

SECTION VII/CVAC CHEERLEADING

FALL & WINTER SEASON RULES & GUIDELINES

I. PREFACE

- A. **Traditional Cheerleading**--Schools will be able to offer just a traditional cheerleading squad. These squads will not be required to follow the rules and regulations of SED or the NYSPHSAA.
- B. **Competitive Cheerleading**--If a traditional squad incorporates stunting and/or tumbling into a sideline or halftime routine *they will be considered a competitive cheerleading squad* and will have to follow the rules and regulations of SED and NYSPHSAA.
- C. Schools can chose to be both.

II. RULE BOOK

- A. **All teams** will follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Spirit Rules Book. All coaches should obtain a copy of the current rules book from their Athletic Director.
- B. **Competitive teams** must also follow the SED & NYSPHSAA Rules & Regulations.

III. COACHES CERTIFICATIONS

- A. Coaches First Aid (renewed every 3 years)
- B. CPR/AED training (renewed every 2 years)
- C. CDC "Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports" course (one time)
- D. AACCA Safety Certification (renewed every 4 years)
 1. In order for squads to be allowed to perform partner stunts, pyramids and/or gymnastics at games, public appearances, basketball tournaments, or cheerleading competitions, a coach must hold a current AACCA safety certification.
- E. Other coaching courses per NYSED Commissioner's Regulations are required at each school's discretion for competitive cheerleading teams.

IV. TIME OF CONTESTS

- A. Traditional or competitive cheerleading teams attending any interscholastic contest will adhere to the game times set by the sport for which they are there to support.
- B. Competitive teams may choose any invitational competition hosted by any NYSPHSAA member school or NYSPHSAA sanctioned event. Times and dates will be dependent upon the competition host.

V. OFFICIAL EQUIPMENT

- A. Per NFHS guidelines, the following skills are only allowed on a mat, grass, or rubberized track surface:
 1. Basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses and other similar multi-base tosses.
 2. Partner stunts in which the base uses only one arm to support the top person.
 3. Twisting tumbling skills (Arabians, full twisting layouts, etc.). EXCEPTION: Cartwheels, roundoffs, and aerial cartwheels are allowed on surfaces other than a mat, grass, or rubberized track.

VI. UNIFORMS

- A. Per NFHS rules: no jewelry (including body piercings); religious medallions (without a chain) must be securely taped to the body and worn under the uniform; medical-alert medals must be taped and may be visible.
- B. Hair must be worn in a non-restrictive manner and appropriate for the activity involved; hair devices and accessories must be secure.
- C. Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept short, near the end of the fingers.
- D. Uniform tops and bottoms must meet (no bare midriffs); a single partial/whole manufacturer's logo/trademark (no more than 2 ¼" square with no dimension exceeding 2 ¼") is permitted on apparel.
- E. Athletic shoes must be worn (no gymnastic slippers); apparel and accessories must be appropriate for the activity involved.
- F. Glitter that does not readily adhere on the hair, face, body, uniform, or costume is not permitted. Glitter may be used on signs, props, or backdrops only if laminated or sealed.
- G. Supports, braces, soft casts, etc., that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design/production do not require any additional padding. Supports/braces that have been altered from the manufacturer's original design/production must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than ½" thick if the participant is involved in partner stunts, pyramids, or tosses. A participant wearing a plaster cast or a walking boot must not be involved in partner stunts, pyramids, or tosses.

VII. ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

- A. Competitive cheerleading teams must follow the SED/NYSPHSAA guidelines for athlete eligibility, including the use of the Athletic Placement Process and Mixed Competition guidelines.
- B. Competitive cheerleading teams must compete in at least two competitions prior to the Sectional Competition in order to be eligible to represent Section VII at the State Competition should they win their division.

