



# 2022 Rules & Regulations

## CHEER

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## I. ELIGIBILITY OF ATHLETES

- a. **Right to Play:** No athlete will be denied the right to participate because of culture, language, gender, race, ethnicity, or disability. No athlete will be denied the right to participate because of ethnicity, race, or religion.
- b. **Permission to Play:** Each athlete must furnish proof of parental or guardian permission to participate, and he or she must pay a registration fee. Each organization determines the amount of the registration fee.
- c. **Academic Standards:** It is the recommendation of the MVFL, that athletes should maintain acceptable grades in order to participate in the football/cheer program. Athletes should maintain a 2.0 or "C" average to be qualified. The various teams in the league shall adopt locally developed policies to ensure that the grades of athletes are acceptable. The MVFL Board will support the decisions of the various teams on this matter. Organizations are encouraged to recognize the academic achievement of its athletes.
- d. **High School Students:** No high school student can participate in MVFL.
- e. **Non-Public School Students:** Athletes not enrolled in the public-school system may participate in MVFL, but they must meet the appropriate age and experience requirements.
- f. **Geographical Areas:** In determining participation, all athletes must live within the school district boundary which defines that team's population of athletes. The MVFL Board can grant exceptions.
- g. **Proof of Residency:** Proof of residency maybe required to show residence on any questioned athlete.
- h. **Proof of Grade Level:** Proof of incoming grade level will need to be given to program, copy of last (end of year) report card or letter from school district of ingoing school grade level.
- i. **MVFL District Transfers:**
  - i. Must live or attend school within the organization boundaries. Proof of residency is determined by "bill with address" or "school registrar paperwork" and must be attached to application.
  - ii. It is recommended that transfers be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup> for fittings.
    - 1. Both teams involved must agree to the transfer. Additionally, a majority vote of the MVFL Board must authorize the action. Organizations not complying with this regulation will be considered as using ineligible athletes and will forfeit all games in which the ineligible athletes participated. Once an athlete receives a district transfer, they may continue to play for that organization annually until they no longer meet the age requirement or separate

membership from the organization for one full season. If one full season of separation occurs, the athlete must again get approval from the other organizations and the MVFL Board. The MVFL Board must review all new and existing District Transfers each year regardless of the circumstance.

- j. **Physical Exam:** All athletes must pass a physical examination in that calendar year to be eligible for participation.
- k. **Eligibility to Participate in Game: Athletes** must complete (10) hours of physical conditioning to be eligible to participate in a jamboree/scrimmage or a game. Physical conditioning may be identified as team conditioning performed at practice or skill camp attendance.
- l. **Level of Play:** As a general rule, athletes should play at the highest level at which they are capable. It is the intention of MVFL that athletes are encouraged to play in their own age division. At the discretion of their local board, athletes may move up a division. Under no circumstances, may an athlete move down a division.

## II. AGE REQUIREMENTS

- a. **Age Requirements:** Any individual who will be (7) on November 1<sup>st</sup> and does not turn (15) by November 1<sup>st</sup> will be eligible to participate. No 9<sup>th</sup> graders are allowed. All MVFL teams are required to secure and make copies of each athlete's birth certificate and keep it as a permanent record.
- b. **Division Ages:**
  - i. Mascots          6 year olds
    - 1. 5-year-olds if they turn 5 by August 1<sup>st</sup>
  - ii. Jr. Novice Division    1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades, consist of ages of 6 and 7 years old
    - 1. 6 years old if they turn 6 by August 1<sup>st</sup>
    - 2. Cannot be 8 years old during the season.
  - iii. Novice Division          3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grades, consist of ages of 8- and 9-years-old
    - 1. Exception will need to be granted, if 7 years old can play down must not turn 8 during season.
    - 2. Cannot be 10 years old during the season.
  - iv. Jr. Varsity Division    5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grades, consist of ages of 10- and 11-years-old
    - 1. Exception will need to be granted, if 9 years old can play down, must not turn 10 during season.
    - 2. Cannot be 12 years old during the season.
  - v. Varsity Division          7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grades, consist of ages of 12- and 14-years-old
    - 1. Exception will need to be granted, if 11 years old can play down must not turn 12 during season.
    - 2. Cannot be 15 years old to play in League during season.

