

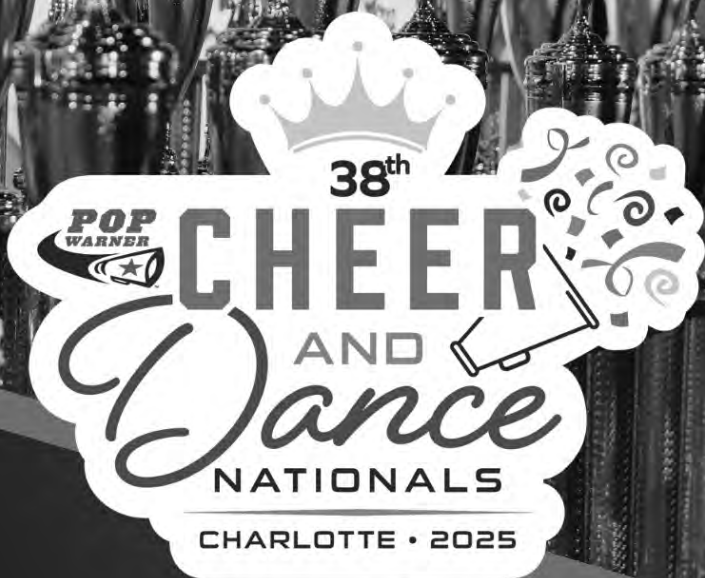


# Official Rules

**Cheer & Dance · 2025-2026**

July 15, 2025 – July 14, 2026

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## **SPECIAL DEDICATION:**

To All Pop Warner Coaches & Administrators,

This book is dedicated to you. The YCADA team acknowledges the time, passion and sacrifice required by everyone who cares about making your program exceptional. You are creating experiences and memories that last a lifetime.

Each season YCADA re-analyzes, revises, and clarifies the safety rules and scoring guidelines. Knowing your busy lives, our goal is to make as few changes as possible while keeping safety and clarity our core focus.

All of us at YCADA wish you a safe, exciting, and rewarding season.

**Marty Grogan**

**Co-Chair - YCADA Board of Directors**



# General Code of Conduct

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. is committed to cultivating a safe and welcoming environment for its regional and national events and programs that encourages and promotes good sportsmanship by student-athletes, parents, coaches, administrators and other spectators. We ask that event participants and attendees cooperate in being respectful at all practice and competition venues, partner hotels and/or ancillary venues throughout the course of the event. All those involved with the event are expected to refrain from the following behaviors:

1. Acting in a way that is unruly, disruptive or illegal in nature.
2. Intoxication or other signs of impairment that may potentially result in bad behavior.
3. Excessive use of profanities and other vulgar language that interfere with other attendees' ability to enjoy the event.
4. Using bigoted, demeaning or abusive or other disruptive and intimidating language and/or gestures.
5. Verbal or physical harassment of officials, athletes and coaches before, during and following the competition.
6. Disrupting the progress of competition (including physically entering or throwing objects onto the playing field or competition mat).
7. Interfering with or failing to abide by security or emergency procedures or response.
8. Displaying signs that contain offensive language, or any graphic art that may be deemed disrespectful.
9. Defacing, destruction or theft of property associated with the event, including property of the opposing team or other athletes, including officials, as well as official venues.
10. Violence or threats of violence against other individuals at any official venue.
11. Publicly criticizing or making derogatory statements of an official, opposing teams, event personnel or its policies, or other individuals associated with the event. This includes comments with respect to their conduct, character, competence, integrity or appearance. Note: social media is deemed a public forum.
12. Failing to follow instructions of event personnel.
13. Any behavior which otherwise violates conduct codes set by partner venues, hotels or ancillary venues including but not limited to theme parks, as enforced by those properties.

Failure to abide by these expectations are grounds for removal from competition. Pop Warner reserves the right to remove individuals or the entire team. Depending on the infraction, a one-year ban from Pop Warner events and programs will be considered. A repeat offense of the same infraction may result in a permanent ban. All removals will be without refund.

# Members Code of Conduct

In addition to the aforementioned General Code of Conduct, all Pop Warner coaches, administrators and other program volunteers shall:

1. Create a positive, safe and healthy environment, free of abuse and harassment, for all athletes and their families.
2. Not criticize athletes in front of spectators, but reserve constructive criticism for later, in private, or in the presence of team members if others might benefit.
3. Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best ability of said officials.
4. Not criticize an opposing team, its athletes, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
5. Emphasize that good athletes strive to be good students and that both are physically and mentally alert.
6. Strive to make every athletic activity serve as a training ground for life, and a basis for good mental and physical health.
7. Remove from a game, competition or practice any athlete when even slightly in doubt about his/her health, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
8. Emphasize that winning is the result of good teamwork.
9. Not engage in excessive sideline coaching and shall not leave the bench area/coaches' designated seating area to shout instructions from the sidelines or competition mat.
10. Together with team officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators at all times. Any fan who becomes a nuisance and out of control will be asked to leave.
11. Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
12. Not receive any payment, in cash or kind, for services as a volunteer or athlete involved in Pop Warner. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status. Choreography Exception: Teams that register and participate in Pop Warner League Championship/Showcase, advance to Region Championships and Nationals, if applicable, are permitted to hire/pay for routine choreography. Choreography Clinic permitted as needed for skills.
13. Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter, except as specifically prescribed by the athlete's physician.

# Members Code of Conduct

14. Not permit an ineligible athlete to participate in a game/competition.
15. Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
16. Not possess or drink alcoholic beverages and/or use illegal substance(s) on either the game, practice field/practice area or competition venue.
17. Not smoke, vape and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field.
18. Uphold all rules and regulations regarding Pop Warner programs.
19. Refrain from engaging in any action within or outside Pop Warner which in PWLS sole & absolute discretion reflects negatively upon, or causes embarrassment to, the Pop Warner program.

If any of these rules are broken, Pop Warner or its member league shall have the authority to impose a penalty including permanent removal from the program.



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Please note: All rule changes that take effect in 2025-2026 are underlined in this rule book.

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# Part I: The Pop Warner Program

## **NATIONAL OFFICE & REGIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAMS:**

Pop Warner is led by a national staff and supported by an extended volunteer staff across eight (8) regions. The number and composition of regions is determined and may be changed from time to time by the Joint Advisory Committee of Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. (PWLS). The National Office may be reached at: P.O. Box 307 Langhorne, PA 19047 or via [www.popwarner.com](http://www.popwarner.com). When contacting the national office, please state your name, note your team identify your association and league, and clearly and extensively describe the issue at hand.

## **NATIONAL REMARKS**

PWLS is dedicated to the athletes who participate in Pop Warner and to their safety and enjoyment. The rules for Pop Warner activity of any type as published in this book are to be followed scrupulously. Failure to enforce these rules can result in legal action, dismissal and/or loss of charter. Each family and each adult volunteer in the program must be covered by excess medical and liability insurance of some type. Although participation in Pop Warner is statistically safe, such insurance should include coverage for “participant risk.” All programs must have minimum insurance limits of \$100,000 Medical, \$1,000,000 General Liability, and \$1,000,000 Sexual Abuse/Molestation in order to participate.

All Pop Warner programs and activities are open to youth – males and females – including “mixed/co-ed” teams.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL**

The Pop Warner Administrative Manual is designed to keep each League and Association current on all administrative matters, as well as to facilitate the daily operational management of those local organizations. This Rule Book and the Administrative Manual are not the personal property of the volunteer, but belong to PWLS.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Pop Warner Little Scholars is to enable youth athletes to benefit from participation in team sports and activities in a structured environment. Through this active participation, Pop Warner programs teach fundamental values, skills and knowledge that young people will use throughout their lives.

# Part I: The Pop Warner Program

## GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE POP WARNER PROGRAM

Pop Warner is an international program operated for the benefit of its youth athletes. Since 1929, the program's philosophy has been that academics and athletics go hand-in-hand. At every level, Pop Warner seeks to develop well-rounded young athletes who learn not only the fundamentals of football, cheer & dance, but also the importance of education, in an atmosphere conducive to developing sound mind, body and character – and having an enjoyable time along the way!

The objectives of Pop Warner are to inspire youth, regardless of race, creed, religion or national origin, to practice the ideals of sportsmanship, scholarship, and physical fitness, as reflected in the life of the late Glenn Scobie “Pop” Warner.

Pop Warner strives to make the game fun for all athletes. The program stresses learning lessons of value that will transcend their participation in Pop Warner, such as: self-discipline, teamwork, determination, friendship, leadership, and good sportsmanship. With such goals in mind, and by providing an opportunity to participate in an organized, supervised environment with emphasis on maximum safety and participation, Pop Warner offers young athletes a unique and memorable opportunity to excel.



# Part II: Pop Warner Structure

## DEFINITIONS

### S1: LEAGUE

The term “League” has two definitions, each separate and distinct as applicable:

- A. It is a legal term to define a type of Federation/Conference, **or**
- B. It is a grouping of teams of the same ages and weights (playing levels) into a “league” for scheduling purposes.

League shall be utilized and referenced herein place of Federation and Conference. A League consists of a minimum of four (4) teams playing in the same playing level. Leagues are Chartered and managed by PWLS with the assistance of the appropriate Region Management Team. All Leagues must declare a commitment to their charter agreement annually and remain in good standing. Pop Warner national staff shall have the right to attend any League/ Association function with or without notice.

### S2: ASSOCIATION

Associations are organizations that sponsor and administer one or more teams. They raise money, buy equipment, recruit coaches, secure fields, secure indoor practice facilities, etc. Each Association shall have Association Board members to be called the Director of Football or Football Commissioner, as well as a Director of Cheer & Dance, Cheer & Dance Commissioner (or whatever other term is locally applicable), who are equal voting members of the Association Board and responsible only to that board.

Associations are characterized by specific geographical coverage. In cities, they often adopt commonly understood neighborhood names. In the suburbs, they usually take the town name. In rural areas, an association name may embrace an entire county (or a substantial part of it). An association’s recruiting area is approved by its League and is normally consistent with its geographical name. When there are no associations, a League is intramural.

### S3: ADMINISTRATORS

All League & Association Administrators must be at least 21 years of age.

### S4: TEAM

A team is the universal, basic unit of organization. At minimum, a team consists of a group of athletes organized under the direction of a coaching staff in a given playing level. Each football team may have a maximum of three rostered Pop Warner Cheer & Dance teams.

# Part II: Pop Warner Structure

## S5: LEVEL OF PLAY – AGE AND SKILL DIVISIONS

Levels of play for tackle football include: Age-Based 6u, 7u, 8u, 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u and 14u. Age/Weight divisions are Tiny-Mite, Mitey-Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity and Varsity. For flag football, divisions are 5u, 6u, 7u, 8u, 9u, 10u, 11u, 12u, 13u, 14u, 15u, 16u, 17u, 18u. Other programs are available for 7v7 non-contact and Challenger. More details are listed in Football, Rule 1, S4.

Division is used to designate DI, DII, DIII or a sub-grouping of a League, such as “National-American divisions” or “East-West divisions.”

**Cheer & Dance Age Divisions:** Junior Tiny Mite (JTM), Tiny-Mite (TM), Mitey-Mite (MM), Junior Peewee (JP), Peewee (P), Junior Varsity (JV), Varsity (V), Bantam (B), Challenger (CH).

Pop Warner offers YCADA Skill Divisions: Show Cheer 1 Ltd. (S,M,L), Show Cheer 1-3 (S,M,L), Show Cheer 4 (S. M, L, NB), Core Cheer Ltd., Core Cheer, Sideline Performance Cheer (S, M, L), Pom Performance (NB), Theme Dance (NB) and Hip Hop (NB). (NB = Natural Break applied if division has four (4) or more.)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE RULES

**S1:** The rules contained herein are required to be enforced by each PWLS association and league. Failure to do so shall be subject to the penalties defined herein, in the PWLS Administrative Manual and in any other PWLS Policies.

**S2:** For all purposes, the Pop Warner Cheer & Dance season shall be defined as July 15 through July 14. Meanwhile, the Pop Warner Tackle Football season is July 15 through December 31, and the 7v7 season typically runs in the spring, with the season concluding no later than June 30. Flag Football is available in the spring and the fall, with the season dates determined locally.

All Leagues, administrative personnel, coaches, athletes are subject to disciplinary action for violations of Pop Warner rules and regulations occurring at any time during a stated season.

**S3:** No Rules will be added after July 15 unless required for safety reason(s).

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

### ARTICLE 1: POWERS/AUTHORITY OF LEAGUE

**S1:** The League has, among its powers, the obligation and authority to enforce National rules. Leagues will follow all Pop Warner Rules as printed in this book or their Charter shall be in jeopardy.

