



CCYFCL 2025

Cheerleading Standard Operating Procedures Article

Article I. CHEERLEADING BY-LAWS

- A. All programs must follow rules and bylaws of the CCYFCL and General Rules (Standard Operating Procedure for Football and Cheerleading).
- B. CCYFCL Cheerleading includes cheerleading squads, pompon squads and dance squads.

Article II. MEETINGS

- A. Regular cheerleading meetings shall be held monthly, at a time and place to be determined by the Board or VP of Cheerleading. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with parliamentary procedures.
- B. Meetings minutes must be made available to all Programs prior to the next meeting.
- C. All area directors must attend the majority of meetings held, January thru December. All in-season meetings defined as June thru December must be attended. It is the responsibility of the area director to send a program representative in their absence at all in-season meetings and it is mandatory that a representative be present for in-season meetings. Virtual meetings are available during the season to use at the CCYFCL Cheer Board's discretion; however, roster certification and pre-competition meetings must be held in person.
- D. Each program will be granted two (2) meetings missed during the year. Any additional missed meetings will result in a \$100.00 fine for the program. Any program that misses more than three (3) meetings will have their program's voting privileges revoked until the following season. Voting privileges will be reinstated during the next season or upon the election of a new AD. All fines are to be paid to the CCYFCL Cheer Treasurer prior to the next meeting.

Article III. VOTING

- A. The Vice President of Cheerleading may call for votes on cheer-specific issues outside of the meeting via email. Seven (7) days must be provided to programs to respond and cast a vote. Results must be provided to the Cheerleading directors, Program directors and CCYFCL Executive Board. Votes do not have to be cast in person, they can be cast via email.
- B. All non-probationary programs in good standing and with voting status may vote on all cheerleading issues.
- C. Each program may cast one vote.
- D. Motions and issues presented to the CCYFCL Cheerleading VP/Board shall be voted on by the Area/Program Directors or their designated Representative.
 - a. Area/Program Directors or their designated Representative will have the ability to cast a vote on all "program specific" issues.

- b. All board members are able to cast a vote on general CCYFCL issues.
- c. An elected CCFL Cheer position may NOT serve as a proxy for an organization.
- E. Majority is required for motions to carry. In the event of a tie the VP of Cheerleading, Co-Presidents or a designee will rotate the responsibility of casting the deciding vote.
- F. Any motion that has been brought to vote cannot be brought to the floor again until the following year unless it is an emergency situation or unless more than 2/3 of programs agree to entertain the motion. These specific motions can only be raised at Cheerleading meetings and may not be raised via email for voting

Article IV. COACHING REQUIREMENTS

- A. Head Coaches must be at least 18 years of age.
- B. All coaches, trainers and other team representatives are required to stress courtesy, friendship, spirit, teamwork and good sportsmanship at all times.
Any team representative on the roster must complete heat and concussion training.
- C. Each program must have at least one person be USA Cheer certified. USA Cheer certification must consist of Youth Safety and Risk Management and Athlete Protection (for Coaches).
- D. Everyone 18 and up must have concussion and additional training required by each individual program. Regardless of age, each coach must have a signed code of conduct.
- E. When dealing with younger children, the guidelines are expected to be modified to further assure the safety of the children.

Article V. REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

- A. Cheerleading roster certification is required by all teams in the league in order to participate in league sponsored events, to include but not limited to: practice, games, competition, league wide morale activities. Dates of cheerleading certification will be determined by Cheerleading Board/Area Directors to occur at least four (4) to six (6) weeks prior to competition.
- B. All registered cheerleaders may participate in competitions.
- C. Sideline/non-competitive teams must have a roster to include the name and birthdate of each cheerleader. The roster may be sent via email by at least the second game of the season.
- D. Every cheerleader who participates in the CCYFCL Competition, regardless of team type and competition intentions, must have a CCYFCL ID. All other forms of ID will not be accepted. Teams who do not participate at the CCYFCL Competition are not required to have a CCYFCL ID.
- E. Official certification for CCYFCL competition to be addressed in Article IX.

