

# ROCKINGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

20 East Gay Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

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## 2016 Cheerleading By-Laws

### I. Organization

The Rockingham County Parks & Recreation Department (RCPR) shall be the sponsoring agent of the Youth Cheerleading Program. The Recreation Director or his/her designated representative shall be the Executor of the program. The Youth Cheerleading Program shall be governed by Rockingham County Parks & Recreation Department and the Recreation Commission. Questions of conduct and affairs of the program shall be submitted to RCPR and/or the Recreation Commission.

### II. Mission

To organize the orderly conduct and participation of cheerleading in the Rockingham Youth Football League, by teaching basic cheerleading techniques, teamwork, commitment, sportsmanship and the love of cheerleading.

### III. Eligibility

1. All cheerleaders must pay the registration fee and be registered by the deadline in order to participate in the program. Fees must be paid to and at the RCPR office.
2. The program is open to girls who are between the ages of 6 (by September 30) and 13 years old. No exceptions.
3. Divisions are divided by age. Squad A are ages 10-13, Squad B 6-9 years old. Consideration of moving a child up or down is only given to the head cheer or football coach child(ren) by the Recreation Staff.
4. All cheerleaders must complete a Registration Form, Tumbling Waiver and Emergency Contact Forms.
5. Cheerleaders can only miss 1 practice weekly and still be eligible to cheer at the following game, unless approved by the coach. In the two weeks prior to exhibition, cheerleaders can only miss 2 practices.
6. RCPR reserves the right to change age groups based on participation numbers.
7. Once a team has been selected and established cheerleaders must remain on the designated team. Any changes thereafter can only be made by RCPR Director or Recreation Program Supervisor.

### IV. Rules

1. All cheer squads will be put together by RCPR staff with suggestions from coaches. Factors for determining squads but not limited to, nor will not be guaranteed; coaches of cheerleaders, siblings, individual skill levels, and age/grade of participant. Once squads have been made, any changes thereafter can only be made by the Director or Recreation Program Supervisor of Rockingham County Parks and Recreation Department. Squad changes or "trade" of participants will NOT be permitted.
  - A. Squad Assignment will be based on priority
    1. Child of Head Cheer coach
    2. Child of a Head Football coach
    3. Siblings on Cheer/Football
    4. Friendship/Carpooling
2. Only a maximum of 2 practices are allowed weekly. No practice on Sundays.
3. All practices must end by 8:30 p.m.
4. Practices must be limited to a maximum of 2 hours.
5. All cheerleaders must wear tennis shoes to practice.
6. Parents and those who attend practice as a spectator must sit quietly in the bleachers or on the side of the gym. No spectators may be left unsupervised or allowed to roam the facility. Any spectator disturbing practice will be asked to leave the practice area.
7. Parents must drop off and pick up in designated area assigned by the coach. Parents must be prompt when picking up child after practice. Repeat violators of two late pick ups will result in dismissal from the program.
8. Participants are required to wear the selected uniform. The uniform consists of skirt, top and briefs. Uniforms can be purchased new through RCPR. No additional uniform pieces (such as but not limited to, sweatshirts, jackets, shoes, bows, etc.) will be required to be purchased.
9. Parents and all spectators are asked to stay off of the sidelines, track etc. during games.
10. No official sponsorships are allowed.
11. No mascots.
12. Teams MUST travel with their designated football team.
13. Cheerleading follows youth tackle football which is an outdoor sport. Cheerleading squads are expected to participate in games in various weather conditions (i.e. cold, rain, wind etc.).

