
Southeast Michigan Youth Football Association Cheerleading Rules

The Southeast Michigan Youth Football is a non-profit community driven football and cheerleading organization committed to being the best run youth organization in the State of Michigan as judged by our peers, our high school programs and the communities in which we serve.

This Mission is based on:

- Serving as positive role models to our youth as measured by our decisions and actions
- Working to build the self-esteem of our youth, so that they can confidently pursue and achieve their academic, athletic and life goals
- Providing exceptional coaching and mentoring to all players and cheerleaders
- Providing a safe, structured and competitive atmosphere to learn the values of preparation and hard work
- Southeast Michigan Youth Football will be a partner to community middle schools and high schools to prepare youth athletes for ascending levels of competition
- Offering a scalable league for athletic competition
- Fostering teamwork within our communities for the betterment of our members, future members and collective program.

This end shall be accomplished by providing the means through which the individual cheerleader shall receive education and instruction in cheerleading, to develop a sense of fair play, honest and fair competition and true sportsmanship.

DEFINITIONS

League - Collection of Units that include: Commerce Chargers, Livonia Blue Jays, Livonia Eagles, Livonia Falcons, Livonia Orioles, Walled Lake Braves, Northville Colts, and the Northville Stallions

Unit - A Unit shall consist of a maximum of four (4) Teams classified as Flag, Freshmen, Junior Varsity and Varsity.

Teams - Teams shall be considered as the name indicates.

1. Playing Rules

- 1.1. The rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association for middle school cheerleading shall apply except as hereinafter noted; the rules of the league will be binding on all Units without exception.

See: <http://www.mhsaa.com/games/sports/chr/chrguide.pdf>.

- 1.2. Swearing, fighting, and/or improper behavior will not be tolerated. Such actions will result in ejection from the game. Anyone ejected from more than one (1) game during the season will be suspended from the next game. Anyone ejected from more than two (2) games during the season will be suspended for the remainder of the season. It is the responsibility of each Unit to report such suspensions to the SMYFA commissioner in the weekly game report.
- 1.3. A cheerleader may be on any competitive cheer/pom team, performing, fundraising, practicing or competing, during the SMYFA Season.
- 1.4. It is the duty of each Unit Director to see that the coaches are giving each cheerleader proper opportunities for participation in practice and games.
- 1.5. Each Unit shall have a first aid kit on hand at all practices, scrimmages, and League games.

2. Eligibility Rules

- 2.1. Youth in 1st Grade – 8th grade for the season are eligible to cheer in the SMYFA.
- 2.2. Although every effort should be made to follow the grade level guidelines listed below, it is at the individual Unit's discretion to build their Teams. However, if a Unit decides to move girls outside these guidelines it will be to move them to a higher level and not down. This is the guideline that must be followed for cheerfest.
 - Flag – 1st Grade – 2nd grades
 - Freshmen – 3rd and 4th grades
 - Junior Varsity – 5th and 6th grades
 - Varsity – 7th and 8th grades
- 2.3. Mascots are at the discretion of each Unit
- 2.4. The SMYFA Board of Directors discourages the participation in concurrent athletic programs.
- 2.5. To be eligible as a "Veteran", a cheerleader must have one (1) game during the immediate season proceeding the year in question, barring illness and/or injury, and be in good standing with Volunteer Hours. Quitting the team prior to the end of the season forfeits your veteran rights. Veteran status is determined by the individual units.
- 2.6. The SMYFA Cheer Board of Directors reserves the right to waive the eligibility rules for any cheerleader as it deems appropriate or necessary. Reason for granting a waiver may include, but are by no means limited to, the physical or emotional needs of the individual cheerleader.
 - 2.6.1. Any waiver must be made, in writing, to the SMYFA Cheer Board of Directors and must be approved by a majority vote of the SMYFA Cheer Board of Directors. Waivers must be attached to the cheerleader's documentation for game day review.

3. Registration

- 3.1. Cheerleaders must play within the Unit in which they live, unless that Unit's roster is filled and/or that Unit director releases the cheerleader to play in another Unit. In the case where the cheerleader's family moves from one Unit to another Unit within their city, the cheerleader may exercise veteran rights in either the new or the old Unit.
- 3.2. Registration shall be conducted on a "lottery" or "first come first serve" basis, with preference to veterans of the previous year and immediate family members only. There shall be no tryouts for any team participating in the SMYFA.
- 3.3. Registration shall be conducted in the following format: All veterans registered with their respective Units will receive any and all literature and schedules related to that Unit.
- 3.4. Open registration will be conducted to fill any remaining available positions on each Unit's Teams. An individual waiting list for each Unit's Teams will be created.
- 3.5. Obtaining physicals is at the discretion of each unit.