**S2:** Leagues are responsible to verify accuracy of all scores/results from League Playoffs and/or Championships. If an error is found in reporting, leagues are responsible to correct and advance the proper team.

### ARTICLE 2: BOUNDARIES

**S1:** A League is responsible for the enforcement of its own boundaries. However, it shall not infringe upon the territorial rights or boundaries of another chartered League.

**S2:** Transfer between Leagues: Any team or association seeking to withdraw from one League to join another League may do so only with the prior written agreement of the Leagues involved and with the written concurrence of the appropriate Regional Director, after consultation with the Vice Regional Director and Regional Cheer & Dance Coordinator, and under the direction of the national office. In the event the two Leagues cannot agree upon the terms of the move, the Regional Director, under the direction of the national office, shall rule on the matter, with either party retaining the right to appeal the decision to the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner.

**S3:** Leagues must establish boundaries for their participating associations. Boundaries will be set by a defined, readily recognizable format, (i.e., town limits, school districts, streets, etc.) Failure to establish and operate boundaries in this manner can result in revocation of charter. Athletes found to be participating outside boundaries they reside, without proper release from both Leagues & Associations involved, subject their team to forfeiture of all games played/competitions.

### S4: ATHLETE WAIVERS

Leagues must establish written policies for their Associations pertaining to athlete waivers. Waiver requests must be submitted with cause by a parent or legal guardian to both Presidents/Coordinators of the affected Leagues & Associations. Leagues must approve all waivers between their Associations and the Regional Director or his/her designee must approve all cross-league/region waivers. It is strongly recommended that all Waiver requests be resolved by the first practice.

Waivers shall only be granted upon written application executed and verified by both League & Association Presidents involved in



# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

the Waiver request, attesting that the Waiver meets at least one of the following criteria but not limited to, for waiver allowance:

- A. Valid family circumstances (divorce, custody determinations, court decisions, etc.) in which the athlete effectively resides in multiple locations.
- B. In cases where the team is full.
- C. In cases where an age appropriate team does not exist.
- D. In demonstrated (proven) hardship cases.

All Football Waivers related to the fall tackle season expire annually on December 31. Cheer & Dance Waivers expire annually on July 14. Only waivers which serve in the best interest of Pop Warner both locally and nationally will be given consideration.

**S5:** Under the direction of the Executive Director, the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner shall have final non-appealable authority over any/all League boundary and waiver disputes.

### **ARTICLE 3: RESTRICTION AGAINST DUAL MEMBERSHIP**

No League or member association holding a Pop Warner charter may enter any one of its teams into membership in any other youth football, cheer or dance organization and no adult volunteer may serve on the board of a Pop Warner Region, League or member Association while concurrently serving on the board of another youth football, cheer or dance organization. Any individual, League or member Association in violation of this rule shall be immediately dismissed from Pop Warner.

### **ARTICLE 4: ANNUAL LEAGUE CHARTER APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & VARIANCE OF RULES**

The Charter Committee for Pop Warner consists of select National Staff members, as well as Region Directors. They are responsible for reviewing, granting, suspending or revoking the privileges and conditions of the local league's charter. When a local league wishes to request a waiver of a specific rule or regulation, it must submit in writing to the Region Director, who will forward it with their recommendation to the Charter Committee. The appropriate Region Director will present the variance to the Charter Committee for a decision.

**S1:** Variances shall only be granted upon a written application executed and verified by the President of the League, attesting that the variance sought is based upon good cause and can be shown to be in the best interest of Pop Warner athletes assuring their safety. Variances are defined by one (1) of three (3) categories: Football only, Cheer & Dance only, Football and Cheer & Dance.

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

**S2:** Programs granted a variance forfeit their rights to compete in Region and National Championships for the current season.

**S3:** No program granted a variance may compete in post season bowl games/competitions that year, unless the opposing team has an identical variance.

**S4:** All variances expire annually on July 14 every year. Only variances which serve in the best interest of Pop Warner both locally and nationally will be given consideration.

### ARTICLE 5: COACHES REQUIREMENTS

Details related to this article are now included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

### ARTICLE 6: REGISTRATION

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has officially registered. Registration consists of completing and submitting items S1-S4 in this Article in addition to any/all local required forms.

The sign-up fee, if any, may be collected at this time. All coach trainees and student demonstrators under the age of 18 must be registered/certified in the same manner as all other minors participating in Pop Warner programs. All candidates must furnish the following in order to be registered and before starting practice:

#### S1: PARENTAL CONSENT

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has officially registered. Registration consists of completing and submitting items S1-S4 in this Article in addition to any/all local required forms.

#### S2: MEDICAL FORM

A signed medical form provided by PWLS is required to be submitted each year by a parent or legal guardian of each youth participant attests that the youth athlete has been given a medical examination within the past two years, is physically fit, and has no observable conditions which would contra-indicate playing football or participating in cheer & dance.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** A person with a loss of limb may participate provided that the individual has a signed statement of approval from an examining physician and that the use of the artificial limb is no more dangerous to athletes than the corresponding human limb, and does not place an opponent at a disadvantage.

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

### **S3: PROOF OF AGE**

A certified copy of the birth certificate on file bearing the seal of the issuing office of the state of birth is the best guarantee of reliability of claimed date of birth and is the form of proof most recommended.

Passports are also reliable. Military ID cards are acceptable. Certified wallet-size certificates issued by a state or commonwealth are acceptable. Any other alleged “proof of birth date,” including photocopies of “originals,” are to be accepted only upon the willingness of the team administration to have its schedule forfeited should fraudulent application later be determined. Pop Warner does not mandate retaining the originals but verifying them.

### **S4: SCHOLASTIC FITNESS**

Proof of satisfactory progress in school is required. A 2.0/70% or the equivalent shall be the minimum grade point average acceptable to participate. In cases of doubt, conflict of opinion, or if a valid report card is not submitted, the nationally published scholastic eligibility form shall be used and deemed final. NOTE: Like all rules herein this rule as it relates to scholastic grades may not be made more stringent by any team, association, or league. No local team may be allowed to participate in Region/National sponsored championships or bowl games if it has not met the nationally published scholastic requirements and may be subject to other penalties.

Academic verification will take place at the local level. Leagues do not need to keep a record of each individual athlete's GPA, but must affirm eligibility. Each League Scholastics Coordinator is required to file an official Pop Warner “League Confirmation of Compliance with Scholastic Fitness” affidavit annually with the National Office. This affidavit will state that each athlete on the certified roster meets the minimum academic standard and is eligible to participate.

### **ARTICLE 7: FORMATION OF TEAMS**

Tryouts of any kind within Pop Warner are prohibited. Tryouts are defined as any means used to ascertain the level whereby a participant is placed on a team, including assessments, evaluations, or any other method used to place a participant in Pop Warner. For more information regarding formation of teams, please see the specific rules in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

### **ARTICLE 8: MANDATORY CUTS**

Any participant must be cut who:

**S1:** Is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells team management he/she does not really want to play football or compete in cheer & dance.

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

**S2:** Refuses or cannot furnish the 4 required items: Parental Consent, Medical Form, Proof of Age, and Scholastic Fitness.

**S3:** Is a member of any other organized Pop Warner program that retains his/her rights is the one whose boundary includes the athlete's primary residence.

**S4:** Is to be simultaneously rostered and participating on another Pop Warner team in the same sport, or simultaneously rostered and participating in other youth football, cheer or dance leagues, teams and events that are not under Pop Warner governance. (Exceptions: See Football, Rule 21; See Cheer & Dance, Section V, S6).

**S5:** Attempts to intimidate fellow athletes in practice by word and/or physical deed. No refunding of fees shall be required.

**S6:** Is a recurring discipline problem (and then, only with the concurrence of the League).

### ARTICLE 9: VOLUNTARY CUTS

An athlete shall be considered a voluntary or "self-cut" athlete when he/she simply no longer shows up at practices, games or competitions of his/her own free will. While voluntary cuts are not charged to any team for the purpose of these regulations, a coaching staff may attempt to disguise its cutting pattern by arranging practices in such a way as to discourage athletes of lesser ability into quitting on their own. While these practices are not common, they have been known to occur and are considered intentional avoidance of the rules and regulations and are, therefore, punishable as a result of a hearing.

If a team loses 20% or more of its assigned athletes prior to certification, it is mandatory that the Association investigate the causes for the athletes voluntarily leaving the team, and take whatever appropriate action may be needed. The results of this investigation shall be reported to the League and the League shall have final authority as to whether appropriate actions were taken.

### ARTICLE 10: CERTIFICATION

**S1:** Certification is that process whereby the team or association will file with the League and Region of which it is a member, a complete roster of athletes for the regular season schedule.

**S2:** A roster is certified once the Association and League have approved the roster through Pop Warner's online Roster Software. A certified roster is one that the League has accepted at a preseason session with its teams, based upon information submitted, and the teams are restricted to these athletes for the balance of the season (except for allowed "Drops" and "Adds," see Article 12).

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

**S3:** Certification will be accomplished within the official Roster Software. All rosters must be completed online prior to the first regular season game to be certified.

**S4:** To be certified onto a team roster, an athlete shall qualify under the following:

- A. Eligibility according to residence shall be decided by the League when the candidate resides in an area other than that authorized for the Association by the League and on file at PWLS.
- B. Each Association shall attempt to assign a first-time athlete to the lowest age and skill division for which he/she is qualified.
- C. Once certified for a particular age level, an athlete shall not be permitted to recertify to a lower age level during the current season under any circumstances, but based on the information available shall be permitted to approve recertification to a higher age/skill level.
- D. Ages shall be verified by birth certificate as specified in Article 6, S3.
- E. Associations will require each athlete to upload a current photo to the roster software that is no more than two years old.

### ARTICLE 11: RETENTION OF ELIGIBILITY

Once certified, an athlete or Coach Trainee/Student Demonstrator must meet the following requirements to retain eligibility:

**S1:** Transfer policy in case of change of residence will be decided by the League.

**S2:** Retain parental consent.

**S3:** Maintain sound physical condition.

**S4:** Continue to maintain sound scholastic standards. In cases of doubt, a League shall have the right to require a written statement by the school administration, which shall be deemed final.

**S5:** An athlete or Coach Trainee/Student Demonstrator serving a school suspension is not eligible to participate in Pop Warner until the day after their school suspension is completed.

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

### ARTICLE 12: DROPS AND ADDS

**S1:** A team may add athletes to its certified roster as long as said roster was certified below the maximum number permitted, or to replace those originally certified and no longer on the team for any valid reason as outlined herein.

**S2:** Each League shall establish its own Drops & Adds cutoff date, but no athlete may be added to any roster after September 15 of the current season.

**S3:** All Fall Season Team Rosters must have active status in Pop Warner's Roster Software by September 15.

### ARTICLE 13: NO ALL-STARS

All-Star teams are prohibited in Pop Warner. Pop Warner Football fall season rosters are valid from July 15-December 31, while Pop Warner Cheer & Dance rosters are valid from July 15-July 14 of the current year. Any coach or athlete found to be competing with All-Star athletes from different rosters of regular season teams will forfeit future eligibility for all Pop Warner programs.

### ARTICLE 14: AWARDS

**S1:** In compliance with the team concept and in view of the ages of Pop Warner athletes, no athlete will be singled out for presentation of any special award. This includes, but it not limited to "best lineman" and "best offensive back" in football, "best flyer" and "best jumper" in cheer & dance, and generally "most valuable athlete" on any team. Such adulation should be given to an athlete after his Pop Warner days, if he/she justly deserves it by performance or achievement. Individual awards may be presented, but must be given to all team members.

**S2: SPECIAL NOTE FOR ATHLETES:** Awards for individual performances displayed on the uniform, helmet or any piece of equipment are prohibited.

### ARTICLE 15: PRACTICE

Details related to this article are now included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

### ARTICLE 16: CAMPS

Details related to this article are now included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

### ARTICLE 17: IMPORTANT POINT—MEDICAL & CONCUSSIONS

The home team or hosting organization has the responsibility to provide medical coverage at each game or competition. In the absence of a physician and or ambulance on the site, the minimum safety requirement will be the presence of one individual associated with the home team/host organization who is currently EMT qualified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety, the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety ([www.sportssafety.org](http://www.sportssafety.org)), or their equivalent.

Work together with your local EMTs to establish an emergency plan that fits your specific area and needs. Your emergency plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. introduce or identify trainer/health care provider to visiting coach;
- B. home team/host organization review emergency plan with visiting team;
- C. designated duties for coaching staff and or athletes;
- D. specific directions to your facility for emergency medical service (EMS);
- E. emergency numbers,
- F. injury report forms;
- G. treatment authorization card;
- H. list of administrators that the coach is required to contact.

