

Youth Cheerleading Rules and Regulations

The purpose of Youth Recreational Athletic Leagues is to provide an enjoyable organized experience under capable adult supervision for youth in Pittsylvania County. The program is organized to promote sportsmanship, cooperation, and fair play at all times while developing knowledge and skills of cheering.

I. Parents Meeting

Each recreation club is required to have a parents meeting prior to payment of any fees not including the initial registration fees. Things discussed in this meeting should include: a handout that shows any and all fees associated with cheerleading, structure and locations of practices and games, introduction of sponsors, and anything else the club deems appropriate. No fees should be taken at this meeting other than registration fees.

II. Player Eligibility

A. Age cutoff shall be September 30 of the current year (2021).

B. League Age Divisions:

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| Basketball: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8U – 6-8 year olds • 10U – 9-10 year olds • 12U – 11-12 year olds • 14U – 13-14 year olds | Football: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C League – 6-8 year olds • B League – 9-10 year olds • A League – 11-13 year olds |
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C. Five-year-olds are permissible as mascots but not required. Mascots can only stunt on the youngest age division.

D. Players must be a Pittsylvania County resident or attend a Pittsylvania County Public School to be eligible to participate. If a player moves out of the county, they may continue to participate in the program until the season is over.

E. A child must cheer for the recreation club that represents the high school district in which they live or Pittsylvania County Public School they attend.

F. An extenuating circumstance may be presented to the Parks and Recreation Department in writing for review.

G. All players must have an Athletic Registration Form which includes the medical release and liability release completed, signed by parent or guardian and on file with the recreation club before he or she is allowed to practice or play in a game.

H. It is recommended but not required that all players have a current physical within the last 12 months.

III. Cheerleaders Playing Up

Any recreation club wishing to move a cheerleader up into an older age division can only pull from the oldest cheerleaders in the younger age division. No child is required to play up if asked. Any child playing up must be cleared through the Parks and Recreation Department. Any cheerleader playing up as of the end of the 2017 season will be "grandfathered" in.

IV. Team Rosters

A. Football – Rosters are limited to a maximum of thirty (30). Mascots are included in the roster numbers.

B. Basketball – Rosters are limited to a maximum of fifteen (15). Mascots are included in the roster numbers.

- C. The number of squads will be determined based on the number of basketball/football teams in that area.
- D. A player transferring in from another county or state must have permission from the Parks and Recreation Department to practice or play. This consideration only applies to private and homeschoolers.
- E. Any booster club fielding more than one squad per age group must place players on teams using the county drafting procedures. There will be NO CUTS for players that registered and paid on-time. No exceptions.
- F. For new players, a copy of their birth certificate must accompany the team roster. No roster additions will be accepted after the team's first game. Exception: the player moves into the county after the roster deadline. Player must provide proof of residency and school starting date.
- G. Team rosters must be completed on a League Roster form and submitted to the Parks and Recreation Department at a time and date set by the Director.
- H. An existing recreation club must sponsor all teams.
- I. Sponsors must consent to a background screening and be cleared to coach before he or she is allowed to coach a team during a practice or game.

V. Uniforms

- A. Cheerleaders are responsible for their uniforms including undergarments, socks and shoes. There is an out-of-pocket cap of \$185 for each participant. This includes registration fees for the recreation club.
- B. Accessories (i.e. wind suits, sweat suits, rain gear, etc.) must match in color only.
- C. Accessory colors for each area:
 - 1. Dan River – Royal Blue
 - 2. Chatham – Black
 - 3. Tunstall – Cardinal Red
 - 4. Gretna – Royal Blue
- D. It is not mandatory for all girls to put rain gear or wind suits on if one girl chooses to.

VI. League Rules

- A. Practice routinely starts around August 1 for football and November 1 for basketball.
- B. Before cheerleading competition, a maximum of three (3) practice sessions per week, at no more than two hours per session.
- C. After cheerleading competition, a maximum of two (2) events per week, at no more than one and ½ hours per session. An event can be a practice or game.
- D. The Recreation Department will handle all makeup games.
 - 1. Games will only be rescheduled for school functions or inclement weather.
 - 2. The Recreation Department requires at least one week's notice in order to reschedule games caused by conflicts with school functions.
- E. There is a 24-hour cool down period for parents approaching coaches and coordinators.
- F. A spotter can be pulled from another squad due to extenuating circumstances with permission from Parks and Recreation.
- G. Game cancellation will be made by 3pm on weekdays and 7:30am on weekends.
- H. Game schedules and league standings can be obtained at www.pittsylvaniacountyva.gov/recreation.

VII. During Games/Practices

- A. Cheerleaders must wear official cheerleading uniforms.
- B. Cheerleaders are responsible for bringing all cheerleading equipment to practices and games.
- C. Long hair must be pulled back away from the face; no hair beads allowed.
- D. No jewelry allowed during practice or games.
- E. Cheerleaders may not leave the gym without the sponsor's permission.
- F. Cheerleaders must abide by the 'buddy' system when leaving the gym.

