



# **National Deaf Cheer Competition Bylaws**

**Division 1**

**&**

**Division 2**

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## PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of each National Deaf Cheer Competition (NDCC) squad to promote and uphold team spirit for those we encounter, to develop good sportsmanship by example, and to support good relations in the community and between teams and squads during the events. The organizational goal is to work harmoniously with the team management and administration, other athletic teams, and sporting organizations.

These bylaws are designed for both divisions, 1 and 2, and both are expected to adhere to them to make this competition successful.

# ELIGIBILITY

NDCC is a sole organization that is hosted by various campuses and organizations. For this reason schools are responsible to provide proper certifications and proof of insurance.

The school/coach must maintain current AACCA Cheer Safety certification. Certifications are uploaded when registering a team for the annual event. Uncertified schools and coaches will not be accepted to compete without verified certification.

A verification of insurance form must be completed with a copy of the current Certificate of Insurance (COI) for proof of liability coverage. Schools without proper insurance coverage will not be eligible to participate in the annual event.

Division Assignment - Based on individual schools' NDIAA enrollment. Current NDIAA guidelines are as follows:

Division 1 schools apply to schools with over 75 high school students.

Division 2 schools apply to schools with less than 75 high school students.

For Division 1:

Only 9th to 12th graders can participate in this competition. The participant cannot be any older than 20 years old during the competition. No 5th-year students are allowed to participate. Schools must be able to show current athletic eligibility within their state. The coordinator will check eligibility with the school before the competition.

For Division 2:

The 8th graders are allowed to participate in this competition. The participant cannot be any older than 20 years old during the competition. Athletes may only participate for 4 consecutive high school years or 5 years, including 8th grade. Schools must be able to show current athletic eligibility within their

**state. The coordinator will check eligibility with the school before the competition.**

Squads are limited to six members, with no more than two male participants. Each team will include a total of ten (10) members: six cheerleaders, two coaches, one staff member (Athletic Director, Driver, or Residential Advisor), and one manager or drummer.

If additional staff members (Athletic Director, Driver, or Residential Advisor) are needed, you may request approval from the hosting school to bring up to 12 staff members. If the hosting school is at capacity, the visiting school will be responsible for arranging hotel accommodations for any additional staff.

# COMPETITION EXPECTATIONS

**The fee is \$500, including shirts for registered cheerleaders.**

## **PRIOR TO THE COMPETITION**

**\* Each school is required to be an NDIAA member before participating in this competition.**

\*Each school must submit a team mascot, roster, individual cheerleader pictures, team picture and intro video to the hosting school by the last Friday in January before the competition. A team may not add or replace participants not on the tournament roster except in case of injury or illness. Changes in deadlines communicated by the host school and/or NDCC must be followed.

\*The host school is required to provide a minimum floor size of 42 feet x 30 feet. The wrestling mat is not acceptable due to safety reasons.

\*All stunts must be performed on the mats.

\*Team limits are six cheerleaders, one drummer/manager, two coaches, and 1 staff member (Athletic Director, Driver, or Residential Advisor). Additional staff **MUST** be approved by the hosting school.

\*The order of performance will be determined by a draw at the coaches' meeting prior to the event. The coordinator will arrange the drawing and announce it to the participating schools.

\*Each school is responsible for its music and must check it before performing.

\*Each school's cheer coach must have a safety certification under USA Cheer to participate in this competition.

\*Host schools must provide a minimum of (2) spotters to ensure cheerleaders' safety during the stunts.

\*Due to any unforeseen emergency circumstances where a school must back out of the competition, the registration fee will not be refunded unless otherwise

approved by the host school and/or NDCC. Coverage of expenses must be reviewed and accounted for before any partial or full refunds occur.

\*Hospitality rooms will be provided for the coaches, judges, and staff working in the competition.

\*Host schools will provide equal practice time slots for all participating teams. All practice sessions must be completed before the competition begins. No team may practice during the competition unless an optional “on-deck” area is designated specifically for competition use.

