

By-Laws of the ACQC Cheerleading Program

Revised May 2023

Article I – Cheerleading coordinators and coaches

Section 1. Expectations of coordinators and coaches

1. All area **cheer coordinators** must have some cheer experience (if at all possible)
2. **AGE BRACKETS:** Follow age brackets as of 10/1 of the year we are in
Flag – 5 & 6 years old
Midgets – 7 & 8 years old
Juniors - 9 & 10 years old
Seniors – 11, 12 & 13 years old
3. **Cheer coordinators** are asked to attend the ACQC cheer meetings and be held to standards that the athletes are.
4. All head coaches must be 21 years of age, assistant coaches under the age of 18 must have a reference letter from a teacher, principal or school counselor to coach
5. The **Cheer coordinator** is in charge and responsible for coaches at all times. **Cheer coordinators** shall be in charge of choosing coaches and presenting them to board to be voted in. The **cheer coordinator** should also be responsible to holding coaches accountable and if **cheer coordinator** ever feels a coach is not fulfilling their role the respective board needs to help address the issue. If the **cheer coordinator** is having any issues, they are to get their respective board to help them resolve the issue. The next step is **corporate board member** and **ACQC Cheer coordinator** and **President**. All **Cheer coordinators** will be held to ACQC standards as well as the coaches.
6. A coach who becomes unruly, disorderly, threatening, taunting and who is generally disrespectful towards game officials, coordinator, athletes, parents etc. may be warned, censured, or dismissed by the area representatives. Any coach or a member of their staff who is ejected will immediately be removed from the area. If coach does not remove themselves, they will be disqualified or whole squad will be dismissed from game.
7. **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:** The following actions can be taken by the ACQC in dealing with any infractions by registered coaches.
Level 1: Give verbal and/or written warning
Level 2: Suspend a coach for a period of one (1) week to indefinitely
Level 3: Ban a coach indefinitely from all activities in the ACQC
Depending on the infraction any level can be enforced the first (1st) time.
8. All **cheer coordinators** and coaches are to be in respective school uniform at all games and school functions and remember they are representing their schools and the ACQC.
9. **BACKGROUND CHECKS:** All **coaches/coordinators** must be background checked EVERY YEAR and back ground checks must be completed before a coach can be with athletes at practice. If coach is teacher, police officer, principal etc that requires yearly background checks they need to provide a copy of the background check to the respective board and then a background does not have to be run on that coach for the year.
10. **CHEER COACHES CLINIC:** All **coaches** and **cheer coordinators** must complete cheer clinic every year to be a coach.
11. **REGISTRATIONS:** Each area shall have its own registrations, with an end date (can not be cut off by numbers). Any participant who has not yet registered and been approved by the teams second Saturday game played, will not be allowed to participate in ACQC activities.
12. Always set a good example for participants and fans to follow exemplifying the highest moral and ethical behavior.
13. Practice and expect proper sportsmanship for everyone including yourselves
14. Respect parents, athletes, coaches, other teams and officials at all times
15. Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.
16. No use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal substances during practice or game times on or near school properties
17. Work with respective board members to ensure communication is there and everyone is on same page to ensure a positive and successful environment for all athletes.
18. Be sure to have an official roster for each squad for all events and make sure an official copy is available at every game for announcements and for competitions.
19. Make sure all athletes have a code of conduct that needs to be followed.
20. Make sure all parents have a code of conduct that needs to be followed.
21. Be sure to verify birthdays of all athletes and make copies of them for records
22. Stay organized
23. Be sure to do an inventory of uniforms to ensure you can work with respective board on how and when to order, replace etc. Have a system in place to hold athletes and parents accountable for uniforms etc. throughout each season. Work with board to ensure this is in place.
24. **PICTURES OF ATHLETES** – every area should have a system in place with picturing of athletes. For cheerleading that should also be enforced and we do not post pictures of videos of our athletes in competition stunts, dances etc. on any social media. This is another reason why competition practices are closed to parents, siblings etc.