VIII. COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Coaches must supervise their team at both home and away athletic events and should be in attendance at all practices. If someone else substitutes who is not certified, no partner stunts, pyramids, or gymnastics will be allowed.
- B. There will be no pre-game music allowed for any visiting squads.
- C. Coaches should design cheers that encourage and promote positive crowd response and participation.
- D. Coaches must determine if the level of partner stunts/pyramids/gymnastics are within the ability of the present squad to perform. As each squad changes, so will the material to be performed.
- E. Host school responsibilities
 - 1. A cheerleader or representative shall meet the visiting team upon arrival in order to greet and direct them toward changing rooms, bathrooms, concessions, etc.
 - 2. Each host school should provide the visiting team a place to change that is locked or is off limits to the general public, such as a separate classroom.
 - 3. Coaches should make sure the visiting coach is familiar with where the squad may sit in the gym/stand on the field.
 - 4. Coaches (or captains) must determine the flow of the game prior to it beginning—with courtesy extended to visiting squads during basketball games to take the first floor, teams may decide to alternate each floor time out (full time outs & quarter breaks) as well as each 30-second sideline time out, or they may choose to designate the quarter breaks and alternate the full floor time outs and 30-second floor time outs.

5. Coaches will notify the visiting coach(es) as early as possible before a game time if a postponement or cancellation is necessary.

F. Guest school responsibilities

1. Coaches should assure that the squads will abide by the rules of the host school while present at that school. Visiting coaches should advise the host school coaches in advance whether they will be participating at the game and whether they will need changing facilities.

G. Participant conduct

1. Cheerleaders and fans should not compete with the other cheerleaders when they perform their floor cheers/halftime routines. Please advise your squad to act respectfully during any performance of another squad.
2. Cheerleaders shall not perform taunting cheers.
3. Cheerleaders are not allowed to yell when the opposing team is taking foul shot attempts.
4. Any stunts or pyramids during football or basketball games will be performed only with proper training, spotters, etc. and will follow NFHS rules.

IX. OFFICIALS

A. See Competition Guidelines

X. DIVISIONS

A. See Competition Guidelines

XI. LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

A. See Competition Guidelines

XII. AWARDS

A. See Competition Guidelines

XIII. MEETINGS OF COACHES

- A. Coaches will attend a pre-season meeting as set forth for all CVAC coaches prior to the start of each season (Fall & Winter).
- B. Any additional meetings may be held as necessary and will be coordinated by the Cheerleading Chairperson/Sport Coordinator.

XIV. METHOD OF SELECTING CVAC ALL-STAR TEAM

- A. The CVAC Competitive Cheerleading All-Star team will be made up of 20 to 32 athletes from all participating CVAC cheerleading programs.
- B. All CVAC coaches may nominate up to 4 outstanding athletes for the All-Star team in any of the following categories: jumps, tumbling, base, back, flyer, all-around (you may choose more than one if applicable). Coaches may submit up to 6 nominations if approved by the voting members (coaches).
- C. Nominations will be submitted to all CVAC coaches via short video (less than 1 minute) for voting/confirming nominees. Nominees may be present in the same video and do not require separate video submissions. *Video submission may not be necessary unless there are more than 32 nominees.*

XV. METHOD OF REVISING BY-LAWS

A. Procedure should be followed as outlined in the CVAC General By-Laws.

XVI. Any squad violating these guidelines as documented by a coach, Athletic Director or Principal, will be reported to the Council of Athletic Directors.

SECTION VII/CVAC CHEERLEADING CHAMPIONSHIPS

PERFORMANCE RULES AND GUIDELINES

I. PARTICIPATION/ELIGIBILITY

- A. All high school Varsity winter cheerleading squads will be invited to compete.
- B. Participants must have cheered the basketball season to be eligible.
- C. All JV/Modified squads will be invited to perform an exhibition routine.
- D. JV/Modified cheerleaders may be moved up to Varsity prior to the competition.
- E. JV/Modified and Varsity squads may be combined to compete as one Varsity squad.
- F. All NYSPHSAA rules & regulations must also be followed regarding the athletic placement process of younger athletes & mixed competition for teams with male athletes.
- G. Squads must have competed in at least two competitions prior to the Section Competition in order to be eligible to represent Section VII at the State Competition should they win their division.