\*Optional - The on-deck area will include 1–2 mats for teams to warm up tumbling, stunts, or walk-throughs of their choreography. A designated staff member will manage this area to ensure safety and smooth transitions between performances.

### **DURING THE COMPETITION:**

\*An athletic trainer and/or physician must be present at each school for the competition.

\* In the event of injury or an unfortunate incident during the competition, the routine may be stopped and restarted initially. A new scoresheet will be provided, and the original scoresheet will be null/void.

\* Squads will not be penalized for performing less than the recommended time for each event.

\*A designated “coaches box” on the front edge of the performance area will be permitted. An accordion tumbling mat is suggested to keep the floor protected. Only 3 team members (two coaches and one drummer) are allowed in this area.

# TOURNAMENT FORMAT

## TEAM PERFORMANCES:

\*2 minutes of warm-up (NO POINTS)

\*3 minutes of Floor Cheer

\*3 minutes of Dance

## TEAM PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTIONS:

### WARM-UP (2 MINUTES):

\*It can be anything you want to show, your best that you would like to show off and feel confident, or your weakness in positions you want to ensure that your cheerleaders look accurate and ready for the actual performance. It is up to you how you would like to utilize the two minutes you have available. **THIS ROUTINE WILL NOT BE SCORED.**

### FLOOR CHEER (3 MINUTES):

\*This allows you to use your posters, flags, and poms.

\*Use of drums, no music.

\*Gymnastics, jumps and stunts allowed.

\*Follow the Score Sheet for more in-depth criteria.

\*Spotters must be present.

\***MUST** follow NFHS Cheer guidelines.

## **DANCE (3 MINUTES):**

- \*Music is required for this routine. There will be a penalty if there is no music.
- \*Use of poms is allowed.
- \*Props and signs are **strictly prohibited** and will result in a deduction. Please review the penalties/deductions form for the amount of deductions.
- \*Your creative dance routine incorporated gymnastics, jumps, and stunts.
- \*Follow the Score Sheet for more in-depth criteria.
- \*Routine music must be recorded on smartphones, iPods, iPads, or tablets. CDs will only be accepted if stated by the host school. Your music must be cued and ready to play. If using a smartphone, ensure it is in airplane mode. Keep in mind that recording equipment differs.
- \*In the event of a music malfunction, the music representative must inform the music tech to stop the music. The announcer will inform the performing team to regroup and start over. There will not be a point deduction for a music malfunction. (Note: A coach can repeat the routine; however, the request to repeat must be made before the team exits the mat.)
- \***MUST** follow NFHS Cheer guidelines.

## **INDIVIDUAL CHEER SHOWCASE (DAY PRIOR TO COMPETITION)**

### **Individual Jump**

- \*Two rounds
- \*Toe Touch and Individual Choice

## **Individual Floor Cheer**

\*Signs, Props, Pom Poms are Allowed

\*Time Limit of 2 Minutes

## **Individual Dance**

\*No Signs or Props Allowed

\*Pom Poms Allowed

\*Time Limit of 2 Minutes

\*All schools are **NOT** required to participate in the cheer showcase.

\*Cheerleaders will be categorized into Division 1 and Division 2 assignments.

\*Awards will be given in each division and category.

\*Awards will be given out at the completion of the event during the Awards Ceremony.

\*All Showcases' will be judged by the head coaches only.

\*Head coaches aren't allowed to vote for their school.

\*Each squad may enter up to three different cheerleaders to perform, with a different cheerleader participating in each event. Teams may choose to participate in none, one, several, or all of the individual events—participation is completely optional. However, NDCC encourages teams to join in as many events as they wish to help promote a fun, spirited atmosphere focused on growth and leadership.

# **ROUTINES/SETUP/PENALTIES**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

\*All introductions (tumbling, entrances, chants, spell-outs, etc. are considered part of the routine and will be timed as part of the performance.

\*All team breaks, rituals, and traditions need to take place prior to entering the mat.

\*Music is only required during dance.

## **COMPETITION PERFORMANCE AREA:**

\*Participants must start in the competition area with at least one foot on the ground.

