

SAMVA NATIONALS 2026

Values and Ethics Guidelines

Code of Conduct | The SAMVA Pledge | Zero Tolerance on Gender-Based Violence

24 – 26 September 2026 | UKZN Westville Sports Centre, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal

RESPECT	INTEGRITY	FAIR PLAY	EXCELLENCE	COMMUNITY
For players, officials and opponents	Transparent processes and decisions	Competition on a level playing field	High standards on and off the court	A positive and inclusive volleyball family

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



UKZN SPORT



THE STANDARD AT THE NATIONALS

Play hard. Play fair. Keep every person at this tournament safe. These Guidelines set out what SAMVA expects of every player, official, supporter and guest, what happens when those expectations are not met, and the SAMVA Pledge that every team is asked to make.

1 PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

- 1.1 The SAMVA Nationals is a competitive platform for Masters volleyball players. It is hosted in a venue shared by participants, spectators, women and children. These Guidelines set out the values, standards of behaviour and disciplinary procedures that apply to everyone who takes part in, or attends, the tournament.
- 1.2 **Our values** are Respect, Integrity, Fair Play, Excellence and Community. The SAMVA Pledge (Section 8) gives them practical effect, and this document enforces them.
- 1.3 **Who is bound.** Players, captains, managers, coaches and team officials; referees and scorers; SAMVA Board, Committee and tournament staff; volunteers and security; sponsors and partners; and every supporter or guest attending with, or on behalf of, a team.
- 1.4 **Condition of entry.** Acceptance of a team's entry is acceptance of these Guidelines on behalf of every person associated with that team. They are read together with the SAMVA Nationals 2026 Rules and Regulations and the Fan Zone Guidelines. Where they overlap on conduct or ethics, these Guidelines prevail, and Section 7 (Gender-Based Violence) prevails over everything else.
- 1.5 **Mandatory distribution.** Club leadership must distribute these Guidelines to all club members, players and supporters before the event. Compliance is mandatory for all attendees, and not having read them is not a defence.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 **Team leadership accountability.** Team captains and managers are directly responsible for the behaviour and actions of their players, staff and club supporters at all times.

- 2.2 Tournament Desk access.** Only designated team captains and managers are permitted at the Tournament Desk to raise queries or concerns. No other individuals will be attended to.
- 2.3 Internal resolution.** Clubs must endeavour to resolve internal issues at club level before approaching the Tournament Desk.
- 2.4 Individual responsibility.** Every participant is answerable for their own conduct, and is expected to speak up, or report, when they see conduct that breaches these Guidelines.

3 VALUES AND ETHICS COMMITTEE AND DISCIPLINE

- 3.1 Role.** The Values and Ethics Committee is the custodian of these Guidelines. It sits at the venue for the duration of the tournament and hears major infringements and serious ethical matters.
- 3.2 Escalation of serious matters.** Only major infringements and serious ethical matters should be referred to the Values and Ethics Committee. Everyday matters are handled by match officials, the Tournament Desk and the Tournament and Fixture Committee.
- 3.3 Same-day resolution.** The Values and Ethics Committee will resolve urgent matters on site, so that the tournament continues without interruption.
- 3.4 Right of removal.** SAMVA reserves the absolute right to remove any individual from the court, the playing area or the overall venue for non-compliance with tournament regulations. Removal is immediate and protective; any hearing follows.
- 3.5 Fair process.** Other than in the immediate removal situations above, the person concerned is told the substance of the allegation, is given a fair opportunity to respond, and receives the decision in writing.
- 3.6 Graduated sanctions.** The following ladder applies to general misconduct. It is a guide only: the Committee may go to a higher level where the seriousness of the conduct, the seniority of the person, or repeat behaviour warrants it. Gender-based violence is dealt with exclusively under Section 7.