II. COMPETITION DATE & SITE

- A. Will be determined by the Section VII/CVAC Cheerleading Chairperson, the Section VII Executive Director, and the Council of Athletic Directors at the beginning of or prior to the winter season.
- B. A Site Coordinator (usually the Athletic Director of the host school) will be designated to fulfill the logistical requirements of the competition.
- C. If the Section VII/CVAC Cheerleading Chairperson is a competing coach during a given year, the Chairperson and the Council of Athletic Directors will appoint a Competition Coordinator who is unaffiliated with any competing squad, to run the competition and ensure adherence to the rules.
- D. An alternate date should be considered in case of inclement weather so that all staff, officials, and the site are available if necessary.

III. OFFICIALS

- A. Officials will be certified/qualified judges. The Competition Coordinator will contact the Section VII chapter of NYSCJA to request qualified judges for the event per the NYSPHSAA recommendations.
- B. The NYSCJA state assignor will be utilized in the event that the local assignor is unable to adequately fill the judges panel per the NYSPHSAA recommendations (4 panel judges + 1 safety judge).

IV. DIVISIONS

- A. Teams will compete in designated divisions in accordance with NYSPHSAA championship divisions:
 - Division I – schools with BEDS 750 or higher
 - Small Teams – 16 or fewer athletes
 - Large Teams – 17 or more athletes
 - Division II – schools with BEDS 749 or less
 - Small Teams – 16 or fewer athletes
 - Large Teams – 17 or more athletes
 - Mixed Competition – teams including one or more male athletes

V. CHAMPIONSHIPS/AWARDS

- A. One champion receiving the highest score in each division will be determined and will represent Section VII at the NYSPHSAA Championships in their respective divisions.

- B. The CVAC Championship will be awarded to the team with the highest overall score regardless of the division in which they compete.
- C. Competing member coaches may vote prior to the event to include other competitions for the athletes in which they can earn placement awards, such as a Longest Held Extension Contest or Jump Off. If elected, these “competitions” would be separate from the team championships.

VI. COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS & PROCEDURES

- A. During matted competition, teams will follow all NFHS Spirit rules. Teams must adhere to NYSPHSAA competitive cheerleading guidelines & recommendations.
- B. The competition order will be randomly selected prior to the competition by the Council of Athletic Directors.
- C. Teams will be given a practice time prior to the competition based on each school’s distance from the host site.
- D. Coaches may choose by vote prior to the competition date to allow each team to do an introduction cheer before the judges begin to evaluate. During this cheer, pompons are the only prop allowed.
- E. Routine time limit is **2 minutes 30 seconds maximum**. Guidelines for time limits, music length, and routine components will follow the NYSPHSAA guidelines.
- F. Props: pompons, megaphones, banners and signs are the only props allowed.
- G. The competition will be held on a 9-panel foam strip floor mat (54’x42’). If not all 9 panels are available, 7 panels (42’x42’) may be used without out-of-bounds penalties. Coaches should choreograph their routines accordingly.
- H. Stunting and gymnastics will take place in designated, supervised areas ONLY.
- I. Participants
 - 1. During the competition, substitutes may be made only in the event of an injury or emergency.
 - 2. In the event of an injury during the competition, a routine may be stopped and restarted at the beginning. Scoring will continue from the point at which the routine was stopped.
 - 3. During the competition, no mascots are allowed on the floor.
- J. Disqualifications & Penalties
 - 1. Boundary Violations, Timing Violations, Safety Guidelines Violations, & Technical Deductions will be taken in accordance with NYSCJA guidelines/NYSPHSAA recommendations.
 - 2. Disqualifications
 - a. Disqualifications will be determined by the Competition Coordinator and the Judges Panel for blatant, severe, or multiple infractions.
- K. Music
 - 1. Schools are required to provide proof at the Section VII/CVAC Championship that the music they will use during their routine has been legally purchased (licensed).
 - 2. The coach or a representative from each team must start and stop your music.
 - 3. This person must be available to work with the DJ Service during your practice on the main floor to do a sound check. Coaches are encouraged to have a second CD or digital copy available in case a problem arises with the original.
 - 4. If mechanical difficulties arise with the music during the routine, the person running the music will stop it and allow the squad to start over without any points or penalties resulting.

