



CHEER RULES & GUIDELINES

RESOLUTION:

It is solemnly resolved by the Board and Members of the Southern Premier Youth Football League (SPYFL) that our primary goal is to provide a safe and wholesome environment for our children to enjoy youth football and cheerleading. All rules, policies and actions of the Southern Premier Youth Football League (SPYFL) should be interpreted with this primary purpose in mind.

MISSION:

The mission of the Southern Premier Youth Football League (SPYFL) program is to provide quality learning experiences and opportunities in a supervised environment for all participants. These participants should leave with a strong foundation in the sport of cheerleading and develop qualities essential to being great leaders and becoming a team player.

PURPOSE:

It shall be the purpose of the Southern Premier Youth Football League (SPYFL) Program to promote and uphold team spirit for those we encounter, to develop good sportsmanship by example, to support good relations in the community and between teams and squads during events. We will work in harmony with the county representatives, team management, coaches, and volunteers.

Team Composition

Rule 1: Team Composition

- a. Each SPYFL Cheer squad shall have a minimum of five (5) participants to certify a team.
- b. The staff of each SPYFL squad shall be limited to one (1) head coach and a maximum of two (2) assistant coaches.
- c. The league shall be comprised of teams from each member park.
- d. Each SPYFL Cheer squad will be limited to twenty (20) cheerleaders per team; SPYFL Cheer Lead must approve all exceptions.
- e. The league is comprised of squads from member parks in the SPYFL. When two (2) or more teams of the same age group represent any one park, a Head Coach may freeze up to twelve (12) cheerleaders. The park cheer coordinator to determine cheerleader assignment of all other registered cheerleaders will conduct a draft accordingly.
- f. Cheerleaders may not participate on more than one (1) squad.
- g. A cheerleader may not switch teams, nor can they be on two (2) rosters. The park cheer coordinator with SPYFL cheer lead approval will be conducted for all cheerleader reassignments. Team Reassignment form must be submitted with reason for the change.
- h. Cheerleaders must cheer in their age group according to age of registration. No Mascots are allowed.
- i. A Cheerleader may cheer up one age division provided her birthday falls within (12) months of the minimum age of the older age division stipulated by the age cut-off date in order to constitute a squad. When the situation dictates the need for multiple ages to constitute a squad, it must be approved by the SPYFL cheer lead.
- j. A Cheerleader may receive a "Sibling Tag Exemption," permitting her to cheer up one age divisions, provided she has a sibling playing football and/or cheering within the alternate older age group. The sibling tag exemption is not an automatic guarantee; it is solely based on the recommendation of the park cheer coordinator and approval by the SPYFL cheer lead.

Team Roster

Rule 2: Team Roster

- a. Each team shall submit, to the cheer park coordinators, on an official form, the following information of each player on the team:
 - i. Full name
 - ii. Age and date of birth
 - iii. Address and phone number
 - iv. School attending
 - v. Digital Photograph
- b. Included on the team roster shall be the color of the home team, team color, telephone number for the home field, name of the field marshal/coordinator, division/age classification, team name, and the names and telephone numbers of each member of the team's staff, except the team managers\team mom. The cheer coordinator or designated individual may approve any changes in a team's staff any time during the current year, subject to the limitations contained herein.
- c. Once the team assigned age group has been identified and determined, it will not be changed from that shown on the official roster. If by chance, this is not practical and a change is required, the appropriate SPYFL cheer officer may authorize the change. It will be the cheer coordinator responsibility to notify the cheer officer as soon as possible of any team changes along with a justification that will be reviewed and agreed upon by the cheer officers and cheer park coordinators. However, the use of a different team name from that shown on the official roster in any subsequent game or competition event must be approved as outlined herein.
- d. No cheerleader certified by the SPYFL may appear on more than one league cheer roster during the season. This includes all SPYFL team rosters. No cheerleader appearing on any high school roster may participate on any SPYFL team roster.