Practice your emergency plan early in the season, and repeat often throughout the season. A similar plan should be in place for teams traveling to away games and competitions.

All teams are recommended to have a staff member carry the entire team's medical release forms and emergency numbers for all athletes in case in an emergency their parent(s) or guardian must be reached. Having the family physician's number opposite the athlete's name is also recommended.

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

### **S1: CONCUSSION RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES:**

An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or a head injury in a practice, game or competition shall be removed from practice, play or competition at that time based on evaluation and determination by the Head Coach. However, if an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional is on site and available to render such evaluation, that person shall always have final authority as to removal or return to play/competition of the athlete. When an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional is not present, and a parent or guardian of the injured athlete is serving as head coach, the final authority on removal of a athlete shall rest with the league president, association president or the top ranking assistant head coach; whomever is present and highest in the Pop Warner chain of command.

Any Pop Warner athlete who has been removed from practice, play or competition due to a head injury or suspected concussion may not return to Pop Warner activities until the athlete has been evaluated by a currently licensed medical professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and receives written clearance to return to play from that licensed practitioner.

In the absence of an official licensed athletic trainer or other official qualified medical professional, at Pop Warner regional events, the Regional Director and/or Regional Cheer & Dance Coordinator shall be the final authority on removal of an athlete for a suspected head injury or concussion. At National events, the National Football Commissioner or National Cheer & Dance Commissioner, or in their absence the President & CEO, shall be the final authority on removal of an athlete for a suspected head injury or concussion.

Pop Warner recommends that all decisions be made in the best interest of the athlete and that when any doubt exists as to the health of the athletes, they sit out. Please check [www.popwarner.com](http://www.popwarner.com) or [www.cdc.gov/concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion) for Center for Disease Control (CDC) signs and symptoms chart for concussions.

### **ARTICLE 18: CHARGING ADMISSION**

Reasonable admission fees may be charged to attendees for entry into pre-season, regular season and postseason Pop Warner league, association and team events, however such admission fees shall not be borne by any active rostered individual who is partaking in the event, including both athletes and coaches, as well as all pertinent Pop Warner administrators; all of whom shall be admitted free of charge.



# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

### ARTICLE 19: PROTESTS

**S1:** Only protests involving the eligibility of an athlete shall be considered.

**S2:** Protests are decided in accordance with the administrative procedures of the League.

**S3:** Teams, Associations and Leagues have the responsibility to communicate protests as soon as they are known to exist. Lack of prompt notification may result in denial of the protest.

### ARTICLE 20: PATCH REQUIREMENT

All Pop Warner athletes must have the official Pop Warner patch displayed on every uniform for games and competitions in order to participate. More specific information on placement is included in the football and cheer & dance portions of the rule book.

Patches may be purchased through [www.popwarnershop.com](http://www.popwarnershop.com). All uniforms purchased through Pop Warner Authentic, Inc., are permitted to have the patch sublimated or silk screened directly to the uniform. Momentec Brands has the exclusive right to include a dye-sublimated patch onto its uniforms; no other manufacturer has that same right.

### ARTICLE 21: MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

**S1:** As a condition of service to a Pop Warner League, all member League and Association board members, coaches, administrators, team parents and other individuals on official, certified team rosters, are required to complete and submit an official "Pop Warner Volunteer Application" to their local Pop Warner Association or League. **Annual** background checks must be completed prior to the applicant assuming his/her duties for the current season, and should be submitted to the League President prior to the start of the current season. Refusal to submit a fully completed "Pop Warner Volunteer Application" annually must result in the immediate dismissal of the individual or denial of participation for the applicant.

**S2:** Each League shall require and be responsible for enforcing all league and association personnel to annually submit to the League President a fully completed official "Pop Warner Volunteer Application," prior to the applicant assuming his/her duties for the current season. The Volunteer Application must include signed permission from the applicant allowing the League or Association to perform the necessary background check. The official "Pop Warner Volunteer Application" shall only be modified in order to comply with local, state, provincial or national laws. Each League shall also

# Part III: Pop Warner Regulations

## All Programs

require and be responsible for enforcing that an Officer of each member Association complete and submit an official Pop Warner “Association Confirmation of Compliance with Background Checks” affidavit.

Each League is required to file an official Pop Warner “League Confirmation of Compliance with Background Checks” affidavit annually with the National Office. All volunteer applications and Association affidavits must be maintained by the League for a minimum of one year, but Pop Warner’s recommendation is for two years after the volunteer leaves the organization. Volunteers shall be defined as those persons who have been approved by the League to serve in that capacity.

**S3:** No League shall permit any of the above referenced persons to participate in any manner whose background check reveals a conviction for, or guilty plea to, any crime involving or against a minor. In addition, other charges and convictions may be an indication of an unfit volunteer, and therefore a League may prohibit any individual from participating as a volunteer if the League deems the individual unfit to work with minors, as long as the League applies the same criteria uniformly for all individuals seeking to volunteer.

**S4:** All Leagues must conduct a nationwide search that contains the applicable government sex offender registry data using a preferred background check provider or a government agency sponsored state search of criminal records. Additionally, if a League utilizes only a state sex offender registry check, that League must also perform a national database or a Federal background check search. If a local organization becomes aware of information, that an individual, including, but not limited to, volunteers, athletes and hired workers, has been convicted of or pled guilty to any crime involving or against a minor, the league must immediately contact the applicable government agency to confirm the accuracy of the information.

Upon confirmation of a conviction for, or guilty plea to, a crime against or involving a minor, the league must prohibit the individual from participating in any manner. Due to the fact that Pop Warner Little Scholars Inc. has no direct operational control over the selection of volunteers, each League shall be required to indemnify and hold harmless Pop Warner Little Scholars Inc. against all legal actions based upon allegations arising from a failure to enforce all or part of this regulation. Failure to comply with all or part of this regulation may result in the suspension or revocation of the league charter, the removal of league and/or association volunteers, ineligibility for participation in region and national play/competition, and as well as significant legal liability.



# Part IV: Enforcement Policy

## POLICE POWERS/HEARINGS & APPEALS

All Pop Warner organizations – Leagues, Associations, and Teams will be called upon from time to time to do the following:

- A. Resolve disputes between member organizations and individuals.
- B. Take action to enforce National and local rules and regulations.
- C. Discipline both adult and juvenile members.

## NOTE: NATIONAL POP WARNER DOES NOT HANDLE APPEALS.

Each League is advised to set up its own tribunal to handle matters in a timely fashion at the local level. WARNING: Failure to do so could result in being taken to court. The National Office will intervene only in rare instances at its sole discretion. Please refer to the Pop Warner Administrative Manual for hearings and appeals guidelines.

## MINIMUM MANDATED PENALTIES

Minimums are established to assure that the punishment for listed offenses will occur in a uniform fashion. More severe penalties may be levied where circumstances warrant or for repeated offenses.

## S1: ADULT OFFENSES

- A. **Ejection from Game/Competition:** Automatic one week suspension from practice, including the following game.
- B. **Endangerment of Juveniles:** Suspension for 1 year.
- C. **Fighting:** Suspension for 1 year.
- D. **Cheating:** Suspension for 1 year.
- E. **Threats:** Suspension for 1 year.
- F. **Gambling on Game/Competition Outcome:** Suspension for 1 year.
- G. **Lack of Cooperation/Obstruction:** Suspension until compliance is achieved.
- H. **Falsification of Official Documentation:** Suspension for 1 year. This would include, but not be limited to: parental consent, medical form, proof of age, proof of scholastic eligibility, and/or background screening forms.

Additional adult offenses that are specific to football include:

- A. **Run-Up-the-Score:** Probation unless found to be intentional, then suspension for 1 week.
- B. **Teaching Prohibited Offensive & Defensive Techniques:** Suspension for 1 year.
- C. **Violation of Mandatory Play Rule:** Probation unless found to be intentional, then suspension for 1 week.

Upon suspension of any penalty provided herein, an accused shall be placed on probation, among the general conditions of which shall be: (1) that the accused be and remain of good behavior and that he strictly enforce all rules and regulations of Pop Warner; and (2) that

## Part IV: Enforcement Policy

the accused prepare and submit to his League his/her written plan to supervise implementation of the Pop Warner Rules/Guidelines.

The failure of a convicted coach to comply with this provision will be deemed a second violation.

### **S2: JUVENILE OFFENSES**

Fighting, intimidation, disrespect for authority or blatant disregard for rules of competition shall be cause for ejection from a game/competition. Any juvenile ejected from any game/competition for cause shall be ineligible for participation in their next game/competition. If an ejection happens during the last game of the current season, the ejected juvenile will serve their 1 game suspension the first game of the following season. A second ejection during the same season shall be cause for removal from the team for the balance of that season. Any juvenile charged with criminal activity may be removed to ensure the safety of other athletes.

### **S3: TEAM AND ASSOCIATION OFFENSES**

- A. FAILURE TO KEEP FAITH WITH JUVENILES & PARENTS** is defined as any deliberate practice or failure of a team or association which placed the health, welfare and safety of juveniles in jeopardy, or exploits or treats them in such a manner that the juvenile becomes a “tool” of the team.

To file this charge, the violation must result from team or association policy, and not be an aberration of one individual. This implies that the practice is carried out by order of, or with the knowledge of, the officership, and no steps are taken to end it.

**MINIMUM PENALTY:** Probation of the organization coupled with permanent suspension of its president and all others who participated in the practice. Upon a second offense, suspension of the organization until all officers are removed.

- B. FIGHTING/RIOTING/INCITEMENT TO RIOT:** Game related: forfeiture of the game for first offense; forfeiture of the season for second offense within the same season. Scrimmage related: at the discretion of the League. Competition Related: forfeiture of the competition.

### **S4: REGION AND NATIONAL PLAYOFFS**

Investigations and hearings concerning Region and National Championships and Playoffs will be conducted by the National Office and/or appropriate Region Staff in accordance with Pop Warner's Dispute Resolution Policy as stated in the Administrative Manual and/or communicated by the National Office.

### **S5: ADDITIONAL OFFENSES**

Any and all other offenses which are committed by any party may be subject to the minimum penalty of probation.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## ORGANIZATION

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. (PWLS) has established one (1) set of Cheer & Dance rules for all athletes. In addition to the general regulations found in Parts I-IV in this book, which is the Cheer & Dance Coaches' responsibility to read and adhere to, Pop Warner Cheer & Dance teams shall follow the rules outlined in this section. This section incorporates the current rules of YCADA (Youth Cheer and Dance Alliance) and existing Pop Warner rules/limitations. No rules will be added after July 15 unless for safety reasons.

## YCADA

JAMZ, as Pop Warner Little Scholars' Development Partner, is the original developer of the Youth Cheer and Dance Alliance (YCADA) which is an organization dedicated to helping grow the Youth Cheer & Dance market and provide structure to youth organizations at a national level. For further details see [www.YCADA.org](http://www.YCADA.org).

## CHEER & DANCE VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

### S1: CHEER & DANCE COORDINATORS

- A. Each Association, League and Region shall have a Cheer & Dance Coordinator who is a voting member of equal status on the Association/League/Region Board. Note: All committees supporting the Association, League or Region Management Teams should have Cheer & Dance representation proportionate to the number of Cheer & Dance teams within the organization to include the following committees: Nominating, Membership, Finance, Building & Property, Equipment, Coaches, Auditing, Hearings and Scholastic.
- B. All Association, League and Region Coordinators must be at least 21 years of age.
- C. All Certifications in the Y100 Series are now valid for One Year Only. Once coordinators have completed the Y101 & Y102, they will then rotate between the Y103 and Y102 (until such time when other courses are created). This is to ensure all coordinators are current on any rule changes/updates that are made each season of certification.
- D. Complete the online YCADA Coaches' Competitive Edge Program to better understand YCADA - Pop Warner skill levels and scoring guidelines. Highly Recommended.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- E. The Cheer & Dance Coordinator is responsible for the following:
  - 1. Coordinate formation of “Cheer & Dance without Football” Teams, Associations.
  - 2. Provide coaches with information on managing teams and skill declarations.
  - 3. Enforce Pop Warner and YCADA Rules and Regulations.
  - 4. Liaison between National Partners and Pop Warner Events to provide guidance on Coaches Clinics, Athlete Camps, Meetings.
  - 5. Review recruiting, media and social media, retention and loss procedures annually.