Article VI. CHEERLEADER SAFETY

- A. Safety of cheerleaders, pom pons and dancers is highest priority and supersedes all other rules.
- B. Every AD should have a copy of the CCYFCL SOP, NFHS guidelines, and CCYFCL Bylaws in their possession during all cheer activities, including practices, games and competitions.

- C. Stunting should only occur in appropriate weather and good ground conditions.
- D. For the safety of both players and cheerleaders, no stunting should occur when the ball is in play from the 50 yard line to goal in front of the cheer box.
- E. Every AD should have a weather policy in effect for their particular program to ensure cheerleader safety.

Article VII. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All programs affiliated with CCYFCL may have cheerleaders (pom or dance squads) participate with their football programs at both home and away games. Outside organizations may only cheer at their home fields. To be considered part of the league, you must also compete in the official CCYFCL cheer competition (unless you do not participate in any cheer competitions).
- B. Exceptions to outside organizations will be made for guest cheer teams at away games. Guest cheer teams are defined as non-active members of the CCYFCL cheer board. Guest cheer team must receive contact and receive permission from the home team coach. One waiver per program will be available for guest teams.
- C. Parental consent for each player must be kept on file by each program.
- D. Youth ages 4 – 17 may participate in CCYFCL cheerleading. Youth 3 years old may participate with CCYFCL waiver. Athletes turning 18 during the season must be allowable based on CDE USASF age grid. Exceptions to age are only available for cheer abilities teams.
- E. Cheerleaders must meet age and squad requirements as outlined in Article IX to participate in league-sponsored cheerleading competition.
- F. All programs should offer an instructional level if they agree to participate in the CCYFCL competition. This squad may participate at competition as an exhibition team or competitive. All age levels are allowed to compete at exhibition level.
- G. No player may participate in the CCYFCL while living in or being housed in a juvenile detention facility.
- H. Programs are to remember that the CCYFCL is a Recreation program. Sideline cheerleading and programs who sponsor squads for recreation cheerleading competitions are not to hold try-outs for squads.
- I. No more than 25% of a team can participate in non-recreation cheer teams; at least 75% must be pure recreational. If a team has more than 25% of cheerleaders participating in non-recreation cheer teams, they must compete as exhibition at the CCYFCL competition.
- J. Cheerleaders are not to be turned away for lack of experience, skill or disability. All programs will follow the Equal Rights provisions followed by all County Recreation Councils.

Article VIII. RECRUITMENT

- A. Active recruitment of cheerleaders or coaches from another CCYFCL program's current or previous year's roster is prohibited and will be deemed a rules violation which will be subject to a Cheer Board review which could result in suspension, game forfeiture,

playoff ineligibility, and expulsion for all involved parties. Cheerleaders are defined as cheerleaders, pom pons or dancers

B. If a head coach and/or assistant coach changes programs within the CCYFCL and plans to coach in any capacity for the new program in the next CCYFCL season, the only player(s) who played in the former program during the previous season that may play for the new team they are now coaching, without restriction, is (are) the daughter(s)/son(s) of the transferring coach(es). Any other player wishing to leave the former program and play for the coach's new team must request and obtain written permission from the former program and make a request of waiver from the CCYFCL Board. This restriction will expire after one full season at the new program.

C. Recruitment violations are described as;

- (1) Telephone calls, personal home visits or meetings with the individual cheerleader, coach, or family member to discuss the benefits of joining your program.
- (2) Emails or letters to the individual cheerleader, coach, or family member to discuss the benefits of joining your program.
- (3) Giving unsolicited cards or contact information to individual cheerleaders, coaches, or family member to discuss the benefits of joining your program.
- (4) Extending targeted invitation via email, mail or personal handout to a cheerleader, coach, or family member for a program's sponsored event at which the benefits of joining your program will be discussed or promoted.
- (5) Public announcements via social media advertisement, signs, or posted fliers will not be deemed as recruiting, however the sending of these items to a targeted individual cheerleader, coach, or family member will be deemed as recruiting.
- (6) When a former coach leaves a program, the coach may send an email to their former cheerleaders informing them that they will not return to the program. The coach cannot mention the new organization they are coaching for with their former cheerleaders.
- (7) Although it is not encouraged, the CCYFCL understands that a parent may move their cheerleader to another program without receiving written approval from their previous organization. This may stem from a number of reasons, and is acceptable for any of them EXCEPT active recruitment by a former coach or the new organization.