Rule 3: Proof of age

- a. Each SPYFL cheerleader must furnish proof of age by submitting one of the records specified below to the coordinator, or designated representative, at the SPYFL certification. Any cheerleader who does not provide one of the required proof-of-age records for certification may be ineligible to participate on a SPYFL team. Only the following records shall be acceptable in providing proof of age.
- b. A hospital issued birth certificate, an official state or county birth certificate, or certificate of registration of birth from a state or county bureau or vital statistics. This should be the best form of certification and should be the primary method of establishing the child's birth date. In the event such a record is not available, the following shall be sufficient.
- c. An official school registration certificate issued by a private or public school provided the certification is personally signed by a school official and notarized.
- d. An appeal may be made to the board of directors regarding other records supporting proof of age. Should the board deem an age valid as the result of investigation relative to "other records", certification may be granted. In the event an appeal is made, the cheerleader will remain ineligible until the SPYFL Lead Coordinator has approved her appeal.

- e. Each team shall submit two complete sets, on official forms, of cheerleader identification records complete with current photographs of the cheerleader from the waist up wearing an official roster outfit. Each of the cheerleader identification forms will include a signed statement by a parent or guardian of the cheerleader in an affidavit form attesting to the accuracy of the date of birth and proof of age. Both the park coordinator and the SPYFL representative will attest with each of their signatures to the accuracy of the information contained in the affidavit. One set of each team's identification records will be retained by the park coordinator and the other by the team manager. Each team manager must present the team book prior to each game.

Rule 4: Cheerleader Age Restrictions

- a. The age of cheerleaders on all SPYFL squads will be determined by their age as of July 1st of the current year.
- b. The ages of the cheerleaders assigned to a division team will be as follows: Cheerleaders must be at least 4 as of the July 1st age control date to participate in the league.
 - a. Flag U5
 - b. Pee Wee U6
 - c. Mighty Mite U8
 - d. Bandit U10
 - e. Junior U12
 - f. Senior U14

Rule 5. Cheerleader Certification

Documentation needed for certification

- a. Parental consent/registration form on file with member association.
- b. Birth certificate
- c. Photo: Must clearly show cheerleader face and preferable in team colors.
- d. Certification book should be assembled by last name, date of birth, youngest to oldest.
- e. Certification book will be presented at the Official Cheer Certification Meeting.
- f. Documents will be placed in a binder after certification has been completed.
Cheerleaders will be certified by the SPYFL Cheer Board Officer at a time and location set forth by the board. All cheerleaders will be identified by documents provided in certification books. All cheerleaders must attend. **No exceptions.**

****Official Certification Documentation will be used for Annual Competition****

Rule 6. Guidelines for Cheerleading Coaches

- a. All head coaches must have CPR training, coaches certification training, Concussions Training and attend designed Coaches Clinics or Training. All assistant coaches must have Coaches certification, concussion training and attend designed Coaches Clinics and Training. The assistant coach will have the authority and responsibility of the squad when the head coach is not available.
- b. All coaches must have a background check, coach's code of conduct agreement and acknowledgement of rules and regulations. They are to set an example for all squads at all times by following the rules and displaying acceptable behavior.
- c. All coaches must be at least 18 years of age.
- d. It is prohibited for cheerleading coaches to use any form of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs as well as any form of profanity while on the playing field or practice field, or any time while in contact with the children.
- e. Coaches are to be familiar with cheerleading techniques, stunts and jumps.
- f. Coaches are to be on time and should set a good example for their squads and communities at all time.
- g. Coaches are to be in control at all times, whether at a game or practice.
- h. Coaches are to treat all cheerleaders, parents and other coaches (football and cheerleading) with respect.
- i. Coaches should always look the part by dressing appropriately, following team dress-code guidelines as well.
- j. Coaches are required to attend all practices, games, park and county scheduled activities. The Park Cheer Coordinator must be notified in the event a head coach or her assistant cannot attend any of the following to ensure appropriate supervision is provided.
- k. Cheerleading coaches are to treat all cheerleaders fairly, teach all cheerleaders equally, and make them feel a part of the squad.
- l. Cheerleading coaches can be dismissed at any time due to team issues, league violations, league mission and objectives, fighting, cursing, physically disciplining a child, and consistent negative behavior as advised by the Cheer Coordinator\Officer.
- m. Cheer trainers, aids, or junior coaches may be used to teach cheers and cheer routines but is under the direct authority and supervision of the head cheerleading coach\park cheer coordinator.

