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Suspension Point System FAQs For Junior, Adult, and Wheelchair Tournaments February 8, 2023

USTA's Competition Staff has prepared this FAQ for USTA National and Sectional Association Staff as a helpful reference tool. This is not intended to provide direction, but rather guidance, as each Sectional Association has its own set of regulations and requirements related to suspension matters that fall under their jurisdiction. In addition, the USTA regulations ultimately govern and not this FAQ sheet. As such, please do refer to *Friend at Court* (FAC), USTA Bylaws, and your Sectional Association's Bylaws, regulations, and procedures, and if need be, please consult with your Sectional Association's Chief Executive who may utilize outside counsel for advice.

- **Where can suspension points occur?**
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.1** - The USTA Suspension Point System applies to sanctioned tournaments. It does not apply to a Net Generation Program that uses Red Ball Tennis or to a Net Generation Program that uses Orange, Green, or Yellow Ball Tennis, unless authorized by the sanctioning Sectional Association. It applies to conduct: during all matches (main draw, compass draw, consolation, qualifying, and doubles); during tournament activities; at tournament facilities; and at facilities, such as hotels, dormitories, and other locations identified in FAC. Additionally, each suspension point assessed at ITF tournaments becomes one suspension point under the USTA Suspension Point System.

- **How does the point system work?**
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.8.a** - First suspension. If a player receives 10 suspension points within a 12-month period, the player shall be suspended from competing in sanctioned tournaments for three months. (If no USTA National Championship falls during the 3-month period, the player shall not be accepted into the USTA National Championship immediately following the 3-month suspension period.) Upon suspension these 10 points shall be cleared from the player's record. All other suspension points shall remain on the player's record and count toward a second suspension.
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.8.b** - Second suspension. If a player receives 8 suspension points within the 12 months immediately **following the first suspension**, the player shall be suspended from competing in sanctioned tournaments for 6 months. Upon suspension these 8 points shall be cleared from the player's record. All other suspension points shall remain on the player's record and count toward a third suspension.
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.8.c** - Third suspension. If a player receives 6 suspension points within the 12-month period **immediately following the second suspension** (and any suspensions subsequent to the second suspension), the player shall be suspended from

competing in sanctioned tournaments for a period to be determined by the applicable Suspension Point administrator, the chair of the applicable committee, and one additional member of the applicable committee appointed by its chair. The suspension period shall **not be less than one year**. In the case of a junior player, including a junior wheelchair player, the maximum suspension period is the remainder of the player's junior career. These 6 points shall be cleared from the player's record.

- **Who has the first level of jurisdiction over the suspension - National or Sectional Association?**
 - **Junior**
 - If any points are imposed at Level 1 - Level 3 Open - National
 - If all points are imposed at Level 3 Closed - Level 7 - Sectional Association
 - **Adult**
 - If any points are imposed at Level 1 - Level 3 - National
 - If all points are imposed at Level 4 - Level 7 - Sectional Association
 - **Wheelchair**
 - If any points are imposed at Level 1 - Level 3 - National
 - If all points are imposed at Level 4 - Level 7 - Sectional Association
 - The letter issued from the National office to the player will advise which one it is. It is best practice for your Sectional Association's staff to review to verify. Any questions or if you believe it was sent in error, please contact your National counterpart.

- **Can I backdate a request?**
 - No, the earliest a suspension can start is on the date the letter was sent out, but only if the suspended player has made the request to do so. They have up to 30 days to appeal. If there is no appeal after 30 days, a suspension will be started. A suspension can start the date the letter was sent out (See **USTA Regulation IV.F.10**).

- **Can suspension points be appealed?**
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.7.a - Suspension points assessed at sectional tournaments:** A Sectional Association, at its discretion, may adopt a procedure for permitting a player to appeal suspension points assessed at tournaments it sanctions. Points removed from a player's record as a result of an appeal process shall not count toward a suspension.
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.7.b - Suspension points assessed at national tournaments:** A player may appeal suspension points assessed at national tournaments only after the player has accumulated sufficient points to be suspended.
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.7.c - Appeal of suspension points:** After the player has accumulated sufficient points to be suspended, all suspension points are appealable.

- **What is the Appeal Process?**
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.11.a** - Suspension points at national tournaments and ITF tournaments. When at least one suspension point that results in a suspension is assessed at a tournament sanctioned by the national committee or at an ITF tournament, any appeal shall be filed with the USTA Grievance Committee in accordance with USTA Bylaw 43f.ii. Absent good cause shown, any appeal shall be barred unless it is made in writing within 30 days of mailing the notice of suspension. The notice of appeal shall be mailed first class certified or registered mail to the Grievance Chair, c/o USTA Office of the General Counsel, 70 West Red Oak Lane, White Plains, New York 10604.

