

Burlington Pop Warner Cheerleading

**2025 Registration
Information**

&

Handbook

Welcome to the 2025 Cheer Season with Burlington Pop Warner! To ensure a smooth registration process for our families and volunteers, please follow the steps below to complete your child's registration.

Important Notes

- **In-Person Registration Only:** This year, we are transitioning to in-person registration events to streamline the process and reduce the administrative burden on our volunteers. This change will help us prepare for Pop Warner certification more efficiently and ensure all paperwork is submitted accurately and on time.
- **Attendance Requirement:** Families must attend one of the scheduled registration events with all required paperwork and payment in hand (check preferred).
- **Alternate Arrangements:** If you cannot attend a registration event, please contact Erica Monaco at burlingtonmapopwarner@gmail.com to arrange registration prior to **April 30, 2025**.
- **Team Placement Deadline:** Complete registration by **April 30, 2025**, to secure your child's spot on a team. Some teams have limited spots, and team placements will be announced in mid-May.
- **Uniform Fitting:** Cheerleaders are encouraged to attend the registration event to be fitted for their uniform.

In-Person Registration & Uniform Fitting Dates

- **Sunday, March 30:** 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM @ Mount Hope Gym, 3 McGinnis Drive
- **Sunday, April 06:** 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM @ Mount Hope Gym, 3 McGinnis Drive

Registration Checklist

To finalize your registration, the following items must be completed and submitted. Incomplete registrations will result in your child not being placed on a team. **No exceptions. Please come with documents completed and printed to speed up the registration process. Hard copies will be available if necessary**

1. **2025 Participant Contract and Parental Consent Form-** Fully completed and signed.
2. **BPW Cheerleader Acknowledgment Form-** Completed and signed by both guardian/cheerleader.
3. **Birth Certificate-** If an original was submitted to BPW and still on file from 2024 season, no need to supply another copy.
4. **Registration Fee-** \$300 (check payable to Burlington Pop Warner).
5. **Cheerleader Headshot-** Photos will be taken at registration. If your child cannot attend, bring a printed photo to registration or email a headshot to burlingtonmapopwarner@gmail.com.
6. **Copy of 2024-2025 Year-End Report Card-** Email the final report card for the school year ending June 2025 by the last day of school to burlingtonmapopwarner@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in making the registration process seamless! If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact: burlingtonmapopwarner@gmail.com

2025 Season Registration Fees

The registration fee for the 2025 season is as follows:

\$300 per cheerleader (see below for sibling discount)

\$100 per cheerleader for the G team (ages 4-5) *Note: Team formation requires at least eight cheerleaders and two parent coaches.*

This fee includes:

- \$250 for registration
- \$25 for the competition bow
- \$25 for the sponsorship practice t-shirt

This is not an increase in registration costs but to make things simpler and more convenient for everyone, we included anticipated additional costs upfront as part of registration. This approach eliminates the need to collect money for various items throughout the season and ensures parents have a clear understanding of what to expect. We hope this streamlines the process and makes the season more enjoyable for everyone. The only anticipated additional expense outside of registration will be if your daughter needs to purchase new cheer sneakers.

Full Refunds (100%) will be given if requested prior to August 1st, 2025, of the current season.

Sibling Discount

This year, sibling discount will be \$175.00 (\$175 plus \$50 for bow and t-shirt). Moving forward for 2026 and beyond, we will not be offering a sibling discount. As a 100% volunteer-run program, we rely on consistent funding to cover the costs of uniforms, practice facilities, competition expenses, and other program needs. Offering sibling discounts can impact our ability to maintain the quality and stability of the program for all cheerleaders. We truly appreciate your understanding and continued support.

Hardship Assistance

If any families are facing financial hardship that would restrict their ability to participate, please reach out to Erica Monaco at **burlingtonmapopwarner@gmail.com** to discuss hardship assistance options. We are committed to ensuring all children have the opportunity to be part of this program and will do our best to support families in need.

Practice Information

The 2025 Burlington Pop Warner season is scheduled to start on **July 15th**. Starting in July is NEW this year for Pop Warner! We are excited to have the extra time to team build and condition this season.

Summer practices will take place at MSMS Field or Memorial School Field. Once the town releases the summer field schedule, coaches will confirm times and locations. Indoor practices will begin mid-September and will take place at BHS.

Practice Details:

- Practice schedule runs from **July 15th until the end of the season** (early December if the team makes it to Nationals).
- **Summer Practices:**
 - All Teams (except Tiny Mite (F Team) and Jr. Tiny Mite (G Team, see below)): **5:30–7:30 PM** – Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.
 - Tiny Mite (F Team): **5:30–7 PM** on Monday and Thursday.
 - Junior Tiny-Mite Team (G Team, ages 4 and 5): **5:30–6:30 PM** on Mondays beginning August 4th. *Note: Team formation requires at least eight cheerleaders and two parent coaches.*
- **Indoor Practices:**
 - Indoor practices begin mid-September at BHS, with times varying between **5:30–9 PM** depending on the team.
 - Adjustments to the indoor practice day schedule are possible due to gym availability and school holidays.
 - **Specific Team Schedules will be announced after registration closes and teams are formed.**

Parent Guidelines:

- Parents are welcome to stay and watch during outdoor practices.
- When practices move indoors, **parents are not allowed in the gym.**

Additional Notes:

- **Photo Consent:** By allowing your child to participate in Burlington Pop Warner Cheerleading, you consent to the use of their photos and videos for team promotions, social media, and fundraising purposes. If you have concerns or wish to opt out, please contact us directly.
- Stay tuned for **summer pizza nights** and **concessions after practices** – a great opportunity for families to connect and support the program!