## **S2: REGION COORDINATOR**

- A. Reporting Relationships:
  - 1. The Coordinator reports to the National Cheer & Dance Commissioner (Region to National).
  - 2. Liaison for the League Coordinators to the Region Board.
  - 3. Other duties in Coordination with the Region Management Team.
- B. The Cheer and Dance Coordinator is responsible for the following:
  - 1. Delegate to the National Meeting and Region Cheer & Dance Meetings.
  - 2. Chair all Region Cheer & Dance meetings, often held separately from the football meetings.
  - 3. Reporting and Forms
    - a. RCDC – Championship Scores Reporting.
    - b. RCDC – Event Request Form. Region Coordinator Signs / Approval on Event Request Form for submission/approval to National Coordinator.
- C. Administer Region Cheer & Dance Championships
  - 1. Secure Facilities: Admission/Ticket Sales, Concessions, Spectator Seating/Restrooms, Sound System/Emcee, Electrician, Trainer/Ambulance, Parking, Security, and Maintenance/Housekeeping.
  - 2. Purchase Awards/Trophies.
  - 3. Hire/Provide Entertainment Decorations/Backdrop.
  - 4. Provide Timeline, Order of Performance, Practice Schedule, Music Upload/Order Perform, Event Script.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

5. Secure Matted Surface for Warm-up and Performance Areas.
6. Secure PWLS Approved Licensed Vendors for Concessions Area.
7. Select volunteer job responsibilities in each area of the event.
8. Hire YCADA trained Judges to include Head, Rules, Point, Panel, Tabulation, Timers and Spotters. Trained Judges/Staff have successfully completed the YCADA Judges' Education Course and participate in YCADA Judge Webinars.
9. Confirm Eligibility, Audit Book Check.
10. Release Event Date, Location and Event logo on Region Website and Social Media Outlets, October 1st.
11. Communicate Pertinent Information (including Order of Performance) to Officials, Coaches, Parents and Athletes.
12. Coordinate and Release Score Sheets to Head Coaches on Event Day.
13. Communicate Advancement Procedures for PWLS National Event.
14. Post Placements (First to Last) on League / Region Website listing scores of Top Five Placements Only.

## **S3: LEAGUE COORDINATOR**

### **A. Reporting Relationships:**

1. The Coordinator reports to the Region Cheer & Dance Commissioner (League to Region; Region to National).
2. Liaison for the Association Coordinators to the League Board.
3. Other duties in Coordination with the League Management Team.

### **B. The Cheer and Dance Coordinator is responsible for the following:**

- 1.. Delegate to the Region Meeting and League Cheer & Dance Meetings.
2. Chair all League Cheer & Dance meetings, often held separately from the football meetings.
3. Reporting and Forms
  - a. LCDC certifies Rosters – Absentee Forms in Team Book
  - b. LCDC certifies Declarations to Certified Roster.
  - c. LCDC – Championship Scores Reporting.



# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- d. LCDC – Event Request Form. Sign Approval on Event Request Form for submission/ approval to Region and National Coordinator.  
CONSEQUENCES: It is recommended that the League create a policy for their Pop Warner coaches that take a Pop Warner team and/or its athletes to a competition or camp/clinic without submitting prior written approval/Event Request Form.

## C. Administer League Cheer & Dance Championships

1. Secure Facilities: Admission/Ticket Sales, Concessions, Spectator Seating/Restrooms, Sound System/Emcee, Electrician, Trainer/Ambulance, Parking, Security, and Maintenance/Housekeeping.
2. Purchase Awards/Trophies.
3. Hire/Provide Entertainment Decorations/Backdrop.
4. Provide Timeline, Order of Performance, Practice Schedule, Music Upload/Order Perform, Event Script.
5. Secure Matted Surface for Warm-up and Performance Areas.
6. Secure PWLS Approved Licensed Vendors for Concessions Area.
7. Select volunteer job responsibilities in each area of the event.
8. Hire YCADA trained Judges to include Head, Rules, Point, Panel, Tabulation, Timers and Spotters. Trained Judges/Staff have successfully completed the YCADA Judges' Education Course and participate in YCADA Judge Webinars.
9. Confirm Eligibility, Audit Book Check.
10. Release Event Date, Location and Event logo on Region Website and Social Media Outlets, September 1st.
11. Communicate Pertinent Information (including Order of Performance) to Officials, Coaches, Parents and Athletes.
12. Coordinate and Release Score Sheets to Head Coaches on Event Day.
  - a. Communicate Advancement Procedures for PWLS National Event.
  - b. Post Placements (First to Last) on League Website listing scores of Top Five Placements Only.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## **S4: ASSOCIATION COORDINATOR**

### **A. Reporting Relationships:**

1. Cheer & Dance Coordinator reports to the League Cheer & Dance Coordinator (Association to League; League to Region; Region to National).
2. Represent each age division for all cheer and dance teams in their respective associations.
3. Liaison for the coaches to the Association Board.
4. Other duties in coordination with the Association Management Team.

### **B. The Cheer & Dance Coordinator is responsible for the following:**

1. Reporting Forms
  - a. Submit completed Declaration Form to LCDC.
  - b. Maintain rosters with an update of add/drops to the League to include Age Division, Skill Level & Cheer Size.
  - c. Event Request Form (Association Coordinator completes this form for events "other than" the League/Region/National Playoff Competition System). Permission to participate in an event (i.e., Tournament, Bowl Game, Competition, Parade, NFL Halftime participation, etc.) is granted only if it is in writing, in advance, and approved by the League, Region and National Office.

## **S5: TEAM LEVEL, VOLUNTEER ROSTERED STAFF**

A team's coaching staff is in complete charge of the team whenever it is together at practice or on the playing field, traveling as a group to and from practice sessions, games and competitions, or together for any team function, such as a banquet. The coaching staff is under the direction of the Head Coach; other coaches are called Assistant Coaches. The following applies to all coaches:

- A. All Rostered Cheer & Dance Staff must successfully complete the YCADA (Youth Cheer and Dance Alliance) online Coaches' Education and Testing including but not limited to the Head Coach, Assistant Coaches, Coach Trainee, Student Demonstrator, Coordinators, etc. All Certifications in the Y100 Series are now valid for One Year Only. Once coaches/rostered staff have completed the Y101 & Y102, they will then rotate between the Y103 and Y102 (until such time when other courses are created). This is to ensure all coaches/rostered staff are current on any rule changes/updates that are made each season of certification.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

1. All Rostered Staff who fail to pass the YCADA online course will be immediately removed from coaching until successful completion of online course.
  2. All Rostered Cheer & Dance Staff must have their YCADA Training Certificate in the Team Book (digital or hard copy) for Book Certification.
  3. It is highly recommended that Head Cheer or Dance Coaches complete the Coaches' Competitive Edge program to better understand YCADA-Pop Warner skill levels and scoring guidelines.
- B. The staff positions for a Cheer & Dance team are as follows:
1. The Head Coach of each Cheer & Dance team must be 21 years old by the start of the season, August 1.
    - a. The Head Cheer & Dance Coach has final responsibility for his/her actions, those of his/her assistant coaches, Cheer & Dance athletes, staff and parents.
    - b. The Head Coach will determine the assignments of the Assistant Coaches.
    - c. Every team shall have at least one adult volunteer as head coach (21 years old or older). After the first 12 athletes (including mascots) there must be an assistant volunteer coach (18 years old or older) for every 12 athletes. The number of adult volunteers shall, therefore, determine the maximum team size (one 21 year old or older head coach –maximum 12 athletes; 13-24 athletes must have one 21 year old or older head coach and one 18 year old or older assistant volunteer coach, etc.).
  2. An Assistant Coach must be at least 18 years of age. A team may have a maximum of four (4) assistant coaches.
    - a. The Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s) or Association Cheer & Dance Coordinator must be 21 years or older in order to supervise at all practices, games and functions. (Clarification: at least one rostered coach must be 21 years of age supervising at practices games and functions.)
  3. In the absence of a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team in the medical area (physician, paramedic, specially trained volunteer) one of the coaches must be the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent or the P.R.E.P.A.R.E. Course by the National Center for Sport Safety ([www.sportsafety.org](http://www.sportsafety.org)) or their equivalent.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

4. Teams are permitted to carry a maximum of 3 Coach-Trainees, who must be a minimum of 16 years of age and a maximum of 17 years of age.
  - a. All coach trainees must be certified in the same manner as all other minors participating in Pop Warner, i.e. parent permission, physical, proof of age, scholastic eligibility, photo ID. (Refer to guidelines as specified in Part III, Article 6: Registration.)
  - b. Coach-Trainees must also follow the guidelines for a student demonstrator listed below in 5, b through g.
5. Each team is permitted to carry up to four Student Demonstrators. Please follow all guidelines listed below:
  - a. A Student Demonstrator must be at least 15 years old or 14 years old if on the High School Cheer & Dance Team.
  - b. A Student Demonstrator for a Cheer & Dance team must have had at least two seasons prior Cheer & Dance experience.
  - c. The Student Demonstrator must only work with teams that are younger than his/her current age. The oldest athlete on the team that the student is assisting must be at least two years younger.
  - d. A rostered cheerleader/dancer may not also serve as a Student Demonstrator.
  - e. Student Demonstrators must be under the direct supervision of the Head Cheer or Dance Coach.
  - f. Student Demonstrators must be rostered as part of the coaching staff of the team with which they are volunteering.
  - g. All Student Demonstrators under the age of 18 must be certified in the same manner as all other minors participating in Pop Warner Football, Cheer & Dance i.e., parent permission, physical, proof of age, scholastic eligibility, photo ID. (Refer to guidelines as specified in Part III, Article 6: Registration.)The Student Demonstrator may be used to demonstrate moves, techniques and may teach words to cheers. He/she is not allowed to coach or conduct a practice.
6. A team is allotted a total of 4 Student Demonstrators/ Coach Trainees combined (i.e., 1 Coach Trainee and 3 Student Demonstrators 2 Coach Trainee and 2 Student Demonstrators, 4 Student Demonstrators and 0 Coach Trainee, etc.).

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- C. Coaches are to be selected by methods approved by League rules and/or by-laws.
- D. Each League shall establish its own rules regarding the placing of coaches with sons, daughters or siblings within its own boundaries. Further note: All athletes and/or mascots must be placed in an age appropriate division.
- E. Coaches do not make team or League policy, they carry it out. However, the coaching staff is in complete charge and shall not be interfered with except in cases of rules violations and any other conduct deemed by higher authority to be contrary to the welfare of youth.
  - 1. Reporting Relationships: The Head Coach reports to the Association Cheer & Dance Coordinator.
  - 2. Liaison for the Rostered Staff/Team to the Association Board.
  - 3. Other duties in coordination with the Association Management Team.
- F. Reference Members' Code of Conduct – Beginning of PWLS Rule book; Coaches shall not receive any payment, in cash or in kind, for services as a coach in Pop Warner Cheer & Dance. This includes any coach, expert, consultant or choreographer, regardless of his/her roster status. Choreography Exception: Teams that register and participate in Pop Warner League Championship/Showcase, advance to Region Championships and Nationals, if applicable, are permitted to hire/pay for routine choreography. Choreography Clinic permitted as needed for skills.
- G. Once approved for coaching, a coach is automatically terminated at the close of each season. To coach the following year, the same League approval is required. Any violation of the rules committed by a coach during the season, even though the hearing is not held until after the close of the season, is still under the jurisdiction of the sponsoring association and/or League.

## ADDITIONAL COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Coaches should remain up-to-date on all new techniques, progressions and safety regulations by attending conferences/clinics and rules meetings. The staff includes the head coach, assistant coaches, coach trainees, student demonstrators and a specialized, trained person affiliated with the team in the medical area (i.e., physician, paramedic, and specially trained volunteer/athletic trainer).

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- B. The coach should approve all cheers, chants, posters, music and other activities of the team. Inform team that all new skills must first be reviewed and approved by the coach prior to performing them.
  - 1. Music Appropriate Reminders- Mixed with Choreography and Facials - Teams are reminded that they must incorporate music and movements in their routine that are appropriate for “family viewing”. Teams are further reminded that choreography and music incorporated with facials and movements should also be appropriate for family viewing.
- C. The coach should not permit a team member to participate if in the judgment of the coach, the athlete does not conform to PWLS rules.
- D. All team personnel including coaches, coach trainees and student demonstrators and any other staff adhere to the same safety guidelines that the athletes are held to (i.e., appropriate hair, nail length, etc.)
- E. It is highly recommended that the rostered coaching staff does not stunt with the team or an individual member during a game or performance. It is the team’s time to shine and enjoy working with each other as a group.
- F. The coach must establish a line of communication within the association’s cheer & dance teams, the football personnel and the League Cheer & Dance Coordinator.
- G. Complete the Event Request Form (Head Coach completes this form for events “other than” the Pop Warner League/Region/National Championships). Permission to participate in an event (i.e., Tournament, Bowl Game, Competition, Parade, NFL Halftime participation, etc.) is granted only if it is in writing, in advance, and approved by the League, Region and National Office.