- **USTA Regulation IV.F.11.b** - All suspension points at tournaments sanctioned by one Sectional Association. When all suspension points that result in a suspension are assessed at tournaments sanctioned by one Sectional Association, any appeal shall be filed with the Sectional Association that sanctioned the tournaments. Unless the Sectional Association grievance procedures provide a longer period for appeal or absent good cause shown, any appeal shall be barred unless it is made in writing within 30 days of mailing the notice of suspension. The notice of appeal shall be mailed first class certified or registered mail to the Grievance Chair of the Sectional Association. The Sectional Association shall notify the applicable Suspension Point administrator of the appeal.
 - **USTA Regulation IV.F.11.c** - Suspension points at tournaments sanctioned by more than one Sectional Association. When suspension points are accumulated at different tournaments sanctioned by different Sectional Associations, the procedure in **USTA Regulation IV.F.11.a.** shall be followed.
- **Can a player forego the appeal and immediately start a suspension?**
 - Yes, players may request that suspension start immediately. When a player accumulates sufficient points to be suspended, the player may request that the suspension period begin immediately. (See **USTA Regulation IV.F.10**).
- **What if they do not appeal?**
 - If the player does not appeal the suspension, the suspension begins 30 days after the applicable Suspension Point administrator mails the certified notice of suspension to the player or such earlier date as may be requested in writing by the player under (See **USTA Regulation IV.F.10**).
- **When does the suspension start if they do appeal?**
 - The suspension begins 30 days after the notification letter is issued, advising of their suspension; unless the notification letter states otherwise. If a stay is not requested and/or granted, the suspension begins regardless of the appeal.
 - If the player appeals the suspension and the appeal is denied, the suspension begins on the date the decision is mailed unless the decision states otherwise or unless a stay is granted (See **USTA Regulation IV.F.12**).
 - This is the risk for players appealing, make sure they understand by pointing them to the timeframe and impact of their timeline to restart play, as well as missing the next National event (if applicable).
- **What can Sectional Association Grievances Committees do?**
 - Take disciplinary action they deem necessary; includes but not limited to:
 - Verbal or written reprimands;
 - Impose conditions upon the acceptance of entry to a tournament;
 - Fine a player, not more than \$1000;
 - Suspend a player (if greater than 6 months, appealable to National).
 - If this is in a Sectional Association's jurisdiction they should notify National.
- **Who can issue suspension points?**
 - Only the Referee, designee of a Sectional Association that sanctions the tournament, or the applicable Suspension Point administrator may assess suspension points. Points shall be

assessed pursuant to **Table 17**. The Referee or the Referee's designee shall report points assessed within three days after the end of the tournament. (See **USTA Regulation IV.F.5.**)

- The National Grievance Committee and your Sectional Association's Grievance Committee, **do not** have the authority to issue Suspension Points.

- **Real life scenario example 1:**
 - **Scenario:** Player A reached 8 additional suspension points on March 22, 2022 and the points were accumulated at different tournaments held in different Sectional Associations. His last suspension occurred on January 12, 2021 and went until April 12, 2021 as a result of originally accumulating 10 suspension points in a 12 month period. All of Player A's points occurred at Level 4 and Level 5 events.
 - **What to do:** Since Player A reached 8 additional points within 12 months of the conclusion of his last suspension, Player A would be suspended for 6 months. Since Player A chooses to appeal the second suspension, it would be sent to the USTA Grievance Committee as the points were accumulated at different tournaments sanctioned by different Sectional Associations.

- **Real life scenario example 2:**
 - **Scenario:** Player B reached 10 suspension points and has not had a suspension occur in the last 12 months. This is the first suspension. All suspension points occurred in the same L4 sanctioned by the same Sectional Association.
 - **What to do:** As this is the first suspension and nothing has occurred in 12 months, Player B will be suspended 3 months. This is a suspension issued by the Sectional Association (See **USTA Regulation IV.F.11.b.**, for the jurisdiction).

- **Length before the letter comes out?**
 - Please note USTA National will utilize its best efforts to issue suspension letters within 5-7 business days (please allow more time if there are holidays, National tournaments going on such as Orange Bowl, US Open, etc.)

- **What do I do if I have a League Grievance (Adult)?**
 - League Grievances and the League Suspension Point Penalty System are handled separately from Tournaments. Suspensions and points do not cross over between tournaments and Leagues. [Click here](#) for more information about League Grievances and the League Suspension Point Penalty System or contact your Section League Coordinator.