- vi. Athletes are eligible to move up. Refer to Eligibility of Athletes.
  - 1. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade athletes must cheer on Varsity regardless of age.
  - 2. Athletes are eligible to level-up. Refer to I. Eligibility of Athletes.
- c. **Proof of Age:** A certificate of live birth, issued by the county or state, must accompany the team when the team is participating in any MVFL game. All MVFL teams are required to secure and make copies of each athlete's birth certificate and keep it as a permanent record. If a certificate is unobtainable, the MVFL Board will have final say for an athlete's participation by a majority vote.

### III. CHEER RULES

- a. **Purpose:** The MVFL Cheerleading Program is an integral part of our total youth football program and contributes highly to an individual's overall education and growth as a young person. The MVFL cheerleading program is in place to promote spirit, develop teamwork, sportsmanship and provide a safe environment in which cheerleading athletes can learn and have fun. It is the intention of this organization to allow any athlete who wants to cheer the opportunity to participate. Depending on the number of cheerleaders, availability of uniforms, the number of coaches available, etc., it may be necessary to limit squad sizes.
- b. **Safety:** No issue is of greater importance than the safety of our young athletes. None is more worthy of the attention of coaches, officials, players, and administrators. The young athletes who enjoy the sport of cheerleading deserve our wholehearted commitment to their safety.
  - i. No jewelry on any part of the body or piercings allowed during practices and games. Medical/religious jewelry may be worn if taped down.
  - ii. No false fingernails.
  - iii. The only metal allowed are flip clips, bobby pins and other accessories at the discretion of the cheer advisor.
  - iv. Casts/braces:
    - 1. Athletes with a hard cast may not tumble, stunt, or be considered as spotters and are not required to be wrap/pad the cast.
    - 2. Athletes wearing hard braces with exposed metal material, such as knee, wrist, and elbow braces, are required to wrap/cover the brace with a padded material so that it protects both them and their fellow athletes from injury.
- c. **Liability and Responsibility:**
  - i. Guidelines are aimed to ages, due to the liability and risks involved in cheerleading. Younger athletes are less likely to recognize and respect those risks and are more likely to attempt something inherently dangerous due to current skill levels. Restrictions exist for the protection of those under the age of legal liability, coaches, parents/guardians, and responsible organizations such as the MVFL. Therefore, no

intermixing of stunt groups will be allowed. This applies to performing with a High School as well.

- ii. On combined teams, stunt groups must be based on the level for which the athlete would have been assigned to if there were no combination team.
- iii. Only current badged coaches, assistants, junior coaches may be allowed on track or sideline. No coaches on field during halftime.
- iv. NO above/below level athletes are allowed on track or field spotting stunts or filling in for an absent athlete.

**d. Divisions:**

- i. If an organization does not have a Jr. Novice team, their 6, 7, 8-year-olds may move up to the Novice team. 6-year-olds are considered a Mascot unless they level up.
- ii. Mascots may only cheer at the Jr. Novice and Novice level.
  - 1. Any character mascots must be a registered athlete in the athlete books with all forms completed.
  - 2. Mascots must have two uniform differences.

**e. Level-Up Certification:** Level-ups are used to move an athlete up (1) level with having (1) year prior experience at the advisor's discretion. No approval needed from the MVFL Board.

**f. Exception Request Application:** Exceptions are used for any reason outside the current MVFL Rules and Regulations. All Exceptions must have approval from the local board and presented to the MVFL Cheer Board for approval.

