



**FLORIDA YOUTH
FOOTBALL &
CHEERLEADING
ASSOCIATION, INC
CHEERLEADING RULES**

Adopted: May 18, 2011

FLORIDA YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING ASSOCIATION, INC.

CHEERLEADER RULES

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FLORIDA YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING ASSOCIATION, INC.

Cheerleader Rules

RULE 1—TEAM COMPOSITION

- A. Each FYFCA teams shall have no more than thirty-five (35) cheerleaders.
- B. Anyone not a registered player and over the age of 18 (excluding media personnel and chain gang), must have a valid Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation Department Coach's Card or its equivalent and pass their respected Counties/Cities Background Check— see Bylaws
- C. The staff of each FYFCA team shall consist of the following;
 - 1. One (1) head coach,
 - 2. No more than Five (5) assistant coaches and/or trainers,
 - 3. No more than two (2) team representatives or team moms/dads.

RULE 2—TEAM ROSTER AND OFFICIAL BINDER

- A. The team binder shall contain the following required information and shall be arranged in the same order as the official team roster. Included in the team binder shall be verification of minimum of one coach's CPR Certification and all Coach's Certification per Article IX C.1 of the FYFCA Bylaws.
- B. Each FYFCA team shall include, on a roster form supplied by the FYFCA, the following information:
 - 1. Member organization's name,
 - 2. Team name,
 - 3. Team ages,
 - 4. Color of uniforms
 - 5. Names, titles, and telephone numbers of all staff,
 - 6. Roster should have full name of each cheerleader in order of youngest to oldest,
 - 7. The name of the school each cheerleader attends, and
 - 8. Age (as of July31st) and date of birth of each cheerleader.
- C. Team rosters and official binders shall be due for inspection prior to the final seal. Cheerleaders will be marked as absent or present. Team rosters and official binders shall be due for inspection and sealing by a designated trustee from another member organization beginning at the first regular scheduled football game, except for a team who has a "Bye". In such case, those team rosters and official binders will be due for inspection at their first regular scheduled football game. Additional cheerleaders may be added each week thereafter only on game days until Game Week Four. Added cheerleaders must comply with all official requirements and can only be added and sealed by another member Trustee. No changes may be added to this roster after Game Week Four. This shall be the official roster.
- D. Three (3) signed and sealed copies of each team's official roster shall be prepared and distributed as follows: *(these Three (3) copies shall be updated each week with any cheerleader additions.)
 - 1. One (1) to the FYFCA President no later than one week after the first game,

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2. *One (1) to the team's official binder, and
- E. Additions:
1. Any additions to an official roster must be in compliance with all Cheerleader Rules and approved in advance by a designated Trustee from another member organization, who will sign the additions.
 2. Any additions to an official roster shall be reported to the FYFCA President by the organization making the addition.
- E. Upon completion of the official roster (Game Week Four), in which rosters are sealed and closed, the designated Trustee will sign and affix an approved seal to it and all copies. Sealed and closed rosters should be mailed to the FYFCA President by Game Week Five of the current season.
- F. Required documents:
1. Each team shall maintain a page in a loose-leaf binder for each cheerleader on the official roster. The page shall contain the following—(Although photocopies of proof of age are acceptable in the binder, member organizations must see the original or a certified copy at the time a cheerleader is registered.)
 - a. A completed FYFCA Participant Registration/Information Form, completed by a parent/legal guardian in the presence of a duly appointed organizational official (must be printed on heavy duty card stock).
 - b. A completed FYFCA sports physical examination certification dated no earlier than May 1st of the current year, with physician's signature and stamp (must be printed on yellow paper).
 - c. A color photograph, current and clear enough so as to be able to easily recognize the cheerleader
 - d. Any proof of age documentation as follows:
 - i. An official state, county, municipal, federal or foreign birth certificate or certificate of birth registration as issued by a governmental entity, or
 - ii. An original court issued document attesting to the cheerleader's date of birth, or
 - iii. An official passport, or
 - iv. Any other documents which has been approved by the Board of Trustees.
 - e. In the event of an injury or illness in which a physician has excused said Cheerleader from Physical activity, participant must upon returning present a medical release to be eligible to participate in practice or games. If said Cheerleader is released to Cheer with injury or illness a medical release is required. Medical release is to be placed in the official binder.
 - f. An official Attendance Record, which will be initialed by a FYCA Trustee at each game.

