



2023/24 Competition Team Handbook

Welcome to the Encore Dance Team! This competition team was created for dedicated students who have the desire to enhance their dancing talents, to experience working as a team, and to build their own self-esteem with the experience of performance/competition. We promote good sportsmanship within the team, and we do not tolerate anything less! These guidelines outline the expectations of the competition team members and their parents for the upcoming performance season. Please read this information very carefully, go over it with your dancer, and feel free to ask questions. If you feel that you are unable to meet all these guidelines, please let us know immediately. We understand that the strict requirements of a competition team aren't for everyone, so we encourage you to explore other options available at Encore Performing Arts.

Most of our communication is done by email, so please make sure we have your current email address on file. If for some reason you are unable to receive messages from us via email, please let us know so we can make sure to keep you informed by other methods of communication.

TEAMS: We have one national competition team. However, our dancers are divided as Petites, Intermediates, Preteens, Juniors & Seniors. Groups are formed based on a combination of their age, size, and abilities; but not necessarily in that order. Groups may include various combinations of dancers based on a combination of their skills, age, interests and teacher's vision.

TEAM ATTIRE

Class Attire: All competition team members are required to wear a black leotard and pink tights to their ballet classes. Students may, at the discretion of the instructor, bring a skirt, shorts, jazz pants, etc. to wear over their leotards during classes other than ballet. Hair must be secured tightly away from the face at all times. Dancers should come prepared for class each week, with appropriate shoes and attire. No exceptions!

Competition Attire: Team members are expected to dress as a team. This helps to identify our group. Members must wear their team jacket to and from all competitions and performances (and anytime during the competition when they are not in costume). Dancers are not permitted on stage during awards if they don't have their jacket. Parents are welcome to show their team spirit by wearing a studio t-shirt too!

ATTENDANCE

Just as a sports team requires all players to attend practices and games, a dance team requires its members to attend classes, rehearsals, and performances. Excessive absences will not only hold back the individual dancer, but the whole team as well. An excessive absence refers to missing more than 3 scheduled class times. Any student with more than 3 absences may be asked to forfeit their place on the team and their opportunity to perform as a solo/duo/trio. If the student incurs an injury and is on crutches, for example, they are still required to attend/observe classes. If a student knows in advance that he/she will not be able to

attend practice, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. Please be sure that dancer arrives on time for classes so as not to miss any of the warm up or choreography. Being late for class is unacceptable, and it is unfair to the other team dancers who arrive on time and prepared for class. In addition, independent practice is a must, and parents should encourage their dancer to practice at home.

All rehearsals and competitions are mandatory. We're sorry, but there are no exceptions (other than extreme emergency situations, required school testing and/or medical emergencies). If a dancer or parent of a dancer makes a decision to not attend a rehearsal or competition, then they are forfeiting their position on the Encore Dance Team. These rules are in place for the benefit of our team, so please make sure you are willing to make this commitment prior to committing to be on the team. Any team member who fails to attend rehearsal the week prior to a scheduled competition will not be permitted to perform. If this happens, there will be no refund for competition fees.

Once the performance schedule has been determined, students and their parents will be provided a list of competitions, rehearsal and recital dates, and locations. All competitions, rehearsals, and recitals are mandatory. If you do not attend a competition, you will automatically be removed from the team.

Reporting an Absence:

1. All absences must be reported to encore@zoomtown.com. Please do not post absences on BAND.
2. When a dancer misses a class, it is important that he/she practices at home to catch up. During the students' following solo lesson after an absence, students may be asked to spend the lesson working on what they missed. At Encore, group dances are most important.
3. If a student must miss a solo/duo/trio/private lesson for sickness or family emergency, they need to notify BOTH Terri and the teacher by no later than 12:00pm on the day of the lesson. Otherwise, your account will be charged. Teachers will do their best to make the lesson up but if they are unable to, your account will not be charged. If you miss your lesson for vacation or other outside activities, your account will still be charged. Teachers rely on their income. If a teacher misses a lesson, they will find a substitute, reschedule with the student, or your account will not be charged.

Consequences for Excess Absences:

In general, each student is able to miss 3 classes per semester for classes that run Monday-Thursday. (Semesters run September-December and January-Nationals). For classes that meet on Saturday, students may miss 3 total for the entire year. (Please keep in mind this applies to all classes including choreography, technique, and optional classes).

