



INTERNATIONAL PARA PICKLEBALL ASSOCIATION (IPPA)

BASIC RULES OF PARA PICKLEBALL

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BASIC RULES OF PLAY

- A. Para Pickleball is a paddle sport played between two players (singles) or four players (doubles) on a rectangular court divided by a net. The objective of the game is to score points by striking the ball over the net and into the opponent's court in a manner that prevents a legal return. The sport is inclusive of players with a wide range of disabilities, including, Standing Para Pickleball Players, Dwarf Para Pickleball Players, Wheelchair Para Pickleball Players and Intellectual Disabilities & Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball Players where applicable, and players utilizing approved assistive or adaptive devices. All participants shall compete under the principles of fairness, safety, sportsmanship, dignity, accessibility, and equal opportunity, ensuring that every athlete has the ability to participate and excel within a competitive and inclusive sporting environment.
- B. A rally begins with a legal serve delivered diagonally into the opponent's service court. The serve must be executed in accordance with the applicable serving regulations established by the International Para Pickleball Association (IPPA). Following the serve and return of serve,

players may continue striking the ball until a fault occurs or the rally ends. Players shall make every reasonable effort to play the ball before it bounces more times than permitted under the applicable division rules.

- C. The game incorporates the Mandatory Bounce Rule (Double Bounce), requiring the receiving team to allow the served ball to bounce once before returning it and the serving team to allow the return of serve to bounce once before playing the ball. After these two mandatory bounces have occurred, either team may play the ball in the air (volley) or after a bounce, subject to all non-volley zone restrictions.
- D. A point shall be awarded when the opposing player or team commits a fault. Faults include, but are not limited to, hitting the ball out of bounds, failing to clear the net, volleying illegally from the non-volley zone, committing a serving violation, or otherwise violating the rules of play. IPPA Matches will be played using side-out scoring system only. A traditional scoring method in which points can only be scored by the serving player or serving team. If the receiving side wins a rally, no point is awarded; instead, the right to serve passes to the receiving side.
- E. The non-volley zone is a designated area extending from the net on both sides of the court. Players may enter this zone to play a ball that has bounced but may not volley the ball while standing in or touching the non-volley zone or its boundary lines. This rule is intended to promote skill, control, and strategic play near the net.
- F. Players are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and respect throughout the match. All line calls, scoring announcements, and interactions with opponents, officials, and spectators shall reflect the highest standards of sportsmanship. Deliberate misconduct, unsportsmanlike behavior, or actions that bring the sport into disrepute may result in penalties or disciplinary action.
- G. The fundamental purpose of these Basic Rules of Play is to ensure that Para Pickleball remains safe, competitive, accessible, and enjoyable for athletes of all disability classifications. While additional chapters of the IPPA Rulebook provide detailed regulations governing serving, faults, scoring, adaptive provisions, and tournament procedures, these basic rules establish the essential framework upon which every match is played.

Coin Toss and Choosing of Ends

22.1 Purpose

Prior to the commencement of a Para Pickleball match, a coin toss or another approved random selection method shall be conducted to determine the initial choice of ends, service, or receipt of service. The procedure is intended to ensure fairness and equality between the competing players or teams before play begins.

22.2 Conduct of the Coin Toss

The coin toss shall be conducted by the Referee, Umpire, or designated Match Official in the presence of the players or team representatives. One player or team shall call the coin toss while the coin is in the air. The winner of the toss shall be entitled to make the first selection from the available options.

Where a coin is unavailable, the Tournament Director may authorize an alternative random selection method, provided that the process is impartial, transparent, and acceptable to both competitors.

22.3 Options Available to the Winner of the Toss

The player or team winning the coin toss shall have the right to choose one of the following:

- a. To serve first; or
- b. To receive first; or
- c. To select the end of the court on which they wish to begin play.

The opposing player or team shall be entitled to the remaining choice. For example, if the winner of the toss elects to serve first, the opponent may choose the preferred end of the court. If the winner elects to choose an end of the court, the opponent shall choose whether to serve or receive first.