RULE 3—AGES AND DIVISIONS

A. The following age limits shall be strictly enforced: (Ages are determined as of July 31st of the current season.)

TEAM	AGES
Mighty Mites	*4, 5, & 6
Peewees	6, 7, & 8
Midgets	8, 9, & 10
Super Midgets	10, 11, & 12
Junior Varsity	12, 13, & 14

Varsity

14, 15, & 16

No Waivers will be permitted unless specified otherwise see Rule 15 B.

*4 year old with be allowed at each parks discretion.

RULE 4—PRACTICE

- A. Practice shall be defined as any gathering of a team or individual cheerleaders to exercise or study cheerleading.
- B. FYFCA member organizations are prohibited from engaging in any organized physical conditioning prior to the scheduled first day of practice as designated by the Board of Trustees. The only activities in which a cheerleader may take part in prior to the designated first day of practice shall be registration, physical examinations, distribution of uniforms and equipment and fund raising. If any event is for the purpose of instructing cheerleading, it must be open to all members of FYFCA.
- C. Practices shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) hours per day. All Sports Physicals are due by the first day of practice.
- D. Teams shall hold no more than five (5) practices during any calendar week until the start of the school year in Hillsborough & Polk County, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees. When school starts (based on Hillsborough & Polk County Schools' calendar) practices shall be limited to no more than three (3) days per calendar week through the regular season. Practices shall not exceed six (6) hours per week through the regular season and post season play.
- E. Exception to RULE 4—PRACTICE.D. Two (2) weeks prior to FYFCA Cheer off, teams may practice four (4) nights a week for a maximum of two (2) hours each practice.
- F. Teams with a Bye shall be permitted to practice an additional two hours during the Bye week only.
- G. Curfew for practices shall be 9:00 p.m.
- H. One Trustees shall be present at all practices, scrimmages and games.
- I. All practices **MUST** be held at each Organizations official practice facility

RULE 5—FYFCA SCHEDULE

- A. All FYFCA games shall be scheduled on Saturday according to the following time frame:
 - B. Might Mites 8:45 am
 - C. Peewees 10:00 am
 - D. Midgets 11:30 am
 - E. Super Midgets 1:00 pm
 - F. Junior Varsity 3:00 pm
 - G. Varsity 5:00 pm
- B. The Board of Trustees has the authority to cancel, postpone, or reschedule any game or part of a game when, in their opinion, such action will best serve the needs of the FYFCA.
- C. Cheerleader teams shall be required to cheer for all games of their designated football team aa scheduled.
- D. Cheerleading teams shall be allowed to participate in outside competitions during the season.

RULE 6—UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

- A. Each Cheerleader must have a complete uniform. A Uniform is defined as the regulation Cheerleader uniform (Top, skirt, Bloomers, Socks, Shoes and Hairbow) with the addition of a turtleneck only. The only additions that may be added to the uniform are the following accessories.
 - 1. Face Paint
 - 2. Hair Pieces
 - 3. Hair Bows (metal clips are acceptable)
 - 5. Gloves (NCA approved cheerleading gloves only)
 - 4. Hair and Body Glitter (No loose glitter permitted)
 - 5. Pom-poms

RULE 7—GAME DAY ETIQUETTE

- A. Roster: All teams shall provide a current list of cheerleaders to the press box prior to the start of the game. The list should contain rostered cheerleaders only.
- B. Inappropriate cheers: The use of inappropriate cheers is strictly forbidden and subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Trustees.
- C. Welcome Cheer: After the kick-off the Home team will perform a “Hello” cheer for the Visitors, followed by the Visiting team performing a “Hello” cheer for the Home team—each to be performed in front of the appropriate side.
- D. Cheerleaders shall not cross the 50 yard line, in stadium conditions where the cheerleaders are not restricted by a football team, during game time. Otherwise, cheerleaders shall remain outside the 30 yard lines designated by the football box.
- E. Half-time: Introductions of each team, visiting team first/Home team second, shall be done from center field—each team will then perform their routine for their audience. Half-time performances shall not exceed four (4) minutes per team.
- F. Sportsmanship: Good sportsmanship is required at all times.
- G. Providing adequate safety and first aid equipment and procedures, including the following:
 - 1. Complete first aid kit,
 - 2. Emergency procedures posted conspicuously, and
 - 3. A telephone in the immediate area for emergency use only.
- H. Adequate seating for teams and spectators.
- I. Restraining lines between the spectators and the playing field.
- J. Donations at the gate are permitted, but shall not exceed \$3.00 for adults and \$1.00 for Children except for Cheer-Offs, Super Bowl and All Star Game the Donation is \$4.00 for Adults and \$2.00 for Children.