1. If there is a 4th absence, dancer must take an additional Saturday morning Conditioning Class (Dates/Times TBA) and account will be charged \$15 to cover teacher's fee;
2. If there is a 5th absence, the student will not allowed to compete their solo at the next competition. Fees will not be reimbursed. If your student is not in a solo, they are required to pay a \$30 fee plus take two additional Saturday Conditioning Classes.
3. After a 6th absence, the dancer will be removed from the choreography.

Absence the week of a competition:

Students are required to be in class the week of competition. Excused absences include sickness (must have a doctors note), school event with a Program, or extreme Family Emergency. If a student misses for any other reason, they will forfeit their Solo at the competition. If the student is not in a solo, they will be required to pay a \$30 fee and attend two Saturday Conditioning Classes.

BEHAVIOR

All team members and parents are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all times. You must always show respect to instructors and fellow students or competitors. Dancers and their parents must have a positive attitude and work as a team. The team is representing Encore's most professional members and you are expected to act the part. Everyone on the Team is an equal; no one person is more important than another. Each team member and parent is expected to compliment, cooperate, and be friendly, positive, and helpful. Negativity and gossip will not be tolerated. The studio's good reputation in our community is a reflection of our conduct. In addition, any negative comments posted on the internet, social forums, and/or social networking sites such as Band, Facebook or Instagram, regarding Encore Performing Arts, the students, or the staff will not be tolerated. Those found posting negative or inappropriate comments will be asked to forfeit their position on the team and possibly the studio. Please remember that you are representing YOUR dance studio. The dance team is about dancing, performing, and having fun! Let's be sure to keep those our top priorities! We should encourage ALL dancers, including those who are on other studio's teams. Good sportsmanship is expected at all times.

TIME COMMITMENT

Competition team classes will be held weekly (with the exception of studio designated holidays). All team members are required to take technique class(es) as indicated on the attached form. All team members are strongly encouraged to take additional technique classes, if your schedule permits. The fee to participate on the team includes all available technique classes. Dancers learn choreography during their team practice which allows no time to learn proper technique. The technique classes are where the dancers get their fundamental training. The more technique classes you take, the better dancer you will become. That is why we offer unlimited technique classes at no additional cost.

Performing a solo or duo/trio is a privilege and will only be granted to those students who exhibit the skills, abilities, and dedication it takes to master a solo or duo/trio. Only dancers who are competing in the Elite level have the option of doing two solos. Those who choose to do a solo or duo/trio are still required to participate in their regular group numbers, and the instructor has the final decision in what music and form of dance will be performed. Also, performing in a solo or duo/trio requires additional time commitment above and beyond the regular group numbers. Finally, if a dancer commits to doing a solo or duo/trio, they must also be attending a technique class that will allow them to further their training in that particular form of dance.

We will schedule three regional competitions in addition to one alternative, in case of a cancellation. Competitions may possibly be held on Friday, Saturday, and/or Sunday, and we have no control over the performance times we are given. Once you have been given the competition dates, please mark those dates on your calendar. These events are mandatory! You must be available for the alternate date as well as the other three. Many times in the past, we have had to attend the alternate because one or more competitions were cancelled. Therefore, the date of the alternate competition must not be overlooked.

A NOTE ABOUT RECITAL

All team dancers will perform in the spring recital but the Christmas recital is optional. Dancers will not perform solos/duos/trios in the spring recital, with the exception of seniors, who will perform all of their solo dances.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Monthly tuition is due by the 7th day of each month. All accounts must be kept current at all times. Competition fees will be provided with a due date as soon as we have that information. Please supply us with your credit card for auto-pay. If you prefer to pay by check or cash, please do so before the 7th (autopay). The monthly fee for competition team members includes all technique classes, so if your dancer does not attend, you are not getting full advantage of your fees. This is a one year commitment and quitting the team

does not relieve you of your responsibility. If a dancer quits the team for whatever reason, the balance of the months of tuition will still be owed. For example, if a dancer quits in March, tuition for March, April and May will be charged to their credit card. This is a one year commitment and quitting the team does not relieve you of your responsibility.