Article IX. UNIFORMS

- A. All cheerleaders must wear uniforms modestly and not reveal cleavage, midriffs or undergarments. Skirts should not be worn below belly button.
- B. Cheerleaders who are not appropriately covered may not sideline cheer.
- C. No Jewelry. No false fingernails. No long fingernails.
- D. In cold weather, cheerleaders may wear extra items, however they may not stunt if clothing is too loose or ill-fitting.
- E. Cheerleaders must follow the CDE USASF rules in all areas of appearance. Appearance includes uniform, hair and makeup.

F. Squad size to follow CDE USASF rules.

Article X. PRACTICE, PRESEASON COMPETITIONS, SQUAD SIZE

- A. For programs that only participate in sideline cheering and do not attend the in-house CCYFCL competition may practice or participate in any preseason or post-season activities they wish other than cheer competitions.
- B. For programs who attend the in-house CCYFCL competition must follow the outlined criteria to assure equity in competition and continue to foster a recreational enjoyment and experience for all cheerleaders:
 - (1) A program/squad may attend an outside-run camp outside the regular season.
 - (2) Programs may run or contract to run, any camps, conditioning programs, or clinics prior to the beginning of the official season,
 - (3) Programs may attend outside competitions during the season and prior to the CCYFCL in-house competition as long as they participate in the CCYFCL competition.
 - (4) A week is defined as seven days from a Monday to Sunday.
 - (5) To assure that academics remain a priority for cheerleaders, practice hours are limited to no more than eight (8) hours during preseason with duration of no longer than two (2) hours per practice. Practice is limited to Six (6) hours a week in-season. Up to six (6) weeks prior to competition, each team may choose 2 weeks where practice hours are unlimited. Selected weeks will be reported to the VP of Cheer.
 - (6) Practice shall begin in accordance with football timelines.
- C. Squad size is unlimited for sideline cheering.
- D. There is no minimum number of cheerleaders for a squad.
- E. Competition squad sizes are outlined by CDE USASF Rules.
- F. CDE USASF Rules specify the three following definitions for recreational teams:
 - a. **GAME DAY:** The program must be affiliated with, report to, and be governed by an organization such as; YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, City/County Parks and Recreational Program, American Youth Cheer, Pop Warner Association, or other community run program not associated with All Star.
 - i. Each team must cheer for a sport during the 2023-2024 cheer season. o MAY NOT crossover to a Performance Division.
 - ii. MAY NOT have another team in Performance Recreation.
 - b. **TRADITIONAL:** The program must be affiliated with, report to, and be governed by an organization such as; YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, City/County Parks and Recreational Program, American Youth Cheer, Pop Warner Association, or other community run program not associated with All Star.
 - i. Each team must cheer for a sport during the 2023-2024 cheer season.
 - ii. Athletes MAY NOT cross from a Traditional Rec Cheer team to Performance Rec Cheer team.
 - c. **PERFORMANCE:** Organization may be independent of town/city organization/ clubs. Team does not necessarily cheer for a supported, sports program.

- i. Athletes MAY NOT cross from a Performance Rec Cheer team to a Traditional Rec Cheer team

Article XI. OFFICIALS

- A. Officials must be respected and their instructions followed at all games.