22.4 Considerations When Choosing Ends

Players may consider environmental factors when selecting an end of the court, including but not limited to:

- Wind direction and intensity.
- Position of the sun or artificial lighting.
- Court surface conditions.
- Indoor or outdoor venue characteristics.

- Spectator, camera, or venue configurations.

The selection of ends shall not be altered after the commencement of the warm-up period unless directed by the Referee for safety or operational reasons.

22.5 Wheelchair, Standing, Dwarf, Intellectual Disability & Cerebral Palsy Divisions

The coin toss procedure shall apply equally to all Para Pickleball divisions, including:

- 🏳️ Standing Para Pickleball.
- 🏳️ Dwarf Para Pickleball.
- 🏳️ Wheelchair Para Pickleball.
- 🏳️ Intellectual Disability
- 🏳️ Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball.
- 🏳️ Other recognized Para Pickleball classifications.

No player shall receive preferential treatment regarding the toss procedure based upon disability classification.

22.6 Change of Ends During the Match

Following the initial selection of ends, players shall change ends of the court in accordance with the match format and scoring regulations prescribed by IPPA. The purpose of changing ends is to minimize any advantage or disadvantage arising from environmental conditions.

Multi-Game Matches (Best-of-Three Games)

Teams shall change ends at the completion of each game. In the deciding or final game, teams shall additionally change ends when one side first reaches the midpoint of the game:

6 points in a game to 11.

The player or team that is serving at the time of the end change shall continue to serve after changing ends.

22.7 Failure to Appear for the Coin Toss

If a player or team fails to report to the court within the prescribed reporting time, the Referee may proceed in accordance with the tournament's lateness

and default regulations. The coin toss may be conducted upon the arrival of the player provided the match has not been declared a default.

22.8 Authority of the Referee

The Referee's determination regarding the conduct of the coin toss, the selection process, and the recording of choices shall be final unless a clear procedural error is established before the commencement of play.

22.9 Spirit of Fair Play

The coin toss is a ceremonial and procedural component of Para Pickleball competition that reflects the principles of neutrality, fairness, and respect. All players shall conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner during the toss procedure and shall promptly comply with the choices and directions confirmed by the Match Officials.

MATCH FORMATS AND COMPETITION STRUCTURES

23.1 General Principles

The International Para Pickleball Association (IPPA) recognizes that different tournaments, championships, leagues, and promotional events may require varying competition formats to accommodate player participation, venue capacity, scheduling requirements, and competitive objectives. Accordingly, IPPA-sanctioned competitions may adopt a range of match formats and competition structures, provided that such formats are announced in advance and applied consistently throughout the event.

All competition formats shall be designed to promote fair play, competitive balance, athlete welfare, and meaningful sporting outcomes while ensuring accessibility for, Standing Para Pickleball Players, Wheelchair Para Pickleball Players, Dwarf Para Pickleball Players, Intellectual Disability & Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball Players, and other recognized Para Pickleball classifications.

23.2 Competition Categories

IPPA COMPETITION FORMATS

IPPA competitions may be organized in one or more of the following:

SL. NO.	COMPETITION FORMAT	DESCRIPTION	PLAYERS / TEAM STRUCTURE	ILLUSTRATION
1	Men's Singles 	A competitive event for individual male athletes.	1 Player (Individual)	
2	Women's Singles 	A competitive event for individual female athletes.	1 Player (Individual)	
3	Men's Doubles 	A competitive event for two male athletes as a team.	2 Players (Same Gender)	
4	Women's Doubles 	A competitive event for two female athletes as a team.	2 Players (Same Gender)	
5	Mixed Doubles 	A competitive event with one male and one female athlete per team.	2 Players per Team (Mixed Gender)	
6	Fundraisers Challenge – Able Vs Differently Able 	A fundraisers event where able-bodied athletes compete against athletes with disabilities.	2 Players per Team (Able Vs Differently Able)	
7	Fundraisers Mixed – Able & Differently Able 	A fundraisers event with a team comprising able-bodied and athletes with disabilities.	2 Players per Team (Able & Differently Able)	
8	Team Competitions 	A competition format where teams comprising multiple players compete against other teams.	Multiple Players per Team (Team Event)	



IPPA competitions may be organized in one or more of the following:

- Men's Singles
- Women's Singles
- Men's Doubles
- Women's Doubles
- Mixed Doubles
- Fundraisers Challenge – Able Vs Differently Able
- Fundraisers Mixed – Able & Differently Able
- Team Competitions
- Open Events and Classification-Based Competitions

Tournament organizers may create additional divisions subject to IPPA approval and athlete participation requirements.