Article II – Practices

Section 1. Practices

1. Unlimited practices are permitted until the start of Augusta County Schools. Once school has started you can practices three (3) days a week – two (2) full stunt practices and one (1) run through practices (no stunts) No extra practices are allowed for cheer competitions.
2. Set rules for practices. Remember competition is optional, cheerleaders sign up for side line cheer, they do not have to participate in competition, but if they do make sure parents and athletes understand it is a big undertaking with lots of dedication. During parent meeting make sure this is announced.
3. Practices missed – any more than 2 unexcused practices missed will result in not being allowed to participate in competition. Up to **Cheer coordinators** discretion on sideline games. Keep all doctors notes etc. in file for each athlete. If a child is out of school (suspension, sickness etc.) they cannot be at practice.
4. In the event that an athlete is sick and school work is sent home, or they missed due to a family emergency, death etc. video call practices can be done. Work with respective parent on making this an option so athlete does not fall behind too far.
5. Parents at sideline practice – sideline practice this is up to respective area boards
6. Parents at competition practices – these practices are closed to parents. There is very little mat time in our areas to prepare the athletes for competition and no distractions will be allowed. For competition practices there shall be coaches and 1 board member present for closed practices.

Article III – Competition Section

Section 1. Competition Rotation

1st Competition of each year is held at Riverheads, 2nd Competition of each year is on a rotation (rotation does not include Riverheads or Wilson)

2023 – Comps – Riverheads & Draft & Gap

2024 – Comps – Riverheads & Waynesboro & Fort????

2025 – Comps – Riverheads & Staunton & Draft

2026 – Comps – Riverheads & Fort

2027 – Comps – Riverheads & Staunton

Start rotation over

Section 2. Competition Rules

1. **Entrance to comps:** (Host school will give more specific details that pertain directly to their location). Each school will be given a time to be at the door. When Rosters are generated all persons(s) entering with squad must be listed on roster (i.e., assistant coaches, comp coaches, helpers etc.) Only person(s) listed on rosters will be permitted through doors with squad. All rosters need to be in word or excel for screen printing purposes.
2. **Communication:** Host will communicate with areas for deadlines and information
3. **Rosters & Music:** All areas will send rosters to host school and once final rosters are submitted there can be no additions to the rosters.
Each area is responsible for their own routines and music – we ask that music be on cd (2) as well as blue tooth capable – there is a list of cheer music companies available with each coordinator. Each area coordinator is responsible to check all squad's music at specified time from host school. Each area is also responsible for having someone hit the play button for each squad during actual competition. The DJ/MC is not allowed to hit play.
4. **Down time (pre-comp):** Every school and AD is different and we have to work with each school closely. Some schools have holding in cafeteria, classrooms or in parking lot, but no matter where holding locations are ACQC requires the utmost respect and sportsmanship at all times and to clean up after yourselves and squads. If holding is inside, we ask to keep noise to a minimum.
5. **Squad Size:** All squads must have at least 6 and no more than 25 per squad. If you have less than 6, please let your ACQC coordinator know so they can take the information to the ACQC board for approval. If you have more than 25, the squad will need to be split. If this occurs, a plan to split must be presented to the ACQC board for approval by league director.
6. **Routine Information:** Each squad must follow time limit of at least 3 minutes but no more than 5 minutes. Time will start with first motion of word. All routines must include a cheer, chant, dance, stunts, jumps and a pyramid (all stunts, jumps etc. must meet the ACQC stunt level safety guidelines) No adult spotters are allowed at any time.
7. **Competition approved uniform and accessories:** All squad members must match & sideline uniforms must be worn for competition (all no show socks, same color shoes, same hair, same uniforms, same bows etc. All squad members must have arm covers (bodysuit) No knee socks are allowed only no-show ankle socks, no glitter of any kind allowed on comp mats, no fingernail polish unless it's clear, no acrylic fingernails allowed and nails must be trimmed to a sport length, no jewelry of any kind allowed on mat (no exceptions – this also includes hair beads) Shoulder length hair or longer must be put up, all hair must be pulled back from face.