Rule 7: Cheerleading Safety

There is no more important issue today in cheerleading than safety. It is highly recommend that you become thoroughly familiar with the information contained in SPYFL cheerleading rules and regulations as well as the Georgia High School Association (GHSA) safety rules.

Coach's Role in Safety

The cheerleading coach has responsibility for the safety of the cheerleaders. Here are some important points to remember when working with your squad. All coaches, aides\trainers are required to abide by the SPYFL rules and when rules are, violate, their volunteer services will be restricted or removed. Coaches will be notified of undesirable conduct or behavior and will be restricted or removed by the Board Cheer Coordinator depending on the rule violation.

- a. Constant Supervision – A survey revealed that 8% of all cheerleading injuries occur in practice. The coach must be present at all cheerleading practices and make sure the cheerleaders are aware of and abiding by safety rules.
- b. Setting Parameters and Establishing Safety Levels – The safety guidelines established by SPYFL cheer broad are parameters for cheerleading activity. The coach must constantly evaluate her squad members to make sure they participate in activities within their ability level. An easy way to set specific guidelines for each cheerleader as well as the squad as a whole is to establish a qualifying system. In other words, i.e. before cheerleaders are allowed to perform stunts of skills without spotters they must do the stunt 5 times without difficulty. Qualifying should be done in the presence of spotters.
- c. Stay Current– Coaches should remain up-to-date on all new techniques and safety regulations.
- d. Coaches are required to ensure that squad members are safe, safety being the top priority at all times, that First Aid is available, and an emergency contact list is kept up to date and present at all times during the season.

Health and Safety

- a. All earrings/piercings must be removed before practice.
- b. Fingernails should be clipped to prevent starches or cuts.
- c. All self-administered medications must be on hand at all times and parent available for monitoring as required. Medical conditions\allergies must be provided to coach, park coordinators and team.
- d. Asthma: If your child requires an inhaler for an asthmatic condition, you must have an extra inhaler to leave at every practice and game. If your child does not have their inhaler, they will not be allowed to participate that day.
- e. Allergies/Bee Stings: If you child has any allergies, especially for bee-stings, you must notify their coach at the start of the season. You will be required to provide the proper first aid kit and emergency instructions clearly labeled on a baggie with your child's name for the entire season or the parent needs to be available during all practices.

- f. Coaches should be aware of all parents or guardians the child is leaving with at the end of practice. The coach should clarify with parent\guardian for clarification when necessary.
- g. When leaving the cheering area, permission must be given by the coach or adult advisor. All cheerleaders must use the buddy system by traveling in groups of two or more. NO cheerleader is to go to the parking lot area without adult supervision.
- h. All stunts, pyramids, jumps, and tumbling MUST be taught in sequence. Cheerleaders MUST master stunt, pyramid, jump and tumbling move in practice before they can do it at a game or competition.
- i. Cheerleaders should be taught proper spotting techniques and proper spotting should always be used when practicing new stunts.
- j. Tumbling maneuvers are permitted by participants who have demonstrated the ability to master and control the skills as follows, i.e. cartwheels, round off, front rollover, walkovers, and backhand spring.
- k. All mastered jumps are permitted and allowed based on the coach's guidance and approval.
- l. A cheerleader who misses all practices at which a pyramid, stunt, or gymnastic maneuver was mastered shall not be allowed to perform at the next performance unless approved by the coach.
- m. Any cheerleader whose behavior or actions are disrespectful or harmful to themselves or others will be asked to leave the field and park cheer coordinator and parent will be notified.

Rule 8: Practice Regulations

- a. All practices are defined as any gathering of cheerleaders on a SPYFL program to discuss the subject of cheerleading, to view cheerleading films, demonstrations, exhibits, or exercise and study cheerleading materials. No team can practice before the season date, based on the date issued by your park coordinator.
- b. Violations of the regulations, or any other rules pertaining to practice, or practice type activities, shall be considered a very serious offense. In the event any SPYFL park, team or associated individual is deemed guilty by the SPYFL coordinators. Of violating any part of this rule, or any other rule pertaining to practice or practice type activity, the park team, and/or individual will be subject, collectively and separately, to possible suspension, probation, and/or other such action as the SPYFL coordinators shall deem appropriate.
- c. Cheerleading practice should correspond with the dates set for by SPYFL season
- d. All practices will be limited to 10 hours per week until school begins. After school starts teams will only be allowed to practice no more than 6 hours a week. Two weeks prior to the SPYFL Cheerleading Competition, squads may practice an additional 6 hours per week.
- e. Practices shall not be held more than 3 days per week.