4. Roster Requirements

- 4.1. Roster requirements will be left to the discretion of the Unit Director.
- 4.2. The number of cheerleaders per Team is set at thirty (30) per level for each Unit.
- 4.3. Preliminary Cheer Unit rosters and waiting lists shall be provided to the SMYFA Board of Directors and each Unit no later than the 2nd week of practice.
- 4.4. Each Cheer Unit Director shall provide the SMYFA Board of Directors with a master roster of each Team, which shall include, at a minimum, each Cheerleaders' and Coaches' name, team designation, and phonetic spelling.
 - 4.4.1. Two (2) copies of the closed Team roster must lie in the hands of the League no later than the second game of the regular season. This roster must be uploaded to the SMYFA Cheer Directors Facebook Page, and updated as any changes are made.
 - 4.4.2. An update roster must be uploaded to the Facebook Cheer Directors group one week before Cheerfest

5. Coaches

- 5.1. Coaches must abide by the following Code of Conduct:
 - 5.1.1. To provide positive support, care and encouragement for the team
 - 5.1.2. To encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all participants, coaches, officials, board members and league staff at home and away games
 - 5.1.3. To place the emotional, psychological, and physical well-being of the cheerleaders and other children in the league ahead of any personal desire, and to insist the team participate in a safe and healthy environment
 - 5.1.4. To support all coaches and board members in order to encourage a positive enjoyable experience for all
 - 5.1.5. To demand an environment that is DRUG, TOBACCO, and ALCOHOL free at all youthattended events
 - 5.1.6. To remember that the SMYFA is for the youth, not the coaches

- 5.1.7. To ask the team to treat other participants, coaches, board members, parents, and spectators with respect, regardless of race, sex, creed or ability
 - 5.1.8. To refrain from any and all vulgar, lewd or obscene language or gestures
 - 5.1.9. To direct all comments and criticisms to parents, participants, officials, and board members away from the children participating in the league
 - 5.1.10. To read the SMYFA Rules and Regulations. Violations of rules may result in disciplinary action.
- 5.2. The Head Coach on each Team shall be at least 18 years of age.
- 5.3. The Unit Cheer Director shall keep a copy of code of conduct and concussion rules and training for each coach.

6. Practice

- 6.1. No formal or informal supervised practice or conditioning shall be held more than five (5) weeks prior to the first regularly scheduled game. Date to be established.
- 6.2. Camps may be conducted by league members. All camps will be approved by league officials and enrollment will be open to all league Units. Camp participation may not be used for team "try outs" or "cuts".
- 6.3. Prohibited Practice - prior to the first game, there shall be no more than (5) practices per week. After the first game there shall be no more than four (4) days of practice per week.
- 6.4. Practice Duration - the practice schedules shall be left to the discretion of each Unit. Practices shall not exceed two and one half hours.
- 6.5. Practice Attendance - the level of participation in practice required of the cheerleaders, in order to be eligible for game-day play, should be defined by each individual Unit.

7. Competition

- 7.1. A competition shall be held at the end of each season.
- 7.2. The location shall be agreed upon before the start of the season. The cost of the competition shall be split evenly between the host units.
- 7.3. Competition Rules shall be decided by a committee consisting of at least one representative from each Unit.
 - 7.3.1. The rules shall be agreed upon before the start of the season.
- 7.4. No Professional Training or Professional Choreography shall be allowed by persons that are not actively involved in a Units Program. Professional Training is defined as obtaining the assistance of an active employee that is on the payroll of an accredited All-Star/Cheer gym, Dance Studio, or entity that proves choreography during opening practice and active football season set forth by the SMYFA.
- 7.5. Music for a Unit's pom routine may be prepared (cut and spliced) by a professional.
- 7.6. Cheerleaders shall be excluded from Cheerfest for missing five or more practices during the cheer season, or at the Unit's discretion.
- 7.7. Competition consists of two portions: Pom and Cheer. At the competition, pom and cheer judges will be available for each unit's routines. If judges are not made available then the portion of competition affected will be set as a showcase for all units.

- 7.7.1. A rostered cheerleader MUST compete in both events. If participating in one, they must participate in the other.
- 7.7.2. Flag will compete only in the cheer event.
- 7.8. No Glitter may be worn on faces or hair, no bobby pins may be worn in hair and no nail polish may be worn. No Jewelry of any form is allowed (earrings, piercing things, rings, bracelets, necklaces, etc).
- 7.9. All teams are required to wear their team uniform, which shall consist of a cheer skirt and/or pants, shell, socks and shoes. Shoes must all be the same color and of a similar style

*Refer to the SMYFA Competition Rules for further details.

8. Weather

- 8.1. The decision to cheer at a game in inclement weather shall be strictly in the hands of the Unit Cheerleading Director. Once a decision is rendered, it shall be considered final and received in the spirit of good sportsmanship.

All rules and the intent thereof, as published herein, including their enactment and enforcement, shall be the responsibility of the Southeast Michigan Youth Football Association's Board of Directors.
Revised: 2/18/2019