

2007 Cheerleading Policies and Procedures

Registration

- A.) Cheerleading registration shall coincide with football registration, which shall be determined by the RYA Board of Directors.
- B.) * Cheerleading Registration will not extend past set date of 6 weeks prior to first official game of the season to ensure adequate time for uniform delivery.
- C.) A Medical Release Form and Parents Code of Ethics must be signed at the time of registration.

Eligibility

- A.) A participant must be at least 4 years of age on or before August 31st of the current year and not more than 13 years of age.
- B.) Divisions will be determined by age. Cheerleaders will cheer in the division according to their age level for the fall football season.

<u>Division</u>	<u>Age</u>
Bantam	4-6 years of age as of Aug. 31 of current year
Junior	7-9 years of age as of Aug. 31 of current year
Senior	10-13 years of age as of Aug. 31 of current year

Exceptions to this rule are as follows:

Sister/Sister Option: Younger sister shall be permitted to cheer on older sister's squad (room permitting), though much younger sisters will be discouraged. Any sister who is optioning to cheer up to be on a sister's team must be within 12 months of the age requirement of that team to be considered a sister/sister option. If she is not she will be considered a mascot option. Example: If a child that is age 9 is requesting to cheer on a senior team with her older sister she would be within 12 months of meeting the age requirement for senior. Therefore she would be considered a sister/sister option. Where as if a 5 year old is requesting to cheer on a senior team with her sister she would not be within the 12 month time frame and would be considered a "mascot option" Please refer to mascot option for guidelines.

Brother/Sister Option: Sister shall be permitted to cheer on brother's team (room permitting), though much younger sisters will be discouraged. Any sister who is optioning to cheer up to be on a brother's team must be within 12 months of the age requirement of that team to be considered a sister/brother option. If she is not she will be considered a mascot option. Example: If a child that is age 9 is requesting to cheer on a senior team for her older brother she would be within 12 months of meeting the age requirement for senior. Therefore she would be considered a brother/sister option. Where as if a 5 year old is requesting to cheer on a senior team for her brother she would not be within the 12 month time frame and would be considered a "mascot option" Please refer to mascot option for guidelines.

Mascot Option – A mascot option is when a child is requesting to cheer on a sibling's team and is not within 12 months of meeting the age requirement for that league. Each team will be allowed one mascot option in draft. Mascot options will be allowed room permitting.

- C.) Older siblings may not request to play down a league for any reason.

Mascots

- A.) Definition: Mascots are children who are not eligible to cheer within the league's guidelines, yet desire to participate on a cheer squad due to a sister/sister option or Brother/Sister option.
- B.) Mascots are only eligible if they are not old enough to be on a cheerleading squad for the division they request to cheer and they are not within 12 months of meeting that age requirement.
- C.) Mascots must be supervised by the parent/guardian 100% of the time at all RYA practices, games, and events.

Participation

- A.) All cheerleaders must be utilized in every cheer and routine.

Exceptions to this rule are: Participation of mascots will be at the discretion of the Head Coach, keeping in mind what is best for the child and team. Stunting will be limited to the guidelines for the actual age division and must have a mandatory spotter.

Squad size

- A.) Squad size will be determined by registration.
- B.) All cheerleaders are divided equally among the squads available in their division.
Team Coaches
- A.) Each Team shall have a NYSCA Certified Coach. All coaches for that team must be certified.
- B.) Each coach must submit a coach's application and background check.
- C.) All cheerleaders must be under direct supervision by the coaches or team parent at every practice plus before, during and after the game until released by the coach. Cheerleaders are not to be left alone on the game or practice field at any time.
- D.) Head Coaches may select their assistant coaches. Assistant coaches must be certified and submit a coaches application and a background check.
- E.) All coaches must report all injuries or incidents to the Cheerleading Commissioner or their league's vice-commissioner by filling out an "incident report form" within 7 days or by the next scheduled game, whichever comes first.
- F.) Each Coach will teach the rules and fundamentals of cheerleading.
- G.) Each Coach will supply a name, phone number and email address (if applicable) of the person responsible for team parent duties to the Cheerleading Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner.
- H.) Each Coach must report to the Cheerleading Commissioner any cheerleader who drops out of the program immediately.
- I.) Each Coach will treat all cheerleaders equally and will stress the fact that cheerleading is a team sport. One or more Head Cheerleader (captain/co-captain) will be rotated weekly and each cheerleader will be Head cheerleader (Captain/Co-captain) at least once.

J.) Warm-up exercises and stretching should precede all practice session, pep rallies, games, and other events to ensure safety.

K.) One coach from each squad must attend a Stunting Clinic to learn proper technique for stunting. Attendance is mandatory in order to allow the teaching of stunts to a cheer squad.