23.3 Match Formats

Matches may be conducted using one scoring and two types of match structures as specified in the tournament regulations.

a. Single Game Format

A match may consist of one game played to a IPPA 11 points Rule, such as:

- 11 points

A winning margin of two points shall normally apply.

The single-game format is particularly suitable for introductory competitions, early-round tournament play, participation-focused events, and competitions requiring efficient scheduling of numerous athletes.

b. Best-of-Three Games Format (IPPA Standard Format)

A match may be decided by the player or team winning two out of three games.

Each game will be played to:

- 11 points
- A winning margin of two points shall apply.

The Best-of-Three format is the official structure for all IPPA-sanctioned championships and ranking events.

23.4 Scoring Systems

IPPA competitions may utilize:

IPPA Side-Out Scoring

Only the serving side will score points. The receiving side gains the right to serve by winning a rally.

23.5 Tournament Competition Structures

(A) Single Elimination (Knock Out Format)

Under a Single Elimination format, a player or team is eliminated after one match loss.

The Single Elimination Competition Format is a tournament structure in which a player or team is immediately eliminated from championship contention upon losing a match. Competitors advance through a predetermined draw, with the winner of each match progressing to the next round and the losing player or team being removed from the main championship bracket. The competition continues through successive rounds, typically consisting of preliminary rounds, Round of 32, Round of 16, Quarterfinals, Semifinals, and Finals, depending upon

the number of entries. The player or team that remains undefeated throughout the bracket shall be declared the tournament champion.

(B) League Format Structure

1. A **League Structure** is a competition format in which players, teams, clubs, or national representatives compete over a series of scheduled matches during a defined season or competition period. Participants earn points based on match results, and final standings are determined by the total points accumulated throughout the league.
2. League competitions may be conducted on a single-round or double-round basis, where competitors play each opponent once or multiple times. Rankings are typically determined by match wins, points earned, point differential, and other approved tie-break criteria.
3. This format emphasizes consistency, long-term performance, athlete development, and regular competitive opportunities. League structures are commonly used for club championships, national circuits, professional tours, and regional Para Pickleball development programs. The participant or team finishing at the top of the standings at the conclusion of the league shall be declared the league champion, unless a separate playoff stage is prescribed by the competition regulations.

(C) League Cum Knockout Format

1. The **League-Cum-Knockout Competition Format** is a two-stage tournament system designed to combine the advantages of league play and knockout competition. This format is commonly adopted in national and international championships to ensure that participants are evaluated through multiple matches before advancing to the decisive elimination rounds.
2. In the **League Stage**, players or teams are allocated into designated pools, groups, or divisions. Each participant competes against all other participants within the same group in accordance with a round-robin schedule. Match results are recorded and points are awarded based on the competition regulations. Rankings within each group are determined by factors such as total points earned, number of matches won, head-to-head results, point differential, or other approved tie-break criteria.
3. The purpose of the league phase is to provide all participants with a minimum guaranteed number of matches while establishing a reliable competitive ranking. This stage reduces the influence of a single

unfavourable result and rewards consistency, skill, and overall performance throughout the competition.

4. Upon completion of the league phase, a predetermined number of the highest-ranked participants from each group qualify for the **Knockout Stage**. The qualified participants are seeded into an elimination bracket based on their league standings or as specified in the tournament regulations. Once the knockout stage commences, competitors must win each match to remain in contention for the championship title.

23.6 Team Competitions

IPPA may sanction team-based competitions involving:

- National teams.
- Regional teams.
- Club teams.
- Franchise teams.
- University or institutional teams.

A team match may include a combination of:

- Singles Matches.
- Doubles Matches.
- Mixed doubles Matches.
- Fundraiser Exhibition matches.