\*Teams may line up anywhere inside the competition area.

\*UCA Competitions comply with the NFHS and AACCA surface ruling that school-based programs may not compete on spring floors.

\*Approximate floor size will be 54 feet wide by 42 feet deep (9 strips). \*\*

\*In some situations, the floor size may be smaller. No less than 5 strips will be accepted. Between 5 and 9 strips will be accepted. The mats must be sufficient for the cheerleaders to perform safely.

\*Deduction will NOT be assessed for out-of-bounds, including the signs, stepping out, etc.

## **DISQUALIFICATION/PENALTIES:**

Disqualification and/or penalty will occur if the following occurs (as worded exactly in the NFHS rules and regulations – from selected passages – some sentences have been modified to fit the general NDCC tournament format better):

- \*If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation.
- \*Three (3) point deductions for 1-5 seconds over.
- \*Five (5) point deductions for 6-10 seconds over.
- \*Seven (7) point deductions for 11 seconds and over.
- \*Acknowledging the potential variance caused by human reaction speed and sound system time variations, judges will not issue a deduction until their stopwatches show a time of 3:03.
- \*Penalty judges are not required to participate in the competition.
- \*All schools will receive regular score sheets with a penalty score sheet.
- \*Judges must have all score sheets, penalty sheets, and rules available at the competition.

### **SPOTTER POLICY:**

To promote a higher level of safety for competing athletes, each school will provide additional trained spotters at the cheer competition. Spotters the school provides will observe teams during practice to familiarize them with their routines. Two spotters from each school must be present and must be on the mats with the cheerleaders whenever they do the stunts. The school will be responsible for providing adequate training to those spotters. Schools can decline the use of spotters but are responsible for their squads' safety and proper certification.

In the event of spotter interference where unintentional contact occurs, disrupting the performance, please review UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.

### **INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE:**

### **UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

\*If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of competition equipment, facilities, spotter interference, or

other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.

\*The team will be given a second chance to perform again, but the points given before the interruption will be thrown out. The judges will be given a new score sheet. The competition officials will determine the degree and effect of the interruption.

### **INJURY:**

\*The only people that may stop a routine or injury are a) competition officials, b) the coach/advisor from the team performing, or c) an injured participant.

\*The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of the competition officials. The team may repeat the routine, but the original score sheet will be thrown out. A new score sheet will be provided for the re-performance.

\*The injured participant who wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:

-The competition officials receive clearance from the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present), and then the head coach/advisor of the competing team.

-If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.

-In the event of a suspected concussion, the participant cannot return to perform without clearance from a licensed medical professional who has training related to head injuries, even with a waiver from a parent or legal guardian.

# SCORES AND AWARDS

## SCORE SHEETS:

\*Individual score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available **ONLY** to the coaches at the conclusion of the competition.

## RESULTS AND AWARDS:

\*The results will be announced at the end of the competition and will be permanent and final.

\*Spirit (Team Spirit Video) award(s) will be voted on by the NDCC Committee.

\*Sportsmanship award(s) will be voted on by the Division 1 and Division 2 teams.

\*There will be six awards altogether for Division 1 and 2, ranking from 3rd to 1st place.

\*In the event of a tie, the team's highest-scoring performance will be used to determine the ranking for Nationals trophies.

Example:

TEAM	Cheer	Dance	Total:
1	<b>264</b>	255	519
2	258	<b>261</b>	519
3	252	<b>267</b>	519

All three teams would be in a three-way tie with the combination of both scores. Therefore, the highest routine score would be used in ranking for the Nationals trophy, which would result in Team (3) winning first place (**267**), Team (1) second place (**264**), and Team (2) third place (**261**).

## **JUDGING THE PERFORMANCE ROUTINES:**

\*There will be a Big Schools Division I and a Small Schools Division 2 based on NDIAA criteria, totaling 10 trophies and up to 42 medals for team awards.

\*Judges will score teams based on the criteria listed on each score sheet. Each routine will be evaluated by three judges on a 90-point scale, for a total of 270 possible points per routine. Combined, the floor cheer and dance routines allow for a maximum of 540 points.