Level	Typical conduct	Possible outcome
Minor	Dissent, sarcasm or profanity directed at officials or opponents; delaying play; untidy or unsportsmanlike conduct.	Verbal caution by the referee or Tournament Desk; note recorded.
Moderate	Repeated minor conduct; vulgar language; bullying; racist or sexist remarks; disrespect to officials or volunteers; breach of the social media rules.	Formal written warning; removal of the individual from the court or the match; team may play on short.
Serious	Aggressive or abusive behaviour; public intoxication; alcohol, drugs or banned substances at the venue; court interference; disruptive protest; bringing SAMVA into disrepute.	Removal from the venue; suspension from the rest of the tournament; team points deduction; fine.
Severe	Physical violence or threats; conduct that endangers others; deliberately concealing or obstructing an investigation.	Expulsion; disqualification of the team; suspension from future SAMVA events; referral to the SAMVA Board of Directors.



- 3.7 Decisions and review.** Decisions of the Values and Ethics Committee take effect immediately. A team or individual may ask the SAMVA Board of Directors, in writing and within 14 days after the tournament, to review a decision. An expulsion or suspension remains in force pending that review.

4 TOURNAMENT INTEGRITY AND DISRUPTION

- 4.1 Peaceful protests only.** Any protest must be conducted peacefully and through the official channels set out in the Disputes procedure of the Rules and Regulations. Under no circumstances may a protest disrupt scheduled tournament activities.
- 4.2 Court interference.** No team may occupy a court to prevent scheduled matches from taking place. A team that does so will be removed immediately by venue security. Managers must make sure that every player knows this rule.
- 4.3 Fixture adjustments and transparency.** The Tournament and Fixture Committee is committed to complete transparency. If a match error occurs, the Tournament Desk will resolve it. Where it cannot be resolved at the Desk, SAMVA Board members will make the final, binding decision so that play can proceed.

5 SPIRIT OF PLAY AND BEHAVIOURAL STANDARDS

- 5.1 Core focus.** SAMVA provides a competitive platform for Masters volleyball players. Fair, high-level competition must remain the primary focus of every participant.
- 5.2 Ambassadorship.** Every participant represents SAMVA and is expected to set a positive example through respectful behaviour and professional communication.
- 5.3 Officials and opponents.** Match officials are volunteers and peers. Their decisions on court are respected. A concern is raised afterwards, by the captain or manager, through the official channels.
- 5.4 Social media and group chats.** The Social Media and Code of Conduct provisions of the Rules and Regulations apply in full. Content that is derogatory, abusive, discriminatory or sexualised, on public platforms or in team and club group chats, is a breach of these Guidelines.
- 5.5 Alcohol, drugs and banned substances** are totally banned inside the venue.
- 5.6 A safe venue for everyone.** The venue hosts participants, spectators, women and children. Vulgarity, obscene behaviour and any form of gender-based violence will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

6 WATCH LIST AND LIFETIME BAN

Please note: some players are on the SAMVA Watch List for behavioural issues, including comments made on social media. **One player is subject to a Lifetime ban from SAMVA.**

- 6.1 Reminder to all teams.** SAMVA keeps a Watch List of individuals whose conduct has raised behavioural concerns. This includes conduct on and off the court, and comments made on social media, including team and club group chats. Some players participating in, or associated with teams at, the Nationals are on the Watch List.





- 6.2 What it means.** Individuals on the Watch List are monitored by the Values and Ethics Committee for the duration of the tournament. Any further breach of these Guidelines, or of the Rules and Regulations, may be dealt with at the higher end of the sanction ladder in clause 3.6, up to and including immediate removal from the venue.
- 6.3 Social media counts.** Posts, comments and messages made before, during or after the tournament are treated as conduct for the purposes of the Watch List. Grievances must be raised through the official channels, not online.
- 6.4 Lifetime ban.** One player is currently subject to a Lifetime ban from SAMVA. A person under a Lifetime ban may not play, coach, manage, officiate or attend the tournament in any capacity. A team must not register, field or accommodate that person, and a team that knowingly does so will be dealt with under the Severe level in clause 3.6.
- 6.5 Manager responsibility.** Team managers are responsible for making sure that no person under a Lifetime ban takes part in any capacity with their team. A manager who is unsure should consult the Tournament Desk before the team is registered.
- 6.6 Confidentiality.** Names are not published in this document. Placement on the Watch List is a monitoring measure and not, in itself, a sanction. The Watch List is held by SAMVA and shared with the Tournament Desk and the Values and Ethics Committee only.

