

MICHIGAN YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEER CONFERENCE (MYFCC)
FINAL 2024 CHEERLEADING RULES

Adopted by the MYFCC Board of Directors on 2/19/2024

Section 1. **Cheerleading Eligibility Rules**

- A. The age of the participants, ages 5 through 14 (and be in 8th grade with proof), shall be their age on or before September 1st of the year concerned.
- B. A non-competing mascot is considered to be anyone on a squad which is below the eligibility age requirement of the squad. **ONLY PARTICIPANTS WHO FALL BELOW THE AGE OF ELIGIBILITY (MASCOTS) ARE TO BE RIBBONED AT COMPETITION UNLESS OTHERWISE APPROVED BY THE MYFCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS BY THE SEPTEMBER LEAGUE MEETING. No team shall have more than three Mascots.**
- C. Each cheerleader must provide a photocopy of their birth certificate at registration for each organization.
- D. Prior to the start of practice, cheerleaders must have an annual physical, signed by a physician and co-signed by parents/guardians. Physicals shall be dated in the current calendar year. Physicals shall be kept on file with the member organization and available for inspection at all times.
- E. Signed concussion awareness paperwork must be obtained prior to the first practice by each squad.
- F. Try-outs for cheerleading are NOT permitted. No MYFCC Cheerleader shall compete with another competitive cheer squad during the MYFCC cheer season. Follow current MHSAA rules.

Section 2. **Cheerleading Rules**

- A. Michigan Middle School Athletic Association Cheerleading Safety Rules shall apply except as hereinafter noted.
- B. The rules of the league will be binding on all members without exception.
- C. The cheerleading director or designated person should be present at all practices and games. Stunt Certified and Concussion Trained Coaches can be designated person. **Proof of Certification to be completed by August 1st to be turned into league director with league book due in September.**
- D. The cheerleading directors/coaches should follow the recommended rules as prescribed by the Michigan Youth Football and Cheer Conference.
- E. Within each individual organization, Cheer Directors/coaches should recognize a squad's particular ability level and should limit the squad's activities accordingly. "Ability Level" refers to the squad's talents as a whole and individuals should not be pressed to perform activities until safely perfected.
- F. All cheerleaders should receive proper training before attempting any form of tumbling, stunting, pyramids, and jumps.
- G. The use of the opposing team's name in a negative manner in a cheer, banner or poster is prohibited.
- H. Cheerleaders are NOT to cheer when a football player is injured. Cheerleaders must kneel until the injured player leaves the field, or until otherwise directed by the head coach.
- I. The sportsmanship and conduct of the cheerleaders, directors, coaches and/or designated persons will fall under the same rules, guidelines and penalties as the football players, unit directors and coaches.
- J. It is mandatory for the cheerleading director, a cheerleading representative or the football director to attend all MYFCC league meetings. Penalties will be assessed after one missed meeting.
- K. Cheerleading head coaches must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- L. When teams are located on the same side of the football field, the cheerleading squads must alternate cheers (away squad, home squad, away squad, home squad, etc.).

Section 3. **Stunting and Tumbling**

- A. MHSAA Middle School rules shall apply to all stunting and tumbling techniques. The MHSAA middle school rules book clarifies legal and illegal stunts and specifies required spotting techniques for each type of stunt prep and dismount in Michigan and how it relates to Junior High/Middle School age limitations.
- (a) MYFCC limitations due to age are as follows:
1. **Junior Freshmen**- may NOT stunt higher than knee level. (The cheer committee may grant certain exceptions to this rule upon agreement).
 2. **Freshmen**- may NOT stunt higher than waist level (The cheer committee may grant certain exceptions to this rule upon agreement).
 3. **Junior Varsity**- may NOT stunt higher than shoulder level.
 4. **Varsity**- are permitted to do all stunts as stated in MHSAA Middle School Rules

Proof of instruction and proof of certification shall be maintained by the member organization's cheer director, with a copy provided to the MYFCC Cheer Director with September delivery of league book. Safety training is mandatory for all new coaches every year and every other year for returning coaches.

