

YOUTH CHEER RULES & REGULATIONS

The Athletics Division of the Onslow County Parks & Recreation Department provides a platform for physical activity focused on ethical behavior, social responsibility, community engagement, and competitive effort that encourages leadership and individual growth.

ACCEPTANCE: Participation and play, including district officers, coaches, volunteers, and players, in any Onslow County Parks and Recreation Department athletic program implies full acceptance of all rules governing play, including the playing rules, by-laws, policies and procedures, and “Code of Conduct.”

PHYSICAL HEALTH VERIFICATION: It is the parent’s responsibility to see that their child is in sound physical condition. It is recommended that a player have a thorough physical examination prior to participating in the program.

CONDUCT: All players, spectators, parents, and coaches will be expected to adhere to the OCPR Athletics Code of Conduct that is provided in the OCPR Athletics Handbook. Any conduct that does not align with the expectations of our recreational league will be addressed by OCPR directly with consequences assigned.

TEAM UNIT:

- Each team shall have a maximum of 18 cheerleaders per roster.
- Registration for all districts must be completed before the start of the first scheduled practice. A player cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has registered and has been placed on a team by the specified district.
- No coach shall allow any player to practice with his or her team who is not listed on the team roster.
- All practices must be held at the sites and times assigned by OCPR and district board. No other sites or times may be used.
- Ineligible Players: Allowing ineligible players who are not registered with the OCPR league, have been suspended from league play, or are not assigned to the roster of that team will result in a head coach suspension for the next game for the first offense and a suspension for the remainder of the season following a second offense.

AGE GROUPS

Participants shall be rostered by age according to the following:

6 & Under - Must not turn 7 prior to the cut-off date; Must be 4 by the cut-off date

8 & Under - Must not turn 9 prior to the cut-off date

12 & Under - Must not turn 13 prior to cut-off date

16 & Under - Must not turn 17 prior to cut-off date

Cut-Off Date: January 1st

COACHES

- All coaches must be approved by OCPR and receive a badge prior to coaching the first practice session.
- A coaching staff cannot exceed three coaches: one head coach and two assistant coaches.
- Coaches must wear the OCPR badge during all practices and games.

RULES & REGULATIONS

General Rules

- All skills legal for sideline cheering can be performed on artificial/live grass, rubberized track, indoor basketball court or a matted surface. No skills are allowed on asphalt, concrete or any other similar surface.
- Uniforms must be appropriate for youth recreational cheerleading. When standing at attention, apparel must cover the midriff. Uniforms must be alike or similar with appropriate undergarments.

- Hair must be worn in a manner that is appropriate for the activity involved. Hair devices and accessories must be secure.
- Supports, braces, soft casts, etc. that are unaltered from the manufacturer's original design do not require any additional padding. Supports/braces that have been altered from the manufacturer's original design must be padded with a closed-cell, slow-recovery foam padding no less than one-half-inch thick if the participant is involved in partner stunts, pyramids, or tosses. A participant wearing a plaster cast or walking boot must not be involved in partner stunts, pyramids, tosses, jumps, or tumbling.
- Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except for the following: religious medal without a chain is allowed but must be taped and worn under the uniform, medical-alert medal must be taped and visible.
- Use of mini-trampolines, springboards, spring-assisted floors or any height-increasing apparatus is not permitted for use at any time.
- Participants must not chew gum or have candy in their mouths during practice or performance.
- The only props allowed to be used are megaphones, poms, signs, and flags. The only props allowed to be used while in stunts or pyramids are poms or signs in use by the top person only. A top can hand a sign to a base or spotter with the intent of immediately releasing it to the ground as long as the top is not extended.
- Participants must not stunt or tumble when the ball is in play, including during free throws in basketball.

Regular Season Games & Half-Time Routines

- A squad may cheer during the game for their respective team. Cheers and gestures (including stomping of bleachers) may not be done during free throws.
- Each squad in attendance at a game will be allowed five minutes of performance time during halftime of the basketball game. If two squads are present, one for each team, the "away" squad will perform first.
- A squad may perform their half-time routine to either side of the gym.
- When an opposing squad is performing, the viewing squad must remain quiet and demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Cheerleaders must remain outside of the playing area during a 30-second or less time-out during a basketball game.
- Participants must not stunt or tumble when the ball is in play, including during free throws in basketball.
- Participants are not allowed to be in the area directly beneath and behind the basketball goal ("free throw lane extended").