VII. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Site Coordinator** (usually the Athletic Director of the host school)
 - 1. Set-up of gym using proper matting and/or competition dimensions
 - 2. Set-up practice gym and provide staff to time teams/supervise transitions between stretch/warm up area, practice gym, and main gym practice
 - 3. Tables or clipboards, chairs or roped-off preferential, unobstructed seating for tabulators and judges.

4. Stopwatches for timers during competitions, as well as for Team Coordinator/staff during practice times.
5. Table for Team Coordinator for checking in teams and providing information throughout the competition.
6. Tables for ticket sellers
7. Set up of concessions
8. Access to photocopier to copy total sheets at the end of the competition.
9. Room for Coaches Meeting
10. Room for Judges to keep belongings, get organized, take breaks, etc.
11. Provide security personnel according to host school requirements.
12. Provide Athletic Trainer or other on-site First Aid provider
13. Payment of DJ Service, judges, security and all other competition staff on the day of the event.

B. Section VII Sport Coordinator/CVAC Cheerleading Chairperson

1. Obtain video provider, if necessary.
2. Coordinate design and ordering of competition T-shirts
3. Assign practice times based on distance from the host site and provide to coaches and Site Coordinator prior to the competition.
4. Compile “gate list” for ticket sellers/Site Coordinator
5. Coordinate with Site Coordinator on a working budget for the competition
6. Order trophies/awards
7. Work with Site Coordinator and Competition Coordinator to fill other staffing positions (tabulators, Athletic Trainer, Team Coordinator, etc.)
8. Provide competition information to local newspapers to advertise the event.
9. Coordinate acquisition of a DJ Service for music and Master of Ceremonies duties

C. Competition Coordinator

1. Must be familiar with all NFHS Spirit Rules.
2. Must NOT be affiliated with any competing squad.
3. Contact Section VII NYSCJA assignor and/or NYSCJA state assignor to request qualified judges.
4. Provide timers with time sheets, judges with score and rule sheets
5. Provide DJ and Team Coordinator with Order of Appearance
6. Work with Site Coordinator and Sport Coordinator/Cheerleading Chairperson to fill other staffing positions (tabulators, Athletic Trainer, Team Coordinator, etc.)
7. Coordinate Master of Ceremonies responsibilities/scripts with DJ, including the National Anthem
8. Set up of trophies/awards
9. Provide coaches with copies of total sheets, score sheets, and penalty sheets following the competition.
10. Answer all questions/issues regarding rules and procedures.
11. Organize coaches meeting

D. Team Coordinator

1. Check in squads upon arrival and direct to changing areas
2. Provide information on practice times and location of practice area(s)
3. Run “information desk” throughout the competition for questions regarding restrooms, concessions, practices, etc.
4. May also be asked to time teams during practice sessions.

E. Tabulators

1. One tabulator per judge will tally each score sheet and pass to the Head Tabulator
2. Head Tabulator will re-check each score sheet and apply any deductions from the penalty sheet.

VIII. RESULTS

- A. All final results (total sheets, score sheets, and penalty sheets) will be distributed to competing coaches at the end of the event.
- B. Questions regarding rules violations ONLY may be directed to the Competition Coordinator and/or Safety Judge.
- C. No protest of the final order of finish will be permitted. The decision of the competition judges, through their points awarded, will be final.