



# **CALVERT COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION**

## **Office of Sports, Community & Well-Being**

### **CALVERT COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION**

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## **2021 Calvert County Parks & Recreation Cheer Program Rules**

### **I. STRUCTURE**

#### A. Philosophy.

The purpose of the Calvert County Parks & Recreation Cheerleading Program shall be to provide an opportunity for youth to cheer within prescribed age limits and to learn the fundamentals of cheerleading. Objectives shall include the development of positive social values and character traits; good citizenship; and physical and mental health. The goal is to instill the will to win and the courage to accept defeat or disappointment with emphasis on fair play and good sportsmanship. The rules, as specified by Calvert County Parks & Recreation will govern practices and games at all times.

#### B. Program Division.

There are currently 6 separate clubs located in Calvert County. Cheer athletes between the ages of 4 and 17 as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year will be placed on teams. Projected 8 to 10 game regular season, postseason playoffs and cheer competitions.

#### C. Administration.

The program will operate under the jurisdiction of Calvert County Parks & Recreation's Office of Sports, Community & Well-Being. Any questions or discrepancies should be directed to this office's attention.

### **II. CHEER CLUB COMMISSIONERS AND COACHES**

The cheer club commissioners and coaches shall represent each club/team and shall be responsible for the following:

- A. Being the liaison between the Department of Parks & Recreation, individual club and coaches.
- B. Attending all cheer meetings. Each organization will provide one representative at the beginning of the season informational meeting held by Calvert County Parks & Recreation.
- C. Informing athletes and parents about information pertaining to the program.
- D. Being aware of the conduct of players, coaches and spectators.
- E. Distributing league schedules and all other league materials and/or messages to parents/guardians team members.
- F. Being aware of all emergency procedures and phone numbers.
- G. Completing and/or re-certifying annually through the National Alliance for Youth Sports' Coach Training and Membership Program.
- H. All persons ages 16 and older having contact with the participants of the Cheer Program must have an annual background check, the cost of which to be paid by the individual club.
- I. Be responsible for enforcement/ education and informing athletes and parents/ guardians of the rules and regulations contained and provided in the cheer rules/ guidelines package.

### **III. TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Each team shall consist of no more than 36 cheer athletes. If a team needs to split for multiple football teams in one division, it will be the goal of the club commissioner to split the team equally.
- B. Team rosters shall include name and date of birth. Rosters shall be final after the second game of the season and copies retained by each club for possible distribution to all clubs. **Any additions or changes to rosters prior to the end of the season cheer competition must be approved by Calvert County Parks & Recreation. (See attachment).**
- C. Any team that knowingly includes a cheer athlete that is non-rostered with the club or organization will, upon realization of this violation by Parks & Recreation, be released of their duties as a coach.
- D. In order for a team to participate in any end of season competition or other competitions, athletes on said team must have actively participated in sideline cheer for **no less than half** of all scheduled games for their respective registered/roster assignment during the season. Any use or attempted use of interscholastic or all-star cheerleaders is in violation of the spirit, philosophy, and purpose of the Calvert County Parks & Recreation Youth Cheer Program.

### **IV. ELIGIBILITY**

- A. Cheer athletes must be between the ages of 4 to 17 years old by August 31st of the current season.
- B. Cheer athletes cannot change rosters once the season starts. In the event of an extenuating circumstance, cheer athletes may move with the consent of Parks & Recreation.**

### **V. GAME REGULATIONS**

- A. American Association of Cheerleader Coaches and Advisors (AACCA) rules will be followed for all

games. It is recommended that each club's Cheer Commissioner be a member of AACCA and have, at least, one safety manual from AACCA for each head coach. Local rules and policies will supersede all cheer rules mentioned above.

B. Player/coach conduct is applicable before, during and after all practices and games.

C. All players on team rosters are strongly encouraged to participate in every game. Exceptions to attendance will be made for injury, sickness, or other excused absences. An attendance log is required to be kept by coaches at every practice and game. A minimum of 5 games will be cheered and the majority of practices must be attended throughout the season in order to qualify for competition. Majority of practices attended is at the discretion of each club's Cheer Commissioner.

D. Profanity, insulting language or gestures and unsportsmanlike conduct by a cheer athlete and/or coach toward an official, other coach or athlete is an automatic disqualification from the game and possible suspension from future games.

E. Cheer athletes removed from a game due to misbehavior or unsportsmanlike conduct will be reported to Parks & Recreation and may be suspended from further participation.

F. Any physical assault or threat of an act of assault on an official by a coach, assistant coach, or athlete will result in automatic removal from the field and/or facility and ejection of the individual from the program.

G. Any coach, upon a second ejection from a league game by an official will be suspended from coaching in the league for the remainder of the year and possibly the next season.

H. Calvert County Parks & Recreation will take disciplinary action in circumstances concerning the credibility, integrity and welfare of the league. Actions taken by Parks & Recreation are not subject to appeal.

J. Halftime routines will be done by the visiting team facing the home team and then the home team will do their routine for the visiting team and may turn and do their routine for the home team. Each team shall have 2 minutes and 30 seconds to complete their routine and return to their sideline. (Half time is typically 10 minutes).

K. Under no circumstances will derogatory cheers across the field be tolerated. Any cheer deemed inappropriate by a Cheer Club Commissioner during games will result in that team being asked to leave the sidelines. Coaches may also be brought before Parks & Recreation for a disciplinary hearing regarding the incident.

## VI. PRACTICES

A. No team will meet for practice more than three times a week (Sunday thru Saturday) after the start of the school year. Violation: 1st offense – coach suspended for one game, - 2nd offense – coach suspended for the remainder of the season. Practices must not exceed two hours per session. Game day practices of 45 minutes or more will count towards the weekly maximum. After October 3<sup>rd</sup>, all teams may not practice more than three times per week.