The team accumulating the required number of match victories shall be declared the winner.

23.7 Seeding and Draw Procedures

To promote competitive balance, tournaments organisers may utilize seeding systems based upon:

- IPPA World Rankings.
- Continental Rankings.
- National Rankings.
- Previous tournament performances.

- Wildcard allocations.

Seeded players shall be placed in the draw according to approved tournament procedures to minimize early-round contests between the highest-ranked competitors.

23.8 Consolation and Placement Competitions

Tournament organizers may provide additional placement matches for para pickleball players eliminated from the main draw.

Such competitions may include:

- Bronze Medal Matches.

- Third-Place Playoffs.

- Consolation Brackets.

- Classification Matches.

- Ranking Position Matches.

These events provide additional competitive opportunities and assist in determining final tournament rankings.

23.9 Match Scheduling and Order of Play

The Tournament Director shall publish an official schedule specifying:

- Match times.
- Court assignments.
- Warm-up periods.
- Rest intervals.
- Competition rounds.

Players are responsible for reporting to their assigned court on time and shall comply with all scheduling requirements.

The Tournament Director may adjust schedules due to weather, venue conditions, athlete welfare considerations, or unforeseen circumstances.

23.10 Tie-Breaking Procedures

Where two or more players or teams are tied in group standings, the following criteria may be applied in order:

- Number of match victories.
- Head-to-head results.
- Games won versus games lost.
- Point differential.
- Points scored.
- Additional playoff or tie-break match, if required.

Tournament regulations may specify alternative tie-break procedures provided they are published in advance.

23.11 Para Pickleball Competition Considerations

Competition structures shall take into account the specific needs of Para Pickleball athletes, including:

- Appropriate rest and recovery periods.
- Accessibility of courts and facilities.
- Classification-specific requirements.
- Medical and safety considerations.
- Equipment inspection schedules.

Tournament organizers shall strive to create competition schedules that maximize athlete performance, safety, and participation opportunities.

23.12 Authority of the Tournament Organizer

The Tournament Director, in consultation with the Technical Delegate and Referee, shall have authority to determine the most appropriate competition structure for an event, provided that all participants are informed of the format before competition begins.

Any changes to the approved competition structure after the start of play shall only be made under exceptional circumstances and in the interests of fairness, athlete safety, or operational necessity.

23.13 Principle of Competitive Integrity

All match formats and competition structures adopted by IPPA shall be guided by the principles of transparency, equality of opportunity, sporting merit, and player-centered competition. Regardless of the format selected, the ultimate objective shall be to identify the most deserving competitors through fair and consistent competition while promoting the growth and development of Para Pickleball throughout the world.

SCORING SYSTEM (11-POINT FORMAT)

24.1 Scope

1. The 11-Point Scoring System is the standard method of scoring used in Para Pickleball competitions sanctioned by the International Para Pickleball Association (IPPA). The system is designed to provide a balance between competitive fairness, match efficiency, athlete endurance, and tournament scheduling requirements.
2. Under this format, points may only be scored by the serving side. The first player or team to achieve the required winning score and satisfy the winning margin requirement shall be declared the winner of the game.
3. Under the IPPA Scoring System, only one (1) point may be awarded during any completed rally. Regardless of the nature or number of faults committed within the rally, a maximum of one point shall be credited to the side entitled to score.
4. A rally shall conclude immediately when a fault is committed, and the result of that rally shall be the award of a single point or a change of service, as applicable under the Rules of Play.
5. No rally shall result in the award of multiple points, penalty points, bonus points, or cumulative scoring. Each legally completed rally shall have only one scoring outcome.

Examples

- If the serving side wins the rally, the serving side scores **one point**.
- If the receiving side wins the rally, the receiving side gains the service opportunity but **no point is awarded** under the traditional side-out scoring system.
- If a rally-ending fault occurs, only **one point** may be awarded irrespective of any subsequent actions after the fault.

This principle ensures scoring consistency, maintains the integrity of rally-based competition, and promotes uniform application of the IPPA Rules across all sanctioned events.

24.2 Standard Game Format

A standard game shall be played to **11 points**.