## V. Tumbling Guidelines

1. Tumbling guidelines are to be observed at all practices, games and exhibitions.
2. Tumbling waiver must be signed and dated by an athlete's parent/guardian and kept on file with the squad coach.
3. All tumbling must be executed on an appropriate surface and must originate from and land on the performing surface.
4. Tumbling skill must involve constant physical contact with the performing surface, front or back flips are not permitted.
5. Tumbling over, under or through a stunt, individual or prop is not allowed. Tumbling while holding or in contact with a prop or another athlete is not allowed.
6. Dive rolls are not allowed.
7. Jumps are not considered tumbling.
8. Tumbling skills allowed:
  - A. Forward and backward rolls
  - B. Front and Back walkovers
  - C. Handstands
  - D. Cartwheels and round offs

## VI. Stunts Guidelines

1. Stunting guidelines are to be observed at all practices, games and exhibitions.
2. Spotters are required for all allowed stunts and must be squad members, coaches or adult volunteers that have been properly trained through RCPR in spotting techniques.
  - A. Spotters primary responsibility is the protection of the head and shoulders area of the top during the performance of stunt.
  - B. Spotter must be positioned to the side of the back of the stunt.
  - C. Must be in direct contact with the spotters.
  - D. Must be attentive to the skill being performed.
  - E. Must be in the proper position to prevent injuries and does not have to be in direct contact with the stunt.
  - F. Cannot stand so that their torso is under a stunt.
3. Athlete's feet must not be higher than waist high on the base.
  - A. Exception for A squad athletes: One foot may be higher than waist high, not to exceed shoulder height of the base while the other foot must be at waist height or lower.
4. Pyramids can only be 2 layers, are allowed without spotters.
5. Ponies are allowed without spotters.
6. Straight pop downs are the only dismount allowed.
  - A. Definition: A controlled downward release of the top's feet. The top may dismount directly to the cheer floor with an assisted landing.
7. Thigh stands are acceptable.
8. One foot must be in contact with the base at all times.
9. Extended Stunt is allowed.
  - A. Definition: with the entire upper body of the top is extended in an upright position over the bases, usually by their arms, but feet are still making contact with waist level on bases.
10. Stunts not allowed:
  - A. No fall backs or cradles
  - B. No moving stunts
  - C. No Airborne/Aerial stunts
  - D. No Prep-level stunts (hands of bases and feet of top at bases' shoulder height)
  - E. No Tosses
  - F. No Shoulder Sits

## VII. Coaches Duties

1. Coaches are required to attend all coaches meetings as set by RCPR.
2. The program follows the football schedule. Football is an outdoor sport and cheerleading squads are expected to participate in games in various weather conditions (i.e. cold, rain, wind etc.). Coaches will not be allowed to cancel cheering on a scheduled football game or a make-up game.
3. Divisions of squads will be conducted by area on set date by RCPR staff and area coaches.
4. Coaches must be present at each game or practice or appoint a responsible adult to supervise the squad.
5. Coaches will NOT be allowed to change, add or "trade" participants on their rosters. Any violations may result in participant and/or coach suspension.

6. Coaches will be given a coach's binder and are expected to have planned and organized practices.
7. Practices will be scheduled by RCPR. No practices are allowed to be held anywhere except at RCPR approved location. Coaches are not allowed to schedule practices with schools without RCPR permission.
8. Coaches are not to transport participants other than their own child(ren). RCPR will not be held liable should any infraction on this policy be made.
9. All coaches will have a background screening each year.
10. Coaches must be in same area (field or track) as where the participants are cheering.
11. Emergency cards must be kept with the coach at all times.
12. Coaches must notify all participants of rules/regulations and by-laws set forth by the program, scheduled games, exhibition and practice times/locations and cancellations and/or make-ups as indicated by RCPR.
13. Coaches ARE NOT ALLOWED to ask parents to provide any additional uniform (such as but not limited to jackets, sweatsuits, sweatshirts etc.) Any violation is cause for dismissal of coaching and the coach will be responsible for the reimbursement of the additional uniform. A shirt and tights can be worn with the uniform but not required nor shall a certain brand be required for purchase. This is at the parent's discretion for weather purposes.
14. No fundraising.
15. Pictures and trophies are to be at the discretion of the squad coach. RCPR will not be responsible for pictures or collection of fee. Pictures are not to be used as fundraisers.
16. Squads must be ready to cheer by kick off.
17. Exhibition is a requirement of the coach(es).