NOTE: No person shall be denied admission for not offering a donation; however everyone is encouraged to support each organization.
- K. The home team shall provide and distribution Game Day Spirit Awards along with a FYFCA Concession Coupon of \$5 in value to include expiration date 12/31

RULE 8—STOPPING, SHORTENING, OR POSTPONING GAMES

- A. All games must be played to completion, except under such conditions or circumstances where the safety and welfare of the cheerleaders may be adversely affected. Any shortening of the cheering time must be with the agreement of both organizations’ Trustees.

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- B. A game may be postponed for good cause, providing the visiting team is given at least four (4) Hours notice and there is agreement by both teams.
- C. Any games stopped due to adverse conditions (weather, etc.) shall resume at the point when it was stopped, at a date and time set by the two (2) organizations involved, if such resumption is warranted. In the event the game is rescheduled, cheerleaders shall be required to cheer.

RULE 9—CHEERLEADER ELIGIBILITY

- A. Anyone who has been or is a part of any school or other organized cheerleading team during the time period of August 1st of the current FYFCA season to the end of the season, shall be ineligible for participation in the FYFCA
- B. Every participant must be enrolled in and attending an accredited school or registered with Hillsborough County or Polk County for home schooling (appropriate documentation required), unless the participant is too young to attend school. Any player who is not enrolled in and attending an accredited school shall be ineligible to participate, unless he has graduated from an accredited school. Any player who quits school after the season begins shall become ineligible to continue to play.
 - a. The responsibility of notification of withdrawal from school shall be the responsibility of the individual cheerleader. Failure to notify the organization of his/her withdrawal shall result in his immediate removal from the team.
 - b. Any other Cheerleaders knowledgeable of an individual's withdrawal from school shall be required to report such withdrawal to his/her organization's officials. Failure to do so may result in the individual also being subject to dismissal from the team.
 - c. Any organization official knowledgeable of an individual's withdrawal from school shall be responsible to investigate the situation in an appropriate manner and report it to the FYFCA President in a timely fashion.
 - d. If failing to report the non-attendance of a Cheerleader by any individual—player, coach, or organization official—is deemed to be of a vindictive nature, disciplinary action may be warranted.
- C. Each organization must provide upon request a copy of FYFCA Attendance Sheet to the visiting organization by the end of the game day.
 - 1. Cheerleaders Attendance check in to be conducted by the end of half-time of each game day. A trustees initial will be required on the Attendance sheet each game week.
 - 2. Game Attendance is required at a minimum of 70% of eligible rostered regular season games; to be eligible to participate in Cheer offs.
- D. A violation of **RULE 9—CHEERLEADER ELIGIBILITY.A.OR B.** shall be cause for exclusion from competition in Cheer Offs by the Board of Trustees
- E. If at any time during the season the eligibility of a cheerleader becomes a question, after a majority vote of the Board of Trustees, the questioned cheerleader(s) may be required to provide documents to prove her/his eligibility (i.e. original birth certificate, school records, etc.)
- F. A Cheerleader(s) may move from one member organization to another member organization in successive years with the written consent of both organizations. Not giving written consent is only for the purpose of collecting equipment or unpaid funds or any documented disciplinary actions to the organization. This rule may be waived with the written consent of both organizations or the approval of the FYFCA Board of Trustees.

RULE 10—COACHES

- A. Head Coaches shall be 21 years of age, Asst. Coaches 18 years of age and trainers shall be 3 years older than oldest league age for said squad.
- B. No coach or organization official may transfer from one (1) member organization to another in successive years as a coach or organization official, except with the knowledge and consent of both organizations involved. Not giving written consent is only for the purpose of collecting equipment or unpaid funds or any documented disciplinary actions to the organization. This rule may be waived when written consent has not been granted by either of the two (2) involved organizations with the approval of the FYFCA Board of Trustees.
- C. A maximum of eight (8) organization representatives (coaches or team representatives) may be on the field during the game for all teams.
- D. If a rostered Head Coach resigns his position prior to or during the current season (December,31st), the Head Coach may not transfer from one member organization to another member organization in any coaching capacity for the period of one (1) year (season). Cutoff date shall be 12/31.