## FORMATION OF TEAMS

The following requirements are taken from Part III, Article 7 as follows: Tryouts of any kind within Pop Warner Cheer & Dance Teams are not permitted. Tryouts are defined as any means used to ascertain the level whereby an athlete is placed on a team, including assessments, evaluations, or any other method used to place an athlete in Pop Warner. Not more than 35 athletes shall be assigned to a team at the start of pre-conditioning on August 1st or the later starting date of the association, whichever comes first.

## REGISTRATION

A candidate cannot begin practice with a team until he/she has officially registered. Registration consists of completing and submitting items (Parental Consent, Physical Fitness & Medical

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

Form, Proof of Age, and Scholastic Fitness) in addition to any/all local required forms. The sign-up fee, if any, may be collected at this time.

## ROSTERS & DECLARING DIVISIONS

Associations & Leagues will make best effort to assign teams in appropriate age divisions for Cheer & Dance Divisions: Below is a list of criteria that will be used by Associations/Leagues to assist the Head Coach with determinations:

- A. YCADA Skill Progression Sheet
- B. Returning Number of Athletes from Prior Season
- C. Coaching Staff (Returning vs. New)
- D. Prior Year League/Region/National Standings
- E. History in League, Region & National Championships

Any questions/issues regarding where to place a team will be decided by Region Cheer & Dance Coordinator.

Teams must declare by Sept. 15 in the Pop Warner Roster System. Once a team has been approved, they cannot change divisions (age/size/skill) unless approved by your Region Cheer & Dance Coordinator.

## HEAD COACH DECLARING TEAM SKILL LEVEL

The Head Coach determines the skill level of the team based on the category descriptions listed in the YCADA portion of the Cheer & Dance Section of the Rule Book, ability of the team following proper progression and past championship performances.

The Head Cheer Coach is required to submit the Skills Progression Sheet to the Association Cheer & Dance Coordinator. Once approved, the Skills Progression Sheet is a required document in the Team Book (digital or hard copy). The Association Cheer & Dance Coordinator then completes the Declaration Form for all Association Teams. **This applies to Age Divisions: Challenger, Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.**

- A. Declarations for Primary Cheer Teams include Core Cheer, Show Cheer 1-4.(Show Cheer 1 Ltd., Core Cheer Ltd., for Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite Only)
- B. Declarations for Primary Dance Teams include Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop.
- C. Once rostered/declared Primary Cheer or Primary Dance, teams are permitted to select a Second Routine. This applies to Age Divisions: Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.
  - 1. Teams participating in two routines, Primary and a Second

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

Routine, will receive two additional practice hours per week from Sept.1 leading up to the Pop Warner National Championships or to the last Pop Warner Championship while participating/advancing in two routines.

2. **Show Cheer 1-4 Teams** can participate in the following Second Routines: Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop, Sideline Performance Cheer.
3. **Core Cheer Teams** can participate in the following Second Routines: Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop, Sideline Performance Cheer.
4. **Dance Teams** can participate in the following Second Routines: Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop, Core Cheer, Sideline Performance Cheer.

D. **Team Book Check** - Document Audit: The procedure where by each athlete's mandatory documents are reviewed to ensure that the documents are accurate and comply with the standards established by Pop Warner National Rules, per Part III, Article 6: Registration in the Official Pop Warner Rules. Team Book Document Order:

1. I.D. Cards/Standard Athlete Contract (i.e., if Contract is laminated /sealed on back of ID Card)
2. Proof of Age
3. Physical Fitness & Medical History
4. Participant Contract & Parent Consent
5. All Rostered Staff - YCADA Training Certificate
6. Skill Progression Sheet

The Team Book Check, or Document Audit, may now include a review of digital files submitted into the Sports Connect roster software. If the Participant Contract Parent Consent and USA Football/YCADA Coaching Certifications, as well as the Skill Progression Checklist Head Coach Declaration Checklist (Cheer & Dance only), are verified in the software, they do not need to be included in the book. Please include a signed copy of your league's Roster Compliance Affidavit in their place. Note: New for 2023, proof of scholastic fitness is only audited at the point of team certification; report cards are no longer audited at competition.

## POP WARNER CHEER & DANCE TEAMS

- A. **TEAM** – Referenced from Part II - Pop Warner Structure, A team is the universal, basic unit of organization. At minimum, a team consists of a group of athletes organized under the direction of a coaching staff in a given Age division. Each football team may have a maximum of three rostered Cheer & Dance teams. For all purposes, the Pop Warner Cheer & Dance season shall be defined as July 15th to July 14th.



# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

**Situation:** If a football team folds before September 15, can the Cheer/Dance team continue? Yes, if all of the guidelines are met that are referenced below under “cheer/dance without a football team”.

**Situation:** If a football team folds after September 15, can the Cheer/Dance team continue? Yes, with written approval from the League, Region and National Office.

## B. **PRIMARY CHEER TEAM** – Cheer Skill/Age Division Options:

1. **YCADA Core Cheer Limited, Show Cheer 1 Limited Age Divisions:** Challenger, Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite.
2. **YCADA Core Cheer Age Divisions:** Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee & Peewee
3. **YCADA Show Cheer 1 Age Divisions:** Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.
4. **YCADA Show Cheer 2 Age Divisions:** Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.
5. **YCADA Show Cheer 3-4 Age Divisions:** Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.

**Cheer Size Divisions:** Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam:

- a. **Cheer Small:** Minimum 5 – Maximum 10 Athletes
- b. **Cheer Medium:** 11 – 20 Athletes
- c. **Cheer Large:** 21 – 35 Athletes
- d. **Core Cheer:** 5 to 35 Athletes

**Cheer Size Divisions:** Core Cheer Divisions, Challenger:

- a. Up to 35 Athletes

## C. **PRIMARY DANCE TEAM**

A primary team may elect in August to be a Dance team and be rostered as a Dance team, and only dance during games and halftimes. They cannot and will not perform any stunts or any other activity limited to cheer teams with the exception of crowd participation sidelines/chants. Dance Age/Skill Options:

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

1. **YCADA Pom Performance:** Challenger, Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.
2. **YCADA Theme Dance:** Challenger, Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.
3. **YCADA Hip Hop:** Challenger, Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam.
4. **Dance Size Divisions:** Junior Tiny Mite, Tiny Mite, Mitey Mite, Junior Peewee, Peewee, Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam:
  - a. Minimum 5 – Maximum 35 Athletes
5. **Dance Size Division:** Challenger:
  - a. Up to 35 Athletes

## PRIMARY TEAMS WITHOUT A FOOTBALL TEAM

Any Association Cheer & Dance teams that cannot be affiliated with a corresponding football team in any particular division during the playing season, and has other Cheer & Dance teams matched with football teams within the same association, may form a Cheer or Dance team provided the following requirements:

- A. The team must be age eligible for that division.
- B. The Cheer or Dance team must perform during the association's football games at another level's assigned games.
- C. Additional Insurance is required per athlete.

## PRIMARY TEAMS "WITHOUT A FOOTBALL PROGRAM" Association or League

Any League and/or Association that cannot be affiliated with a corresponding football program during the playing season, may initiate a newly formed Cheer or Dance Association or League to provide continued opportunity for Cheer and Dance athletes not affiliated with a Football Program.

### The Association:

Association status would apply to those Cheer & Dance Teams that currently participate with a Pop Warner Football Program whereby the football teams are no longer members of our program. This proposal will allow those teams to form a new Cheer & Dance Association within the existing league/ boundaries to continue under the name of Pop Warner in the same manner that a PWLS Football Association would exist.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## **The League:**

League status would apply to those Cheer & Dance programs that would like to form under the current Pop Warner League guidelines in areas where there is not an existing Pop Warner Football Program. Current Program Cheer & Dance athletes are prevented from moving to a new league from an existing league.

## **REGION RECEIVERSHIP**

Teams/Associations Register under Region Receivership. A Region Holds Teams/Association in place until Association or League can be determined.

Note for all Choices Listed: If there are no Football Teams available to participate with on Game Day, the Cheer & Dance Program(s) registers as Cheer & Dance without Football. If, at a later date, Football teams form, Region/National to discuss best options, including bringing the two programs together under one Name/Organization and continuing with two programs, Cheer & Dance retaining Cheer & Dance operations.

## **Organization Set-Up:**

Follow all guidelines currently in place under the guidance of the National Cheer & Dance Commissioner.

- A. Follow all guidelines as outlined in the Pop Warner Rulebook. Attend and participate in all planning meetings for League, Region and National programs.
- B. Submit rosters and administer athlete certification process.
- C. Participate in the Pop Warner Championship Program, League, Region and National. Participate in Pop Warner Scholastic Program under the current guidelines.
- D. When possible, teams will cheer at football games per season.
- E. Teams within an association will cheer/dance for their association's games.
- F. Newly formed league's teams may cheer/dance for leagues when practicable.

## **CHALLENGER DIVISION**

Pop Warner offers Challenger Division Cheer & Dance teams. Please contact PWLS for more specifics on guidelines or starting a Challenger Division.

- A. The Challenger Division includes all athletes ages 5 to 18 with physical or mental disabilities who are currently enrolled in school.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- B. All participants including Coaching Staff and Helpers must be rostered.
  - 1. Rostered Team Helpers are a minimum of 13 years of age, max 18 years of age, to assist.
- C. The Challenger Division follows Pop Warner Cheer & Dance Rules following proper progression under direct supervision.
- D. YCADA routine guidelines recommend that Challenger Exhibition Performances' be one minute thirty seconds. Performances may include Cheer & Dance.
- E. Teams are permitted to cheer for one football game per week.

## CHEER & DANCE SEASON

- A. Season: July 15, 2025 to July 14, 2026.
- B. Rosters: July 15, 2025 roster accepted until July 14, 2026.
- C. Adds: For the second half of the season, athlete additions can take place January 1, 2026 to March 31, 2026. Drops: For the second half of the season, if not enough athletes to continue the season, combine teams within an Association and create a new roster. If an association creates a new roster, all athletes must fall within the 8/1/2025 age range. Reminder: Athletes can only roster on one team.
- D. Drops: If teams within an Association do not compete January 1, 2026 to July 14, 2026 and an athlete wants the opportunity to compete, an athlete under the approval/supervision of the LCDC can participate on another Association's team from January 1, 2026 to July 14, 2026. The parent must sign league/association forms acknowledging that they will return to their local association on July 15, 2026. If an athlete moves to a Non-Pop Warner Cheer Dance team on January 1, 2026, Drop the athlete from roster at the time of the move, re-assign upon return on July 15, 2026.
- E. Skill Level: Continued progression using Skill Progression Sheet
- F. Practice Hours: Follow "After Labor Day" practice hours as a Max guideline (6 hrs/2 per day)
- G. Competitions: No Minimum/Maximum Number of events from January 1, 2026 to July 14, 2026. Please complete an event request form for all events.
- H. Competition Restrictions: Teams (First Place, Second Place) at 2025 Pop Warner League Championships and do not advance to 2025 Region National Championships, Competition season is complete. These teams can participate in all other activities: i.e., Practice Fundraising/Community Events/ Parades/Bowl Games, etc.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- I. Competition Restrictions: Teams (First Place, Second Place) at 2025 Pop Warner Region Championships and do not advance to 2025 National Championships, Competition Season is complete. These teams can participate in all other activities: i.e. Practice/Fundraising Community Events/Parades/Bowl Games, etc.
- J. Camps: Follow Current Rulebook regarding Camps

## AGE DIVISIONS

**S1:** PWLS Cheer & Dance Age Schematic below:

Division Name	Ages
Jr. Tiny Mite	3-4- <u>5</u> **
Tiny Mite	5-6-7
Mitey Mite	<u>6</u> -7-8-9
Jr. Peewee	8-9-10-11
Peewee	9-10-11-12
Jr. Varsity	10-11-12-13- <u>14</u>
Varsity	12-13-14-15-16
Bantam	14-15-16-17-18*
Challenger	5-18

*\*Bantam Age Division includes athletes 18 years of age and currently enrolled in High School.*

*\*\*Program offers a Junior Tiny Mite Age Division (ages 3, 4 and 5) under the supervision of the League & Region Coordinator.*

- A. Junior Tiny Mite Teams meet/practice no more than three hours per week.
- B. This Division may declare one Primary YCADA Cheer Division: Show Cheer 1 Limited, Core Cheer Limited OR one Primary YCADA Dance Division: Pom Performance, Theme Dance or Hip Hop.
- C. In Year 3, The JTM Division will offer teams Game Day Appearances upon availability. At the close of the program, teams have the opportunity to participate in an exhibition performance at League/Region Championships/Showcase.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

**S2:** Divisions are determined by Association Registration, Budget, Equipment, etc. reviewed /approved by the League each season.

