

USA Competition FAQ's High School, Jr. High/Middle School Spirit Teams (Cheer, Song/Pom, Mascot, Pep Flag) – Rev. 10/22/2020

Safety remains our top priority, and we have a dedicated, experienced team focused on researching and developing a plan for each event. Below is what you can expect at all Varsity Spirit in-person competitions, at least through December 31, 2020.

Please note that the final details and schedules for any individual competition will be continuously monitored and may be adjusted, including making the competition virtual, if necessary. All guidelines are subject to change based on the CDC, federal, state, local and venue-specific guidance. We will communicate any changes to you as soon as they are confirmed. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require.

Do I have to attend camp to compete at an in-person or virtual USA competition?

No, all teams are eligible to attend any competition. In-person and virtual competition options can be found at myVarsity.com.

Do I have to attend camp to be eligible for a bid to USA Spirit Nationals?

The requirement for cheer teams to receive NFHS credentialing as a pre-requisite to qualify for the 2021 USA Spirit Nationals has been delayed for this season. The requirement will be implemented for the 2021-2022 season for teams wishing to compete at the 2022 Spirit Nationals.

How do I get a bid to USA Spirit Nationals/Jr. Nationals?

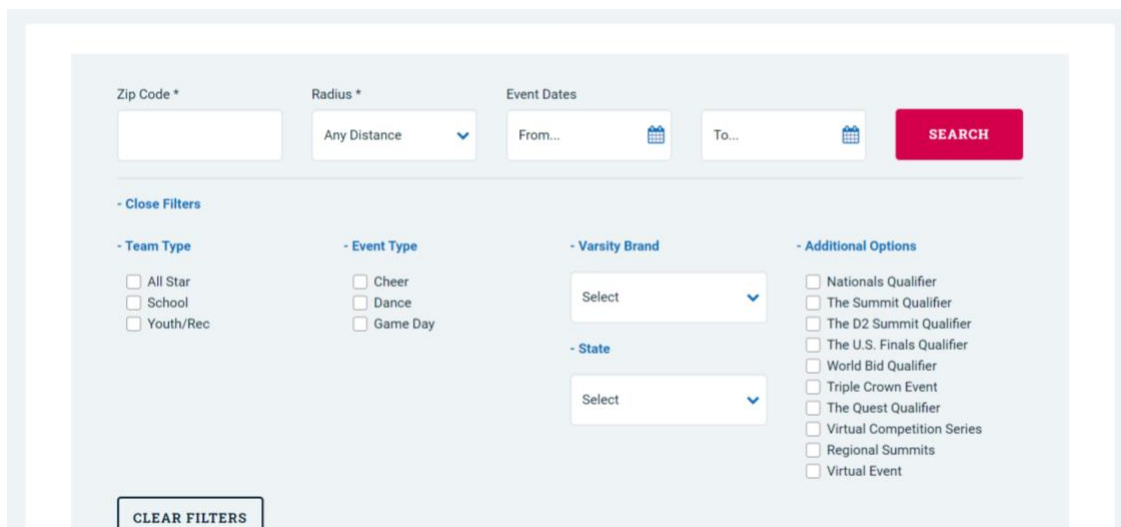
For teams wishing to compete at the 2021 USA Spirit Nationals/Jr. Nationals, they still must qualify with a minimum score in order to attend the event, either through an in-person or virtual one-day competition during the 2020-2021 season. More information these qualification opportunities will be laid out in the coming weeks.

Which virtual event can I attend?

For areas in which an in-person event is not possible or offered, we have virtual options for you. For more information go to myVarsity competition portal or online [here](#).

Where can I find a list of Virtual Events on myVarsity.com?

You can search for a Virtual Event by clicking on Additional Options and then select Virtual Event as a filtering option. Do not select a state if you are looking for virtual events, only select the Virtual Event filtering option.