- f. No team is allowed to practice without head coach supervision or designated adult supervision.
- g. All cheerleaders must practice in designated area with safe conditions.
- h. No stunting is allowed on pavement areas or without the coach present. (Please refer to stunting guidelines of the National Federation State High School Association, Spirit Rule Book for further explanation).
- i. Cheerleaders should practice in adequate practice attire, cotton shorts, shirts and tennis shoes. Non-restrictive clothing should be worn (jeans and skirts are not recommended).
- j. Only registered participants and certified coaches are allowed in the practice area and participation in all program activity.
- k. No jewelry is permitted.
- l. Cheerleading camp is optional and may not be required for any cheerleading team.
- m. Tumbling classes are optional and may not be required for any cheerleading team.
- n. Head coach should advise parent of child's failure to attend scheduled practice will result in child's sitting out during half time performance. Failure to attend practices could also result in a child not being able to participate in cheering during team game due to lack of knowledge of cheers and chants.
- o. The coach is responsible for inspecting the area prior to the start of all practices and workouts. Make sure there are no physical obstructions in the area, and that cheerleaders are not in the pathway of any other individuals.

Rule 9: Game Day Protocol

- a. ALL SPYFL Cheerleaders are expected to be in traditional, full uniform by the date specified by the park coordinator. This includes park issued attire, Shell (or vest), skirt, briefs, uniformed socks and shoes, and bow (optional). Coaches should notify park coordinator of all changes for approval to the uniform.
- b. The visiting squad shall be introduced and perform first. Visiting squad should be immediately ready to take the field at half time.
- c. Half-time cheers, dances, or stunts will be limited to three (3) minutes per squad. Sexual or proactive body motions are prohibited.
- d. At the end of the game, all cheerleaders shall line up behind the football team for the purpose of shaking hands with the opposing team and their cheerleaders.

- e. If a football player becomes injured during a game, both cheerleading squads are to stop cheering, kneel on one knee, or quietly stand, until the player is up or removed from the playing field, at which time the injured player should be applauded.
- f. All cheers and chants are to be free of vulgar words, phrases, and motions. No type of derogatory cheer will be allowed.
- g. Cheerleading coaches are to keep their cheerleaders within the defined sidelines boundaries, as designated by each association, except half-time.
- h. Cheerleading coaches are to keep non cheerleaders and unauthorized individuals on the sideline or track during the game.
- i. At least one (1) coach must accompany each squad on game day. NO squad should be on the field without a coach.
- j. All participants must be in uniform during the entire game and all participants must wear tennis shoes/sneakers.
- k. Poms, flash cards and megaphones are allowed. All other items are not allowed.
- l. Music and boom boxes are allowed during half-time performances, music must not contain any profanity or sexual innuendo, and the performance will be stopped and not allowed.
- m. All stunts, tosses, and tumbling are prohibited on surfaces other than a mat or flat grassy area. All cheerleaders MUST BE GROUND BOUND when on the concrete surfaces. Jumps are okay on all surfaces, as long as they are flat with no physical obstructions are in the work out or performance area.

Rule 10: Park Courtesy and Participation

- a. The coach and/or park cheer coordinator of the home team for each squad should introduce themselves to the visiting squads (prior to the game). They will show them where the concession stand and restrooms are located, etc.
- b. Opposing squads, cheering within twenty yards or less of each other will alternate cheering/chanting throughout each game.
- c. There will be no offensive cheers or chants performed at any time. This includes any language or body motions that may appear intimidating to the crowd or visiting team.

- d. If any coach, sponsor, or representative observes a cheerleader conducting herself in a questionable manner. It will be that person's obligation to notify the SPYFL representative of that park.
- e. Cheerleaders will cheer at all regularly scheduled football games, including Jamboree and post season games.