RULE 11—CONDUCT

- A. Conduct of spectators or participants which is determined to be unsportsmanlike or detrimental to the cheerleaders' opportunity to cheer, or to FYFCA, or to a member thereof, may subject their team to disciplinary action after a warning by the offended organization or Trustee whose responsibility it will be to warn the offending organizations Trustee or coach of such conduct.
- B. Such conduct by spectators or cheerleaders before, during, or after an event may also subject their organization to disciplinary action by FYFCA. If a disciplinary problem continues, refer to ByLaws **ARTICLE X—DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**.
- C. FYFCA Trustees and their organizations are responsible for controlling the conduct of spectators and participants, and have the authority to request the departure from the premises of any individual whose conduct is detrimental to peace and order.
 - 1. Any removals should first take the form of a reasonable request.
 - 2. Should the request be ignored or trouble is anticipated, a law enforcement officer shall be summoned immediately.
- D. The press box announcer shall not be allowed to coach, officiate, or criticize from the press box.
- E. Ejection for misconduct shall result in the cheerleader Trustee completing the Official Ejection Form. The form shall have the person's name, organization name, date, division, reason for ejection, and signatures from FYFCA Trustees. Each FYFCA Trustee and FYFCA President shall receive a copy of the Official Ejection Form. Ejection's for misconduct is as follows:
 - 1. Cheerleaders:
 - a. Any cheerleader ejected from cheering for unsportsmanlike conduct is automatically suspended from the next regular scheduled FYFCA game. For purposes of this rule: "the next regular scheduled FYFCA game" shall be defined as the next regular season game, mini game, make-up game, play off, or championship game scheduled or to be scheduled.
 - b. Any cheerleader ejected a second time for unsportsmanlike conduct during the same year must appear before the FYFCA Board of Trustees and show just cause why they should not be suspended for the remainder of the season.

- c. Any cheerleader ejected for fighting is automatically suspended for the next two (2) consecutive games (as described in **RULE 11—CONDUCT**) and cannot participate in any other regular scheduled games until they appear before the FYFCA Board of Trustees and show just cause why they should not be suspended for the remainder of the season.
 - d. Any organization's cheerleaders joining a fight shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions.
2. Coaches and Organization Officials:
- a. **RULE 11—CONDUCT.D.1.a. b., and c.** shall be in effect for coaches and organization officials.
- F. Any pending litigation against any FYFCA member organization shall be reported to the FYFCA Board of Trustees.

RULE 12—BOUNDARIES

- A. There shall be no organization or team boundaries.
- B. It is recommended, however, that organizations use players from their local communities in order to create community spirit and, at the same time, prevent hardships on parents in transporting player's long distances for practices.

RULE 13—PLAYING FIELD

- A. Regulation high school field measurements shall be used for FYFCA games in all divisions. Cheerleaders shall have an appropriate area in which to cheer that shall be free from spectator or football player interference.
- B. If more than one (1) field is available the organization must specify which field will be the game field. If the selected field becomes unavailable, the organization must notify the FYFCA President at least seven (7) days prior to the next game. The FYFCA President will notify all organizations affected, as well as the officials.
- C. If cheering conditions at game time are considered hazardous; the game may be postponed by the game official.
- D. A pre-game inspection of the cheering area shall be conducted by the FYFCA President or a designated representative(s) two (2) weeks prior to the start of the regular season. If, at this time or subsequently, a cheering area does not meet accepted minimum safety standards, or FYFCA requirements, the Board of Trustees shall have the authority to deny the member organizations home games until such conditions are corrected.

RULE 14—SIDELINES RESTRICTIONS

- A. During all FYFCA games no one is allowed in the cheerleader area except the following:
 - 1. Cheerleaders,
 - 2. Five (5) organization representatives (coaches or team representatives).
 - 3. Hosting or Visiting FYFCA Trustee/Alternate Trustee.
- b. The use of tobacco products on the sidelines is strictly prohibited.

