



2024 Cheer Rules

Georgia Youth Football League

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## **NAME**

The name shall be the Georgia Youth Football League doing business, referred to as the GYFL Cheerleading program.

## **PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of the GYFL Cheerleading Program is to provide a wholesome, inclusive, and faith-based environment for the children of the Metro Atlanta area to enjoy the sport of cheerleading. Our program is dedicated to promoting the physical, mental, social, and educational welfare of our participants while fostering good citizenship and sportsmanship through our cheerleading activities.

We aim to inspire our young athletes to develop not just cheerleading skills, but also valuable life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and resilience. By encouraging engagement through sideline cheerleading and competitive cheerleading, we cultivate a strong sense of community pride and unity among our cheerleaders and the families we serve. All rules, policies, and actions of the GYFL Cheerleading Program and its representatives shall be interpreted with this purpose in mind.

Safety is of utmost importance in our program. GYFL is committed to promoting a "safety first" philosophy by conducting and facilitating programs with stringent controls over age, weight, equipment, and the behavior of participants, coaches, and spectators. By prioritizing safety, we ensure a supportive environment where every cheerleader can thrive and excel.

## **PREAMBLE**

We stand united in our mission to uplift our community by providing exceptional cheerleading experiences that nurture and empower our young athletes, reflecting our core values of faith, integrity, and sportsmanship. Together, we will forge a legacy of excellence that resonates throughout the Metro Atlanta area and beyond

## **ARTICLE 1 - Cheer Commissioner Duties**

The Cheer Commissioner shall be responsible for the administration and enforcement of these Rules. The Cheer Commissioner shall adopt such rules and regulations and issue such orders as are deemed necessary or appropriate to achieve the purpose outlined in the purpose.

The Cheer Commissioner shall be responsible for certifying all GYFL cheer coaches, cheer volunteers, and all cheer squads before the END of September.

The Cheer Commissioner shall be responsible for appointing a Safety Officer.

## **ARTICLE 2 – Cheer Director Duties**

The Cheer Director shall be responsible for attending GYFL meetings. To ensure all Coaches and Cheerleaders are within regulatory guidance. Assist the GYFL Cheer program in the certification process and the annual cheer competition. The Cheer Director ensures all cheerleaders have a valid birth certificate and current physical form. The Cheer Director is responsible for providing all those registered within the Association are entered into the GYFL database.

The Cheer Director shall enforce these rules and issue such orders deemed necessary and appropriate to assist the GYFL Cheer Commissioner.

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### **ARTICLE 3 – Cheer Coach Duties The Cheer**

The coach shall be responsible for:

- A. Conducting practice
- B. Teaching the art of cheerleading
- C. Receiving certification documentation for each cheerleader
- D. Attending games
- E. Prepare the squad for the annual cheer competition.
- F. Maintain squad conduct
- G. Selecting Team Managers
- H. Assistant junior coaches with the squad
- I. Sign the Coaches Affidavit
- J. Be certified by the GYFL Cheer Commissioner or appointed staff

### **ARTICLE 4 - Cheerleading Squad Agreement**

In accordance with GYFL By-Laws and these Rules, the Cheer Coach and Cheerleading Squad agree as follows:

The cheer coach and cheerleading squad will comply with all provisions of these rules, regulations, and relevant orders of the Cheer Commissioner.

### **ARTICLE 5 – Enforcement of these Rules**

In the event of the cheer coach's and cheerleading squad's noncompliance with such rules, and regulations, the cheer coach or cheerleading squad maybe suspended from further participation in GYFL's cheer program and declared ineligible for GYFL's cheer competition. This will also lead to being ineligible to participate in other sanctions, if these rules and regulations are noncompliance with the Cheer Commissioner.