L.) Cheer Coach Attire for games should be in good taste and represent your team colors and illustrate that you are serving as coach to said squad.

M.) Each Coach must be aware of all policies and procedures by reading them and signing an acknowledgment form that they have done so.

Determining a Coach

A.) Returning Coach of a team remaining in the same league shall have first option to retain the team.

B.) In the event a Coach refuses her team, the Assistant Coach has the first option to retain the team.

C.) In the event a Coach moved up from a lower league, the coach with the most seniority on record will have the first choice of available teams. Each will choose a team based on seniority until there are no more teams and no more coaches moving up.

D.) In the event there are no returning Coaches or Assistant, and there are no interested coaches moving up to the league, a returning parent to the team will have the option to obtain the team.

E.) After this point, the team is open for anyone interested.

Seniority of Coaches

A.) In the event it is necessary to determine the seniority of a coach the following method shall be employed:

First: Total numbers of years coaching cheerleading for RYA

Second: Total number of years coaching all sports for RYA.

Third: Total number of years coaching other than at RYA.

Fourth: RYA Board of Directors will vote to decide any tie-breaker

Coaches Certification:

A.) All Coaches and Assistant are required to be certified through the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA) as a provision of our contract with the City of North Richland Hills.

B.) In order to become certified you must pay a \$20 certification fee, attend a scheduled certification class and take a simple exam after the viewing of the first video.

C.) As a member, the coach will receive \$500,000.00 in excess liability insurance coverage, a subscription to the NYSCA quarterly magazine and a certification card.

D.) Any violation of the Coaches Code of Ethics can result in the revocation of the coach's certification and removal from the NYSCA and RYA membership.

E.) It is very important that there be two certified Coaches on each team since the team may not be left under the supervision of someone who is not certified by NYSCA. A certified team mom can be allowed.

F.) Dates and Times for classes will be announced.

Coaches Conduct

- A.) RYA has a zero tolerance policy. Coaches will be monitored and are considered role models, and will be held to an extremely high standard.
- B.) All RYA Cheerleading Coaches are required to demonstrate positive sportsmanship in respect to their players, parents, opposing team's players, football team players and parents and game officials.

Team Fee:

- A.) Coaches are responsible for turning in a Team Fee in the amount of \$75 per team to the Cheerleading Commissioner. This fee is to help with the cost of operating the park during the season.
- B.) If the fee is not paid in full by draft then each team will need to submit a post-dated check in the amount of \$75 at draft. This check will be held until a date after carnival. At that time if a team has not raised the money by sponsorship or through fundraising effort at carnival the check will then be deposited. If the fee is paid before that date the check will be returned to the coach.

Meetings

Meetings scheduled by the Cheerleading Commissioner are mandatory.

Uniforms

- A.) All uniforms will be ordered from Team leader for the 2007 season. Each coach will be given a packet with a set number of choices. Each uniform must be ordered from this packet. No variations are allowed.
- B.) The uniform cost will be \$155 for each girl. All uniform monies are due no later than 10 days prior to draft. 50% of uniform must have been paid to be ordered and balance must be paid for delivery for any team ordering in June.
- C.) The price includes: shell, skirt, brief, hair bow, poms, jacket, socks, shoes, and bag.
- D.) All cheerleaders will comply with their individual Coaches specification for the Uniform.
- E.) All cheerleaders must be in complete uniform for all events (except jacket)

Practices

- A.) All teams must practice at Richfield Park unless otherwise approved by the Cheerleading Commissioner.
- B.) If a team is approved to practice elsewhere there must be working restroom facilities, access to a water fountain and the coach must be able to be contacted during practice by phone.
- C.) Approval will be given typically when the football team is practicing at another location and the cheerleaders wish to practice at the same location at the football team.
- D.) No more than four outings are allowed per week. This includes games and practices.
- E.) Sunday practices are not allowed for standard team outings, but allowed for special league events. Wednesday practice are discouraged and up to the Coach and parents to agree upon.
- F.) Coaches shall not engage in the use of alcohol or tobacco at any team function for any reason.

G.) Max. Practice length is as follows based on age level:

Bantam: 1 ½ hours per night

Junior: 2 hours per night

Senior: 2 hours per night

H.) Conditions of cheerleaders must be watched, especially during hot weather. Frequent breaks must be provided throughout the practice for water.

Games

A.) Squads will be required to participate at all regular season games. This includes Play –off and Super bowl games. The only exception will be a late game played on the day of CheerFest or any other RYA special event, not including team parties. All exceptions must have approval by the Commissioner.

B.) Good sportsmanship is required at all games by the Coaches, Cheerleaders, Parents and Visitors.

C.) Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their Cheerleaders and their parents at team gatherings.