RULE 15—DEFINITION OF A CHEERLEADING TEAM

- A. A cheerleading team shall be defined as viable with eight (8) members. If less than eight (8) Members **RULE 15—B.** may be exercised.

- B. In order to balance team size a member organization may move cheerleaders up or down one Division providing the team up or down has 10 or less cheerleaders and the move would give the team(s) no more than 15 total cheerleaders, i.e. a cheerleader(s) may be moved up to the next division provided the oldest aged cheerleader(s) are the first moved, or cheerleader(s) may be moved down to the next age division provided the youngest age cheerleader(s) are the first moved. This rule can be utilized only on teams with less than eight (8) members, in the event THIS OCCURS, A WAIVER FROM THE FYFCA Board of Trustees shall be required and all the organization's rosters must be presented to the FYFCA Trustees for approval at the next regular scheduled FYFCA meeting. This Rule may be utilized up to the Final Book sealing, no waivers permitted after the Books are closed.

RULE 16—CHEER OFFS (See Cheer Off Handbook for specific rules and regulations that may not be defined here.)

- A. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to enforce all rules and regulations for Cheer Offs.
- B. Eligibility: All teams shall be required to compete in Cheer Offs, regardless of ability. The only exception to this rule is if a cheerleading squad has 6 or less members on the team, it will be up to the individual team whether they participate. If an organization meets this requirement and chooses not to participate the organization is still required to pay fees to FYFCA for the Cheer-Offs. A fine of \$200.00 per squad shall be charged to any organization if all eligible teams do not participate.
- C. Check in Time: The hosting organization shall recommend the check-in time for Cheer Offs. At such time all official rosters shall be checked. Trustees shall review all late arrivals on an individual basis.
- D. Time Limits: When the division is called, all teams in that division shall approach the end zone, in the order as established by the number drawn at the previous Board of Trustee's' meeting, teams will line one behind the other in their respective end zones. Time will start with the first word or movement. Time limits will be a maximum of four (4) minutes—to include one (1) minute minimum of dance and one (1) minute minimum of cheer. There shall be no penalty for time below the four (4) minute maximum. A ten (10) point penalty shall be assessed for every fifteen (15) seconds over the time limit. Time will stop when the last girl crosses the opposite thirty (30) yard line.
- E. Coaches: Coaches shall sit in a specified area during their division's performance. In the case of a tiebreaker the coach may join the team on the sidelines for consultation prior to the tiebreaker. Mighty Mites and Peewees are allowed to have one (1) coach remain with them in the end zone.
- F. Cheer and Dance Routine: Cheers and dance routines are to be at the discretion of the coach. The following regulations apply:
 - 1. All restrictions and regulations of the National Cheerleading Association (N.C.A.) shall be strictly enforced.
 - 2. No opposing team names shall be used.
 - 3. Crowd response cheers shall be allowed without crowd participation.
 - 4. Uniforms and Props: A uniform is defined as the regulation cheerleader uniform (top, skirt, bloomer, socks, shoes, and hair bow) with the addition of a turtleneck only. Hair bows with metal clips are acceptable. Accessories to the uniform may be the following; (Hair Pieces, N.C.A. approved cheerleading gloves, face paint, & body and hair glitter) these are the only accessories that may be added to the uniform. A prop must be carried on and off the field by the cheerleaders, cannot be worn during the entire routine, nor can it enhance the uniform in any way.

- G. Judges: The hosting organization will make every effort to choose judges that are not affiliated with any league or has participated in any FYFCA Competition prior to the Cheer Offs. The judges shall be selected by the host organization and two (2) of the four (4) judges must be current N.C.A. certified. One (1) judge shall be used to assess penalties. The judges shall sit in an elevated position; and, if at all possible, arranged in such away as to allow privacy of scoring. There shall be 3 Trustees (not from the same organization) in “Good Standings” to tally all scores. Trustees shall be appointed at the FYFCA Monthly Meeting prior to Cheer Offs. Judges decisions shall be final.
- H. The Hosting Cheer Trustee shall oversee (review) the score sheets after each division has completed their routines to ensure points and penalties have been assessed properly.
- I. Rules for judging: 100 points per judge shall be possible. A combination of individual judge’s scores shall determine the winners.
- J. Tiebreaker: The same routine originally performed shall be used as the tiebreaker.
- K. Conduct: All teams must show good sportsmanship and conduct.
- L. An explanation of scores will be presented to each trustee at the conclusion of the Cheer Off day.