The Cheer Commissioner shall be responsible for securing compliance by all cheer coaches and cheerleading squads with these rules and implementing any additional rules or regulations. All cheer coaches and cheerleading squads shall comply with the terms of these rules and any implementation by the Cheer Commissioner. The cheer coach and cheerleading squad shall cooperate with the Cheer Commissioner and shall furnish such information and assistance as the Cheer Commissioner may require:

- A. The Cheer Commissioner may investigate the cheerleading practices of any cheer coach or cheerleading squad to determine whether or not the provisions of this rule have been violated. Such investigation shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures established by the Cheer Commissioner.
- B. The Cheer Commissioner may receive and investigate complaints by other persons which allege acts contrary to the provisions specified in any portion of these rules.

The Cheer Commissioner shall use his/her best efforts, directly and through interested parties and all other available resources to cause any cheer coach or cheerleading squad to cooperate in the implementation of the purposes of these rules. The Cheer Commissioner shall, in appropriate cases, notify the GYFL Commissioner whenever it has reason to believe that the practices of any cheer coach or cheerleading squad are in violation of these rules.

- C. The Cheer Commissioner, designated by rules, may hold such hearings in public or private, as the Cheer Commissioner may deem advisable for compliance, enforcement, or educational purposes.
  - D. The Cheer Commissioner may hold, or cause to be held, hearings in accordance with Article 1 of this Section or recommending the imposition of penalties and sanctions under these rules. No rules for the
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ineligibility of any cheer coach or cheerleading squad from competition shall be made without affording the cheer coach or cheerleading squad an opportunity for a hearing.

In accordance with such rules, the Cheer Commissioner may:

- E. Publish, or cause to be published, the names of the cheer coach or cheerleading squad which have failed to comply with the provisions of the rules.
- F. Recommend to the GYFL Commissioner which there is material violation or the threat of material violation.
- G. The provisions are set forth for the appropriate proceedings to be brought to enforce those provisions of these rules.
- H. Cheer Coach or Cheerleading Squad can be cancelled, terminated, or suspended from any activity that is deemed in violation of these rules.
- I. The Cheer Commissioner shall make reasonable efforts within a reasonable time period to secure compliance with the provisions of these rules by conference. This is all done before proceeding to declare a cheer coach or cheerleading squad ineligible for GYFL's cheer competition event.

