

# 2026 CCMFL Cheer Rules

**Eligibility:** 5-12 years old by December 1st (NY) or September 1st (PA). Cannot turn 13 before December 1st (NY) or September 1st (PA). **Levels:** Flag (6-7), Peewee (8-9) Midget (10-12) **Mascots:** Participates with other levels (5). See details in description.

**Teams:** Allegany Limestone Gators, Bradford Raptors, Cattaraugus-Little Valley Timberwolves, Ellicottville Eagles, Franklinville Panthers, Olean Huskies, Pioneer Jr. Panthers, Randolph Raiders, Salamanca Warriors, Springville Griffins.

All new head coaches must be sworn into CCMFL, and will be on probation for one year. All coaches are expected to follow the Coaches Code of Conduct at all CCMFL events including meetings. Assistant coaches, representatives, and certified volunteers (*volunteers who work hands on with the cheerleaders, not those who work chains, concessions, or fundraisers*) must be CCMFL approved. CCMFL approval simply means we have received their information, appropriate certifications, and background checks. Denial will only be the result of a total failure to meet certification requirements or a failed background check.

## **Certifications and Requirements:**

Certifications must be submitted by the July meeting. You may submit them via email [Ccstone0527@yahoo.com](mailto:Ccstone0527@yahoo.com) if a coach signs up after this meeting. If the certifications are due for renewal during the active season, they must be renewed before the July meeting. If any certifications are updated throughout the season, the updated copy must also be sent. *Anyone who has not met the certification requirements will not be permitted to participate in CCMFL practices, games, or post-season events until they're fully certified. Failure to follow the certifications guidelines will result in disciplinary action.*

## **Background Checks**

Every coach, representative, and certified volunteer is required to pass a basic criminal background check prior to working with any CCMFL athlete. Background checks are available through CCMFL. *Once the CCMFL background check program closes, it will be the responsibility of the individual town to obtain background checks for any new coaches or members if they did not submit their information by the provided deadline.*

## **NAYS Certification**

Every coach, representative, and certified volunteer who will be actively participating in cheerleading specific events including supervising stunts and tumbling, or actively coaching is required to be NAYS certified by the first practice. *NAYS certification provides every individual who is certified with their own liability insurance. CCMFL does not cover the cost of NAYS Certification, if your town board does not cover this cost, it falls on the individual coach to purchase.*

## **CPR Certification**

There must be a CPR certified member present at all practices, games, and post-season events.

### **General Cheerleading Rules:**

- No Jewelry is permitted during practices, games, or competitions. Any piercing that is acquired before or after registration must either be removed or the athlete will not be eligible to participate. Medical alert jewelry is always permitted but must be taped down. Anything that is not a part of the uniform/practice attire is considered jewelry. Example: Excess scrunchies/hair ties on wrist
- Beads, clips, hair tinsel with bead/clip extensions, and any other form of hair jewelry is prohibited.
- Athletes must wear **CHEERLEADING** sneakers only. They must be secured with tied shoe laces. NO velcro is allowed. *(No crocs, hey dudes, ballet slippers, etc)*
- Nail polish and acrylic nails/press on nails are prohibited. Nails must be trimmed so they do not extend past the fingertips. Parents/Guardians must trim athletes' nails.
- Bobby Pins are permitted. Bobby pins are to be utilized correctly (flat up against the head) and should not be positioned where prongs are exposed freely in the hair as it can result in injury.
- Hair must be pulled up and back. *If hair is not long enough to be pulled back but still falls into the athlete's eyes, it must be styled by products, hair ties, and/or Bobby pins to prevent the hair from interfering with athletes ability to see.*
- Loose glitter is prohibited at games and competitions.
- Mascot/Flag teams can only practice for one hour three days a week.