Stunts

- Basic techniques and fundamentals must be taught and "mastered" prior to attempting any stunt.
- Stunts must be performed in an appropriate area with a suitable surface.
- At no time should cheerleaders be pressed to perform a particular stunt they are not comfortable with or ready to perform.
- It is the responsibility of a coach to observe, monitor, and recognize a cheerleader's particular ability and limit their activities accordingly.
- Refer to the OCPR Cheer-Rules Grid for further information related to skills that are allowed and not allowed.

COMPETITION

An OCPR cheer competition will take place at the end of each season. Participation in the competition will be an opportunity for all registered participants.

Squads

- Rosters for competition will be submitted to the OCPR Athletic Supervisor.
- Squads with cheerleaders in different age divisions will compete in the highest age division.

Competition Environment

- Competition mats will be provided.
- A staging area for prep will be available to all districts for their teams.
- All teams will have a practice time on the competition mat before the doors open to the public.
- Teams will have practice time in an auxiliary gym before taking their place on the competition mat.

Music

Music should be submitted via a MP3 or MP4 file. More information provided by DJ.

General Information

- Squads must be in the “on deck” area at least one squad ahead of when you will perform.
- Late or no-show squads are not permitted to compete.
- The performance area will be on the gym floor. Squads may enter the floor from wherever they would like. Send a representative to notify the starter of your starting position.
- If injury occurs during routine, coach/coach’s representative has the option to terminate performance at that point within ten (10) seconds. Must resume routine at point of injury. Head judge will decide when they perform.
- The use of signs, non-automated megaphones, and pom poms is permitted if they are incorporated into the routine.
- No additional equipment, mini-trampolines and/or springboards, etc. may be used.
- Recreation squad routine must include **at least** one cheer, one chant, and one dance routine.
 - Cheer: cheer that does not repeat, crowd involvement
 - Chant: cheer that is repeated more than once
 - Dance: any combination of stunt movements, tumbles, ripples, while music is played
- Squad performance must not exceed 2 minutes and 30 seconds. Time starts at the first beat of the music or the first call of the first cheer (depending on how you begin your routine). Time ends at the final beat. The result of running over the time limit is a 10-point deduction.

Scoring

- All decisions rendered by the judges or Competition Chairperson concerning scores and rules interpretation will be accepted as final.
- Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) Rec Scoring will apply.
- Each Division will have a Division Champion and Runner Up.
- Any squad that is disqualified from the competition automatically gives up any rights to awards presented by the competition.

Awards

- Division Champions for each age division will be awarded a trophy
- Division Runner Ups for each age division will be awarded a trophy
- All cheerleaders participating in the competition will receive a medal

RULES GRID

The following rules grid from USA Cheer will be utilized in determining skills that are permissible for each age group. Skills from any lower level are allowed at the higher level.

Category	10 & Under	16 & Under
Jumps	All jumps and jump combinations allowed	All jumps and connections to tumbling allowed.
Tumbling	Forward and backward rolls allowed Forward and backward walkovers allowed Roundoffs allowed Cartwheels (series allowed)	Non-twisting standing handsprings allowed Standing back tucks allowed No series or connected airborne tumbling No twisting airborne skills
Stunts	No inversions (head can never be below hips) No release stunt transitions other than a reload from a cradle position Spotter required for all stunts No spinning/twisting Allow all skills prep level and below Standing stunt at prep level must be double based and standing on both feet	No inversions (head can never be below hips) No release stunt transitions other than a reload from a cradle position Spotter required for all stunts Half twist loading allowed Full twist to a load position allowed Double base extensions allowed Liberties and liberty hitches at prep level allowed
Dismounts	No spinning/twisting No released dismounts (bump down, regrab hands, use a post and pop down, etc.)	Non-twisting cradles and pop downs allowed
Pyramids	Follow stunt rules	Follow stunt rules
Baskets	Not allowed	Not allowed

* Regardless of the upper age in the group, coaches should always be mindful of the ability, maturity, and preparedness level of each individual and what skills they are performing.