**g. Participation:**

- i. **Smaller Programs:** Smaller groups may participate as one squad, but stunting must be based on appropriate age divisions.
- ii. **MVFL Participation:** Athletes are to participate in sanctioned MVFL pre-season, regular season and post-season games or activities that their organization's football team is participating in. Non-MVFL sanctioned events must have written approval by the local board and notify the MVFL Cheer Board of said changes. Prior to participating in any event, appropriate insurance coverage must be submitted to MVFL Board.
  - 1. Competition squads and their performances, practices and activities do not fall under the MVFL guidelines as they are a considered a separate entity and is not MVFL sanctioned.
    - a. All non-sanctioned events must have approval by their local board, the MVFL Cheer Board and the MVFL Board. Prior to any event, appropriate insurance coverage must be submitted to the MVFL Executive Secretary.

iii. **Cheer Coaches:** All cheer advisors, head coaches and assistant coaches must complete an online Pop Warner Course, Y101PW, in order to receive their coach badge. Coaches that do not complete the training, will not be allowed on the sidelines during game and cannot conduct practice sessions. If a coach is added

during the season, they must complete the same required training. Cheer advisors will turn in the completed Y101PW certificates to the MVFL Cheer Representative to be eligible to obtain their organizations badges. Jr. Coaches are not required to complete this training.

- iv. **Cheer Clinic/Camp:** Teams have the option of attending cheer clinic/camp. The MVFL Cheer Board and team advisors will work to contract a certified cheer instructor to teach skills, techniques, progression and stunting while focusing on safety.

#### h. **Stunting:**

- i. **Mascots Stunting:**

- 1. Mascots are permitted to do stunts within waist level on two feet with feet never going above the waist level. Stepping out of stunts ONLY; NO cradling permitted. Mascots can ONLY be stunted by Mascots or Jr. Novice athletes.

- ii. **Cheerleader Stunting:** MVFL will follow the JAMZ Youth Cheer Level Grid up to YCADA Level 4. Levels to be determined by cheer advisor based on ability of each squad. Current JAMZ Level Grid will be provided by MVFL Cheer Representative. If a team performs illegal stunting, video of performance must be sent to MVFL Cheer Representative for review. If determined illegal, organization will be subject to violation Section IX.

- 1. No sideline stunting on dirt tracks for Mascots.

- 2. Level 1 – Sideline stunting allowed for Jr. Novice and Novice.

- 3. Level 2 – Sideline stunting allowed for Jr. Varsity and Varsity.

- iii. **Jamboree Stunting:** Stunting at the jamboree will be at the cheer advisor's discretion. Squads must be uniformed per the cheer advisor's discretion.

- i. **Athlete Card (cheer card):** MVFL athlete cards must be carried and presented at every game.

- j. **Certification of Athlete Books:** All books will be certified prior to jamboree. If for any reason an athlete or athletes will not be present at the jamboree, the athlete's card can be certified at the first game that athlete attends by the opposing team. Teams will bring athlete books with all documentation paper clipped to the outside of the plastic sheeting. Teams must supply a pre-season roster at the time of the book signing.

- k. **Certification Requirements:** In order to certify an athlete, each team must have a copy of the athlete's card, a valid physical, a certified copy of the athlete's birth certificate and the AB2007 acknowledgement form signed by both the parent/guardian and athlete. A photo is required on the athlete's card. The team books must also have a completed copy of their organization roster.

- i. **Athlete Card:** All athlete's information must be included on the MVFL Athlete Card on white cardstock paper. Any athletes that have an approved Level-up Certification, an approved Exception Request, or an approved Transfer form, must be on blue card stock paper. All Mascots must be on pink card stock paper.