The side that first scores 11 points and maintains a minimum advantage of two (2) points over its opponent shall win the game.

Examples:

- 11–4: Game won.
- 11–9: Game won.
- 11–10: Game continues.
- 12–10: Game won.
- 15–13: Game won.

If both sides reach a score of 10–10, play shall continue until one side establishes a two-point lead.

24.3 Point Scoring Principles

Points may be awarded only to the serving side when the receiving side commits a fault or fails to return the ball in accordance with the Rules of Play.

A point shall be awarded when:

- The opponent commits a fault.
- The opponent fails to return the ball before it bounces twice or thrice as per the Classification Category and Additional Bounce Rule.
- The opponent hits the ball out of bounds.
- The opponent violates the Non-Volley Zone (NVZ) regulations.
- The opponent commits a service fault.
- Any other rule violation results in loss of rally.

When the serving side loses a rally, service shall pass according to the applicable service sequence without awarding a point to the receiving side.

24.4 Winning the Game

A game is won when a player or team:

1. Reaches a minimum score of eleven (11) points; and
2. Holds at least a two-point advantage over the opposing side.

There shall be no upper scoring limit unless otherwise specified in the tournament regulations.

24.5 Match Formats

a) Single Game Match

One game to 11 points, win by 2.

b) Best-of-Three Games

The first player or team to win two games shall win the match.

24.6 Extended Play

When the score becomes tied at 10–10, the game shall enter an extended-play period.

During extended play:

- The game continues without interruption.
- Teams continue serving in normal sequence.
- The first side to establish a two-point lead wins the game.
- No special tie-break procedures shall apply unless approved by the Tournament Committee.

24.7 Official Score Announcement

Score announcements shall be made in the prescribed sequence established by these Rules. In doubles competition, the serving team's score shall be announced first, followed by the receiving team's score and the applicable server number. In singles competition, the serving player's score shall be announced first, followed by the receiving player's score.

If a player believes that an incorrect score has been announced, clarification shall be requested before the serve is executed. Once the subsequent rally has commenced, the score shall generally stand unless an error can be clearly established in accordance with the competition regulations.

The score shall be announced before each serve.

For singles competition, the server shall announce:

Server Score – Receiver Score

Example:

“8–6”

For doubles competition, the server shall announce:

Serving Team Score – Receiving Team Score – Server Number

Example:

“8–6–First Server”

“8–6–Second Server”

The announced score shall be considered the official score unless corrected before the next serve is executed.

24.8 Correction of Scoring Errors

If an incorrect score is announced or recorded:

- Play shall be stopped as soon as the error is identified.
- The correct score shall be determined from official records, referee observations, or other authorized means.
- Play shall resume from the corrected score.
- Points validly earned before discovery of the error shall remain valid.

A scoring error shall not invalidate rallies already completed.

24.9 Referee Responsibilities

The referee shall:

- Maintain the official score.
- Announce scores clearly and consistently.
- Confirm game-winning points.
- Resolve scoring disputes.
- Ensure accurate recording of match results.

The referee's determination of the official score shall be final unless overturned by the Match Referee under established competition procedures.

24.10 Tournament Administration

For tournament scheduling and ranking purposes, all match results shall be recorded using the official 11-point scoring format unless an alternative format has been specifically approved by the Tournament Director and published in advance. The 11-point scoring system remains the preferred competitive format for IPPA-sanctioned Para Pickleball events.

CHAPTER 25: SERVICE RULES AND PLAYER POSITIONS

25.1 General Principle

The service is the method by which a rally is initiated and shall be performed in accordance with the technical requirements established by the International Para Pickleball Association (IPPA). Service regulations and player positioning requirements are intended to provide equitable competitive conditions while

recognizing the functional characteristics of different Para Pickleball classifications.

All players, regardless of classification, shall occupy legal court positions before the serve and maintain compliance with the prescribed service procedures. Classification-specific modifications are intended solely to facilitate participation and shall not be interpreted as conferring a competitive advantage.