7 ZERO TOLERANCE: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

ZERO TOLERANCE

SAMVA has zero tolerance for gender-based violence. There are no exceptions. No team, title, seniority, sponsorship or match result will shield any person from the consequences. Every person at the SAMVA Nationals has the right to be safe, and every person here has a duty to help keep it that way.

7.1 Our position

GBV is not an add-on to the disciplinary code. It is a standing condition of entry to the SAMVA Nationals. Every team that accepts a place accepts this Section on behalf of every player, official, coach, manager, director and supporter associated with it.

The Nationals bring women and men, young and old, together in shared venues, with spectators and children present. That only works if every person is safe. A team that cannot guarantee the conduct of its people has no place at the tournament.

The safety of the person affected comes before the fixture list, the schedule and the result. Where a matter involves GBV, this Section takes precedence over every other provision of the Rules and Regulations and of these Guidelines. Silence is not neutral: concealing, excusing or minimising GBV is misconduct in its own right (Level 4, clause 7.8).

Our partner. SAMVA has partnered with the MMVC NPO to monitor and address gender-based violence related matters. The MMVC NPO Directors advise on the implementation of this Section, lead the awareness briefing and programme, and are available at the venue in a support and advisory capacity to any person who wishes to speak to someone outside the tournament structures.



7.2 What constitutes gender-based violence

GBV means any act, threat or pattern of conduct directed at a person on the basis of their sex, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation, which causes or is likely to cause physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm. It includes, without limitation:

- **Physical violence:** assault, pushing, grabbing, restraining, choking, throwing objects at a person, or threatening any of these.
- **Sexual violence:** rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching of a sexual nature, coerced sexual activity, indecent exposure.
- **Sexual harassment:** unwanted advances, persistent propositioning after refusal, sexualised comments about a person's body or dress, sexual gestures, displaying sexual material.
- **Image-based abuse:** taking, sharing or threatening to share intimate images or recordings of a person without their consent.
- **Stalking:** following or persistent unwanted contact, in person or electronically.
- **Verbal and psychological abuse:** degrading, humiliating or demeaning conduct directed at a person on the basis of gender, including on team group chats and social media.
- **Intimate partner violence,** including where both parties are members of the volleyball community.
- **Economic abuse:** withholding a person's money, documents, transport or equipment as a means of control.

This Section protects all persons regardless of gender. It applies equally where the person affected is a man, a woman or a gender-diverse person, and regardless of the gender of the person complained of.

7.3 Where and to whom this Section applies

This Section applies from the day a team enters until the tournament closes, and to conduct connected to it: anywhere within the venue (courts, changing rooms, ablutions, spectator areas, the Fan Zone and the car park); travel to and from the venue in team or club transport; any social gathering, celebration or after-function connected to the tournament; and electronic communication connected to the tournament, including group chats, social media posts and direct messages to a person met through it.

It binds players, coaches, managers, club directors, team officials, referees, table officials, tournament staff, volunteers and any supporter attending with or on behalf of a team.

7.4 What SAMVA commits to do

- Appoint **at least two GBV Response Officers**, of whom at least one must be a woman. They will be clearly identified, and their names and cell numbers displayed at the Tournament Desk and at the scorers' table on every court.
- Present this Section at the compulsory Technical Meeting, and require every captain and manager to brief their team on it before the team's first match.
- Make a private space, first aid and a support person available at the venue to any person who needs them.
- Work with the **MMVC NPO Directors**, SAMVA's partner in monitoring and addressing GBV, who will deliver the awareness briefing and run the awareness programme that a Level 1 offender must complete.
- Receive every report in confidence, act on it the same day, and protect the person who reported from retaliation.



7.5 Reporting an incident

A report may be made to either GBV Response Officer, to any member of the Tournament Committee or the Values and Ethics Committee, or through any of the external channels in clause 7.11. It may be made by the person affected or by a witness.

A person does not need to lay a criminal charge, name the conduct correctly, or produce evidence in order to report. A report made in good faith that is not ultimately substantiated attracts no sanction of any kind. Only a report proven to have been deliberately and knowingly fabricated will be treated as misconduct.