- ii. **Photo:** A photo of the athlete must be on Athlete Card.
  - iii. **Valid Physical:** All physicals must on the MVFL Physical Form or a physician's form, both must be stamped and signed by the physician in the calendar year to be eligible to participate. Any restrictions must be noted on form.
  - iv. **Proof of Age:** A certificate of live birth issued by the county or state. If the certificate is unobtainable, the MVFL Board will have final approval for athlete's participation by a majority vote.
  - v. **Proof of Grade Level:** Proof of incoming grade level will need to be given to program, copy of last (end of year) report card, letter from school or district of ingoing school grade level.
  - vi. **AB2007 Acknowledgement:** The AB2007 Acknowledgement form must be signed by both the parent/guardian and the athlete. Must be kept with Athlete Card.
- I. Certification Procedure:**
- i. MVFL Cheer Board will sign off on all athlete books at cheer book signing meeting.
  - ii. Each advisor or head coach must sign off athlete card prior to any MVFL functions.
  - iii. Two representatives from opposing teams will review all the forms for compliance. They will certify the compliant forms and insure they are in proper order. When compliance is met, they each will sign the individual athlete card. If there is missing or non-compliant paperwork, the team has until the next game to correct it and get it signed off by the opposing team.
  - iv. Any discrepancies found at a later date must be corrected immediately or athlete may be deemed ineligible.
  - v. Athletes may not change squads after athlete card has been signed by two representatives from opposing teams.

## IV. ROSTERS

### a. Roster Submissions and Terms:

#### i. Pre-Season Rosters:

1. Must be presented at the book signing to MVFL Cheer Representative. MVFL Cheer Representative will consolidate and turn into the MVFL Executive Secretary.
2. Each team is required to bring **(13)** copies of each team roster separated by level of play.

#### ii. Regular Season Rosters:

1. Must be submitted to the MVFL Cheer Representative by Game Day Week 4 and forwarded to the MVFL Executive Secretary.
2. Rosters may be faxed or emailed.
3. Athletes can move up to a higher level, but once a game is played at the higher level, the athlete cannot return to the lower level.

#### iii. Post Season Rosters:

1. Must be submitted to the MVFL Cheer Representative by the Play-off Seeding Meeting and forwarded to the MVFL Executive Secretary.
2. Rosters may be faxed or emailed.

- b. **Roster Requirements:** Rosters must be complete, signed as requested and in compliance with all MVFL Rules and Regulations. They will include name, age, birth date and address of athlete.
  - i. **Combined Teams:** All athletes on combined teams must be included on (1) roster.
  - ii. **Mascots:** Mascots will be added to the team assigned at the Jr. Novice/Novice Level. Mascot information will be identified in ITALIC font at the end of the roster.
  
- c. **Roster Size:** Organizations should strive to meet the following criteria of team divisions. The total number of athletes you are allowed to roster for the Jr. Novice, Novice, Jr. Varsity and Varsity Divisions shall not exceed (160).
  - i. Jr. Novice Division                      Maximum number of athletes is 40
  - ii. Novice Division                            Maximum number of athletes is 40
  - iii. Jr. Varsity Division                    Maximum number of athletes is 40
  - iv. Varsity Division                           Maximum number of athletes is 40
  
- d. **New Athlete:**
  - i. **New Athlete:** A new athlete is one that has not participated in any organized youth cheer program at this age or grade level.
  - ii. **Procedure for Adding New Athletes:** Athletes being added must comply with all pre-season eligibility requirements and send all appropriate information to the MVFL Board. For teams with waiting lists, new athletes must come from the waiting list.
  - iii. **Final Day to Add to Roster:** The final day an athlete is eligible to be added to the roster is by Game Day Week 4.
  - iv. **Eligibility Date:** Once the MVFL Board has received the eligibility information, the new athlete may start practicing once they meet eligibility.
  
- e. **Elevating Athletes:** (Level-up/Exception) Elevated athletes must practice at least (3) times with the higher-level team before they can participate in a league game at the higher level.
  
- f. **Post Season Games:** Post season games must be cheered with the roster that was in effect as of the Play-off Seeding Meeting. No athletes may be added or elevated for post season games after the post season roster has been submitted. Teams may petition the MVFL Board for exceptions. Post season games are not considered as regular season games. The post season roster must include cheer athletes at each level.

## V. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

- a. **Team Uniform:** Cheer teams planning to change team colors, must get the approval of the MVFL Board.
  - i. **Game Uniform:** Athletes must have game uniform as required by each organization at all sanctioned MVFL games and scrimmages.
  - ii. **Mascot Uniform:** Must have (2) identifying uniform differences.