The screenshot shows a search and filter interface for the USA United Spirit Association. At the top, there are input fields for 'Zip Code *', 'Radius *' (set to 'Any Distance'), and 'Event Dates' (with 'From...' and 'To...' sub-fields). A red 'SEARCH' button is located to the right of the event date fields. Below these fields, there are four filter categories: 'Team Type' (with checkboxes for All Star, School, and Youth/Rec), 'Event Type' (with checkboxes for Cheer, Dance, and Game Day), 'Varsity Brand' (with a 'Select' dropdown menu), and 'State' (with a 'Select' dropdown menu). To the right of these categories is a list of 'Additional Options' with checkboxes for: Nationals Qualifier, The Summit Qualifier, The D2 Summit Qualifier, The U.S. Finals Qualifier, World Bid Qualifier, Triple Crown Event, The Quest Qualifier, Virtual Competition Series, Regional Summits, and Virtual Event. A 'CLEAR FILTERS' button is located at the bottom left of the filter section.

What is the last day to register and pay for an in-person or virtual competition?

All teams must be registered two weeks prior and paid in full three business days prior to the date of the competition that you are attending. Some events may close earlier due to the local guidance for attendance.

Is USA still planning to host live events this season?

The health and safety of our athletes, coaches, families and staff remains our top priority. We are hopeful to deliver live competitions that will adhere to all guidelines established by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local authorities, as well as our event host partners when and where we can safely and responsibly do so.

How does a virtual event work?

Teams will film their routine in their own gym, football field or other area as long as it is performed on a NFHS approved surface. Routines filmed on spring floors will not be allowed.

Once routine videos are filmed, they will be uploaded to Varsity TV. There is no need to purchase additional equipment or internet services for your program – simply film on your phone or available camera! A USA trained judging panel will score the routines in our Simple Score system. Score sheets and division breakdowns will be emailed to coaches.

These events will then be available to watch on-demand on the event date on Varsity TV and each team will receive one FREE one-month subscription to watch!

What is the KEYWORD for a virtual competition?

The KEYWORD is a word or set of words that must be written on the KEYWORD Template outlined below and displayed on camera before the routine begins. The KEYWORD will be



unique to the event. Any videos that do not contain the appropriate KEYWORD will be disqualified.

Once the filming window is open, the **registered coach** will receive a KEYWORD and PDF Template via email that must be printed and filled out legibly in a dark pen or marker. The KEYWORD will also be available in the event BAND during the recording window.

- A team member or coach must hold up the filled-out Template in front of the camera for 5- 10 seconds before the routine begins.
- The information on this Template will ensure that the judges are judging the proper team.
- Routines submitted without the Template will be disqualified.

For virtual events, will there be a penalty if my team does not have a full floor to film our video?

No, Judges will evaluate teams on what is performed. Teams will be allowed to submit videos performed on any NFHS approved surface. Tumbling and/or stunting for cheer teams must be completed on a NFHS approved surface. Routines filmed on spring floors will not be allowed.

Are teams required to use Music Providers for Virtual Events?

Yes, teams will be asked to disclose if they own the synchronization rights to their music when uploading their videos to Varsity TV. For All Star Dance, School Dance, School Cheer & Open Rec teams, all routines will be judged with sound and available for VTV subscriber viewing with sound for 48 hours once the event goes live. After 48 hours, the routines will be available without sound. After 5 days routines will be available for public viewing without sound for the duration of the competition season.

How do people watch the virtual event?

Varsity TV will host this event and one, one-month subscription will be given to a coach of each registered team. All Varsity TV subscribers will be able to watch the event in its entirety. The awards will be FREE to all viewers on Varsity TV.

What kind of video do I need to submit for a virtual event?

Teams must submit a video recording of their routine taken in their practice facility, using the keyword indicated during the filming period. Videos must be one take – edited footage will not be accepted. All 4 corners of the floor should be visible when possible and athletes must perform on an NFHS approved surface. The program must own rights to this video and consent to it being posted on Varsity TV for use in the Virtual Competition.

Once routine videos are filmed, they will be uploaded to Varsity TV. There is no need to purchase additional equipment or internet services for your program – simply film on your phone or available camera!

For a list of filming guidelines and specifics click [here](#).

What should my team wear for a virtual event?

Teams may submit videos in their practice wear or official team uniforms. For a full listing of uniform guidelines please refer to the USA Rules and Regulations <https://www.varsity.com/usa/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/USA-School-Rec-Spirit-Comp-Policies-and-Procedures.pdf>

If an in-person event is canceled, my school district or local government no longer allows me to attend an in-person event, what are my options?