**S3:** The ages of the Cheer & Dance teams should correspond to the playing ages of the football team with which they are associated. Teams should match as close as possible in age to insure a football sideline schedule. For exceptions and or information on Cheer & Dance without Football teams, contact your Region Cheer & Dance Coordinator in writing with your request.

**S4:** The athlete's age on July 31st of the current year shall be the athlete's age for the coming season August 1 to July 31. Beginning in 2026-2027, the athlete's age on July 14 shall be the athlete's age for that season - July 15, 2026 to July 14, 2027.

## **S5: MANDATORY CUTS**

Any athlete must be cut who:

- A. Is found to have signed up as a result of parental pressure or tells team management he/she does not really want to play, cheer or dance.
- B. Refuses or cannot furnish the 4 required items-Parental Consent, Medical Examination, Proof of Age, and Scholastic Fitness.
- C. Is a member of any other organized Pop Warner Football, Cheer and Dance team of the same sport or non-Pop Warner Football, Cheer or Dance team. Exception for Cheer & Dance teams: Athletes who tryout and make a school team of the current season and are members of a Pop Warner Team will be permitted to simultaneously participate in Pop Warner and school programs administered and coached by School District employees.
- D. Attempts to intimidate fellow athletes in practice by word and/or physical deed. No refunding of fees shall be required.
- E. Is a recurring discipline problem (and then, only with the concurrence of the League).

## **REGARDING INELIGIBLE ATHLETES**

**S1:** There are four (4) unequivocal definitions of an ineligible Cheer & Dance athlete from which there are no appeals. Further, these violations shall result in forfeiture of all competitions in which the ineligible athlete was a member of the team. There are no exceptions.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- A. Athlete overage or underage
- B. Athlete residing outside of legal boundaries without mutual agreement (waiver) of appropriate League(s) and/or Associations.
- C. Falsification of any athlete certification/registration documentation. (Part III, Articles 6 & 10)
- D. Participation in any other non-affiliated, non-school Cheer & Dance program and Pop Warner in the same season.

In the case of any other situation resulting in an athlete being declared ineligible, the result shall be removal of the athlete from the program with no penalty against the team.

## PRACTICE

**S1:** The following practice requirements are taken from Part III, Article 15 as follows:

- A. To prevent possible bending of the rules and as a protection for children, practices are defined as a gathering of players or Cheer & Dance athletes, without minimum number, in the presence of at least one (1) coach, where one or more of the following activities take place:
  - 1. Viewing of fundamentals film
  - 2. Group conditioning
  - 3. Individual skills sessions
  - 4. Group skills sessions
  - 5. Cheers, sidelines, chants, dance, music, etc.
  - 6. Stunting, Jumps, Gymnastics, etc.
  - 7. Camps/Clinics

As can be seen, a so-called “party” at a coach’s home, where films are shown, or where football or Cheer & Dance teams are talked about, can be deemed a practice session, as can a “party” at a parent’s home where one or more coaches are present. Use of a football field is not required to satisfy the definition of a “practice session.” Each League is directed to establish a policy with respect to home videos and/or films of games or competitions and the viewing thereof.

Pop Warner strongly recommends that Leagues/Associations discourage “parties/practice sessions” at coaches’ homes. All the activities/practice sessions that are referenced in S1 above, must include a minimum of (2) two coaches in attendance the entire session.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- B. Pre-season practice may begin as early as July 15. The actual date will be determined in accordance with climate and other factors determined by the League in establishing a common starting date for all teams within its jurisdiction.
- C. All practices must be attended by one person holding a Red Cross Community CPR and First Aid Certificate, or its equivalent, if not by a volunteer physician or EMT (such as a parent of one of the participants).
- D. **BEFORE LABOR DAY:** No team may schedule more than 10 hours of practice per week before Labor Day. A week is defined as Monday-Sunday. Not more than 2-1/2 hours of practice may be scheduled on any one day. Note: Practice is up to 10 hours per week. It is not mandatory for a team to practice the full 10 allotted hours. (7/15 to Labor Day)
- E. **AFTER LABOR DAY:** Practices after Labor Day weekend are limited to 6 hours per week. A week is defined as Monday-Sunday. Practices after Labor Day weekend are not to exceed 2 hours per day. Note: Practice is up to 6 hours per week. It is not mandatory for a team to practice the full 6 allotted hours. (Labor Day to 7/14)
- F. **BREAKS:** Break time is not counted against the ten (10) or six (6) hours per week or 2-1/2 or 2 hours of allowed practice time. Water breaks should be given as needed and when requested by participants.
- G. **CONDITIONING:** After the first week of practice (10 hours) for conditioning, and after the second week of practice (10 hours) for conditioning, performer readiness evaluation and/or camp/clinic the team may engage in regular practice sessions and/or pre-season games. (The Second Week may include basics in Warm-Ups, Conditioning for Jumps & Tumbling, Arm Motion Drills, Progressions in Stunting, Conditioning, etc.). So as to avoid any misinterpretation, 20 hours of "practice" is required for all Pop Warner Cheer & Dance teams before the team may engage in regular practice sessions and/or pre-season games.
- H. Any Cheer & Dance athlete added after a team has formed and/or after the season has started must be subject to the initial 20 hours of conditioning/practice as mentioned in this article.
- I. All Cheer & Dance teams should develop a conditioning and strength-building program.
- J. **WARM-UP & WARM-DOWN:** At least 10 minutes of warm-up exercises (to stretch and to limber-up) shall be included prior to Cheer & Dance practice, with a maximum of 30 minute warm-up period prior to games and competitions. Warm-up and stretching should precede and conclude all practices, games, performances and competitions.



# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- K. No additional practice for post-season play shall be authorized beyond the hours of practice per week currently authorized by these rules.
- L. No practice, or participation at games/competitions, shall be permitted without the minimum number of adults specified in Cheer/Dance Staff Requirements.
- M. All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders/dancers, i.e., use of tumbling mats is highly recommended, away from excessive noise and distractions, free from obstruction, etc. Stunts, pyramids, tosses and tumbling shall be modified to be appropriate to the performing surface/area. The Cheer & Dance surface, location, and weather conditions should be taken into consideration before engaging in physical activity.
- N. Advisors/coaches must recognize the entire team's particular ability and limit the team's activities accordingly.
- O. Athletes may individually enroll in non-Pop Warner affiliated instructional classes. However, an athlete may not be officially enrolled in another cheer or dance team that is not a School affiliated program. All-Star and other Recreational Cheer & Dance team participation is not permitted during the Pop Warner season.

## WARM WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

The training regimen of any team practicing under high heat and/or humidity conditions must:

- A. Limit or eliminate laps entirely. Do not assign laps for disciplinary reasons.
- B. Schedule practices for early evening, after the sun is low in sky.
- C. Give athletes all the water they want to drink, when they want it. Do not substitute soft drinks for water.
- D. Each coach must keep an eye on all athletes and his fellow coaches for the slightest sign of heat exhaustion or fatigue.
- E. A fifteen minute break is mandatory in the middle of each practice, not to be counted against practice time.

## CAMPS/CLINIC

**S1: JAMZ is the endorsed camp/clinic provider for Pop Warner.**

- A. Camps must be open to all ages and all athletes in a given League/ Association. All camps must be approved through the Event Request Form with appropriate camp insurance.
- B. No Pop Warner organization or personnel associated within, shall require or mandate that a Pop Warner Football, Cheer & Dance team, in part of in whole, with or without Coach(s),

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

attend a Cheer & Dance Camp. There shall be no exceptions. However, a Pop Warner Cheer & Dance team, in part or in whole may attend a camp if they so choose to, providing the following conditions are met:

1. Coach or other team affiliated personnel does not make it mandatory.
2. Camp provides as part of its services, an Accident Insurance Plan for camp athletes.
3. Any camp, whether it be for Cheer or Dance Athletes, shall not be endorsed or sponsored by any League, Association, or team, which does not provide as part of its services, an Accident Insurance Plan for the camp athletes.

**S2:** Clinics are generally a one (1) day event and Camps are generally three (3) to four (4) day event (Consecutive Days). Pre-Season Clinic and/or Camp that include Rostered and/or Non-Rostered members are permitted in the months of April May June July and are limited to 4 events. Exception: Teams that register and participate in Pop Warner League Championship/Showcase advance to Region Championships and Nationals, if applicable, are permitted clinics/camps as needed for skills.

- A. Pre-season Clinic and/or Camp permitted in June or July.
- B. In-season Clinic and/or Camp permitted, counted towards practice time. (Season 7/15 to 7/14)

**S3:** Competition Choreography Clinics/Camps are not permitted. Choreography Exception: Teams register and participate in Pop Warner League Championship/Showcase advance to Region Championships and Nationals, if applicable, are permitted to hire/pay for routine choreography. Choreography Clinic permitted as needed for skills.

**S4:** Recruiting events are permitted with no skills or demonstrations, meet and greet only (i.e., classroom/PPT Presentation style) with event request approval.

**S5:** A Recruiting Camp/Clinic is permitted with event request approval and appropriate camp insurance. Recruiting Camp/Clinic events are permitted on behalf of an Association. Clinics are generally a one (1) day event and Camps are generally three (3) to four (4) day Event (Consecutive Days). Pre-Season Recruiting Clinic and/or Camp that include Rostered and/or Non-Rostered members are permitted in the months of April May June July only and are limited to 4 events. Exception: Teams that register and participate in Pop Warner League Championship/Showcase advance to Region Championships and Nationals, if applicable, are permitted clinics/camps as needed for skills.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## PRACTICES, GAMEDAY, SUPER BOWL & BOWL GAMES RULES & REGULATIONS FOR CHEER & DANCE TEAMS

**S1:** It is highly recommended that football teams competing be accompanied by the corresponding Cheer & Dance teams at all games, except when the Region/National Cheer & Dance championships are being held at the same time.

A. All Cheer & Dance Divisions can participate with their Cheer/Dance team at Pop Warner League, Region and National Football Games.

**S2:** Twisting (mounts/dismounts and transitions) and basket tosses cannot be performed on the field unless a mat is in place.

**S3:** Additional Coaching Responsibilities for Football Games

A. The Coaching Staff should supervise the team at an appropriate/safe distance as permitted by field guidelines. Coaches must supervise the team on and off the field.

B. Check the team environment: Learn the dimensions of the playing field as well as terms that may apply to the team and their location on the field. Position the team at a safe distance away from the football team.

C. Head Coach should provide a staff checklist to close the game (i.e., team meeting, store equipment, clean up, exit to parents, etc.)

D. Skills should be appropriate to the performing surface and follow the guidelines/skill level set in the current Pop Warner Rule Book.

E. Skills should be visual, clean and include Stunts that have been mastered/approved in practice.

F. Skills should be easy to follow, structured in a way to lead the crowd.

G. Skills should utilize as many members of the team as possible.

H. Game Day Routines and Skills should be fun!

I. Gloves (in cold weather conditions) may be worn at games and/or practices provided no stunting is involved.

J. **Game Day Coaching Attire** shall consist of Business Casual or Game Day attire Khaki pant and a polo (with Pop Warner Logo and/or Team/Association/League name and/or logo), or Team Sweat Suit/Athletic Sneakers with Pop Warner Team logo, etc.). The following items are not acceptable: Jeans, flip flops and/or tank tops. Coaching staff consists of rostered staff to include Coordinator, Coaches, Coach Trainee, Student Demonstrators, etc.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## POP WARNER GUIDELINES

### Uniform & Equipment

**S1:** Participant Apparel - PW Authentic ([www.pwauthentic.com](http://www.pwauthentic.com)) is the Official Uniform Provider of PWLS.

Athletes shall wear apparel (uniform, costume, shoes, etc.) that is appropriate for the activity involved. Uniforms should be properly fitted to each athlete. Appropriate undergarments should be worn at all times. Please use discretion in judgment in selection of uniforms. When standing at attention, cheer and dance apparel must cover the midriff. While during the athletic competition a teams' uniform may rise up but teams should plan and provide uniforms that give complete coverage during the majority of a teams' routine regardless of the athletic activity. The midriff is considered the middle section of the bodice, front and back. Cutouts and Mesh below the top of the bra line are not permitted. Also, note that nude body suits are not acceptable; the intent of the rule must be obvious to everyone.