### ***Exceptions must be cleared through the CCMFL board of directors***

- Props such as Pom poms, signs, megaphones, etc. may be used at practices, games, and competition with certain rules followed. Flyers may have props in their hands while entering stunts, props must be handed to spotters and discarded before dismount. Front spots and flyers are the only approved athletes to have props during a stunt. Props may not be used while tumbling and must be out of the way when not in use. *(See competition deduction section for more details regarding prop use)*
- Athletes with casts may only participate in games with the written consent of a doctor and will not be permitted to stunt, jump, or tumble. Athletes in a wheelchair may participate in sideline cheers in formation with their team.
- Sportsmanlike conduct is expected of all athletes at any practice, game, or post-season event.

## **Cheer Coach Expectations:**

**Rosters**—Coaches must provide CCMFL with a Game Day roster by the August Roster meeting. Coaches will only be required to provide CCMFL with a competition roster in September if there have been changes from the game day roster. *Roster must be typed and include athletes first/last name, age as of August (PA) or December (NY), and date of birth. Town, level, and coach names must be included.. Failure to provide this information will result in disciplinary action.*

### **Meetings**

- Head coaches shall attend all required meetings or delegate someone to attend on their behalf.
- After every meeting coaches are required to provide their Town President with all CCMFL documents, and updates.

### **Managing your team**

- Coaches are required to provide all necessary information to parents prior to the first practice of the season, this includes conduct expectations for both athletes and parents, safety rules, and town specific rules. *It is recommended that this be done in writing but may be done in the form of a parent meeting.*
- Coaches may produce an attendance policy, parent expectation document and/or code of conduct. These documents may restrict or prohibit cheerleaders from participating in CCMFL events. These policies must be given to parents in writing by the first practice of the season and must be submitted to the CCMFL by June. A letter of warning must be given to parents when an athlete's attendance or behavior is close to prohibiting them from participating in competition. *(See 'competition roster' section for more details) Extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family, religious events, and serious medical issues should be considered when possible. CCMFL reserves the right to send a policy back to be changed if it is deemed unreasonably strict by the board of directors. It is recommended that all policies are discussed with the coach's town board and are similar from team to team within a single organization.*
- Coaches are required to document all injuries that take place at any event (practices, games, and post-season events) whether it was during active cheering or not. They must document injuries even if it does not result in medical attention or an incident form. This documentation (who, when, where, and how) should be kept in the insurance binder in case the injury requires medical attention at a later date.
- Injuries that result in medical attention require a call to a CCMFL director within 24 hours to start the insurance process. CCMFL will provide all coaches with an incident form that is to be filled out as soon as the injury is seen or reported to the coach. *All incident forms must be scanned and emailed to [TiffanyCCMFL@gmail.com](mailto:TiffanyCCMFL@gmail.com) no later than 5 business days after the event. Insurance claims made to CCMFL without an accompanying incident form, or turned in after the season will result in disciplinary action.*
- Every team's copy of their insurance binder must be present at all CCMFL sanctioned events. This includes but is not limited to practices, games, and competitions. Head Coaches are responsible for their team's insurance binder until the end of the season. This binder shall include their team athletes:
  1. Birth certificates
  2. Registration Sheets
  3. Signed CCMFL Code of Ethics from child and parent

- Coaches must ensure there is a first aid kit on site at all practices, games, and post-season events.
- It is the coaches responsibility to communicate with parents and spectators to ensure they are not in athlete/member only areas. This includes but is not limited to; on the field, on the track, and non-spectator locations at the competition venue.
  - Coaches, assistant coaches, representatives, and certified volunteers are strictly prohibited from using physical force to discipline or move athletes at any time except to prevent serious injury. This includes the coach's own child. The use of physical force against an athlete, member, or spectator will result in immediate suspension pending a CCMFL disciplinary meeting. Physical force qualifies for removal without progressive discipline, if the coach or member is found guilty.
- Any Cheer specific or CCMFL infractions witnessed by any coach at game day, competition or any other CCMFL sanctioned event are to be reported via email to [ReportsCCMFL@gmail.com](mailto:ReportsCCMFL@gmail.com). This includes infractions by coaches, athletes, fans, and spectators.