\*Any deductions or violations will be removed from the final scores.

\*Each school can review the available score sheets prior to the competition.

## **AWARDS:**

### **\*Division 1**

- \*1st Place (9 Medals)
- \*2nd Place
- \*3rd Place
- \*Best Spirit Award (intro video)
- \*Individual Jump (1 Medal)
- \*Individual Floor (1 Medal)
- \*Individual Dance (1 Medal)
- \*Sportsmanship Award
- \*All-Star Team (6-8 Medals)
- \*Extra All-Star (1 Medal)

### **\*Division 2**

- \*1st Place (9 Medals)

- \*2nd Place
- \*3rd Place
- \*Best Spirit Award (intro video)
- \*Individual Jump (1 Medal)
- \*Individual Floor (1 Medal)
- \*Individual Dance (1 Medal)
- \*Sportsmanship Award
- \*All-Star Team (8 Medals)
- \*Extra All-Star (1 Medal)

### **ALL-STAR VOTING AND AWARDS:**

\*6 to 8 (Depending on entry numbers) All-Star Cheerleaders are selected for Division 1

\*8 All-Star Cheerleaders are selected for Division 2

\*Each Head Coach will nominate 3 cheerleaders. Nominations are due Saturday before the competition starts. **(Please make sure rosters with individual headshots are sent the last Friday in January.)**

\*Voting begins during the competition. All votes must be submitted immediately after the final event completion.

\*Each Head Coach will have 8 Ranked votes. 1st vote worth 8 points, 8th vote worth 1 point.

\*Head coaches **CANNOT** vote for their school. Coaches vote for the individual's best performance overall. Coaches are not required to vote for all schools.

\*Top-Voted Cheerleaders in each division with the most points from votes will be selected.

\*All-Star teams may be expanded to include up to eight cheerleaders in each division. In the event of a tie for the final selection, the All-Star roster may be increased to include both tied athletes (e.g., selecting the 6th and 6th, or the 8th and 8th cheerleaders). This would bring the total to seven All-Stars or nine All-Stars, depending on the division or expansion of the All-Star roster.

\*All-Star Cheerleaders should be announced at the end of the awards ceremony. If there is a voting issue, awards will be announced and mailed 24-48 hours after the event.

# STAFFING

## COORDINATOR:

\*The Directors and Coordinator will reach out to each school to make contact, make arrangements for preferred forms of communication, and work together to ensure a successful cheer competition.

\*The Directors and Coordinator shall contact all participating schools to ensure participation, share bylaws, and distribute the competition information the coaches need.

\*The NDCC Directors and/or Coordinator will coordinate with judges, timekeepers, scorekeepers, interpreters, and on-site volunteers to help during the competition. Efforts should be put forth in searching far and wide for judges with extensive judging experience, knowledge of the sport, and reputable in the general cheerleading community. Once the judges are selected, the Directors and/or Coordinator will ask for their professional biographies to share information with cheer coaches.

\*The Directors/Coordinator will prepare copies of all scoring sheets for each judge and ensure that every scoring sheet is placed inside a large manila envelope labeled with each school's name.

\*During the competition, the Coordinator will have a team of 2 scorekeepers tally up the scores to be submitted to the NDCC Director after the competition for final input into the Annual NDCC Final Scores Spreadsheet, (double checking for any time limit violations, and ensure that the scorekeepers apply the appropriate points deduction and inform the Athletic Director and/or Coordinator of the results).

\*The NDCC Directors and/or Coordinator will make copies/digital scans of all marked score sheets and hand them to each coach after the competition or scan them to their email if preferred. Can be up to 1-2 weeks after the competition.

\*Total Scores will be given, ranking all schools at the end of the competition. This will **ONLY** be given to the coaches.

\*NDCC Directors and Hosting Coordinators will work closely together to ensure the competition is successful.

\*Committees needing to be established are Hospitality, Crowd Control/Security, Judges, Media/Technology, Setup/Breakdown, Coordinators, Dorms, Cafeteria, Workshops and Schedules.