D.) Every team is responsible for picking up the trash around their bleacher after every game. No exceptions

E.) Any Coach or Cheerleader behaving in a un-sportsman like manner will not be allowed to be at the next game. If misconduct continues further action may be required.

F.) Cheerleaders are required to supply a banner for each game.

Pep Rally:

A.) Date and time of the event will be announced by the Cheerleading Commissioner

B.) Each league will have its own set date for Pep Rally. There will 3 Pep Rallies - one for Bantam, one for Junior, one for senior.

C.) All teams are required to participate on their scheduled night.

D.) Order of performance will be determined by the Cheerleading Commissioner and Vice-Commissioners.

Sponsorship/Fundraising:

A.) You may solicit vendors for sponsorship of you team. The funds obtained from sponsors may pay for any cheerleading expense and/or team fee.

B.) All vendor checks should be made payable to RYA for tax purposes.

C.) Please provide the vendor with a receipt containing the RYA Federal Tax ID number upon receipt of the funds.

D.) You may also participate in team fundraisers to raise monies for your team.

E.) No coach will be allowed to demand money from parents for any expenses in excess of the uniform fee. Parents may offer to buy out of a fund raiser, purchase items for the team, or sponsor the team, but the Coaches may not insist that this be done by one member of the team.

F.) If all members of the team cannot afford to join in as additional expense, the expense must be paid for with team funds or sponsorships fee in lieu of the family who cannot assist.

G.) Anything purchased for individual team members with team funds or as a team must be purchased for all team members.

H.) All items purchased with team funds belong to the Cheerleader for whom they were purchased at the end of the season. No coach may take back items from a cheerleader at the end of the season.

I.) All coaches are to submit an Expense sheet itemizing their income and expenses during the season. This is due by Cheerfest.

J.) This is for the protection of the Coaches as well as the League in case there are question from the parents or Sponsors regarding the use of the team funds.

Vice-Commissioners (VC's):

A.) VC's are expected to interact on a regular basis with all the Coaches in their assigned league

B.) VC's will observe Coaches during games as well as practices when possible to confirm Coaches understanding of and Compliance with the RYA Cheerleading Policies and Procedures.

C.) VC's should be available in case of emergency while at the field.

D.) VC's will be certified to coach a team in the case they need to oversee a team in a Coaches absence.

E.) Serve on a Grievance Committee, along with one coach from one league

F.) Listen to comment and complaints from parents with compassion and understanding. Inform Coaches of special events and/or changes to pre-scheduled events and meetings.

G.) Assist Cheerleading Commissioner in organizing Cheerleading Functions and any other duties assigned by the Commissioner.

H.) Assist with Registration, and draft

I.) Contact Coaches regularly regarding their understanding of the events schedule and any question they may have regarding Coaching for RYA.

Discipline

A.) All coaches must follow the Coaches code of Ethics

B.) All Cheerleaders must follow the Players Code of Ethics

C.) All parents must follow the Parents Code of Ethics

D.) It is the responsibility of Parents and Coaches to make sure visitors follow the Parents Code of Ethics.

E.) Anyone not following the Code of Ethics may be reported through process identified below.

Complaints

A.) It is recommended that all complaints be given in writing. The complaint should follow the chain of command according to the NYSCA Handbook whenever appropriate:

Head Coach
Vice-Commissioner
Commissioner
NYSCA Coordinator
Grievance Committee
RYA Board of Directors
Director of City of North Richland Hills

Stunting Safety Guidelines

Definitions: Base – The bottom person of a partner stunt or pyramid. Flyer – The top person of a partner stunt or pyramid. Girl High – designates how many flyers can be up on one base, i.e. in creating a pyramid you have 3 bases and 2 flyers, therefore you have 2 girls up. Two high- is defined as the base having at least one foot on the ground. Mandatory Spotter – A spotter must be used for all stunts.

- A. All partner stunts and pyramids are to be performed only if the squad has been taught proper mounting, dismounting, and spotting procedures. The Head Coach is responsible for learning proper technique prior to instructing the squad. (See Team Coaches section K). Any stunt that is observed being performed without proper mounting, dismounting, or spotting in place will be called down immediately, whether during practice or game, and may not be performed again until approved by the Commissioner or Vice-Commissioner of that league.
- B. Stunting guidelines are based on the participant's age. Participants outside the 12 month age requirement window (See Eligibility sister /mascot options) must follow the stunting guidelines for their age division.
Example: If a 6 year old was placed on senior team due to sister and/or mascot option they would adhere to the stunting guidelines for their age appropriate level. If a 9 year old was placed on a senior team then they would be able to follow the stunting guidelines for the senior league.
- C. Bantam Division Stunt Guidelines:
Bantam division may perform partner stunts and pyramids that are limited to "one girl high" and the Flyer's feet are at maximum height of hip level with mandatory spotters on all flyers.
- D. Junior Division: Junior division may perform partner stunts and pyramids that are limited to "two high" and flyers feet are at maximum height of chest level with mandatory spotters on all flyers.
- E. Senior Division: Senior division may perform stunts and pyramids that are limited to "two high" Flyers may be in full extension in Senior. Mandatory Spotters are required on all flyers.
- F. Cradles are only allowed in Junior and Senior Division.
- G. The use of trampolines, springboards, or other height-increasing apparatus is prohibited.
- H. These safety guidelines are general in nature and are not to cover all circumstances. All cheerleading gymnastics (including tumbling, stunts and pyramids) should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a certified coach.