#### VIII. Game Day Protocol

1. Half-time "HELLO" cheer is required, and should be limited to no more than three (3) minutes per squad. Home squad goes to visitor side first.
2. At the end of the game all cheerleaders should shake hands with the other cheer squad.
3. If a player becomes injured during a game, cheerleading squads are to stop cheering, kneel or stand quietly, until the injured player is removed from the playing field, at which time the injured player should be applauded.
4. All cheers should not be derogatory and be free of vulgar or sexual words, phrases, innuendos and motions.
5. All participants must be in uniform and wear tennis shoes.
6. A bathroom monitor must accompany cheerleaders to and from bathrooms.

#### IX. Code of Conduct

1. All participants must be approved by the Rockingham County Parks & Recreation Department. In league play, the conduct of a team's participants is the responsibility of the team's manger. Mangers will be encouraged to help keep their team's fans orderly. If at any time the conduct of any of the above mentioned persons is determined to be detrimental or contrary to the best interests and ideals of the activity, such individual will be suspended from further participation. The Parks & Recreation Department will take any action it deems necessary to discipline a participant, team, or fan during the course of the season.
2. Adult Sports: Profanity or misconduct will not be tolerated before, during, or after an activity.
  - A. If profanity or misconduct occurs, the guilty participant will be ejected or suspended from one activity period. Persisting in an disorderly manner after a ruling may be considered as an additional offense. The participant will be warned in writing of further action from the Rockingham County Recreation Department.
  - B. If the same participant is ejected from a second activity for profanity or misconduct, he will be suspended from the remainder of the season. If the third offense occurs within the last five activity periods of the season, he will be suspended for the remainder of the current season and also the next season.
3. Youth Sports: Zero tolerance to any violations of the code of conduct.
4. Any participant or fan that threatens bodily harm or verbally abuses any Parks & Recreation employee, league official or volunteer coach can or will be suspended from all Rockingham County recreational activities for up to one year. Term of suspension will be determined by Director of Parks & Recreation, Athletic Program Supervisor, Recreation Programs Supervisor and Recreation Commission.
5. Any participant or fan that physically attacks a Parks & Recreation employee, league official or volunteer coach will be suspended from all Rockingham County recreational activities indefinitely. Term of suspension will be determined by Director of Parks & Recreation, Athletic Program Supervisor, Recreation Programs Supervisor and Recreation Commission.
6. Teams or participants at a recreational facility awaiting their turn to participate shall conduct themselves in an orderly manner.
7. While at a recreational facility, the rules of that particular facility are to be observed, because the participants' conduct will determine whether we are allowed to use the facility during the next year.

8. Accidents resulting in damage to equipment or to the facility should be reported immediately, so that proper action may be taken to prevent jeopardizing the privilege of using the facility.

X. Exhibition Rules and Regulations

1. The exhibition will be held in October. Site will be determined by early October.
2. The building will open at 2:30 p.m. Any practice must take place outside prior to the building opening.
3. Upon entering the building, groups will be given a number before entering the gym.
4. Coaches required to attend a brief 2:45 p.m. meeting prior to the start of the exhibition.
5. All participants should perform to both sides of the gym.
6. Coaches should remind parents of sportsman like conduct and clap for all team performances. Un-sportsman like conduct will NOT be tolerated. Un-sportsman like conduct includes but not limited to: booing, profanity, cackling, etc. Offenders of un-sportsman like conduct will be removed from the gym immediately.
7. Standard uniform issued is to be worn. Accessories such as face paint will be allowed.
8. Music to be used in the routine must be pre-approved by the Rockingham Parks & Recreation Department three weeks prior to the event. The music must be submitted via mp3 sound file or CD. Music must not be derogatory and be free of vulgar or sexual words, phrases and innuendos lyrics. Disney or "Kidz Bop" versions of songs are recommended. Coaches that do not meet this deadline may not be allowed to coach in the exhibition.
9. The exhibition will include two cheers and one dance routine.
10. The exhibition routine must be 3 minutes or less.
11. The ending cheer will be "Everybody in the Stands." Coaches are to have participants wait for the microphone cue before beginning cheer.
12. All coaches and participants are expected to follow the exhibition rules.
13. Violations could result in suspension for 1 year or probation.
14. This is an Exhibition not a competition.