- G. Cheering on court/field during timeouts or between quarters is permitted as long as it doesn't delay the game.
- H. Routines: See "In Game Routines" on next page.
- I. Cheer teams will follow sport teams after the game for handshakes.
- J. When there is an injured player on the field/gym, all cheering will stop and cheerleaders will take a knee until the player is removed or leaves the field/gym.

VIII. Demerits

- A. Leaving practice or game early without the sponsor's approval – 1 demerit
- B. Unexcused tardiness or picked up late – 1 demerit
- C. Long fingernails (pose safety concern during stunts) – 1 demerit
 - 1. Fingernails should not be visible beyond the length of the fingers when viewed from the palm side of the hand.
- D. More than 2 hair colors – 1 demerit
- E. Wearing jewelry – 1 demerit
- F. Chewing gum – 1 demerit
 - 1. No gum, candy or other food in the mouth while cheering.
- G. Eating or drinking during a game without the sponsor's permission – 1 demerit
- H. Not in full uniform – 2 demerits
 - 1. CL may not participate if appropriate undergarments are not worn.
- I. Vulgar gestures or movements
 - 1. First occurrence – 2 demerits
 - 2. Second occurrence – benched for the next game/event
- J. Unauthorized use of cell phone during practice or games – 3 demerits
- K. Unsportsmanlike Conduct (negative attitude or behavior) – 3 demerits
 - 1. Cheering or making noise during foul shots in basketball.
 - 2. Inappropriate cheers.
 - 3. Taunting.
- L. Unexcused absence – 4 demerits
- M. Profanity – 4 demerits
- N. Demerit Level Consequences
 - 1. 5 demerits – Benched for first quarter
 - 2. 7 demerits – benched for two (2) quarters
 - 3. 10 demerits – benched for the next game or event
 - 4. 15 demerits – dismissal from the squad
- O. Cheerleaders are expected to attend all games/events in full uniform even if benched for disciplinary reasons. Failure to comply may lead to dismissal from the squad.

IX. In-Game Routines

- A. Time-Out/End of Quarter Performances
 - 1. Opposing squads will alternate performances for each time out and end of quarter breaks. The visiting squad will begin this rotation.
- B. Half-Time Performance
 - 1. Basketball - Each squad will have 3 minutes to perform a dance routine and cheer.
 - 2. Football – Each squad will have 5 minutes to perform a dance routine and cheer.
 - 3. Visiting squad will perform first.
 - 4. Dance routines should not exceed two (2) minutes.
 - 5. Songs and choreography must be age appropriate.
 - 6. Spotters must have direct contact with the performance surface.
- C. Stunts
 - 1. Football –
 - a. C League – stunts can only be thigh high.

- b. B League – youth or adult spotters are required. Full extension is allowed but no 'basket tosses.'
 - c. A League – youth or adult spotters are required. Full extension and 'basket tosses' are allowed.
2. Basketball –
- a. No 'basket tosses' are allowed at any level.
 - b. No 'spin down' stunts allowed at any level.
 - c. On any 'superman' stunt there must be 4 spotters and 2 bases.
 - d. 8U – stunts can only be thigh high.
 - e. 10U – stunts can only be prep (1 ½ persons high).
 - f. 12U & 14U – youth or adult spotters are required. Full extension with cradle is allowed.

X. Player Suspension from School

Per VHSL rule, any cheerleader suspended from school will not be permitted to practice or cheer in games immediately after being advised by school staff.

- A. The player is responsible for notifying the sponsor. Failing to notify the sponsor OR the sponsor choosing to allow the suspended player to participate despite the suspension will result in a player and/or coach suspension determined by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- B. This is applicable for all practice and game sites on and off school property.

XI. Cheerleading Competition

- A. Participation is expected by all squads.
- B. Within the last two weeks prior to the competition, a maximum of one (1) absence is allowed or the child will not be eligible to compete in the competition.
- C. Two cheers and one dance routine with a total performance time of no more than four minutes.
- D. Three judges will be selected to judge the competition from outside of Pittsylvania County.
- E. A team trophy will be given for:
 - 1. Best Dance
 - 2. Best Cheer
 - 3. Best Spirit
 - 4. Best Overall
- F. All cheerleaders will receive a participation medallion.

XII. Sportsmanship

- A. The purpose of the Youth Recreation league is to provide an enjoyable experience for each youth participant, while developing character, skills, sportsmanship, and to promote good will among all players, coaches, parents, officials and recreational staff.
- B. Any person involved in or taking part in any event, practice or game sponsored by the Recreation Department that damages or destroys property while using the facilities will be suspended indefinitely and will be responsible for the cost of required repairs.
- C. Any coach found to be using illegal player, using an assumed name, falsifying a roster, or giving false information to an official or recreation department staff may result in the individual being suspended for up to one year. The suspension is applicable to all sports from the date of the suspension.
- D. Misconduct by players, coaches, spectators, officials, scorekeepers or supervisory personnel will not be tolerated. Misconduct can be defined as improper gesturing, aggressive verbal or physical contact and the use of alcohol, smoke or smokeless tobacco and illegal substances.