RYA CHEERFEST

- A. It is mandatory that all RYA cheerleading squads participate in CheerFest.
- B. Each Team must perform a combination of a cheer/chant, stunt and dance.
- C. Cheerleading Uniforms are mandatory at the event. There will be no alteration of any kind to the uniform.
- D. The only props that will be allowed are pom-poms, hand held signs, team flag or banner.
- E. It is the coaches' responsibility to select music and choreograph a routine and prepare the selection on cheer/chants and stunt to be performed.
- F. No team may "hire" any outside help to teach a routine to a squad. Only certified coaches will be able to teach their team a routine. If you do seek outside help from someone who is "volunteering" their help, they may only teach the routine to the Head/ Assistant Coach. The Head Coach/Assistant must then teach it to the team.

- G. Music must be submitted to the Cheerleading Commissioner at least one week prior to teaching the routine or 2 weeks before the event.
- H. All Stunting guidelines must be followed for this event.
- I. Order of Performance will be determined by a lottery(drawing a number out of a hat) at a meeting before the event.
- J. All routine's should be between 3 and 4 minutes long, not to exceed 4 minutes long.
- K. Each team will have the opportunity to win an individual team award. Each team will receive an award. Final detail on awards to be given and how scoring will work will be given at the final meeting for Cheerfest.
- L. There will be a mandatory meeting for all Head Coaches(or assistant) for all the final details

Cheerleader Responsibilities

- A.) All cheerleaders will be expected to respect their coaches' judgment and instructions.
- B.) Profanity and un-sportsmanship like conduct from any participant will not be tolerated.
- C.) Cheerleaders are required to attend all practices and games. It will be the responsibility of the cheerleaders to contact the coach, if for any reason they cannot attend a practice or game
- D.) Cheerleaders must arrive 15 minutes before practice and 30 minutes before a game to allow adequate time for warm up. A cheerleader will not be able to practice or participate in a game without proper warm up.
- E.) No Cheerleader is to attempt any form of cheerleading gymnastics (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps) without receiving proper training from a qualified coach.
- F.) Cheerleaders must have hair neat and pulled back for all cheerleading activities.
- G.) Cheerleaders must be in complete uniform for all cheerleading events and without jewelry, except practices. (small stud and starter earrings are allowed)
- H.) It is the responsibility of all the cheerleaders to learn all the cheers and dance routines to the best of their ability
- I.) Cheerleaders must cooperate with their teammates and coach(s) and must exhibit good sportsmanship at all times.
- J.) Each cheerleader must remain on the sideline at all times for the duration of the game.
- K.) There shall be no food or gum during pre-game warm-ups, games, practices and other events except during scheduled breaks. During scheduled breaks, cheerleaders may have drinks and snacks provided by a designated parent.
- L.) Cheerleaders are expected to dress appropriately for practice and to be wearing athletic shoes.
- M.) Failure to comply with the above policies could result in suspension of a cheerleader in future events. First infraction will begin with a verbal warning. Second infraction will be by a written warning to the cheerleader and parent/guardian. Third infraction will result in sitting out a game with written notification to cheerleader, parent/guardian. All written infractions must be presented to the Commissioner and/or Vice-commissioner for that league before given to a cheerleader.

Parent/ Guardian Responsibilities

- A.) Parents/Guardians must comply with the "Parents Code of Ethics" at all times
- B.) Parents/Guardians are expected to cooperate with coaches and officials and support them in their goal to teach good sportsmanship and manners.
- C.) Parents/Guardians must see that their cheerleader is in uniform for all games.
- D.) Parents/Guardians must see that their cheerleader has transportation to and from practices and game. Be sure that your cheerleader arrives on time and is picked up on time.
- E.) All communication during the game need's to go through the coach.
- F.) Parents/Guardians will be responsible to work the concession stand on their team's assigned date.
- G.) Parents/Guardians must participate in any team fundraiser that the team plans.
- H.) Parents/Guardians are expected to attend games and show enthusiasm for the cheerleaders and football players.