7.6 Survivor-centred principles

- The safety of the person affected comes before the fixture list, the schedule and the result. Play will be stopped where safety requires it.
- The person affected decides whether to involve the police. SAMVA will assist and accompany, but will not compel.
- The person affected will not be asked to confront, face, or be placed in a room with the person complained of, at any stage.
- No person will be asked what they were wearing, what they had been drinking, why they were there, or why they did not leave.
- Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis. Discussing a report with anyone not directly involved is itself a Level 4 offence.
- The person affected is entitled to have one support person of their choosing present at every meeting.

7.7 Immediate response on the day

- **Separation.** The person complained of is removed from the playing area at once and separated from the person affected. This is a protective measure, not a finding of guilt.
- **Provisional suspension.** For allegations at Level 2 or Level 3, the person complained of takes no further part in the tournament and must leave the venue.
- **The team plays on.** The team is not automatically penalised on the score sheet for the removal of an individual, and plays out its fixtures short if necessary. A team that refuses to take the court without the removed individual forfeits that fixture.
- **Support.** The person affected is offered a private space, a support person, medical assistance, and contact with the GBV Command Centre.
- **Record.** A written record is made the same day by the GBV Response Officer and sealed for the Values and Ethics Committee.



7.8 Sanctions

Sanctions under this Section are additional to any sanction under Section 3. The levels set **minimum** sanctions. The Values and Ethics Committee may impose a higher level than the conduct is first classified under, having regard to the seniority of the person complained of, any power imbalance, repetition, and the impact on the person affected. Positions of trust (coaches, managers, club directors, referees) attract the higher end of every range.

Level	Conduct	Minimum sanction
1	Sexist, degrading, demeaning or sexualised verbal conduct; unwanted sexualised comments about a person's body, dress or conduct; catcalling; gestures or displays of a sexual nature.	Immediate removal from the playing area and the venue for the remainder of the day. Formal written warning. Team points deduction: [scale to be confirmed by the SAMVA Board] Mandatory completion of a GBV awareness programme before the individual may register for any future SAMVA event.
2	Sexual harassment: unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature; persistent unwanted advances after refusal; indecent exposure; taking, sharing or threatening to share intimate images without consent; stalking or following a person at or around the venue.	Immediate expulsion from the tournament. Immediate suspension from all SAMVA activity pending a disciplinary hearing. Team points deduction: [scale to be confirmed by the SAMVA Board] Minimum suspension of one full season on a finding against the individual. Referral to the SAMVA Board of Directors and the individual's provincial association.
3	Physical assault; sexual assault or rape; threats of violence; coercion or intimidation of an intimate partner; any conduct constituting an offence under the statutes listed in clause 7.10.	Immediate expulsion and indefinite suspension from all SAMVA activity. Team points deduction: [scale to be confirmed by the SAMVA Board] Referral to the South African Police Service (SAPS) with the survivor's consent, and to the SAMVA Board with a recommendation of permanent exclusion. Forfeiture of all tournament points, awards and prize money.
4	Team or club-level conduct: concealing an incident; obstructing an investigation; pressuring a survivor or witness to withdraw; retaliating against a person who reported in good faith; knowingly fielding an individual suspended under this Section.	Team points deduction: [scale to be confirmed by the SAMVA Board] Forfeiture of all remaining fixtures in the tournament. Suspension of the team from the next SAMVA event. Referral of the club to the SAMVA Board and its provincial association.

7.9 Disciplinary process

- The person complained of is informed of the substance of the allegation in writing and given a fair opportunity to respond.
- The person affected and the person complained of are heard separately at all times. Each may be accompanied by one representative.
- The standard of proof is a balance of probabilities.
- Urgent matters are decided on site by the Values and Ethics Committee on the day. The outcome is confirmed in writing to both parties within 14 days of the hearing.



- An appeal lies to the SAMVA Board of Directors and must be lodged within 14 days of the outcome. A provisional suspension remains in force pending appeal.

7.10 Relationship to South African law

Nothing in this Section limits, replaces or delays a person's right to pursue a criminal or civil remedy. GBV is a crime in South Africa, and the following statutes apply independently of anything decided by SAMVA:

- Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 (as amended);
- Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 (as amended);
- Protection from Harassment Act 17 of 2011.