The Uniform items listed below are the "General Uniform Policy for Pop Warner Cheerleaders and Dancers. Any coaches or athletes needing a variance of the General Uniform policies should contact the Region Cheer and Dance Coordinator.

#### **A. MALE CHEERLEADER / DANCER\*:**

1. Top- Sweater, Shell, T-shirt, Polo, Etc.
2. Bottom- Short, Pant, Dance Pant\*, Sweat Pant
3. Sneakers, Soft-Soled Shoes\*, Socks

#### **B. FEMALE CHEERLEADER / DANCER\*:**

1. Top- Sweater, Shell, Dance Wear\*, T-shirt, Polo, Etc.
2. Bottom- Skirt, Briefs, Short, Dance Pant\*, Sweat Pant
3. Tights
4. Sneakers, Soft-Soled Shoes\*, Socks
5. Bow/Ribbon

\*Dance specific

**S2:** Patch Placement – Required Equipment (Reference Part III, Article 20)

- A. A Cheer & Dance athlete **must have a Pop Warner patch on the cheer or dance uniform in order to participate** in football games and League, Region and National Championships. A patch must also be displayed on the uniform for all events, Pop Warner and Non-Pop Warner events, and approved on the Pop Warner Event Request Form.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

1. If the patch placement is on the top/shirt/sweater/shell, then it should be 2" from bottom of top towards the left front.
  2. If the patch placement is on the skirt, then it should be 2" from the bottom centered on the middle of the left leg.
  3. If the patch placement is on the pant, short, etc. then it should be 2" below the belt on the front left side or 2" below the belt on the left side.
  4. For dance teams only, if the above patch placements do not display the patch due to costuming, please contact your Region Cheer & Dance Coordinator for more options.
- B. PWLS Cheer & Dance patches may be sewn, ironed, glued or attached with Velcro. They may not be stapled or pinned to the uniform.

## **S3:** Other Uniform

- A. For Cheer Teams, Bow/Ribbon, Socks and Briefs must be uniform to the entire team. All athletes wearing the same item/color(s). All team members shall wear their hair and Hair Ribbons/Bows pulled back and away from the face.
1. A Cheerleading team is not required to wear a bow or ribbon.
  2. Here are a few bow examples for cheerleading teams: Glitter Bows, Sequin Bows, Rhinestone Encrusted Bows, Prints, Tailless bows, designer fabrics, personalized bows, sublimated bows.
  3. There are no attachments to the cheerleading bow, (i.e., sometimes called 3D), just the bow or the ribbon. The reason is for safety and so that all teams have a scholastic uniform image. Attachments to bows can be a potential safety hazard to athletes with sharp edges, hard/metal pieces and attachments that may be haphazardly attached and likely to come off during a performance.
  4. Cuffs, Pony Tail Cuffs, Scrunchies are reserved for Dance teams.
  5. Hair Beads are not permitted for Cheer & Dance athletes. The beads may interfere with the safety of other team members while performing in practice, games and competitions.
- B. Glitter that does not readily adhere to hair, face, body and uniform or costume is not permitted. Glitter may be used on signs and props if laminated or sealed. Athletes must cover any visible body art/body tattoos (i.e., band-aide).
- C. Eyeglasses **MUST** be secured by a sport band while performing

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

to ensure safety (i.e., Eyeglasses shall be secured to the head and under the hair with a sport band). Note: Eyeglass bands must not be knotted or have beads on it.

All of the above items (S1-S3) pertain to all Pop Warner and Non Pop Warner events (i.e., football games, jamborees, performances, competitions, etc.) and they are exceptions to YCADA Guidelines. For Pop Warner Championships, noncompliance on the performance floor will result in a 1.0 point deduction.

## **S4: Other Uniform Guidelines**

- A. Athletic closed-toe shoes are required for all athletes.
- B. Dancers must wear soft soled dance shoes (jazz boots, jazz shoes, etc.). No Bare Feet.
- C. Jewelry of any kind (i.e., post earrings, friendship bracelets, watch, necklaces, rings, pins, body piercing, etc.) will not be worn at practices, games or competitions, except religious or medical medals, which must be secured to the body (without a chain) with tape under the apparel. Piercings may not be covered with any type of tape.
- D. Sequin letters on a uniform must be securely placed on the uniform. They must be used as the team letters (i.e. PWLS) or striping by all team members and not used as a prop in competitions.
- E. Knee socks are permitted for cheer and dance teams.
- F. Teams are permitted to place a mascot on the briefs/bloomers/tights as long as everyone on the team has the same item (same paw print etc.), it is uniform and more importantly age appropriate. The team or athlete should not display the mascot rather it should only be visible from natural movement in stunting or tumbling.
- G. Tattoos, face paint, temporary hair color/mascara for the entire team etc. are not permitted for cheer teams. However, a transferable temporary Mascot Tattoo applied to the face is permitted during games and competition for cheer & dance teams.
- H. Make-up is permitted. It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to advise the athletes on appropriate use of make-up for a youth team.
- I. Nail Polish is permitted in neutral or team colors.

All of the above items (S4: A to I) pertain to all Pop Warner and non-Pop Warner events (i.e., football games, jamborees, performances, competitions, etc.) and they are exceptions to YCADA Guidelines. For

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

Pop Warner Championships, non-compliance on the performance floor will result in a 1.0 point deduction.

## COMPETITIONS

**S1:** Pop Warner Cheer & Dance Teams may enter competitions ONLY as follows:

- A. A PWLS event occurs during the accepted Pop Warner season and follows all Pop Warner safety rules.
  - 1. A Pop Warner Championship Event is a Pop Warner League, Region and/or National Championship, and is hosted and managed by the respective league or region, or the national office. These events are approved for YCADA Use and follow Pop Warner safety rules/guidelines. A Championship Event or qualifier is an event that is on the path to the Pop Warner National Championships. PW League Championship Events are held in October, PW Region Championship Events are held in November and the PW National Championship Event is held in December.
  - 2. A Pop Warner open or invitational event is an event hosted and managed by PWLS National. These events are approved for YCADA Use and follow Pop Warner safety rules/guidelines. Such an event may be held at any time during the Pop Warner Cheer & Dance season.
  - 3. No other Pop Warner "Competition/Awarded" events (other than the above noted events) will be approved.
- B. A competition or event sponsored by a non-Pop Warner organization if it follows all Pop Warner safety rules, occurs during the accepted Pop Warner season, and if permission to participate is granted in writing, in advance, by the League, the Region, and the National Cheer & Dance Commissioner.
  - 1. A team must participate in the Pop Warner League, Region and National Cheer & Dance Championships, if qualified, in order to be approved for a non-Pop Warner event or competition. Each League, Region will enforce this rule and shall have authority to place sanctions on any league, association or team that violates this rule up to and including sanction for the next season or longer.
  - 2. With regard to non-Pop Warner affiliated cheer competitions, if permitted in their rules and regulations, music may be used for the entire choreographed routine, not to exceed (2:30) two minutes and thirty seconds.

**S2:** There shall be no individual competitions.

**S3:** Competition among teams shall be limited to teams from the same division of play competing against one another.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

**S4:** There shall be no cutting from the regular season roster for competition, nor shall substitutions be permitted, unless there is a written medical reason. In addition, note that Part III, Article 12: Drops and Adds applies, no Cheer & Dance athlete may be added to any roster after September 15 of the current season. Therefore, no substitutions may take place after September 15.

**S5:** No team shall engage in more than one (1) competition per week; said competition shall count as one practice or as the game for that week.

**S6:** Pop Warner Cheer & Dance Teams may accept a team award for their achievement in a competition.

## POP WARNER LEAGUE AND REGION CHAMPIONSHIP

**S1:** The League and Region Cheer & Dance Championships must be registered and approved by PWLS no later than July 15, 2025 reported by the League/Region Cheer & Dance Coordinator in the Reporting Document.

### For all Divisions – League and Region Championships – Advancement

A. **League Advancement to Region:** Each Age/Skill/Size Division will advance two teams (First and Second Place) to the Region Championship. The Third Place team may advance to the Region Championship upon regional invitation. There is no minimum score requirement. More specific details regarding your particular regional program will be made available as the season progresses.

1. **For Second Routine/Performances:** Teams must compete in Primary Cheer or Primary Dance at the League Championships in order to compete in a Second Routine. A team can advance to Region/National in one or both routines in the respective division(s).

B. **Region Advancement to Nationals:** Each Age/Skill/Size Division will advance two teams (First and Second Place) to Nationals. There is no minimum score requirement. Reference additional advancement opportunities below.

1. **Options for all divisions – Region to Nationals**
  - a. Teams Placing 3rd, 4th, 5th may advance to the National Championships if they fit the following criteria: Final Region Score 80 and above AND within 5 Points of First Place.
  - b. Use of Natural Break at the Region Championships can be applied to create competition at every level. Natural Break is decided by the number of athletes on the roster as of September 15.



# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- I. If less than four (4) teams in an Age Skill Division (Small Medium Large) then all compete in one division (i.e., Junior Peewee PW 1 Small, Medium and Large).
  - II. If four (4) or more teams and < 10 teams then there is a Natural Break Application into Small Large. If > 10 teams then there is a Natural Break Application Small Med Large. Every division will advance two to National as in the rulebook.
- C. **League Advancement to Region & Nationals & Region Advancement:** Cheer & Dance teams from Alaska, Hawaii must send a video of their final championship routine directly to the RCDC prior to the respective Region Championship for advancement to the National Championship.

## **S2: League and Region Championships: Tiny Mite Division Options**

- A. **YCADA Show Cheer 1 Limited, Show Cheer 1**
1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, Large
    - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
    - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
    - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes
- B. **YCADA Core Cheer Limited**
1. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes
- C. **YCADA Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop**
1. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes – Reference Application of Natural Break options for divisions with four (4) or more teams.

## **S3: League and Region Championships: Mitey Mite Division Options**

- A. **YCADA Show Cheer 1, Show Cheer 2**
1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, Large
    - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
    - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
    - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes
- B. **YCADA Core Cheer**
2. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes
- C. **YCADA Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop**
1. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes – Reference Application of Natural Break options for divisions with four (4) or more teams.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## **D. YCADA Sideline Performance Cheer**

1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, Large
  - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
  - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
  - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes

## **S4: League and Region Championships: Junior Peewee, Peewee Division Options**

### **A. YCADA Show Cheer 1, Show Cheer 2, Show Cheer 3**

1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, and Large
  - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
  - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
  - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes

### **B. YCADA Show Cheer 4**

1. Size Divisions: Refer to League, Region and National Championships-Natural Break listed below.
2. All Show Cheer 4 Teams that participate in League/Region Championships will be permitted to advance to the Region/ National Championships.

### **C. YCADA Core Cheer**

1. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes

### **D. YCADA Dance Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop**

1. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes – Reference Application of Natural Break options for divisions with four (4) or more teams.

### **E. YCADA Sideline Performance Cheer**

1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, and Large
  - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
  - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
  - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes

## **S5: League and Region Championships: Junior Varsity, Varsity and Bantam Division Options**

### **A. YCADA Show Cheer 1, Show Cheer 2, Show Cheer 3**

1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, and Large
  - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
  - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
  - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes

### **B. YCADA Show Cheer 4**

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

1. Size Divisions: Refer to League, Region and National Championships-Natural Break listed below.
2. All Show Cheer 4 Teams that participate in League/Region Championships will be permitted to advance to the Region/ National Championships.

## C. **YCADA Dance Pom Performance, Theme Dance, Hip Hop**

1. Size Divisions: 5 to 35 Athletes – Reference Application of Natural Break options for divisions with four (4) or more teams.

## D. **YCADA Sideline Performance Cheer**

1. Size Divisions: Small, Medium, and Large
  - a. Small: 5 to 10 Athletes
  - b. Medium: 11 to 20 Athletes
  - c. Large: 21 to 35 Athletes

## **POP WARNER LEAGUE, REGION AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **S1: Show Cheer 4 and all Dance Divisions – Apply Natural Break**

If there are less than 4 teams in the Show Cheer 4 or Dance Age Division, there is no size placement and all teams compete in one age division (i.e., SC 4 Varsity Division).