### **Game Day**

- At every game the home team's head coach is required to greet the opposing team's head coach. Greetings shall include: Introduction, restroom location, cheer schedule, etc. In the event both teams are not at their stadiums the home team is considered the team set up on the home side. *It is the obligation of both teams to make themselves visible and available to the opposing team at a reasonable time before the game starts.*
- Safety check - Both head coaches will check all cheerleaders to ensure they are following guidelines. (Proper shoes, no nail polish/acrylics, no jewelry, etc.). In the event an athlete fails a safety check, immediate efforts to correct the infraction must take place. If the infraction cannot be corrected, that athlete must sit for the duration of the game. Opposing coaches are not to touch athletes during safety checks.
- In the event a head coach is not available, you may utilize an assistant coach for greetings and safety checks.
- Teams are required to watch the other team's cheer/performance (even if your team does not have one to perform).
- Coaches must ensure that all cheerleaders are back on the sidelines by the end of the 3rd quarter.
- Game day rules must be followed at all games including playoff and championship games. Cheerleaders do not have to attend play off games but must notify CCMFL board members to inform the opposing team.

***Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary action.***

### **Mascots/Jr Coaches:**

Both junior coaches and mascots must have a completed CCMFL registration form, as well as a birth certificate turned in with the final roster submission. Requiring paperwork does not mean that registration payments are required, this is at the discretion of the town board.

Towns are not under any obligation to accept jr. coaches or mascots and are allowed to choose which levels they would like their mascots to be placed.

**Mascots-** Mascots are defined as an athlete who turns five years old prior to the first day of practice but is not yet eligible to participate on flag. An athlete that turns 6 before December 1st is eligible as a flag.

**Mascots are not their own team;** they practice and participate in games with other levels. If the athlete is 4, but turns 5 before the roster meeting, they may still sign up as a mascot, but may not sign up or participate until their birthday.

- They shall not stunt with other levels but can do their own stunts as long as the stunt is no higher than thigh level. Thigh level does require a back spot.
- May tumble if they follow CCMFL tumbling guidelines.
- Must be at least 5 ft away from other levels' stunts/tumbling.
- In order to participate in competition, they **MUST** be placed with flag. They are not to be on the mat with pee wee or midget teams. They must be clearly identifiable so they are not judged - this can be a separate uniform, bow, t-shirt, etc. Alternatively, they may be placed outside of formation holding signs, in the normal team uniform if they are not actively performing in the routine.

**Junior Coaches-** Junior coaches are defined as a minor who turns 13 prior to the first practice of the season. If a junior coach turns eighteen during the season, they will need to take the NAYS course immediately and submit it to CCMFL so they can be listed as an assistant coach. Jr. coaches may be hands-on with the athletes, assisting in all day-to-day coaching activities and used as non-contact adult spotters. Junior coaches may be on the track, and with the coaches at competition. Junior coaches may **NOT** be held responsible for parent correspondence or left unsupervised with the athletes. An assistant or head coach must be able to visibly see the athletes at all times.

### **Non-contact/Adult spotters:**

Anyone who is in contact or spotting cheerleaders must be NAYS certified. They are not to coach or be left alone with the teams. The use of non-contact/adult spotters does not replace the need for mats where they are otherwise required. They may only supervise one stunt at a time.

### **Skill Safety Rules:**

- It is expected that coaches are gauging their own teams mastery level for all skills. Only performing what is deemed consistently safe.
- Stunting, tumbling, and jumping is prohibited on any surface that is wet, with or without mats.
- When stunting and tumbling, mats are required on all hard surfaces. This includes but is not limited to; concrete, asphalt, and wood. Mats are not required on rubber track/flooring, turf, or grass.

If a stunt being executed has a possibility to fall beyond the surface of the mats available, non-contact spotters and/or teammates should create a perimeter around the stunt until it is considered safe at the coaches' discretion.

- Must follow all general cheerleading guidelines while performing any stunt, tumbling, or jumping skill. (No jewelry, appropriate footwear, mat/grass surfaces etc.)

