on a regular basis about the overall development of their athlete.
6. Supportive parents/guardians understand and respect the difference between parental/guardian roles and coaching roles. While parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for their athlete's development, once they have chosen a program/coach they must leave the coaching to the coach/teacher. Even though supportive parents/guardians often play sports with their athlete they avoid coaching "over the shoulder" of the coach/teacher and/or publicly questioning the coaching decisions.
7. Supportive parents/guardians control negative emotions and think positively. Few athletes wish to perform poorly. Negative reactions to poor performances only add to an athlete's pressures. Supportive parents/guardians realize that even the athlete who "chokes" is trying to succeed. In fact, part of the problem with many athletes is that they are trying too hard to succeed. Criticizing such athletes does little to enhance their performances.
8. Supportive Parents/guardians KNOW HOW TO HELP YOUR ATHLETE DEAL WITH FRUSTRATIONS OF TEAM SPORT - CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING: 1. How to deal with demanding superiors 2. How to be a cooperative team member 3. How to make use of both positive and negative feedback 4. How to cope with adversity 5. How to achieve mental toughness 6. How to be a gracious winner 7. How to live with the eccentricities of coaches, teammates, and opponents.

## ***Guidelines For Being A Positive Parent/Guardian***

1. Be positive with your athlete. Let them know they are successful simply because they are a part of the TEAM.
2. Encourage your athlete to seek their own answers. If he/she is unsuccessful at working things out with his/her coach, schedule a meeting with the coach and have your athlete attend with you. (You may not be hearing the whole story - a very common occurrence)
3. Be supportive of the coaching staff. If you have questions or concerns please talk with the coach at the appropriate time. Never approach a coach with complaints after a tough game. Wait and schedule a visit after everyone cools off.
4. Be careful not to show animosity or jealousy toward any of your athlete's teammates. Many things will aggravate you that do not faze your athlete. Do not make something into

an issue if it is not an issue. This type of attitude can rub off on your athlete and affect the whole team.

5. Please think before criticizing anyone connected with the club or your athlete's team. Criticism is contagious and openly harmful. The damage can be irreversible.
6. Do your physical part as a parent/guardian. Get your athlete to practice on time and pick them up promptly. Encourage your athlete to work hard, be smart, and to do his/her best in everything they attempt. You are a role model for your athlete.
7. Insist on your athlete's respect for TEAM rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. As a fan, you are entitled to your enthusiasm, but please do not be belligerent towards players, coaches or officials.
8. Visibly show that you enjoy watching your athlete perform; this will make them feel better about individual participation, no matter what the role.
9. Positions and talent sometimes do not match up. Coaches attempt to do what is best for the team, putting the best physical mix and best "chemistry" on the floor. That may mean that sometimes your athlete may be playing "out of position" in an attempt to strengthen the team. Stay positive and maybe your athlete will flourish.
10. Encourage your athlete to PLAY FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME, not for scholarship or something that is in the hands of college recruiters.