Communication

- a. If a problem occurs, they should be addressed in a proper manner. Please go to your Head Coach, then, if needed, you should go to the SPYFL Cheer Coordinator Lead. If further discussion is required, you may request a meeting with the SPYFL Park board.
- b. Please make sure you check our website: www.claytonparks.com
- c. An email address and phone number is required from all parents; this will be the primary way of communication by the head coach. If you do not use email or have a contact number, it is your responsibility to find a way for us to share information. We will post all game schedules, team scores as well as league information on the website.

Administrative rules

Rule 11: Ineligible cheerleader and coaches

- a. Request for all coaching changes must be presented to the cheer coordinator of the respective park.
- b. When it is found that a cheerleader has permitted any coach or cheerleader who is ineligible to participate in any game, may subject the coach disciplinary action and possible suspension. Ineligible cheerleaders and coaches shall not be permitted on the sidelines or to participate in any way in a league game or team practice.
- c. Any head coach found to have an ineligible cheerleader shall face a minimum one year suspension from all coaching duties that involves any SPYFL game events or practice events with the team.
- d. Any information about a cheerleader's eligibility should be brought to the attention of the park coordinator of the park for which she is a participant. This should be done as soon as possible. Ineligible cheerleaders and coaches shall not be permitted to be on the sidelines or to participate in any team functions.

Rule 12: Misconduct

- a. Any cheerleader, coach or other adult supervisor who shall be deemed guilty by the department of cheating or misrepresenting any situation\record shall be subject to indefinite suspension from the league.
- b. Any cheerleader or coach who shall be guilty of conduct detrimental to the league, under the influence of alcohol at any scheduled conference event including practice, unbecoming conduct or unsportsmanlike conduct shall be expelled from any game being played. The officials shall make an incident report of such conduct to the coordinator. Any cheerleader or coach dismissed from a game

must be suspended from the next game. Park\Game officials should report to SPYFL along with the opposing team in order that all incidents are reported. If it is found that a cheerleader/coach participates in the next game, they will be suspended for two additional games.

- c. A coach\assistant coach or representative reported by a game official, park representative or league coordinator, in writing, as demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct will, if deemed guilty by the SPYFL board, will be subject to one more of the following penalties:
 - i. Probation for 12 months
 - ii. Three (3) game suspension
 - iii. Permanent suspension from conference participation or such other penalty as deemed appropriate by the league
- d. It shall be considered misconduct to discuss complaints on park representatives or officiating body. A complaint must be submitted in writing to the cheer coordinator lead.
- e. When in any SPYFL function, two (2) or more cheerleaders from different teams become involved in a fight, both squads' head coaches shall appear before the lead cheer coordinator and park coordinators to answer any questions and to explain the incident and accept any punishment deemed appropriate.

Rule 13: Spectator conduct

Conduct of spectators that shall be deemed unsportsmanlike or detrimental to cheerleaders\participants, the game, or league, may subject the offending team to penalty after a warning by the referee to the coach of such misconduct. A zero tolerance policy will be enforced with the unruly spectator/s being removed from the park or face possible criminal prosecution.

Rule 14: Understanding of the rules

- a. Before being accepted as a member of SPYFL team's coaching staff, each individual must have a thorough understanding of all SPYFL rule and philosophies, agree to abide by all provisions of these rules, and be willing to accept any penalties that may be imposed as a result of violation of the rules.
- b. A certification meeting will be conducted by the cheer coordinator lead for SPYFL for each official member park.

Rule 15: Protests

- a. Protests must be made known to the Cheer SPYFL Lead, all protest will be reviewed to include park cheer coordinator\spirit team\park coordinator. The protest board shall render a decision on course of action for moving forward to address the complaint.

Administration, interpretation & enforcement

- i. Each park cheer coordinator will serve as a member on the SPYFL spirit team
- ii. The park cheer coordinator shall be responsible for issuing rulings on all questions of interpretation of the SPYFL rules and any other matters pertaining to the rules that are not specifically covered.
- iii. There will be a written report of all such rulings. A signed and dated copy of each report shall be furnished to each park or individual(s).

Conclusion

The statements of league rules are meant to provide framework and guidance for the administration of the Southern Premier Youth Football League. These rules will be regularly reviewed and amended as required, communication will be provided on any amendments or updates.