SAMVA will not run an internal process in a way that obstructs, delays or discourages a criminal complaint, and will preserve and hand over any relevant record on lawful request. This Section is a disciplinary instrument of a sporting body. It is not legal advice and does not determine criminal liability.

7.11 Support and reporting contacts

These contacts will be displayed at the Tournament Desk and at every scorers' table for the duration of the tournament.

Service	Contact	Notes
GBV Command Centre (Dept. of Social Development)	0800 428 428	Toll-free, 24 hours. Qualified social workers; referrals to shelters, health services and SAPS.
GBV Command Centre: "Please Call Me"	*120*7867#	Free USSD from any cell phone. Request a social worker to call you back.
GBV Command Centre: SMS line	SMS "help" to 31531	For persons with disabilities.
GBV Command Centre: Skype	Helpme GBV	Video line for South African Sign Language support.
South African Police Service	10111	Emergency. Report a crime in progress or immediate danger.
National Shelter Movement of SA	0800 001 005	Helpline for survivors; assistance with safe accommodation.
Nationals GBV Response Officers	[TO BE CONFIRMED]	On site, clearly identified. See clauses 7.4 and 7.5.
MMVC NPO Directors (SAMVA GBV partner)	[TO BE CONFIRMED]	Monitors and addresses GBV matters; awareness programme; on-site support and advisory role. See clause 7.1.

If you are in immediate danger at the venue, go to the nearest court official or call 10111. You do not need permission from your team, your manager or your club to do so.



8 THE SAMVA PLEDGE

Every team enters the SAMVA Nationals in the spirit of the SAMVA Pledge. The Pledge is made freely and voluntarily. Captains and managers must take their team through it before the team's first match, and every player is asked to sign the Pledge Register (Annexure A).

SAMVA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

PLEDGE

1 | PARTICIPATION
We acknowledge that participating in sport is a gift which not every person has been given. I pledge to show gratitude in all my actions.

2 | RESPECT & ABIDE BY RULES
We will embrace selfless action in the interest of the common good with integrity compassion and humility guiding our decisions and behaviour. We pledge to show respect to people and the rules.

3 | COMMITMENT TO EACH OTHER
We make our commitment to uphold and protect the legacy of our volleyball family and my brotherhood/sisterhood.

4 | PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE
We commit to striving for excellence in volleyball participation.

5 | HEALTH AND WELLNESS
We prioritize our health and well-being in volleyball activities.

6 | RESPECT FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY
We show respect for the environment, society, and principles of good governance.

7 | INCLUSIVITY AND CONSTRUCTIVENESS
We strive to be inclusive, constructive, and aligned with positive life values.

8 | TOLERANCE
We acknowledge that making mistakes and losing are part of life. We pledge that we will be tolerant of the mistakes of players, coaches, referees, administrators and others.

9 | VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT
This pledge is made freely and voluntarily.

10 | HONOUR TO THE SPORT
The sole intent of this pledge is to bring honour to the sport of volleyball through our actions.

OUR COMMITMENT ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

As members of the SAMVA volleyball family, **we will never commit, excuse or ignore gender-based violence.** We will treat every person, on and off the court, with dignity. We will speak up, safely, when we see it. We will support anyone who comes forward, and we will not tolerate retaliation against them. We accept that the person affected comes before the result, and that our team, our club and our own name carry no immunity.

ANNEXURE A TEAM DECLARATION AND PLEDGE REGISTER

Team declaration

We, the undersigned, confirm that we have read and understood the SAMVA Nationals 2026 Values and Ethics Guidelines, that we have shared them with all our players, officials and supporters, and that we accept them, the SAMVA Pledge and the Zero Tolerance position on gender-based violence, on behalf of our team.

Team name:	Category:
TEAM CAPTAIN	TEAM MANAGER
Full name:	Full name:
Signature:	Signature:
Cell number:	Cell number:
Date:	Date:

Pledge register

By signing, each person confirms that they have read the SAMVA Pledge and the Zero Tolerance position on gender-based violence, and that they make the Pledge freely and voluntarily. To be completed by the team manager and handed to the Tournament Desk, together with the Team Declaration, before the team's first match.

No.	Full name (player, coach or official)	Signature
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