Should a live event be cancelled, customers will have three options:

1. Request a full refund of fees paid directly to Varsity (i.e competition registration fees).
2. Transfer funds to another live event within the 2020-2021 season.
3. Transfer funds to a virtual event within the 2020-2021 season.
 - a. Any remaining balance following a transfer to a virtual event can be either refunded or transferred to another live or virtual event within the 2020-2021 season.
 - b. Transfer Policy below applies.

Due to uncertainties associated with the COVID-19 virus that could potentially lie ahead, Varsity Spirit will allow 100% event-to-event transfers (team and individual athletes) at any time, to most Varsity Spirit events within the 20-21 season.

Where can I find what divisions are offered, score sheets and rules for the competition?

Teams that are interested in competing can find all information online [here](#).

When will we be notified, if an in-person event is canceled?

We will rely on the official information from health authorities and local governments as it pertains to potentially hosting our live competitions. While things can change rapidly, all decisions for events will be made no less than two weeks prior for one day competitions and three weeks prior for two-day competitions. This plan will follow one of the options below.

What do the Options A, B, C or D mean?

Option A Events: In-Person with Social Distanced Spectators

- Spectators will be allowed with social distancing measures in place.
- All teams will receive score sheets and rankings.
- In-person awards ceremony with limited spectators, athletes and/or coaches.
- Adjustable seating will be spaced to adhere to social distancing guidelines, and this may result in less seating in the competition hall.
- In venues with permanent/non-adjustable seating, seating will be appropriately marked, and spectators should adhere to social distancing guidelines.

Option B Events: In-Person with Limited Spectators

- Spectator viewing limited to team performance time only
- Spectators will follow a moving queue and exit following their team's performance

- Physical distancing measures will be required. Direction signage will guide spectators and athletes throughout the venue.
- All teams will receive score sheets and rankings.
- Live awards ceremony with limited athletes and/or coaches, OR virtual awards ceremony.

Option C Events: In-Person with No Spectators and Virtual Awards

- Spectators not allowed; only athletes and coaches permitted.
- All teams will receive score sheets and rankings.
- Virtual awards ceremony for spectators, athletes and/or coaches.

Option D Events: Virtual Competition

- Virtual event hosted on Varsity TV.
- Routines will be judged virtually by UCA Trained Judges.
- All teams will receive score sheets and rankings.
- Virtual awards ceremony for spectators, athletes and/or coaches.

Note: We highly recommend you wait to book hotel/travel until three weeks prior to the event

What is the time frame used, if an event changes from Option A to B, or B to C, etc.?

The event Option currently planned can be found in the myVarsity competition portal and event information page on the website. Based on updated CDC, local, state or venue specific guidance, the event Option may change up until the start of the event. If this happens, we will notify teams via email as quickly as possible, and our website will also be updated with the changes.

Will spectators need to purchase admission for Option A or B?

Yes, spectator tickets will be available for purchase online (where applicable) prior to the event. The admission fees are listed on myVarsity competition portal under event information. Admission for certain events may also be available at the door, transactions may be limited to cashless. Spectators fees may be adjusted depending on the Option of the event.

If spectators purchase admission prior to attending an in-person event, will a refund be offered if the event is canceled?

Absolutely, in the event an in-person event must cancel, a refund will be issued for the admission cost to anyone that pre-purchased a ticket. Processing fees will not be refunded.

What safety measures will be put in place at live events?

Varsity Spirit's baseline safety standards for 2020 include:

- Physical distancing protocols will be in place and enforced.
- Increased sanitization measures throughout venues, including enhanced cleaning protocols, hand sanitization stations and more frequent cleaning of performance surfaces.
- Longer intervals between team practice and performance times and increased physical distancing throughout the practice and performance areas.

- Generally, face coverings will be required for everyone ages 2 and older, except for athletes when on the practice and performance floors. Based on state or local guidance, at some in person events athletes will be required to wear a face covering when practicing and performing. Coaches will be notified as soon as possible at which events this applies.
- Spectators within the performance area will be limited (several options are being considered and may vary by competition).
- Awards ceremonies will be live with limited capacity (teams or coaches only) or completely virtual.
- All attendees (including coaches, athletes, spectators and Varsity Spirit staff) will be asked to monitor their own health prior to attending an event and follow the CDC guidelines for protecting themselves and others.
- Coaches will be asked to review the [Varsity Spirit Competition COVID Rules](#) with anyone who is attending the event (coaches, athletes and spectators)

Varsity Spirit will adhere to restrictions on mass gatherings and capacity limitations based on local and venue guidelines. Because health, safety and distancing requirements vary across the country, the below may also vary by competition:

- Vendors may or may not be allowed onsite to service an event, and safety measures and precautions may differ. For example, customers may not be able to touch or try on clothing before purchasing, and food may be limited to "grab and go" only and may only be eaten in designated areas.
- Spectator admission fees may be available only through advanced purchase or may be entirely cashless on site.
- Temperature checks for admission may be required based on local guidance.
- Managed traffic flow measures and signs will be implemented where required.