### **JUDGES:**

\*The judges will be USA Cheer certified or any other recognized certification in cheerleading. If they are not USA Cheer certified, they should have at least extensive knowledge of NFHS spirit rules. They will not be biased or conduct themselves in an unprofessional manner.

\*The judges will mark all scores with a blue or black ballpoint pen.

\*The judges will not handle the score sheets after finishing a team's performance. The Coordinator's assistant will gather score sheets when the judges complete them and keep them in a confidential envelope.

\*There are to be three judges with one (optional) penalty judge (for a total of three or four judges): None is to be an alumnus of a participating school. The three judges will use the floor cheer and dance score sheets to judge choreography and other items as listed. The penalty judge will monitor for any safety violations listed in the NFHS Spirit Rules handbook and assess such deductions with specific violation numbers on the deductions score sheet. Deductions will be applied to that specific category AFTER the scores have been averaged and finalized or the final combined score.

\*Protests related to the judgment of officials are not permitted.

\*Judges should submit their professional biographies to the Coordinator promptly so the Coordinator may share them with the coaches.

## **TIME/SCOREKEEPERS:**

\*Time/scorekeepers will be present at the host school. The Coordinator will be responsible for arranging this with the host school.

\*A minimum of two adults is required.

\*Use of stopwatches is required

\*Timing will begin with the first organized movement, the first note of music, or the movement of an individual lifted or supported off the performance floor, whichever comes first. Time will end when the squad ends with the last movement, or the music has stopped/turned off.

\*Any deductions for time or safety guideline violations will be subtracted from the FINAL averaged score.

\*Timekeepers will mark the length of every routine performed by each school. It is expected that there will be two recorded times for two routines.

\*The timekeepers should immediately inform the Coordinator after the competition, while these scores are being tallied, of any possible time limit violations.

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOST SCHOOL

## Schools are required to provide the following:

- \*Coaches are AACCA/USA Cheer Certified
- \*Coverages of Insurance have been verified and accepted
- \*Schools are NDIAA Members
- \*Qualified spotters who have received official training to spot all stunting.
- \*Cheer mats 42 ft x 30 ft (5 Rolls) or larger. If no mats are available, no stunts are allowed.
- \*A designated “coaches box” on the front edge of the performance area.
- \*Send a mascot, picture, roster, and introduction video to the hosting school before the 4th Friday in January.

# YOUTH COMPLIANCE PROTOCOLS

**Our youth compliance protocols facilitate and guide the NDCC efforts to provide a safe environment for our student athletes. We and/or the event coordinator are the primary point-of-contact for maintaining best practices to cultivate safe environments for the protection of youth participants on any campus. Individual schools are responsible for training staff and conducting background checks. In the NDCC Youth Protection Program policy, we work to ensure programming needs are met while fulfilling the legal obligation to provide a safe event environment. This handbook provides information on procedures and guidelines for program directors and/or managers as they work through the planning of programs, camps, activities and other events on and off event locations.**

**This handbook is considered a living document and is subject to change as we continue to improve this as a resource. The most current version of our handbook will always be available at this link. [NDCC Youth Protection Program Guidelines](#)**

# LIVESTREAMING

NDCC is the sole owner and broadcaster of any NDCC Event. NDCC is a public event open to all for attendance. Individual media restrictions of a minor or adult are not applicable for the public events. Please refer to Youth Compliance Protocols for any concerns involving a minor student athlete. NDCC uses a third party company to broadcast the event annually. Any external use of this broadcast or any pictures, descriptions, or accounts of the events without the explicit written consent of NDCC is prohibited.

Rules for specific surface restrictions, gymnastics, jumps, and stunts are subject to change by USA Cheer. GO to [www.USACheer.org](http://www.USACheer.org) for updates.

Copies of the Spirit Rules Handbook may be purchased from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

Website: <https://www.nfhs.org/activities-sports/spirit/>

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**"The principle is competing against yourself. It is about self-improvement, about being better than you were the day before." -Steve Young**