



2026 and 2027 Divisions II and III Women’s Volleyball Rules Changes

The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Divisions II and III Women’s Volleyball Rules Committee and Divisions II and III Playing Rules Oversight Panel. All rules changes are effective with the 2026 and 2027 seasons.

Rule	Rules Change and Rationale
1.2.2 Commercial Logos	<p><u>Proposal:</u> To permit a maximum of two commercial or nonprofit logos on the playing court within the boundary lines that conform to the following standards: (1) The logo(s) shall fit into a box that is not larger than 10 feet by 10 feet, with no more than one logo in each half of the playing court; (2) This box shall be located between the attack line and end line and must not interfere with any required court markings or boundary lines; (3) Logos and commercial advertising are not permitted in the front zone as defined in Rule 1.3.3; and (4) There are no restrictions on NCAA, team or conference logos, names, or abbreviations on the playing court, provided they do not obscure any required court markings or boundary lines.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> To increase revenue opportunities for institutions and to align with other NCAA sports that permit commercial advertising on the playing surface.</p>
6.1.2 Misconduct Sanctions	<p><u>Proposal:</u> All individual misconduct sanctions shall remain in force for the entire match and are recorded on the score sheet.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Under current rules, misconduct sanctions are only in effect for the set and, as a result, cards do not carry over. This proposal would better address and penalize unsporting behavior and align misconduct penalties in women’s volleyball with other sports.</p>
6.1.2.3 Disqualified Team Members	<p><u>Proposal:</u> If a disqualified player doesn’t sit out the next match as required, the head coach and disqualified player would be required to serve a two-match suspension. If a disqualified coach doesn’t sit out the next match as required, the head coach would be required to serve a two-match suspension.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Addresses a 2025 directive from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel to establish penalties when an individual fails to serve a rule-required suspension. The head coach is responsible for ensuring disqualified players do not participate in the next match.</p>
7.2.2 Jewelry	<p><u>Proposal:</u> To Remove limitations on jewelry worn above the chin. No jewelry is allowed to be worn below the chin.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> To align NCAA rules with other rules codes and reduce confusion and subjectivity for student-athletes, coaches and officials.</p>

<p>8.1.4 Scoring Discrepancy</p>	<p>Proposal: To allow referees to consult the official match statistics and/or the challenge review system (CRS) to resolve a scoring discrepancy. A coach would not be required to lodge a protest in these instances.</p> <p>Rationale: Allows scoring issues to be addressed more quickly.</p>
<p>9.2.4.3 & 9.2.5.1 Bench Protocols</p>	<p>Proposal: Teams will change sides of the court at the end of second set. At the coin toss prior to the fifth set, the team that wins the toss may choose to serve, receive or side of the court. Teams will remain on their respective side of the court for the fifth set.</p> <p>Rationale: Aids the pace of play and limits delays of teams changing benches. Limits interaction between opponents in-between sets.</p>
<p>11.2.3 Media & Technical Timeouts</p>	<p>Proposal: To add an alternative timeout protocol for a technical timeout. The technical timeout would occur when a team reaches 15 points in sets 1-4, regardless of whether a team has already taken a timeout. The technical timeout would be a maximum of 90 seconds. There would not be a media timeout in the fifth set. Each team is entitled to two timeouts per set. Team timeouts would be a maximum of 75 seconds.</p> <p>Rationale: Establishes an option to provide certainty in the match when a timeout for media would take place by using a technical/mandatory break at 15 points.</p>
<p>11.3.2.1 Substitutions</p>	<p>Proposal: To increase the number of substitutions per set from 15 to 18.</p> <p>Rationale: Provides student-athletes with more opportunities to participate. Provides coaches opportunities to be more creative with lineups.</p>
<p>13.2.4 Screening</p>	<p>Proposal: Any player on the serving team is not permitted to raise their hands above the head during service until the ball has passed beyond the net.</p> <p>Rationale: Prevents players on the serving team from obstructing the receiving team's view of the serve. Protects the receiving players visual access to the serve. Provides a clear, observable standard to increase officiating consistency and reduce subjectivity. Aligns with other rules sets.</p>
<p>15.1.1 Pursuit</p>	<p>Proposal: A ball that has crossed the net plane to the opponent's free zone over or outside the antenna after a team's first contact or block may be played back to a teammate, provided the pursuing player does not cross under the net, net cable or referee platform; and the ball, when retrieved, crosses the net plane over or outside the antenna on the same side of the court. The opponent(s) may not prevent this action.</p>

	<p><i>Note: The pursuit rule is not used in a facility that does not have at least 2 meters (6 feet, 6 inches) of free space between the net standard (including padding) on the bench side of the court and the scorekeeper's table (or other floor obstacle) and 2 meters (6 feet, 6 inches) of clearance behind the first referee's platform. Media equipment or personnel may not be located in the front zone (the area between the attack lines) behind the first referee.</i></p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Provides more dynamics and excitement to the game by extending playable rallies. Aligns NCAA women's volleyball with NCAA men's volleyball and other rules sets.</p>
15.2.4.3 Center line & 18.1.4 Reviewable Decisions	<p><u>Proposal:</u> Completely crossing the center line with the foot or feet is not permitted. Completely crossing the center line with other body parts is permitted, provided there is no interference with the opponents. Adds center line to the categories of reviewable decisions. Coaches may challenge whether a center line violation has occurred.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Provides clarity and reduces subjectivity for officials in the rule. Allows coaches to challenge an additional decision. Aligns with the international rule for center line.</p>
18.1.5 Challenge Procedures	<p><u>Proposal:</u> The head coach shall request a challenge by forming a "C" with their hands.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Eliminates issues with the challenge card being displaced and with disdainful use of the challenge card.</p>
18.1.5 Challenge Procedures	<p><u>Proposal:</u> A challenge must be requested immediately after the play in which the challengeable action occurred and before a timeout is initiated.</p> <p><u>Rationale:</u> Improves the pace of play and speeds up the time period to request a challenge.</p>
Experimental Rule 6.1.5	<p><u>Proposal:</u> To allow conferences to experiment during the 2026 season with the electronic transmission of live statistical data and/or live video to the bench area for coaching purposes. Video transmitted to the bench may not be used to show the referee(s) a possible missed call or interpretation. There shall be no use of electronic equipment for communication purposes to and from the bench area. However, when not used for communication purposes, laptop computers or tablets are permitted to be used on the bench. When an official is certain that the computer or tablet is being used to communicate to and from the bench area, an individual penalty (red card) shall be assessed to the head coach.</p>

	<p><u>Rationale:</u> The use of video on the bench provides consistency with NCAA rules for other sports. It enhances the educational and competitive environment for student-athletes without undermining officiating authority or game flow.</p>
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