B. Safety is a major concern. Clubs must provide safety equipment while stunting. For example, mats. Teams must always use an additional spotter when stunting. A Coach, Commissioner or Assistant Coach must be present during all stunting. Mats are an essential part of stunting and should and will be used as outlined in AACCA rules.

## **GENERAL RULES**

1. All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/coach.
2. All Commissioners and Coaches will follow the National Standards for Youth Sports which is available at nays.org.
3. All teams, coaches and directors must have an emergency response plan on file in the event of an injury or emergency. This plan will be shared with athletes and parents at the first practice of each season.
4. All coaches and participants will follow the Concussion Protocol as outlined in the Southern Maryland Youth Athletic Conference Rule Book – 2017, version 17.0.3, and as future updates mandate.
5. Athletes and coaches may not be under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, performance enhancing substances, or over-the-counter medications while participating in a practice or performance that would hinder the ability to supervise or execute a routine safely.
6. Athletes will practice and perform on an appropriate surface that has been checked and cleared of any debris prior to practicing or performing, this includes the sideline and midfield areas.
7. All squad member uniforms must cover midriff and skirt must be modest in length.
8. No dance shoes/boots, and/or gymnastics slippers (or similar) allowed. Shoes must have a solid sole.
9. Gum and candy is prohibited during practices, games and competitions.
10. Jewelry of any kind including but not limited to ear, nose, tongue, belly button and facial rings, clear plastic jewelry, bracelets, necklaces and pins on uniforms are prohibited. Jewelry must be removed and may not be taped over. (Exception: medical ID tags/bracelets).
11. Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length (short, near the end of the fingers) to minimize risk for the participant.
12. Hair must be worn in a manner to minimize risk for the participant. Hair devices, if worn, must be secure and appropriate to the activity.
13. A participant who is bleeding, has an open wound, has any amount of blood on his/her uniform, or has blood on his/her person, shall be directed to leave the activity until the bleeding has stopped, the wound covered, the uniform and/or body is appropriately cleaned, and/or uniform is changed before returning to participation.
14. Casts that are hard and unyielding or have rough edges must be appropriately covered with a padded material. *Clarification: The appropriate padded material must be such that it protects both the athlete and fellow athletes from injury. A participant wearing a cast cannot be included in a stunt.*

15. Any height increasing apparatus used to propel a competitor is prohibited. (Exception: spring floor)
16. Flags, banners, signs, pom poms, megaphones, and pieces of cloth are the only props allowed. Props with poles or similar support apparatus will not be used in conjunction with any kind of stunt or tumbling. All props must be safely discarded out of harm's way (e.g. throwing a hard sign across the mat from a stunt would be illegal). Any uniform piece purposefully removed from the body and used for visual effect will be considered a prop.
17. Glitter that does not readily adhere on the hair, face, uniform, costume or body is illegal. Glitter may be used for signs, props or backdrops if laminated or sealed. Exception: glitter may be used on a sign that the football players run through at the start of the games and signs made to hang up for spirit purposes.
18. Cheerleaders are required to be at all games. Exception: If there is an A team and B team the teams should rotate every week between the football teams. Cheer commissioner should notify the opposite team.
19. If team misses more than 2 games, they will not be allowed to compete in the county competition.
20. No stunting, tumbling, or jumping will be permitted on sideline during live play. No exceptions.
21. Coaches are not to "spot" tumbling skills. Tumbling should only be performed by cheer athletes who have perfected those skills.
22. All cheers should be performed in a positive manner and directed toward your team to succeed. The goal is to engage the crowd and encourage the athletes, not belittle the other team.
23. Suggestive, offensive, or vulgar choreography is inappropriate for any audience. No cross-field taunting cheers will be performed.
24. Spotters are required for all stunts performed on the grass.
25. Proficiency is required for all levels of cheer before skill progression. Coaches must consider the individual, group, and team skill levels with regard to the safety of the stunts/ skills being performed.
26. On the level grid, all skills allowed for a particular level encompass all skills allowed in the preceding level.
27. Coaches are required to stand on the sidelines with their team during the game. Coaches should stand between their athletes and the field of play watching the game to ensure cheer athlete safety.
28. Cheer teams will face their crowd, promoting spirit among the fans. A member of the coaching staff will face the field, watching the game to alert cheer athletes to any approach by players and the progress of the game, i.e. offense/defense, touchdown, etc. Between the execution of cheers, athletes should face field in order to observe the progress of the game.
29. Cheer Athletes should cheer to the bleachers and/ or crowd. They should focus on promoting spirit among the fans and encouraging athletes to perform their best.
30. When there is an injured player down on the field, all cheer athletes will take a knee and remain quiet. Once the player is back to his feet or removed from the field, the cheer athletes from both teams will clap in support of that player.

31. During half-time routine 1 safety spotter per stunt group is required and 2 safety spotters for basket tosses.
32. Coaches must be behind a performing team for safety spotting.
33. Drops including but not limited to knee, seat, thigh, front, back, and split drops from a jump, stunt, or inverted position are prohibited.
34. Stunts will not be performed on wet grass. The home field cheer commissioner will assess the field. Exception: If the home field commissioner is not available, the home head coach of the team will assess the field.

## **Southern Maryland Youth Athletic Conference Cheerleading**

### **ROSTER ADDITION OR CHANGE FORM**

Cheer Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent (s) Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Club: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Roster Change: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date Change Effective: \_\_\_\_\_

Change from Team: \_\_\_\_\_

To Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheer Athlete's  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Cheer Commissioner  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Club President  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_