Article XII. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Home team must provide a space for cheerleaders of both the home and away teams on the sideline and in front of or in close proximity of spectators for all games. It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure a defined, designated cheer zone/cheer box to ensure safety of all cheerleaders. This space will be visibly marked so that football coaches and players refrain from entering the area. It is recommended that cheerleading areas be approximately one (1) yard off the sideline to provide a small safety buffer between football players and cheerleaders.
- B. The field must be roped off for crowd control from back of end zone to back of end zone on each side of the field. The rope shall be at least ten (10) yards back from the sidelines and at least two (2) yards back from cheerleading spaces. A field does not have to be roped off if the field cannot be accessed by fans, such as a high school field. Any field not properly roped off, by game time, as indicated above will result in a forfeit for the home team. The only people allowed behind each end zone will be two camerapersons per team. The board may approve exception to the crowd control rule based on the layout of fields. Camerapersons are not allowed in coaching area of the opposite team and must yield to individuals on sidelines (referees, coaches, players, chain crew, spotters, and cheerleaders).
- C. The home team must greet each visiting team and explain the rules at their facilities. Contact should be established between Directors prior to games. Rules and layout of the field must be provided in advance to the visiting team.
- D. Halftime Procedures
 - (1) At halftime, cheerleaders have priority use of the field for halftime shows. Football players, coaches, spectators or others should not be using the field during halftime shows. Cheerleading halftime shows will take place at or around the 50 yard line of both the home and visiting teams, or be centralized to spectator viewing areas. If announcements or music is played at games, this should not occur during cheerleading halftime shows, unless it is part of the halftime performance. Halftime shows for each program are to be limited to three (3) minutes each for a total time of six (6) minutes combined for the entire halftime period. Programs with more than one squad performing at a halftime of one game must split their time.
 - (2) First the visiting team will perform for the visiting side, with the home team watching; then the home team will perform for the home team side with the visiting team watching.
 - (3) Stunting may occur at halftime shows, provided ground and weather conditions permit.

- (4) Squads should show good sportsmanship by applauding or positively supporting the opposing squad at the completion of their halftime show.
- (5) During Pit Bull and flag football games, half time intermission is 10 minutes. Cheerleaders may perform a halftime show at Pit Bull and Flag football games.

E. Sideline Cheering Procedures

- (1) For the safety of both players and cheerleaders, no stunting should occur on the sidelines while the ball is in play from the 50 yard line to goal in front of the cheer box.
- (2) Coaches and cheerleaders must stay inside the cheerleading area. They may under no circumstances be on the playing area of the field.
- (3) Coaches and cheerleaders must give way to football spotters and politely inform them if they intrude in cheerleader areas.
- (4) It is recommended that large or especially loud squads refrain from cheering prior to the snap and beginning of play to allow all youth football players to have a positive experience in the game as well.

F. End of Game Procedures

- (1) Squads should show good sportsmanship by applauding or positively supporting the opposing squad at the completion of the game and support both football teams at the end of the game, regardless of the outcome.
- (2) Squads will not participate in post-game handshake with football teams.
- (3) Squads may participate in end of game cheers to thank the opposing squad or support their football team. They may participate in their own team tunnels.

Article XIII. CCYFCL REC COMPETITION

A. Squad Sizes and Eligibility

- (1) The maximum size of any squad is defined by CDE USASF team size guidelines.
- (2) All programs will vote to define small and large division squad size based on the certified rosters. This quorum meeting/vote shall occur one (1) week after certification and the motion will be passed based on simple majority.
- (3) Each squad must cheer for a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of regular season football games to be eligible to participate in CCYFCL Rec Competition. In the event of undue travel burden or scheduling conflict, Cheer ADs can request waiver for vote. Undue travel burden is defined as having less than 4 home games in a season. In the event of extreme weather conditions that affect 80% of games, Cheer AD can request a waiver for vote. NOTE: this is different from CDE USASF rules and applies to teams competing for placement at the CCFL Cheer Competition.
- (4) Senior teams are allowed to compete in an extended age bracket in accordance with CDE USASF Cheer rules, however they still must participate

in 80% of regular season football games to be eligible to participate in CCYFCL Rec Competition.

(5) Although each cheer squad only has to cheer at 80% of football games in order to compete at the CCYFCL competition, it is required that the Cheer AD schedules cheerleaders every week there are football games.