MONTHLY TUITION:

Petite Team: \$100/month (up to 3 group dances and \$25/month for each additional)
Junior/Teen/Senior Team: \$150/month (up to 3 group dances; \$25/month for each additional group dance;
Solos: \$30/week for choreography; Technique solos: \$25/week
Duets: \$25/week
Trios: \$20/week

Additional expenses:

Costumes: Costumes are chosen by the instructor. Each dance will require one costume. We will try to keep them affordable; however, because they will be worn over and over, it is important that we look for good quality when shopping for costumes. You will be notified of costume expenses as soon as the teachers give us their choices, and costume fees will be placed on your account along with tuition. Costumes are non-refundable.

Choreography Fees: Teachers spend a lot of hours working on choreography and editing music selections. They are compensated for the extra hours with a one-time choreography fee due in August.

Solo Choreography fees: \$200/dance

Duet Choreography fees: \$100/dancer

Trio Choreography fees: \$65/dancer

Group Choreography fees: (\$25 for first 3 dances; \$10 for each additional group dance)

Camps: We have a camp in July which is optional. It is a time to introduce all our new team members to our existing members. The cost is \$100 for petites and \$150 for all others.

There is a brief performance on the last day of camp and parents are encouraged to attend. We also have a mandatory choreography week in August. The charge for the week is based on the number of dances each member is in. More information will be distributed in July. We also have a mandatory National Camp the week prior to our national competition.

Team Jackets: We use the same jackets for 2-3 years. This year we will wear last year's jacket. More information on jackets will be provided in September.

Competition Fees: Each competition varies with cost, but usually the group fees are \$60-\$65 per dance. We are required to send in the competition fees approximately 45 days prior to the competition date to guarantee entry in the competition. We will post the fees to your account several months prior to the competition to ensure that we get the fees paid in time.

Solos/duo/trios: If a dancer chooses to participate in a solo or duo/trio, there are additional expenses beyond the team financial commitments listed above. Solos and duo/trios must pay additional competition fees to perform their pieces at competition. Those fees range from \$125- \$150 per competition, depending on the competition. Solos and duo/trios will also be responsible for additional costume costs associated with costuming their piece. Classes canceled by the teacher must be rescheduled within 2 weeks, at a time convenient for both the teacher & student. Classes canceled by the student are forfeited, with no refund unless it is rescheduled with the teacher.

Fundraising

Our studio will be involved in fundraising for the dance team, however, you are not obligated to participate. We have a non-profit status which open doors for several opportunities. In the past, we organize a dinner/dancing for adults with an auction. We also do gift card raffles at both recitals. Last year, we exceeded our goal of \$15,000.00. This money is applied directly to your account.

Dancewear: You should ask your dancer's teacher the shoes required both for class and performance. We will carry the shoes, however, you are not obligated to buy from us. You may shop elsewhere, just be sure to get the exact shoes required. We want all dancers to be uniform in their shoes and attire. All dancers will be required to wear black leotards; pink tights and the appropriate shoes during class.

ARE YOU READY FOR THE THIS?

SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR DANCER:

1. Can we be completely dedicated to this team and all the requirements (both time and financial)?
2. Can we maintain a positive attitude and refrain from gossip and/or negativity regarding the team?
3. Are we willing to give up some of our weekends and personal time to spend at dance competitions and other dance-related events?
4. When we are faced with a decision between a scheduled dance event and another activity (soccer, cheerleading, birthday party, etc.), will both child and parent be able to understand that they have made a commitment with their dance team and know that their attendance at the dance event is mandatory?

We have a wonderful dance team of talented and dedicated performers and teachers. We also have a great group of supportive parents. It is an honor to be selected to be a part of this team and all students, parents, and teachers should view it as such and commit to the team accordingly. These guidelines are in place to ensure excellent training and a fun, rewarding competition season. The staff at Encore Performing Arts is thrilled that you will be representing our studio as the Encore Competition Team. We are super excited and looking forward to a terrific year!

Terri Shaffner

COMMITMENT FORM

(please sign and bring this page to the Audition)

I have read and understand the above information and by signing below, confirm agreement of the policies set forth in the above Encore Competition Handbook.

Date: _____ Dancer's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____