25.2 Common Service Requirements

For all Para Pickleball classifications:

- a. The serve shall be struck from behind the baseline and directed diagonally into the opponent's designated service court.
- b. The server shall not initiate the service motion until the referee has completed the official score announcement. The serve must be executed within ten (10) seconds following the completion of the score call provided both sides are ready for play; and failure to do so may result in a delay-of-game fault.
- c. The served ball shall clear the net and land within the boundaries of the correct service area. If the ball touches the net/net cord and lands within the boundaries of the correct service area without touching the surface or net post, the server shall be Re-Served.
- d. A para pickleball player shall not deliberately delay service once the score has been announced.
- e. Service shall be executed only after both sides are reasonably prepared to play.
- f. Only one point may be awarded from a completed rally.
- g. The server and receiver shall occupy the correct service positions determined by the score and service sequence.
- h. A server may bounce the ball on the playing surface one or more times before initiating the serve, provided that such actions do not unreasonably delay the game. The ball may also be dropped directly from the server's hand without bouncing prior to the serve.

25.3 Standing Para Pickleball Service and Position Rules

Service Position

Players competing in Standing Para Pickleball divisions shall perform the serve from a standing position using the same court dimensions and service zones applicable to the division in which they compete.

At ball contact:

- a. At least one foot shall remain in contact with the playing surface.
- b. Neither foot may touch the baseline or enter the court before the ball is struck.
- c. The server shall remain within the imaginary extensions of the sideline and centerline corresponding to the designated service area.

Player Positioning

Players may adopt any tactical position on their side of the court provided that:

- Service order is maintained.
- Receiving responsibilities are respected.
- No player obstructs the normal progression of play.

The server's partner and receiver's partner may assume strategic positions after service has been legally executed.

25.4 Wheelchair Para Pickleball Service and Position Rules

(A) Service Position

For wheelchair competition, the wheelchair shall be considered an extension of the player.

At the moment of service:

1. The rear propulsion wheels shall be positioned completely behind the baseline.
2. No propulsion wheel shall contact the baseline, centerline extension, or sideline extension.
3. Front caster wheels may extend beyond the baseline provided the propulsion wheels remain legally positioned.
4. The player shall remain seated throughout the service motion.
5. The player shall not use the feet or lower limbs to generate propulsion or additional leverage during service. No part of the player's body shall make contact with the playing surface, court boundary structures, fencing, walls, or any external structure during the execution of the service.

(B) Player Positioning

1. Players may position their wheelchairs anywhere on their side of the court, subject to service order requirements.
2. Movement and positioning shall be achieved through wheelchair propulsion only.
3. The wheelchair constitutes part of the player's body for determining positional faults, court contact, and boundary violations.

25.5 Dwarf Para Pickleball Service and Position Rules

Service Position

Players competing within Dwarf Para Pickleball classifications shall serve from the standard service area without modification to court dimensions unless otherwise approved by IPPA competition regulations.

Because of variations in stature and limb length associated with dwarfism, players may adopt serving techniques that accommodate their functional reach and balance capabilities.

At service contact:

- a. The player shall maintain a stable and controlled body position.
- b. The serve shall be executed without the assistance of external support devices unless specifically approved under equipment regulations. Dwarf PP40-41 Assisted Category may use additional assistance as per the decision of Tournament Director.
- c. The player's position shall remain entirely behind the baseline at the moment of service contact.

Player Positioning

Dwarf Para Pickleball players may utilize any legal court position and movement pattern consistent with their physical capabilities.

No restriction shall be imposed on movement style, stride length, or tactical positioning provided all standard playing rules are observed.

25.6 Intellectual Disabilities and Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball Service and Position Rules

Service Position

Players competing in Intellectual Disabilities & Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball shall comply with the same technical service requirements applicable to other standing classifications.

The service shall be executed:

- a. From the correct service court.
- b. In the correct serving sequence.
- c. Following the official score announcement.
- d. Into the proper diagonal receiving area.
- e. Cross the net without touching the net cord.

Competition officials may provide procedural clarification regarding score, service order, and court positions when required under approved competition protocols.

Player Positioning

- a) Players shall occupy the correct serving and receiving positions throughout the match.
- b) Officials may assist with positional verification before service when necessary to ensure fair competition and proper administration of the match.
- c) No player shall receive coaching assistance during active rallies except as specifically authorized by classification regulations.