## VI. PRACTICE PROCEDURES

- a. **Practice Schedule:** All teams must file their practice schedule, location, times and dates with the MVFL Executive Secretary prior to any practice beginning for that season. Any change in practice schedules also requires approval of the MVFL Board. Approval may be given by phone, in person or with written correspondence. Jamboree is considered a practice. Cheer to follow suit with football practices.
- b. **Discipline for Breaking Practice Schedule:** Any team breaking any approved practice procedure will be brought before the MVFL Board for action as the Board deems necessary.
- c. **To Start Practice:** To begin practice, all athletes must officially sign up with a team and meet all the requirements stated in these Rules & Regulations.
- d. **Pre-Season Practices:** Practices are as follows:
  - i. **Practices:**
    - 1. **1<sup>st</sup> week:** (5) practices per week. Conditioning and learning new sideline cheers for the season/no stunting
    - 2. **2<sup>nd</sup> week:** (5) practices per week. Conditioning & stunting
    - 3. **3<sup>rd</sup> week:** (5) practices per week. Jamboree is considered a practice
    - 4. **4<sup>th</sup> week:** (4) practices per week. Before 1<sup>st</sup> Game
    - 5. **5<sup>th</sup> week and after:** (3) practices per week
  - ii. **Camps/Clinics:** If the organization chooses to attend to a cheer clinic, the organization is allowed to cancel (1) day practice to allow the athlete to rest either before or after the clinic.
  - iii. **Physical Conditioning:** All athletes must complete (10) hours of physical conditioning to be eligible to participate in jamboree/scrimmage or game.
- e. **Practice Time Limits:** Practices will run no longer than (2) hours at any session. Time spent in team meetings is not counted as part of the 2-hour practice sessions.
- f. **Dual Practices:** Teams are allowed (2) dual practices during the year as long as they stay within the normal practice schedule.

## VII. GAME PROCEDURES

- a. **MVFL Rules:** Refer to 2021 Football Rules & Regulations.
- b. **Halftime Routines:** Cheer is allowed 2 minutes and 30 seconds (2:30) at halftime to perform their routines.
- c. **Ice Chests/Outside Food or Drink:**
  - i. All teams must post these signs at their admission gates:
    - 1. No ice chests will be allowed into any game except TEAM ice chests.

- a. **Ice Chest Badges:** (4) badges, (1) per level & (1) per team, will be issued specifically for personnel to bring in TEAM ice chests ONLY. Ice chests will hold team drinks and healthy snacks.
2. No outside food or drinks.

## VIII. EJECTION

- a. **Athlete Ejection:** Any athlete shall be disqualified from participating in the remainder of the game and will be ineligible for the team's next game. **NOTE** Any athlete who plays in the next game following his/her ejection will be treated as an ineligible athlete for that game.
- b. **Coach Ejection:** Any coach shall be disqualified from participating in the remainder of the game and will be ineligible for the next game.
- c. **Violations:** If a rule is violated a fine will be imposed to the organization as in the 3-strike rule. 1<sup>st</sup> offence \$100, 2<sup>nd</sup> offence \$150, 3<sup>rd</sup> offence is expulsion of the coach
- d. **Appellate Procedures:** Any athlete or coach may appeal his/her one game suspension to his/her local board who shall establish appellate procedures to determine the eligibility of each athlete that is ejected from a game. Any head or assistant coach ejected from a contest will be disqualified from participating in the remainder of that game and will be prohibited from coaching or attending the next game for that organization. **NOTE** Any coach who coaches his/her team or attends the next game following his/her ejection will be referred to the MVFL Board for disciplinary action. See By-Laws "Incidents".

## IX. ALL-STARS

- a. **All-Star Committee:** A sub-committee of a minimum of (3) organizations each will be formed to organize the general operations and oversee rules and guidelines prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>. Committee changes will be subject to MVFL Board approval.