C. Roster Certification and Fees

- (1) All squads participating in competition must have their roster certified at the specified meeting for certification.
- (2) The roster must include squad level, number of members, names of all coaches, squad administrators and squad members in alphabetical order. It must also include their date of birth.
- (3) The following will constitute an official roster: All members on the roster must meet the birth year for the specific squad, all information must be completed on the form, all forms must be typed and emailed to CCYFCL, and finally it must be approved by the CCYFCL official on sight.
- (4) The roster must be accompanied by verification of age for each cheerleader. Every cheerleader, regardless of team type and competition intentions, must have some form of identification to include: birth certificate, league ID, state ID, or other form of government-issued ID. Each program must bring two (2) copies of their roster with them to the certification meeting.
- (5) Exhibition, pom poms and dance squads must be certified to participate in competition. These squads should indicate "Exhibition Squad" as their level on their roster.
- (6) Once a roster is certified, competition squads are final. Upon certification, no new members may be added to or moved among squad without a pro-vote from the Executive Board. Members may be deleted.
- (7) Competition fees will be applied to any program who participates. The cost will be determined by the CCYFCL Cheer Board and established to defray the cost of the competition expenses incurred by CCYFCL.
- (8) Competition fees will be assessed for each squad participating.
- (9) Competition fees are to be made payable to CCYFCL and are due at certification.

D. Venue and Event Requirements

- (1) Competition will be held at an indoor venue.
- (2) Mats must be provided measuring a minimum 54' x 42'.
- (3) Appropriate first aid kit, certified First Responder or appropriate individual with CPR and First Responder training will be on premises for the duration of the competition, including set-up and clean-up.
- (4) A minimum of five (5) judges are required for competition, one (1) of which must be a Safety Judge. Judges will be compensated for their official services.
- (5) At least one individual is required to monitor timing of routines and schedule throughout the day.
- (6) Bleachers or appropriate seating for spectators is required.

- (7) An area up by the mat is required for each squad coaching staff, trainers and judges.
- (8) A warm-up, practice area is required for all squads. Practice/ warm-up times will be offered to each squad (in equal amounts of time) for them to prepare.
- (9) An area for cheerleaders to approach the competition mats is needed. This area must not interfere with performing squads or be in front of spectators while squads are performing routines.
- (10) CCYFCL officials will be required to help monitor crowd control, close spectator areas during routines and take care of issues.
- (11) Vendors wishing to sell products or services may only attend event if they provide a portion of their sales or pay a fee to CCYFCL.
- (12) CCYFCL may offer commemorative or spirits wear at the competition.
- (13) A hospitality room should be offered. When possible, light fare and refreshments should be provided. Judges should be provided meals.
- (14) CCYFCL decorations and event materials shall not promote any particular program. Materials will remain unbiased and be for the benefit of all.
- (15) If competition is filmed, Area/Program Directors must be notified in advance of competition so that they may have the opportunity to purchase a video.

E. Safety and Spotters

- (1) There will be no less than one (1) safety judges. This judge(s) will determine the safety with which the competing squads perform their cheer routines.
- (2) All stunting and tumbling must be fully executed on the mat.

F. Costumes and Props

- (1) The competing squad must wear their official team uniform.
- (2) Long hair must be pulled up and out of eyes.
- (3) No jewelry, body or hair glitter may be worn during competition.
- (4) Props are defined as any item that is held in one's hands.
- (5) Props for competing squads must be carried on and off the judging mat ("deck") by the performing cheerleaders. Props for exhibition Squads may be carried on an off by coaches.
- (6) No extra time will be provided for arranging props.
- (7) Each team is responsible for clearing the floor of their props and miscellaneous items in a timely manner.

G. Routine Rules

- (1) Routine rules - CCYFCL will follow CDE USASF rules for Competition Rules.
- (2) Routines may be no longer than 2 minutes, 30 seconds in length. There is no minimum time limit. Exhibition teams have the same routine restrictions.
- (3) For exhibition levels, coaches/trainers may walk cheerleaders onto the floor and may help to physically place them for their routines. No additional time will be allowed for placing cheerleaders.
- (4) For competing Squads, coaches/trainers may walk cheerleaders onto the floor but may not physically place them for their routines.

(5) For exhibition levels, coaches/trainers may do competition routine motions during the competitive routine.