RULE 17—RULE CHANGES

- A. FYFCA Cheerleader Rules may be reviewed for possible changes by the Board of Trustees in odd-numbered years.
- B. Should any rule changes become necessary at any time, the procedure specified in **ARTICLE VII—AMENDMENTS of the FYFCA ByLaws** shall be adhered to.

RULE 18—PROTEST

- A. Protest applies to Cheer Off results only. Protests must be submitted to the FYFCA President prior to the presentation of awards on Cheer Off day.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the protesting organization to furnish evidence of the protested violation.
- C. If necessary, the coaches and assistant coaches involved shall be notified of the pending protest and the reason, immediately following the contested situation.
- D. In a timely fashion, upon the receipt of a protest, the FYFCA President shall schedule a hearing to consider the protest.
 - 1. At the protest hearing both sides shall be allowed to state their cases and present evidence and witnesses.
 - 2. The Trustees shall be allowed to question witnesses.
 - 3. Upon conclusion of the testimony, the Board of Trustees shall meet in closed session to discuss the protest and to vote.
 - 4. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of all organizations (one vote per organization) is required to approve a protest.
 - 5. All parties will be notified immediately of the FYFCA’s decision.

RULE 19—RESTRICTED ITEMS

- A. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited on the property of any FYFCA facility before, during, or after games, practices, or any other FYFCA event.
- B. It is the responsibility of each organization to discourage the use of personal coolers by their spectators.
- C. Use of tobacco products by any member of a team is strictly prohibited.

RULE 20—AWARDS

- A. A fee shall be set by the FYFCA Board of Trustees to provide necessary funds for the seasonal cost of awards. This fee shall be based on a per capital count from the sealed rosters and shall be paid by all organizations.
- B. FYFCA patches shall be awarded to all cheerleaders based on the outcome of the FYFCA football champions. Cheerleading teams shall receive a conference & Super bowl patches.
- C. Cheer Offs
 - 1. First Place shall receive a Team Trophy and all cheerleaders shall receive a first place FYFCA patch and a first place individual trophy.
 - 2. Second Place shall receive a Team Trophy and all cheerleaders shall receive a second place medallion.
 - 3. Third Place shall receive a Team Trophy and all cheerleaders shall receive a third place medallion.
 - 4. All others shall receive a shall receive a participation medallion.
- D. While it is the intention of the FYFCA to maintain continuity from year to year in presenting awards, unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of FYFCA Board of Trustees may warrant a change in the awards that FYFCA is able to provide.
- E. Two Cheer-Off Grand Champion Awards will be given out to the teams with the highest Score of the day. One Trophy will be given for the large team with the highest score and one Trophy will be given to the small team size with the highest score of the day. A grand total of two Grand Champion Awards. Team sizes will be determined - at the FYFCA Monthly Meeting prior to the Cheer Offs.

RULE 21—WINTER CHEER

- A. Winter Cheer/Winter Football Participants must be rostered on the organization's "Current Roster." "Current Roster" is defined as the official roster presented at Cheer-Offs for Cheerleader & official roster presented at last football game for football players
- B. Winter Cheer ends May 31st.
- C. All competitions must be open to all teams & a team cannot participate in a competition without providing FYFCA members with competition information in a timely manner.
- D. Currently rostered football players are allowed to cheer in winter competitions only in the All-Star Co-Ed Divisions provided it is permitted by the hosting organization.

RULE 22 – Choreography

- A. No teams are allowed to have paid professionals to choreograph any cheerleading routines. No team is allowed to exchange favors for professional services. Any paid professional services must be open to the entire conference.

FLORIDA YOUTH FOOTBALL & CHEERLEADING ASSOCIATION, INC.

Addendum to Cheerleader Rules Cheer Off Handbook

I. SET-UP

A. Performance Box

1. The Cheer Off Performance Box shall be from the thirty (30) yard line to the thirty (30) yard line in length.
2. Shall be eighty feet (80') deep.
3. Exterior lines must be painted to define the parameters of the box.
4. Interior lines must be painted in five (5) yard increments.