### **Tumbling rules:**

- Dive forward rolls are prohibited.
- All tumbling skills must begin and end on the performance surface. ● Tumblers may not perform any skill under or over another athlete, or prop. ● Only tumbling skills that are executed properly and safely without a spotter may be performed at games or competitions.
- May perform more advanced tumbling skills if it follows all requirements listed above.

### **Stunting Rules:**

- Inversions (*defined as the flyer's head is 45 degrees below the waist*) are prohibited. Ensure swedish fish, supermans, do not result in an inversion.
- Twisting dismounts can go up to 1 ¼ full rotations.
- Up to ½ turn entry into stunts are permitted.
- Both feet must be in the base's hands in order to move a stunt, and a bottom athlete must be in contact unless it's a moving shoulder sit or at thigh level or below.
- Pee wee and Midget do not need a back spot for any stunt thigh level and below. Anything higher would require a backspot besides shoulder sits. Flag must have a backspot for thigh level and above.
- Pee wee and Midget level: Tumbling into and out of mounts is permitted with the following stipulations: To tumble out of a stunt the flyer and bases must pause for a minimum of two seconds once the dismount is completed. A flyer may tumble into the hands of a base but there is a minimum of a 2 second pause. They only may tumble into an entry position for a stunt.
- Baja dismount must be executed with both feet in bases hands, and two hands connected whether it's from the back spot or other flyers.
- Pendulums may be executed as a ½ or full. In order to perform a full pendulum, you must have a minimum of 12 athletes. 6 'catchers' on each side, two bases, flyer, and a backspot to start the pendulum. For a ½ Pendulum, you must have a minimum of 10 athletes total. 6 'catchers', two bases, a flyer, and a backspot. \*\*Warning if flyers head falls below hips it could be deducted as an inversion.

|                                                | <b>Flag</b> (Prep level only)            | <b>Pee Wee</b>                            | <b>Midget</b>                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Cradle/sweep/pop</b>                        | Yes with front spot                      | Yes                                       | Yes                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Twistdown<br/>Dismount: ¼ turn<br/>only</b> | No                                       | Yes with front spot<br>at extension level | Yes                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Baha dismount</b>                           | No                                       | Yes-at prep level                         | Yes-bracing other<br>flyers or backspot.<br>Can be at<br>extension level.                                                                                  |
| <b>Superman</b>                                | No                                       | Yes                                       | Yes                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Moving Stunts</b>                           | Yes if bumped<br>down to sponge<br>level | Yes-with front spot.                      | Yes-Flyers can connect<br>hands at prep level<br>only while moving.<br>Both flyers' feet DO<br>NOT need to be in<br>bases hand for<br>non-standing stunts. |
| <b>Rotations</b>                               | No                                       | Yes-See Moving<br>Stunts                  | Yes:See moving stunts                                                                                                                                      |

|                                             |                                       |                                                                       |                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Prep</b>                                 | Yes with front spot                   | Yes                                                                   | Yes                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Extensions</b>                           | No                                    | Yes-with front spot                                                   |                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Teddy/V-sits/non<br/>standing stunts</b> | At prep level only<br>with front spot | Extensions<br>allowed without<br>front spot                           | Extensions allowed                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Pendulums</b>                            | No                                    | ½ Pendulum<br>ONLY:May only go<br>backwards.                          | Yes-must have a<br>backspot to enter<br>into the pendulum.                                                                                |
| <b>One leg stunts</b>                       | Yes- at thigh level<br>or below.      | Yes-Can move at<br>thigh level or<br>below, no front<br>spot required | Yes-Can move at<br>prep level with<br>base/backspot<br>hand contact with<br>the flyer. No front<br>spot required for<br>non moving stunt. |

|                        |                    |                                           |                                               |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Releases</b>        | No                 | No                                        | Yes: Lib tick-tok, quick toss, at prep level. |
| <b>Bracing</b>         | No                 | Yes-but flyers cannot be primary support. | Yes                                           |
| <b>Shoulder sits</b>   | Yes with back spot | Yes                                       | Yes                                           |
| <b>Shoulder stands</b> | No                 | Yes with spotters                         | Yes with spotters                             |
| <b>Swedish Fish</b>    | No                 | Yes                                       | Yes                                           |
| <b>Swedish Fall</b>    | No                 | No                                        | Yes                                           |

Note: If you feel the need to add a spotter to ensure the safety of your athletes even though they are not required, you will not be docked points for doing such. Please ensure execution of basic stunting has been established before progressing onto difficult skills.