### **GENERAL RULES**

1. All rules pertaining to cheerleading must be voted on by the Cheer Directors.
  2. All rules must attain a majority quorum for approval.
  3. Minutes of all meetings shall be taken and distributed at the succeeding meeting.
  4. All member associations shall have a Cheer Director which must be 21 years of age.
  5. Each cheer squad must have at least one coach.
  6. The coach must be twenty-one (21) years of age.
  7. The coach cannot be either an all-star, collegiate or professional cheerleader at the time of his or her appointment.
  8. Each GYFL member shall designate a Cheer Director.
  9. Each member shall have the Cheer Director or a representative present at all GYFL meetings.
  10. The member shall face a \$25 fine for unexcused absences from monthly meetings.
  11. GYFL member organizations must have an open registration or enrollment period.
  12. Each member organization shall have the right to determine its own method of forming squads.
  13. The Cheer director shall hold a parent/cheerleader meeting @ the beginning of the season. This is to explain expectations, requirements, rules & by-laws for the season alone with parent obligation.
  14. No person who signs up in good faith to participate in Sideline cheerleading shall be cut.
  15. Each cheer squad must have a corresponding football team
  16. There will be a maximum of twenty (20) cheerleaders per Team.
  17. There shall be no mascots for cheer squads.
  18. All cheerleaders, regardless of age, must certify in accordance with GYFL Certification Rule.
  19. All persons that furnish the necessary documents shall be eligible to participate
  20. All participants must provide a birth certificate as proof of age. (Other state-issued documents, passports, or military I.D. shall be reviewed by the GYFL cheer director.) All other documents must be current.
  21. All cheerleaders shall be certified by the GYFL Cheer Commissioner and appointed staff.
  22. All new cheerleaders must have an original birth certificate.
  23. All previous year's returning cheerleaders have a copy of their birth certificate.
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24. All cheerleaders must have a current physical dated no earlier than March of the current year. All documentation must be provided at the time of certification.
  25. Cheerleader ages shall correspond with the GYFL football rules and regulations ages. Ages for cheerleaders shall be determined as of July 1 of the current year:
    - a) Tiny – 6 & Under
    - b) Mini – 8 & Under
    - c) Youth – 10 & Under
    - d) Junior 1 – 12 & Under
    - e) Junior 2 – 14 & Under
  26. Each squad is required to take an individual (headshot) picture of each cheerleader. Photos should be legible, and attire should be a uniform or camp gear.
  27. The picture should be uploaded to the GYFL Registration system within the allotted time frame set by the GYFL Executive Committee.
  28. Each squad is required to have a **Certification Book**.
    - a) Certification books shall consist of:
    - b) *Both certification and public team roster,*
    - c) *Copy of birth record,*
    - d) *Copy of a current physical for each member of the squad*
    - e) *A parent contact list*
  29. All parental and/or guardian contact information must be the same as entered into the GYFL Registration system.
  30. Certification rosters must be present at all GYFL games and events in which the Team performs.
  31. Cheerleaders shall not be added to the official roster after certification. The GYFL Executive Committee will review extenuating circumstances.
  32. Teams shall be allowed to practice off-site in preparation for the cheer competition.
  33. All camps and clinics sponsored by member associations must be open to all members of GYFL.
  34. A cheerleader's uniform is defined as:
    - A. Shell (Top portion of a Cheerleaders Uniform)
    - B. Skirt (The bottom portion of the Cheerleaders Uniform)
    - C. Briefs and/or Cheer Shorts must be worn underneath a cheer skirt.
    - D. Shoes
    - E. Socks
    - F. Midriffs
    - G. No jewelry
    - H. No Beads
    - I. No Nail Polish
    - J. Sports Length Nails
  35. Each League Member should have the current year's National Federation of High School (NFHS) Spirit Rule Book.
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A. The books may be ordered from the following:  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
P.O. Box 361246, Indianapolis, IN 46236-5324 [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org) or

B. Georgia High School Association  
P.O. Box 271, 151 S  
Bethel St. Thomaston, GA 30286-4187 [www.ghsa.net](http://www.ghsa.net)

### **Sideline/Gameday Rules**

1. The starting dates for sideline cheerleading practice shall correspond with the dates set for football.
2. The purpose of this rule is to provide a standard, fair and equal practice time for all GYFL teams to keep practice activity at a reasonable level during school days. This helps not to create a hardship on the cheerleaders with regard to school studies and participation in school activities.
3. Practice will be limited to twelve hours per week until school begins. Teams shall be allowed eight hours of practice per week from that point until the first week of scheduled games. After the start of school, teams May not at any time practice more than three times during any calendar week not to exceed 6 hours. No practice shall continue past 9:00 pm.
4. Camp gear is considered a T-Shirt with the Association, Team and/or Squad logo and a pair of shorts.
5. Camp gear can be worn during regular-season games.
6. A GYFL certified coach must be present at games and practices.
7. No offensive or explicit cheers shall be performed by any GYFL cheer squads.
8. Opposing squads cheering within 20 yards of each other because of seating shall alternate cheering/chanting throughout the game.
9. Cheerleaders are required to cheer at games (regular season, playoffs, and championship games).
10. Only certified GYFL coaches and Team Managers, per the roster, are allowed on the playing field during scheduled games.
11. Cheer Squads must cheer in the area designated by the host park.
12. All GYFL coaches should adhere to all rules set forth by the GYFL game day supervisor and referees.
13. Every cheer program will list a game day cheer schedule for the cheer commissioner via email.
14. Coaches should ensure each cheerleader has sacks for the game (Water/Gatorade, Granola Bars or Chips, or Fruit).
15. If stunting, there must be a back spotter, with a GYFL Cheer coach present.

