

2022-2023
USA/VARSITY SCHOOL-BASED and RECREATION
(YOUTH) SPIRIT COMPETITION
RULES AND REGULATIONS

USA/Varsity Spirit has implemented rules and regulations for all events. An overview of these is found below, with more thorough coverage of the Rules and Regulations and references to resources related to these provided in the 2022-23 Spirit Competition Information packet (high school cheer, song/pom, mascot and pep/short flag), 2022-23 Jr. Spirit Competition Information packet (junior high/middle school/elementary school cheer and song/pom) and 2022-23 Youth/Rec Competition Information packet (youth/rec cheer). In order to provide a positive, fair and professional competition environment the coach/gym owner is required to sign this form, but before signing, please read and review the following:

Safety is our priority for your competition experience. We are deeply committed to the safety and well-being of our athletes, coaches and spectators. We are prepared to administer a competition that will meet the state and local guidelines related to COVID-19 at the time of the event. While the final details and schedule of any competition could require up to the day adjustments, and all guidelines are subject to change based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), federal, state and local guidance, please be assured that Varsity Spirit is committed to delivering the same quality of competition experience for which we are known. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require. By accepting the Terms and Conditions you are also accepting the COVID-19 Varsity Competition Rules that will follow.

A. GENERAL

1. All School-Based and Recreation Advisors/Coaches will need to present a photo I.D. and proof of USA Cheer/Dance/Professional Membership to receive your backstage wristband at coaches check in. Coaches’ wristbands/credentials must be worn at all times. You will not be allowed to enter the warm-up area without this identification. Wristbands or lanyards attached to bags do not count.
2. I will follow all 2022-23 NFHS Spirit Rules Book (school-based cheer teams), Varsity Recreation Cheer Rules (cheer recreation/youth teams) or 2022-23 USA Song/Pom, Song/Jazz and Pep/Short Flag Safety Rules (school teams) rules, along with any division-specific restrictions (i.e. Novice and Intermediate) as applicable. I understand that any violation of these rules and regulations could result in a penalty, point deduction or disqualification.
3. I have read and understand the USA/Varsity Spirit registration and competition rules/guidelines. A comprehensive listing of these can be found in the 2022-23 Spirit Competition Information packet (high schools), 2022-23 Jr. Spirit Competition Information packet (junior high/middle school/elementary schools) and 2022-23 Youth/Rec Competition Information packet (youth/rec teams).

B. SAFETY RULES

1. I am aware of the rules pertaining to each division and agree to abide by them (athlete eligibility, safety).
2. I understand that USA/Varsity Spirit reserves the right to remove any persons from a competition for unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct.

C. SCORING

1. Scoring officials will only discuss my routine and scores. I understand that my coaches/advisor may not challenge scores and/or deductions of another team(s).

D. MUSIC GUIDELINES

1. I have read and understand the USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and all sound recordings used in our team’s music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
2. For the most up-to-date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, cheer teams should email info@usacheer.net and dance teams should email dancemusic@varsity.com. Please check the Preferred Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
3. Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event they are attending.
4. If a team does not have the required paperwork, they will be given the option to perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts (provided by USA/Varsity Spirit).
5. If a team does not have the required paperwork and chooses not to perform to the approved track of music or a track with counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not be allowed to perform.
6. If there are concerns regarding a team’s use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed within 10 minutes following the team’s performance.

7. A challenge can only be made by the official coach, advisor, director or gym owner of a team competing at the event at which the challenge is being made.
8. Challenge Process
 - a. All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the event director.
 - b. There will be a \$100 fee to request a music challenge, which must be in the form of a check made payable to St Jude Children's Research Hospital.
 - c. Challenges will be reviewed and finalized within 48 hours of the event.
 - d. If the challenge is correct, fees collected will be voided. If the challenge is incorrect, fees will be donated to St. Jude.
9. Each team is required to have a representative remain at the music station that knows the routine and music. This representative is responsible for starting the music and stopping the music in case of technical malfunction or injury.
10. All teams must provide their own MP3 device or smart phone for use on the event provided sound system. Music must be recorded at the correct tempo. Although it is not recommended due to interference that maybe caused during a routine, a smart phone may be used for playing music. No cover may be on any MP3 player so that a jack may be easily inserted into the device. You will need to acquire and adapter in advance if your player does not have a headphone jack.
11. One or several selections of music may be used as long as they follow the music licensing rules.

E. COMPETITION STANDARD FOR SPOTTERS

1. **“Team Spotters”** = are part of the performing team and required as part of specific types of stunting/pyramid/toss, etc. skills.
2. **“Additional (Routine) Spotters”** = Individuals on the competition floor provided as a safety precaution to spot certain elements of a routine. These are in addition to the team and do not take the place of “team spotters” required by specific types of stunting/pyramid/toss, etc. skills.
In an effort to promote a higher level of safety for competing athletes, USA will provide additional spotters at all USA school and recreational/youth cheer competitions. School and recreational/youth cheer programs do not always have a large number of staff and coaches available to spot routines. Therefore, to help ensure that the safety of participants is not compromised due to limited number of team provided spotters, “additional (routine) spotters” will be provided by the USA. Additional (routine) spotters cannot be provided by the performing team, they must be provided by the USA.
3. **These USA-provided “additional (routine) spotters” will be mandatory on the competition floor.**

Reminder – To provide the safest competitive environment, teams should not attempt skills beyond their ability level.

F. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

1. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES
 - a. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
 - b. The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.
 - c. If worn, and an athlete's mask is no longer appropriately secured to their face, competition must stop in order for the athlete to properly affix their mask.
2. FAULT OF TEAM
 - a. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
 - b. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. INJURY
 - a. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are a) competition officials, b) the gym owner / coach from the team performing or c) an injured individual.
 - b. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.

- c. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 1. The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent or legal guardian (if present) AND THEN the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
 2. If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
 3. Any athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with concussion must be removed from the activity at that time and should not be allowed to return to activity that day. The athlete should not return to activity on a subsequent day until evaluated by and receives written clearance for such participation from a qualified physician (**MD or DO specifically trained in concussion management**).
- d. In addition to the USA Cheer head injury policy, we encourage you to be familiar with the specific laws of the state where the competition is being held.

G. VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, "Event Locations"). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, non-commercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to USA/Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation.

H. LOGO USAGE

Teams will not be allowed to use any USA/Varsity Spirit Brand logo including banners, rings, bows, t-shirts, etc. without prior approval from the Varsity Spirit office. The use of the brand letters will be allowed.

As of 7/18/2023