## **Pyramids:**

A pyramid involved multiple connected stunt groups. It requires at least two connected stunt groups. The connection can be made by the top persons, middle persons, or bases depending on the skill. Examples of legal connections: Top person to Top person, hand to foot, hands on waste, hand on wrist, arm or shoulder. The connection must be intentional and maintained for pyramid points.

## **Competition:**

Any questions regarding competition may be emailed to cheercoordinatorccmfl@gmail.com

**Each town board is required to provide two volunteers for competition. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.**

Volunteer Sign up link will be provided online and on the CCMFL facebook page.

There are designated areas for food/drinks. Only water is permitted in the rented rooms and they must be returned to the condition they were prior to entering. Failure to follow this rule will result in a \$250 fine.

|                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| Routine Length | 2:30 Maximum |
|----------------|--------------|

Music that is edited in any way must be mixed legally, and licensed. In the event a team fails to follow the copyright law, the legal liability falls on the individual town and coach. CCMFL does not permit the use of illegal music and does not accept liability on behalf of the team. Teams will be required to show proof of licensing agreement. *If you are having trouble funding or sourcing music, please reach out to a director.*

## **Routine Requirements**

Routines must include:

1. Minimum 30 second cheer (*hello cheer, crowd cheer, etc.*) *Deduction will be added for less than 30 second cheer.*
2. Dance routine/motions
3. A minimum of one jump (*jump score is based on entire team executing jump at same time*)
4. Minimum of one tumbling skill executed by at least 50% of the team.
5. Minimum of one stunt and a pyramid. *Teams with six athletes or less will receive half points for the pyramid automatically if they are not performed. In the event a team can make a six-person pyramid, the skill will be judged based on execution.*
6. *The routine is then evaluated using the CCMFL scoresheet, which scores areas such as: Crowd-leading ability, Motions, Jumps, Stunts, Pyramids, Tumbling, Choreography and creativity, Synchronization, Overall Execution, Sportsmanship and deductions.*

## **Additional notes, deductions, and disqualifying events:**

Flag level may have one coach display the routine to the athletes but this coach must be seated. Pee wee and Midget coaches may que and/or count during routine. Flag is permitted to have coaches set up props (not poms) on the mat prior to performance. Other levels must have their athletes set up props. Stepping off the mat or on props at competition is a safety deduction. Discarding props during a performance must be controlled by throwing them aside to a designated location. Athletes may throw them aside to a designated location where there is not a risk of them hitting another athlete or being stepped on. If discarded props leave the

mat during competition they may not be picked back up.

Sportsmanlike conduct is expected for the entire duration of the competition. Any taunting or booing of a team is a disqualifying event. Coaches must have their team line up "on deck" prior to the team ahead of them starting their routine. The announcer will give one courtesy announcement to the on deck team before the performing team starts if they are not lined up. If the on deck team is not lined up and ready to take the mat by the end of the performance, a deduction will be taken from the final score. Bases, back spots and connected front spots must keep their eyes on the stunt, failure to do so will result in a deduction. Untied shoes during the performance will result in a deduction. Deductions are taken from the final average score. Teams who are disqualified will still receive their score sheets. Failure to follow the stunting rules will result in a safety deduction.

### **Practice Time/Music Check**

Each team shall have five minutes of designated practice time prior to their division in a separate practice gym. Music will be tested prior to competition or before performers take the mat. It is recommended that teams have their music available on multiple devices. Save to your files on your phone. Place your phone on airplane mode and display screen time should be greater than five minutes. This will prevent disruption during the competition routine.

### **Judging and Scores**

CCMFL will source qualified judges outside of the CCMFL. CCMFL will provide 5-7 judges, one being a safety/timing judge. Each judge will score a section of the routine. The judges must continue to score the same section throughout the entirety of the competition.