A certified trained coach **MUST** be present during all stunt and tumbling activities, including instruction. If no certified trained coach is available, **NO** stunting or tumbling is allowed. Stunting and tumbling is allowed during practice and games with proper safety precautions.

Section 4. **Recommended Squad Ages and Placement**

- A. Age groups by squad for cheer:
- Junior Freshmen: Ages 5 – 7, grades 1st and 2nd
 - Freshmen: Ages 8 – 9, grades 3rd and 4th
 - Junior Varsity: Ages 10 – 11, grades 5th and 6th
 - Varsity: Ages 12 – 14, grades 7th and 8th
- B. Sideline age groups – It is recommended by the Board to follow the same age groups (as written above for Super Cheer) during sideline cheer but is at the discretion of the Cheer Director for the franchise.
- C. Cheerleaders are able to move up or down to one level team with a 25% ratio. Once a cheerleader is moved up or down, they can **NOT** move to another team. If the ratio is larger than 25%, approval from the MYFCC Directors is required

Section 5. **Rosters**

- A. Each initial team roster must be turned in to the MYFCC Cheer Director one week prior to the first league playing date. Only cheerleaders on those rosters will be eligible to cheer. Members may continue to add cheerleaders up to three (3) weeks after this date. Rosters will then be considered final, except for cheerleaders transferring from one squad to another within age guidelines during the season.
- B. The Cheer Director will provide standard template for MYFCC rosters that are turned in. All franchises must use standard template along with birth certificate and photo (wallet size) of each cheerleader by squad.
- C. All rosters are final by the September League Meeting of the current year. Only cheerleaders on those rosters will be eligible to cheer for the season. Members may continue to add cheerleaders up the September League Meeting. Rosters will then be considered final, except for cheerleaders transferring from one squad to another within age guidelines during the season.

Section 6. **Dress and Appearance**

- A. All cheerleading shoes shall consist of a laced supportive leather upper construction, with solid arch support. No hard sole shoes, sandals or bare feet are permitted.
- B. The following are considered proper personal guidelines to be followed by all cheerleaders:
 - a) Proper undergarments.
 - b) Dance briefs or trunks are required at all times when uniform skirt is worn.
 - c) Make-up shall be kept moderate.
 - d) Fingernails shall be neat and trim, no longer than the tip of your finger. Only clear nail polish should be worn, unless otherwise directed by your head coach. No artificial nails allowed.
- C. The following are considered hazardous and should not be worn to practices or games:
 - a) No jewelry (earrings, rings, bracelets, anklets, or body piercings etc.)
 - b) Hooded sweatshirts with strings. In the event your hooded sweatshirt has strings, they shall be tucked inside the neck of your sweatshirt.
 - c) Clothing that is loose fitting.
 - d) Hair that is shoulder length or longer **MUST** be secured in a high ponytail. Hair elastics, and ribbons are the only approved hair accessories to be worn during practices, games and competition. Bobby pins and snap clips are not allowed.

Section 7. **Super Cheer/Competition**

A Cheerleading Rally-Super Cheer/Competition will be held at the end of the season not to infringe on the MHSAA rules and guidelines for the middle school competitive season.

It is mandatory that at least 1 squad from each organization participate in at least one round during the Super Cheer. If this does not occur, penalties will be assessed by the League Executive Board. The cost paid by each organization (Unit) will be based on one unit being 4 squads. If an organization (Unit) brings additional squads, each organization (Unit) will pay a prorated fee for this squad to compete in the Super Cheer.

The rally will be hosted as determined by drawing or by a team designated by the MYFCC Board of Directors. Each organization has the opportunity to shadow the hosting organization in the year before their assigned year for Super Cheer. The following teams have been pre-drawn for the years as follows:

2022: Macomb Mustangs

2023: Rochester Raiders

2024: Plymouth Canton Steelers

2025: Lakes Area Hawks

2026: Westland Comets

2027: Westland Meteors

2028: Canton Lions

2029: Eastside Eagles

2030: Pontiac Panthers

This organization order will stay in place for subsequent years (i.e. Macomb will host 2031, Rochester will host 2032, etc.). The exact time and location will be determined by the Super Cheer host organization committee.