25.7 Positional Integrity Across Classifications

Regardless of classification, the following actions shall constitute positional faults:

- a. Serving from an incorrect service court.
- b. Receiving from an incorrect receiving court.
- c. Failure to maintain proper service rotation.
- d. Serving before the score has been announced.
- e. Deliberately occupying an illegal position to gain an unfair competitive advantage.
- f. Unauthorized movement or equipment positioning that interferes with opponents.

When a positional fault is identified, the rally shall be stopped and the appropriate corrective action applied in accordance with the officiating procedures established by the IPPA.

25.8 Principle of Equitable Competition

The service and positioning provisions contained within this Chapter are designed to ensure that athletes competing in Dwarf Para Pickleball, Standing Para Pickleball, Intellectual Disabilities & Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball, and Wheelchair Para Pickleball are able to participate under conditions that are fair, safe, inclusive, and consistent with the principles of adaptive sport. Classification-specific adaptations shall facilitate participation while preserving competitive integrity, equal opportunity, and the fundamental characteristics of Para Pickleball.

25.9 Drop Serve

The Server may initiate service using a Drop Serve. In a Drop Serve, the ball shall be released from the hand or paddle without any additional force, spin, or propulsion and shall be allowed to bounce on the playing surface before being struck. The server may permit the ball to bounce one or more times before making contact with the paddle. The location of the bounce on the playing surface shall not affect the legality of the serve, provided all other service requirements are satisfied. A Drop Serve may be executed using either a forehand or backhand stroke and is considered a legal method of service in Para Pickleball competition.

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MANDATORY BOUNCE RULE

A. (Two-Bounce Rule)

1. To promote balanced play between the serving and receiving sides, each rally shall begin with a Mandatory Bounce Rule, commonly known as the Two-Bounce Rule.
2. Following a legal serve, the receiving side shall allow the ball to bounce at least once before returning it. The serving side shall then also allow the return of serve to bounce at least once before striking the ball. Only after these two mandatory bounces have occurred may either side play the ball in the air or after a bounce.

3. Any player who volleys the serve or the return of serve before the required bounce has occurred shall commit a fault. This Rule applies uniformly across all categories of Para Pickleball and remains a fundamental element of rally initiation.

ADDITIONAL BOUNCE RULE

1. The Additional Bounce Rule is a sport-specific accommodation designed to ensure equitable participation for players whose functional abilities may limit court coverage and movement efficiency. Under this Rule, eligible players are permitted to allow the ball to bounce twice on their side of the court before making a return.
2. **The Additional Bounce Rule shall apply exclusively to:**
3. Wheelchair Para Pickleball Players classified as PP51–PP57.
4. Dwarf Para Pickleball Players classified as PP40–PP41 Assisted Categories also called as PP40A and PP41A.
5. Intellectual Disabilities Para Pickleball Players classified as **PP20**
 - Profound (PP20-A)
 - Severe (PP20-B)
 - Moderate (PP20-C)
6. Cerebral Palsy Para Pickleball Players classified **PP1-PP8**
 - Profound (PP1)
 - Severe (PP2)
 - Moderate (PP3 & PP4)
7. For eligible players, the second bounce is optional. The player may return the ball after either the first bounce or the second bounce. However, the ball must be struck and legally returned before a third bounce occurs. Failure to return the ball before the third bounce shall result in a fault.
8. The second bounce may occur anywhere within the player's court boundaries, including the Non-Volley Zone. The ball must remain in play and shall not be caught, carried, or allowed to come to rest before being returned.

9. When competing against a player entitled to the Additional Bounce Rule, opponents shall continue to play under the standard Rules of Pickleball and shall not be entitled to an additional bounce unless they are also classified within an eligible category. The application of this Rule shall not affect any other provisions relating to serving, volleying, scoring, court positioning, or fault determination.
10. The Additional Bounce Rule is intended to promote meaningful competition while recognizing the functional realities of specific Para Pickleball classifications. Its implementation shall be consistent with the classification standards and competition regulations established by the International Para Pickleball Association (IPPA).

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