H. Judging

- (1) The competition score sheet and deduction sheet will be provided to Cheer Area Directors prior to competition.
- (2) Score sheets will be available at the end of the day for each organization. The Area Director for each program must retrieve their squads' sheets. A separate sheet containing all other organizational scores will be provided to show how squads placed relative to each other.
- (3) Judges will be selected from an outside area high school, college or organization. They each must meet the following criteria:
 - Have three (3) or more years coaching experience in cheerleading,
 - Be certified by an accredited organization to judge
 - Be willing to meet CCYFCL representatives prior to competition to review our league rules, guidelines and standards.

I. Awards

- (1) CCYFCL will provide medals for competition awards.
- (2) All divisional level awards will be: 1st, 2nd, 3rd place, Honorable Mention.
- (3) One (1) Judges Choice and one (1) Grand Champion will be awarded during each session of competition.

Article XIV. COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. Uphold all rules and regulations of the CCYFCL.
- B. Assure that each coach and organizational official has access to and has read all league regulations.
- C. Assure that each participant knows and obeys the Players Code of Conduct.
- D. Any coach or team official that knowingly allows an ineligible cheerleader to participate in a game will be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Board.
- E. It is deemed proper ethics that anyone that knows in advance or has strong suspicions of an ineligible cheerleader should contact the Executive Board; Vice President or any member of the Executive Board as soon as possible.
- F. Gracefully accept decisions of the game officials on the field or at competition.
- G. Together with game officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators. Any fan that becomes a nuisance and is out of control is the responsibility of the Field Site Director and should be removed from the area.
- H. Do not criticize cheerleaders in front of spectators, with gestures and loud noises, but reserve criticism until a more private situation arises.
- I. Do not criticize cheerleaders, an opposing team, its players, coaches or fans, by word-of-mouth or by gestures.
- J. Refrain from using abusive and profane language to anyone connected with the game, as a spectator, player, opposing coach or game official.

- K. Do not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- L. Abstain from drinking of alcoholic beverages and smoking on both game and practice fields.
- M. Assure that no cheerleader practice or cheer at a game without proper shoes, under garments (if wearing uniforms) or with jewelry or other items that could injure cheerleaders.
- N. Remove from a game or practice, any cheerleader or trainer when slightly in doubt about her health, whether or not a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
- O. Assure that a cheerleader's or trainers scholastic achievement does not suffer because of participation in CCYFCL.
- P. Any coach who actively solicits a cheerleader from another organization by either making telephone calls or visits will be penalized.

Article XV. CHEERLEADERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. No fighting or hitting, kicking, striking or otherwise abusing opponents, football players, or squad mates at any time before, during or after a practice, game, scrimmage or competition.
- B. No verbal or physical intimidation by making gestures such as, victory laps, "number one" chants or other "bring down" or demeaning actions will be allowed.
- C. No disrespectful behavior or derogatory comments aimed at cheerleaders, referees, football players or fans are permitted.
- D. Report to your coach any knowledge of an ineligible cheerleader on your team or another team.
- E. No sexually-explicit or illegal cheerleading or stunting techniques will be allowed.
- F. No talking back to officials, teammates, opposing squads or coaches.
- G. No profanity or inappropriate displays of temper will be allowed at games or practices.
- H. Disciplinary problems at school or unsatisfactory classroom performance will not be tolerated.

Article XVI. PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following this code of ethics.
- B. I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, cheerleaders, coaches, and officials at every game, practice, or other youth sports events.
- C. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.
- D. I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- E. I will provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.
- F. I will demand a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free sports environment for my child and agree to assist by refraining from their use at all youth sports events.

- G. I will remember that the games and competition is for children and not for adults.
- H. I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.
- I. I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.
- J. I will always address any issues with my child's coach in private.
- K. I will promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience within my personal constraints by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever I am capable of doing.

Article XVII. Disciplinary Actions

- A. All disciplinary actions will be discussed with the CCYFCL Cheer Board.
- B. Disciplinary decisions shall be decided on by the CCYFCL Cheer Board based on the CCYFCL Discipline & Adverse Action Policy (adopted January of 2018).
- C. The Area/Program Director is responsible for both informing their organization of the final decision and the subsequent enforcement of the ruling.