Will physical distancing be practiced during an in-person event?

Physical distancing will be required based on state, local and venue guidance. Varsity personnel may give verbal instructions to athletes throughout the day on physical distancing requirements (6 feet separation, no touching, air hugs, air fives, etc.). Spotting/safety procedures should not be minimized due to social distancing.

Will coaches, athletes and spectators be required to wear masks?

Varsity will require anyone in attendance (coaches, athletes, parents, Varsity staff, etc.) 2 years old and older to wear a face covering at all times, except for athletes while on the practice and performance floor. There are some venues that will require athletes to wear a face covering when practicing and performing and coaches will be notified as soon as possible if this applies to an event you are registered for. Based on state or local guidance, the age for which masks are required may also vary. All attendees must provide their own face covering. Anyone without a face covering will not be allowed into the venue, and anyone that does not comply with the face covering requirement may be asked to leave the facility.

Should athletes, coaches or spectators self-monitor prior to attending an in-person event?

Athletes and coaches must monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 listed by the CDC for 7 days prior to and each day of competition. Anyone, including spectators, that feels sick or living with a house member who is currently sick, feels sick, or shows any symptoms of COVID-19 listed by the CDC, including cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell, has been diagnosed or presumed positive for COVID-19, or has been around someone who has been diagnosed or presumed positive for COVID-19, currently or within the last 10 days, must stay home.

What if my state or local government requires masks to be worn at the time of the competition?

The health and safety of our athletes, coaches, employees, families, and friends remains our top priority. We are diligently monitoring official information from health authorities and local governments as it pertains to potentially hosting our live competitions. We will follow the guidance set forth by the state, local or venue regulations. Should your team need to or choose to wear masks, they will absolutely be allowed for any team during any performance.

What if my state or local government does not allow stunting during the competition or in the weeks leading up to the competition?

If your team is not allowed to stunt, you can choose to compete in a Non-Building division. If your team plans to perform a routine with stunts, but then encounters an issue (like an infected athlete), you will be allowed to switch divisions to a non-building division at any time, for free. Be sure to check out more information about scoring non-building teams [here](#).

What cleaning protocol will be used for mats at live events?

Mats will be cleaned and sanitized with a cleaner on the Environmental Protection Agency's list of disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2. Mats will be cleaned by accepted methods at the beginning of each day, as is reasonably necessary or as otherwise directed by the CDC.

Will spectators or teams have temperature checks performed?

Athletes and coaches will monitor themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 as listed by the CDC, including cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell, and check their own temperature each morning, both 7 days prior to attending competition and every morning before attending competition. If the person displays any COVID-19 symptoms or a temperature of over 100° Fahrenheit, during the 7 days before competition or any morning of competition, they must remain home and report their symptoms and temperature to the appropriate competition contact. Temperature checks may be required based on local or venue guidance and that information will be shared on a case by case basis.



Will we be required to turn in waiver forms for virtual competitions?

Yes, all athletes will need to complete a waiver form one week prior to the start of the competition. Once a team is registered for an event an email with instructions will be sent to your team.

What if I am not allowed to travel out of state for the 2021 USA Spirit/Jr. Nationals?

If your school administration will not allow your team to travel in 2021, we will have a virtual division option for you. More information coming soon.

What does my cheer coach need to attend the USA Spirit Nationals?

One coach per cheer team will be required to complete the USA Cheer safety course and must accompany the team at the USA Spirit Nationals. Proof of certification is required upon registering for the event. The course is accessible online or in person, and certification is valid for four years. The online course takes between 3 and 6 hours. Coaches can take the USA Cheer safety course on USACheer.org or on the NFHS site.

For more information and a full copy of the USA Rules & Regulations click [here](#).