If there are 4 or more teams in the Show Cheer 4 or Dance Age Division, the following process applies:

- A. There will be no pre-set number of team members to determine their placement in a SMALL or LARGE Division.
- B. After team rosters are final on October 1, the number of members on each team are “set”.
- C. Show Cheer 4 Teams may then be split into SMALL and LARGE Divisions as determined by the natural break.
- D. Natural break is calculated by finding the average number of participants per team in the division.
- E. The average number will be the largest team size in the SMALL Division.
- F. A minimum of two teams must clearly fall within the SMALL and LARGE break.
- G. Changes/Drops after October 1 will not be considered during placement in Small and Large Divisions on the Final Schedule.
- H. Teams that were “Large” at the League Championship may be “Small” at the Region Championship, depending upon the Natural Break.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

- I. The natural break will be determined prior to each Championship event by the League, Region and National Cheer & Dance Coordinators.

**Please Note:** All Show Cheer 4 Teams that participate in League and Region Championships will be permitted to advance to the Region/National Championships.

**S2: League, Region and National Championships: Rules and Regulations.** Teams performing in the Pop Warner Championship Program(s) must abide by the following guidelines:

- A. Must be declared League champion or qualifier as outlined in Regional/National Championships General Information listed below.
- B. Must have a certified roster with the Region and National by the specified cut-off date, September 15.
- C. All teams must be accompanied with a copy of the certified roster, league registration forms with photo identification, birth certificates, medical release forms and scholastic eligibility, YCADA Certificate for rostered staff members and for Cheer Teams Only: Skills Progression Sheet.
- D. An absentee sheet for any athlete absent from a certified roster must accompany said team. Absentee Forms must be processed prior to competition. PWLS reserves the right to penalize or disqualify a team, in advance or at the event, due to a significant lack of participation from its Cheer & Dance leaders. All athletes must be current and officially rostered members of their regular Pop Warner team.
- E. Cheer & Dance Teams participating in the Championships (League, Region and National) must have at least five (5) active participants rostered (and on the performance floor) on September 15.
- F. Team size status is based on your roster count as of September 15. Please note that the number of actual cheerleaders determines size (Small, Medium or Large). Since mascots cannot participate in competitions, they do not count on the team numbers (even though listed on the roster for registration and insurance purposes.)
- G. Rostered Cheerleading Teams with more than 2 male participants (3 or more) will be placed in a Co-ed Category within their age division for Pop Warner Competitions, League/Region and National.
- H. Costumed Mascot in Pop Warner Championships: A mascot is a costumed character (person, animal, object, etc.) that represents your Pop Warner Football, Cheer & Dance organization.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

1. A Costumed Mascot is an athlete that is rostered in the same, age/skill division as its team and included in the team count.
  2. Teams may add up to one (1) Costumed Mascot in their routine. The Costumed Mascot must enter the floor with the team and remain on the floor for the entire routine. Costumed Mascots should be used to engage the crowd. The Costumed Mascot should not be involved in any stunts or skills and should position themselves away from skills being performed. Costumed Mascots may use traditional sideline props i.e. signs, pom, megaphones or flags.
- I. Safety - In concentrated efforts to reduce the risk of injury to athletes, every regional/national event will use every possible means to obtain performance mats for safety, as well as to secure professional spotters.
1. The use of mini-tramps, spring boards or any apparatus used to propel an athlete is not permitted.
- J. All fees (Regional & National) must be paid prior to participating in postseason. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- K. Failure to provide any of the above or falsification of any documents may result in forfeit of player/participant and or team.
- L. Pop Warner Championships (League, Region and National) Event Judges:
1. All Pop Warner Judges (Head, Rules, Panel) must complete the online YCADA Judges' Training and Testing to judge League, Region and National Championships. Valid for two Pop Warner seasons.
  2. Pop Warner Volunteers are not permitted to judge Pop Warner events. Pop Warner Judges with past affiliations to Pop Warner are not permitted to judge an event with affiliated teams and must be in writing in advance for approval by the RCDC.

## S3: LEAGUE, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Proper roster, competition, and forms must be submitted in accordance with national requirements in order to participate.
- B. Competition Forms include:
1. **Statement of Acceptance:** The Head Coach for each advancing team from League Championship to Region/ National Championships will be asked to submit a Statement of Acceptance. The Statement of Acceptance will include basic team information for registration and media purposes. By completing the Statement of Acceptance, a team commits to participate in the Region Championship

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

and advance to the National Championships if placement in Region Championships is First or Second (includes Primary and/or Second Routines).

2. **YCADA-Pop Warner Score Sheet Package** is distributed to the Head Coach immediately following the event and includes Panel Score Sheets and a Point - Legality Deduction Sheet.

## C. **EVENT GUIDELINES: PERFORMANCE AND WARM-UP AREA**

1. The matted competition area for national competition will be approximately 54' x 42' deep (9 Panels). It is highly recommended that an auxiliary gym is in place to serve as the warm-up area just prior to performance. This area is secured from non-athletes and spectators, and includes a matted surface for tumbling and/or stunt warm-up. (54' x 42' Matted Surface Recommended).

## D. **EVENT GUIDELINES: ROUTINE MUSIC FOR POP WARNER CHAMPIONSHIPS**

1. Music is accepted in MP3 File Format Only.
2. Music is labeled as follows: (i.e, Langhorne Lions Pop Warner, JP, SC2, L, Co-ed, Track 1 of 2)
  - a. Team Name as Listed on the Statement of Acceptance
  - b. Age Level (TM, MM, JP, PW, JV, V, B, CH)
  - c. Skill Level (SC1, SC1-LTD, SC2, SC3, SC4, CC1, CC1-LTD, PP, TD, HH)
  - d. Cheer Size (S, M, L)
  - e. Co-ed
  - f. If more than one track for a routine: Track 1 of 2, Track 2 of 2.
3. For Teams Advancing from Region Championship to Nationals: Music is submitted by Region Coordinator two days following Region Championship. There will be no music changes on location at Nationals once Region music is submitted. If a team receives a rules deduction for music at the Region Championships (i.e., suggestive music or inappropriate for family viewing, etc.), the New Music with changes must be submitted from the Region Coordinator no later than 5 business days following the Region event and emailed to [spirit@popwarner.com](mailto:spirit@popwarner.com).

## E. **EVENT GUIDELINES: INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCES**

1. Interruption of Performances, Prior to Taking the Floor - If an interruption of a team's order of performance occurs prior to taking the floor (i.e., athlete suddenly ill or an injury

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

occurs prior to taking the floor in warmups) then a team will be placed at the earliest possible time in the next available spot taking into consideration a team's need to regroup. The team must perform and take the floor before the last team competes in their division. Once a team's division is complete/closed a team will not be allowed to perform and be judged. Note: Once removed by reason of injury/illness, an athlete shall not re-enter the competition without the approval of an official licensed athletic trainer or medical professional who is not a parent/guardian of the athlete.

2. Interruption of Performances, Injury on the Performance Floor - If an interruption of a team's performance occurs on the floor which requires the stoppage of the routine (i.e., injury that needs immediate medical attention or routine is stopped due to a medical emergency) then a team will be allowed to return and complete their routine. A team must perform the entire routine from the beginning in its entirety "full out" but will only be evaluated by the judges on skills performed in the routine after the occurrence of the injury. The team must perform and take the floor before the last team competes in their division. Once a team's division is complete/closed a team will not be allowed to perform and be judged. Note: Once removed by reason of injury/illness, an athlete shall not re-enter the competition without the approval of an official licensed athletic trainer or medical professional who is not a parent/guardian of the athlete.
3. Interruption of Performances, Music – Coach or Venue - If an interruption of a team's performance occurs on the floor due to a music or venue malfunction it will be determined by the event director if the malfunction was due to a coach's error or technical/venue error. Malfunctions that occurred due to a coach's error will not be allowed to perform again and must complete their routine after the malfunction immediately. A team's timing will not be stopped during the malfunction and as a consequence a team may incur an overtime violation. If it is determined by the event director that the malfunction was due to a technical/venue error then a team, at the discretion of the event director (due to schedule and timing) may be allowed to re-perform and complete their routine. A team must perform the entire routine from the beginning in its entirety "full out" but will only be evaluated by the judges on skills performed in the routine after the occurrence of the malfunction. The team must perform and take the floor before the last team competes in their division. Once a team's division is complete/closed a team will not be allowed to perform and be judged.

# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## F. COACHING

1. Coaching during the performance is not permitted (e.g., yelling instructions or motioning directions to team members). Cheer & Dance crowd response, however, is welcomed from any and all fans, including members of the coaching staffs.
2. Proper Championship coaching attire shall consist of Business, Business Casual or Game Day Attire in the form of a dress, suit, Khaki or dress pants and a polo (with Pop Warner Logo and/or Team/Association/League name and/or logo), or Team Sweat Suit/Athletic Sneakers with Pop Warner Team logo, etc.). The following items are not acceptable: Jeans, shorts, flip flops and/or tank tops. Coaching staff consists of rostered staff to include Coordinator, Coaches, Coach Trainee, Student Demonstrators, etc.

## G. DISQUALIFICATION

1. Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of the competition's "Articles of Understanding" may be disqualified from the championship and automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards, and may also forfeit the opportunity to participate in regional and/or national championships.

## I. HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

1. Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the championship will be handled exclusively by the head coach of the team and will be directed to the competition coordinator. (i.e., League / Regional / National Cheer & Dance Commissioner)

## J. FINALITY OF DECISIONS

1. By participating in a competition, each team agrees that decisions by the judges and officials will be final and will not be subject for review. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges and officials to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative or procedural review of such decisions.
2. For Interpretations: The Rules Committee for competitions will consist of the Event's Cheer & Dance Commissioner (League/Region or National), the Head Judge, and the Rules Judge(s) to speak on specific matter(s).
3. All decisions of judges, including mandatory Rules Judge(s) are final.



# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

## J. COACHES' TECHNICAL/STUNTING QUESTIONS

1. As a coach, it is important to be current on the YCADA-PWLS Safety Guidelines. If you have questions concerning any safety guidelines or questions regarding specific stunts, pyramids and/or dance skills, please follow these steps. This will insure that you receive a timely and accurate response to your questions.
2. All questions must be in written form due to the differences in interpretation and terminology. No phone calls will be accepted.
3. The above requests may be submitted online at <https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/emf/ycada/rules-question-form>. You will be requested to copy your Region Cheer & Dance Coordinator. All requests must be received at least two weeks prior to the event (PWLS League, Region and National Championship) in order to be reviewed.
4. Please include your name, address and daytime contact number on all requests.







# Part V: Cheer & Dance Rules

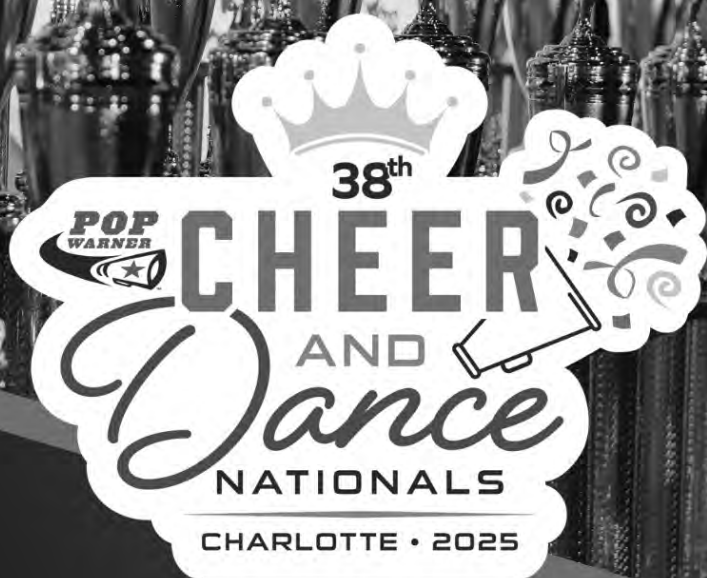
## YCADA Pop Warner General Safety Guidelines

JAMZ, as Pop Warner Little Scholars Development Partner, is the original developer of the Youth Cheer and Dance Alliance (YCADA). JAMZ is also the first company to test and adopt its skill levels, rules and scoring guidelines. Through participation in YCADA, JAMZ and Pop Warner have helped to grow the Youth Cheer and Dance market and provide structure to youth organizations at a national level. For further details see [www.YCADA.org](http://www.YCADA.org).

Scan the QR Code below for access to the Pop Warner YCADA League Member site, your source for everything YCADA including the YCADA Resource Center - Rules & Scoring, Courses and so much more. Or [Click Here](#) to link directly.







*Dec. 7-11*



*Dec. 7-11*



*Mar. 21*

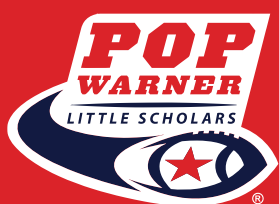
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