### **Competition Rules**

1. The SO (Safety Officer) must be a director or instructor of a high school, collegiate, professional, all-star or competitive team.
  2. A safety officer will serve as a safety judge during the GYFL cheerleading competition.
  4. Each cheer squad certified with GYFL is required to compete or perform as an exhibition in the annual GYFL cheer competition.
  5. Any member association that does not compete or perform at the league cheer competition will be assessed a fine of \$100 for each Team not participating.
  6. All coaches shall display Sportsmanship.
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- a. Conduct shall be in a manner displaying good Sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.
  7. Cheer Director & Coaches shall be responsible for seeing that team members, parents, and other persons affiliated with the Team conduct themselves accordingly.
  8. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
  9. GYFL shall provide awards (trophies) for the top three (3) squads in each division.
  10. There shall be one grand champion, second and third place trophies awarded.
  11. Only the grand Champion Team shall be awarded individual awards (Trophy) for each cheerleader
  12. Every Cheerleader except Grand Champions will receive a medal for participation.
  13. The specific size and design of these awards shall be determined by the GYFL Cheer Commissioner & The Executive Committee.
  14. The judges for the cheer competition shall be secured by the GYFL Cheer Commissioner & Executive Committee Only.
  15. The announcer, disc Jockey (music) & videographer for the cheer competition shall be secured by the GYFL Cheer Commissioner & Executive Committee.
  16. Competition judges must be coaches, directors, or instructors of a high school, collegiate, professional, all-star, or competitive teams.
  17. Coaches, trainers, or others associated with the cheer squads are not allowed in the cheering area during competition.
  18. Each Team participating in the competition agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final, and results may ONLY be reviewed for clarification.
  19. Each Team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition.
  20. Each Team, therefore, waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.
  21. Scores & Rankings:
    - A. Individual score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge.
    - B. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams.
    - C. Scores and rankings will be available ONLY to coaches or the competition.
  22. GYFL will provide spotters.
  23. During the competition (no cameras, video, or tape recorders are allowed).
  24. All squads shall follow the following format:
    - A. Cheer
    - B. Chant
    - C. Dance
  25. There shall be a two and one-half (2½) minute time limit for all routines with a pre-determined point reduction for any violations.
  26. All squads are required to be in uniforms at the competition. (Camp gear is unacceptable)
  27. The competition shall have a minimum of 3 judges along with a tally judge.
    - A. Judge 1. Will score only on jumps/tosses
    - B. Judge 2. Will score only on dance /motions
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- c. Judge 3. Will score only on stunts/Pyramids/tumbling
- 28. In the event of a tie in the overall score, the lowest and the highest score will be dropped, and the squad with the highest middle score will be determined the winner.
- 29. The GYFL Cheer Commissioner shall issue additional Rules and Guidelines at least thirty days prior to the date of the competition.
- 30. This Rules and Guidelines must detail the date, location, and time of the event.
- 31. Cheerleader ages for competition shall correspond with the list below:
  - A. Recreational:
  - B. Tiny – 6 & Under
  - C. Mini – 8 & Under
  - D. Youth – 10 & Under
  - E. Junior 1 – 12 & Under
  - F. Junior 2 – 14 & Under
  - G. Seniors – 18 & Under
  - H. School Division:
    - I. Middle/High
    - J. All-Star:
    - K. Level 1 – Level 6

### **Violations**

1. GYFL Cheerleader Rules shall be considered a very serious offense.
  2. In the event any GYFL league, Team, or associated individual is deemed guilty by the Cheer Commissioner of a violation of any practice, type of activity, certification, competition, and games; the league, Team, and/or individual will be subject, collectively and separately to a fine, suspension, probation and/or any other action deemed appropriate by the GYFL Cheer Commissioner and the GYFL Disciplinary Committee.
  3. It shall be mandatory that all members have adequate insurance per SECTION 1100.00 – INSURANCE of the Football Rules.
  4. The rules of the league may be reviewed annually. All rule reviews must be completed according to GYFL rules. Rule changes must be submitted in writing by the given due date.
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