B. Field

1. Field yard markers shall be appropriately placed noting the following yardage lines;
 - a. Yard markers shall be placed at both thirty (30) and forty (40) yard lines and the fifty (50) yard line.
 - b. The yard markers shall be placed on the judges (audience) side only.
2. Judges shall be seated at the fifty (50) yard line outside the normal side boundary as space permits. This means they shall not be inside the normal playing field boundaries. This area shall be restricted to the judges only and shall be referred to as the "judges' area." Only designated FYFCA trustees may approach the judges during competition.
3. Team coaches [one (1) head coach and five (5) assistant coaches only] shall be seated to the immediate left of the judge's stand (this area shall be referred to as the "reserved area") during their division's performance.
 - a. Coaches are allowed to remain in the reserved area through their division only.
 - b. The coach/assistant coach is permitted to assume this seat while a team is entering or leaving the field—not while a team is performing.
 - c. Coaches are not allowed to distract or talk to the judges.
4. FYFCA Trustees shall be seated to the immediate right of the judge's stand (this area shall be referred to as the "reserved area").
5. No other individuals shall be permitted in the reserved area or allowed to approach it. There shall be an official responsible for keeping parents from coming into the reserved area for picture taking or viewing. Any distractions to the team performing is strictly prohibited.
6. Hosting team shall be responsible for;
 - a. Providing the sound system for announcements, introductions of teams, and playing competition music,
 - b. Making arrangements for video taping of the competition, and
 - c. Making arrangements for a souvenir Cheer Off T-shirt for purchase on the day of the event, and

- d. Designating each organization's bleacher area (both spectator area and team area) with the organization's logo, name, colors, etc. Hosting team may ask for each organization to bring their own banners, if they have one.
- C. Team competition order of appearance
1. Team order for competition shall be determined at the September meeting of the FYFCA Board of Trustees' by drawing numbers from a hat. The cheerleader Trustee shall draw her/his number position and that shall be the rank for all division from her/his organization.
 2. This number determines not only the order of competition, but also the arrangement for organizations equipment setup, and team seating during the Cheer Off day. The order of seating will be determined by the competition
 - a. Teams One (1) thru Four (4) shall be seated on the Left side of the fifty (50) yard line.
 - b. Teams Five (5) thru Eight (8) shall be seated on the Right side of the fifty (50) yard line.
 - c. Order begins Left to Right.
- D. Judges
1. Judges shall be selected by the host organization with the approval of the FYFCA Board of Trustees.
 - a. NCA: Phone 1-800-527-4422
Fax 1-214-840-4010
P.O. Box 4660359
Dallas, TX 752-0359
 - b. CTC: Phone 1-800-462-8294
Fax 1-352-376-0487
P.O. Box 15267
Gainesville, Fl. 32604-5267
 - c. UCA: Phone 1-888-243-7828
 2. There shall be a total of four (4) judges, two (2) of which shall be from the National Cheerleaders Association. The other two (2) may be either UCA or CTC affiliates.
 3. One (1) judge shall be designated as the penalty judge and shall be responsible for assessing all penalties. The hosting organization must provide a stop watch.
 4. The Trustees shall have the opportunity to hold a conference meeting with the judges prior to the start of the competition.
 5. The judges shall be seated in an elevated position, and if at all possible, arranged in such a way as to allow privacy of scoring.
 6. Judges shall utilize a scoring/penalty sheet provided by the FYFCA Board of Trustees that shall reflect FYFCA Cheerleader Rules and selected NCA guidelines. This score/penalty sheet shall be approved by the FYFCA Board of Trustees and sent to the judges one (1) week prior to the Cheer Offs
 7. Judges' decisions shall be final.
- E. Accountant
1. There shall be 3 Trustees from separate organizations to tabulate scores.
 2. He/She shall be seated in the judges' area on the field.
- F. Press Box
1. Shall not be used except in extreme situations as all judging, announcing, playing tapes, etc. shall be done from the field in the reserved area.
 2. If the press box must be used it shall be restricted to FYFCA Trustee, judges, and the announcer.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Judging

1. 100 points per judge (penalty judge shall deduct points only from the totals of the other three (3) judges). Score/Penalty sheet shall be the approved FYFCA.
 - a. Score Sheet (see attached)
 - b. Penalty Sheet (see attached)
 - c. Penalty points shall be assessed for going over the time allotment. Ten (10) point penalty for exceeding the time for every 15 second interval over. A deduction will actually start at the 16th second over the time allotment. This shall be deducted from the overall score by the time judge only.
 - d. Penalty points shall be assessed for coaches prompting in any way. Ten (10) point deduction for the first infraction, up to disqualification for continuing. This shall be deducted from the overall score by the time judge only.