8. **Squads ages & disabilities:** PLEASE ensure all squads are built with only athletes of the correct age group. Each area is responsible to provide proof of birth certificate if questions arise. Each area is also responsible to inform the ACQC coordinator of any disabilities on squads. The ACQC coordinator will share this information with the VHSL rep so the judges are aware.
9. **Mascots:** Mascots are allowed but are not allowed on the mats at any time or be part of the routine
10. **Coaches' assistance during comp:** All coaches must be in team shirt with a name or a name badge. Flag showcases – Coaches are allowed to lead girls – but are not allowed to be on the mats, Midgets – 1 coach and 1 coach only is allowed to lead motions only from the front row of the stands, not on or at the mat, Juniors and Seniors – Coaches are not permitted to do any motions or do any counts. Every area is also responsible to educate parents, siblings etc. in the stands that motions, words and counts are not permitted. If these rules are not followed it can result in DQ from competition.
11. **NO AIR HORNS OR NOISE MAKERS ALLOWED**
12. Only coaches and squads are allowed in warm up and holding area. Please communicate with parents etc. that there will be no access unless it's an emergency.
13. **Judges & Score cards:** Judges are off limits to coaches, coordinators, parents and athletes at all times during the whole competition. This will result in immediate DQ from comp if rule is not followed. The host school director and ACQC Cheer coordinator can have access to judges for specific reasons. Judges are to be in a holding area that is off limits to everyone except for host director and ACQC cheer director, they are to be escorted from said holding area to comp mat each time by an allotted person.
There will be 4 VHSL judges (3 panel & tech) Time keepers and tabulators do not need to be VHSL certified. Each host will be responsible for a time keeper and a tabulator.
The ACQC coordinator will work with the VHSL rep and get a contract to both host schools each year. That contract will need to be signed by host school and sent back into VHSL rep. During competition the score cards and infraction sheets will be tallied by judges and held by ACQC Coordinator until the conclusion of the competition. Awards are not be read on the floor until the judges are in their holding location. The ACQC coordinator will hand score cards to respective cheer coordinators at the end of the day.
14. **In the event of a tie:**
In the event of a tie (each division – 1st, 2nd or 3rd) the team with the least number of deductions will be the winner, if there are no deductions and we still have a tie, the team with the highest difficulty score will be placed above the other.
15. **Un-sportsman like conduct:** There is a score card line on the infraction sheet for sportsman like conduct. If a team (squad/coach) behaves in an un-sportsman like way in a public display this could result in disqualification for next competition and up to a 10-point deduction. That deduction will be discussed by the host coordinator and the ACQC coordinator and passed to judges. This will be given to judges prior to routines to be placed on score cards. Depending on severity of the conduct, it will be discussed with ACQC board if it is determined to be disqualification for upcoming competition, it will be voted on at an ACQC meeting.
16.
 - 16A. **First Comp vs Second & Third Comp:** The reason for a 2nd & 3rd competition is to take feedback from first comp and perfect the routine to showcase again, not to change entire routine this will enhance the coaches and athletes' ability to enhance and learn progression. From first comp to second comp, music must stay the same, and you can change 2 stunts, jumps must stay the same (practice on perfecting them) pyramid or dance must stay the same. With this being said all comps will have to be recorded for reference so all host schools will have to ensure that.
 - 16B. **First Comp vs Second & Third Comp for squads and athletes:** If a school does not send a squad to first comp, they cannot send that squad to second comp and so forth. If an athlete misses first comp due to an unforeseen or unavoidable circumstance (sick, covid, pre-planned vacation, death in family etc.) they as an athlete can come to second comp with the squad.