Coaches will receive their score sheets in a sealed envelope at the end of all divisions. Any questions or comments pertaining to the scores may be submitted to the cheer coordinator prior to the November meeting.

### **Competition Attendance**

Attendance: Competition is mandatory for all teams. However, individual Athletes may choose not to participate in competition as long as there are still enough athletes to compete (minimum of 5). It is recommended that coaches get a signed waiver from any parent who chooses to not have their athlete participate in competition. Coaches may NOT exclude any athlete in good standing who wants to compete. Excluding an athlete in good standing from competition will result in a disciplinary hearing and may result in removal without progressive discipline. If an athlete fails to follow the approved attendance policies/athlete expectations, you may exclude them from competition but you must send in a formal warning to the parents, and forward this warning to the cheer president. The final notice must also be forwarded to the cheer president.

### **Rosters/Athletes with injuries and disabilities:**

Final rosters will be submitted a month prior to competition if there has been a change from game day rosters. Athletes dropping out after the final roster submission will NOT be taken out of the athlete count as that is used to determine divisions.

Athletes may not be excluded from competition due to disability if they're able to independently

take the floor. If an athlete has a disability that interferes with their ability to learn or perform their routine at an otherwise age-appropriate level, coaches should notify the board by providing a layout of the first formation and circle where that athlete will be to ensure they will not be judged with their rosters. This will be provided to the judges. CCMFL will NOT require that athlete to wear something that identifies them. Other towns and coaches are not entitled to know if another team had a “non-judged” athlete on their roster. Athletes with crutches, wheelchairs, or casts may not take the mat, however they may sit or stand with the coaches and are encouraged to be in uniform.

## **Divisions:**

There will be divisions based on team size to promote fairness and competitive balance example: Small, Medium, Large. The division will be divided by levels: Flag, Pee Wee, and Midget. In the event that one team is alone they will still perform as an exhibition and receive a trophy. Divisions and competition schedule will be voted on at the competition meeting.

**If there is any point in time where the rules ‘box you in’ or extenuating circumstances where the rules are compromising the safety of athletes, please contact the Cheer President- [TiffanyCCMFL@gmail.com](mailto:TiffanyCCMFL@gmail.com)**

**Infractions result in disciplinary action, which can be fines, probation, termination, etc. For more information regarding discipline, please refer to our CCMFL Discipline System. Infractions witnessed may be sent to [ReportsCCMFL@gmail.com](mailto:ReportsCCMFL@gmail.com) with evidence attached.**

*Boards are expected to complete the data sheet provided by the league. This list should be emailed to the President-Jason Wick before July and updated any time changes take place during the season.*

## **Organization Board Expectations:**

Boards are expected to complete the data sheet provided by the league. This list should be emailed to the President-Jason Wick before July and updated any time changes take place during the season.

- Town Boards are expected to supply the volunteers for competition, failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. They also must provide coaches with the equipment and licensed music necessary to prepare for competitions. Cheer mats are considered necessary equipment
- CCMFL does NOT require coaches to have carpeted roll mats in order to practice stunting and tumbling safely. Vinyl folding mats are acceptable. Additional measures may be necessary to prevent mats from slipping or sliding on wood surfaces.
- Boards are required to follow the CCMFL Discipline Policy when managing Head Coaches who are sworn in by CCMFL. Documentation of personnel issues, or questions regarding this policy may be emailed to [ReportsCCMFL@gmail.com](mailto:ReportsCCMFL@gmail.com)
- Boards are required to make sure that all dues, fees, and fines are paid. Any questions regarding dues, fines, or outstanding balances may be emailed to the league treasurer.
- Certifications may be paid for by the town or the coach. Boards are required to provide each Head Coach with a first aid kit prior to the first practice of the season.
- Boards are required to provide CCMFL with a copy of all CCMFL registration documents in August. Coaches must bring these documents directly to the August meeting.
- Boards are required to provide all head coaches with their teams' insurance binder until the end of the season.