B. Check-in

1. Check in shall be determined by the hosting organization with the approval of FYFCA.
2. A roster/attendance sheet check shall be conducted to determine if all girls/boys are present. The Board of Trustee shall review all later arrivals on an individual basis.
3. A mandatory binder with roster/attendance sheet check shall be performed by Trustees. Team 1 checks Team 2. Team 2 checks Team 3 and so on....During the original line-up of organizations for the opening ceremony.

C. Time Limits

1. When the division is called all teams shall enter the end zone from their appropriate end and remain behind the twenty (20) yard line.
2. Each team in their assigned position will move on board to the thirty (30) yard line as they are called.
3. Time begins with the first word of the first movement of the routine. Music coach shall be in there reserved area prior to the team starting. The team may start on the thirty (30) yard line or may set up within the performance area.
4. Time ends when the last girl crosses the opposite thirty (30) yard line.
5. Routines shall be a maximum of four (4) minutes—it shall include a minimum of one (1) minute of dance and a minimum of one (1) minute of cheer.

D. Routines

1. The routine is up to each team but shall not use the name of another team in the FYFCA in any of the cheer or chants.
2. All routines and/or stunts shall comply with NCA rules or previously agreed to changes, including FYFCA Cheerleader Rules. Any changes to the Cheer Off Handbook must be in writing and presented to all Trustees by the September FYFCA Board of Trustees' meeting.
3. For the Mighty Mites division, one (1) coach shall be permitted to enter the performance area with the squad to assist with setup. The coach shall be allowed to remain on the field at ground level between the fifty (50) yard marker and the judges stand to assist in performing arm motion during the routine.

E. Tie Breaker

1. The same routine originally performed shall be used as the tiebreaker.

III. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All cheerleaders shall perform at Cheer Offs. An organization Trustee can suspend a cheerleader(s) from participating in Cheer Offs for disciplinary reasons only—not because of lack of skill.
- B. Organizations shall be fined \$200.00 if all rostered teams do not compete. This fine shall be made payable to the organization hosting Cheer Off.

IV. ETIQUETTE

- A. All teams must show good sportsmanship and conduct at all times.No practicing, cheering, chanting, or any other type of team preparation shall be allowed once the competition has started. All warm-ups should be conducted in an area out of the view of the judges. Coaches are responsible for making sure there teams are in the line up at the appropriate time.
- B. Uniforms shall be defined as the regulation cheerleader uniform (top, skirt, bloomer, socks, shoes and hair bow) with addition of a turtleneck or body suit and the following accessories Hair Piece, Body and Hair Glitter, NCA approve Cheerleading Gloves (they must have rubber grips) Metal Clip Hair Bows & Face Paint ***RULE 6-UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT A.***
- C. The only props that are permitted are megaphones, hand signs, and/or pompoms. Handsigns shall be restricted to a two-sided, non-embellished, three (3) foot by three (3) Foot sign. The only exception to this rule is that the sign may have glitter.
- D. Crowd participation, as an audience response, to a particular cheer is not permitted. Applause should be restricted to the end of the performance.
- E. Hosting team may request a \$4.00 for adult and \$2.00 for children donation at the gate. It shall not be a mandatory request. No persons shall be denied admission for not offering a donation. Jersey football players are free.Hosting team shall allow spectators on one side only. Cheerleaders shall be seated on the opposite side and no unauthorized persons shall be allowed on the cheerleader side. Authorized personnel shall be coaches, assistant coaches, and/or team representatives for a maximum of six (6) individuals per rostered team.
- F. Enough seating shall be made possible for all spectators, or notification shall be made at the FYFCA Board of Trustees meeting to bring your own seat (so Trustees can inform their spectators of the need to bring a folding chair.)

V. COACH'S PREPARATIONS

- A. NCA training if possible.
- B. Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation Department's Coach's Certification Clinic or its equivalent if approved.
- C. NCA guidelines and FYFCA Cheerleader Rules and Addendum to Cheerleader Rules Cheer Off Handbook.
- D. Any other approved preparation.