Burlington Pop Warner Cheerleading Attendance Policy

Cheerleading is a **team sport** that depends on every member working together. Absences not only disrupt practice but also impact the safety, progress, and performance of the entire team. As a competitive cheerleading program, we no longer cheer for football and are fully focused on preparing for competitions. This requires a serious commitment from cheerleaders and their families.

Before committing to the season, please carefully consider the level of dedication expected by the program. These guidelines will be upheld to ensure fairness and the overall success of the team.

Commitment Requirements

- **Practices:** Three nights per week from August through early December (if the team qualifies for Nationals). G team will practice 1x/week. F team will practice 2x/week, all other teams 3x/week.
 - **Attendance:** Attendance is **mandatory** for all practices, the season showcase, and all competitions.
 - **Absences Allowed:** Up to **7 total absences** for the entire season (including vacations and non-Pop Warner activities).
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Attendance Guidelines

1. General Rules

- **No absences or late arrivals** are allowed the week leading up to a competition.
- **Excused Absences:** School-related events impacting grade or sickness
- **Unexcused Absences:** Vacations, part-time jobs, family events, dances, concerts, banquets, or recitals.

2. Conflicts with Other Activities

- **Minor Conflicts:** We are willing to accommodate small scheduling overlaps (e.g., attending another activity from 6–7 PM and cheerleading from 7–8 PM).
- **Full Practice Conflicts:** Cheerleaders cannot miss entire practices for other commitments.
- **Recurring Conflicts:** If a cheerleader frequently misses practice or portions of practice, they may not be placed in stunts or pyramids. **Stunting requires full participation**, and absences are unfair to the rest of the group.

3. Notification and Punctuality

- Notify the coach in advance of any absence.
- Consistent tardiness may result in an unexcused absence.

4. Injury and Illness

- Absences due to illness or injury lasting more than two days require a doctor's note to return.
- The note must clear the athlete for **full participation** with no restrictions.

Why Stunting Requires 100% Attendance

Safety First

- Stunts and pyramids require precise timing, trust, and coordination. When a member is missing, it's unsafe to practice or attempt stunts, resulting in lost practice time.

Muscle Memory and Consistency

- Stunts demand repeated practice to build muscle memory and confidence. Frequent absences prevent the group from achieving the consistency needed for competitions.

Team Dynamics

- Stunting depends on synchronization and trust. Absences force teammates to adapt or practice without the missing member, creating frustration and slowing progress.

Competition Readiness

- Judges evaluate stunts on precision, timing, and execution. Without adequate practice as a full group, the performance and overall team score suffer.

Impact on the Entire Team

When a cheerleader is absent:

- Stunt groups lose critical practice time, hindering progress.
- Coaches must rework routines or formations, taking time away from team practice.
- Teammates who consistently show up feel held back and discouraged.

Fairness and Commitment

To ensure fairness, cheerleaders with recurring conflicts will not be placed in key stunting roles. This guarantees all athletes have an equal opportunity to succeed and allows the team to perform at its best.

Consequences for Excessive Absences

- Missing more than **7 absences** may result in dismissal from the team.
- Unexcused or prolonged absences without documentation may lead to reassignment as an alternate or removal from performances.

Cheerleading is a **team effort** that requires dedication, effort, and teamwork from all participants. Let's work together to ensure a safe, successful, and rewarding season!

General Rules of Conduct and Practice Guidelines:

To foster a positive and respectful environment, all cheerleaders and families are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. **Respect:** Treat coaches, teammates, and opponents with respect and dignity. Always compliment good performance and refrain from highlighting mistakes.
 2. **Disciplinary Actions:**
The following behaviors will result in disciplinary action and potential dismissal from the program:
 - Profanity or fighting, either physically or verbally.
 - Any negative electronic communication (e.g., social media posts, emails, messages) targeting coaches, athletes, or any related programs.
 3. **Injury Reporting:** Report all injuries immediately to your coach for appropriate attention.
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Team Practice Rules

To ensure a productive and safe practice environment, the following rules apply:

1. **Jewelry and Grooming:**
 - No jewelry (including earrings, belly rings, and necklaces) is allowed during practice.
 - Fingernails must be kept at a safe, manageable length.
 - Hair must be pulled back in a secure ponytail with no loose or hanging pieces.
 - During competition season, unnatural hair colors (e.g., pink, purple, blue) are not allowed to maintain a unified team appearance.
2. **Clothing and Footwear:**
 - Team-designated practice clothing must be worn at all practices. Specifics will be provided by coaches before the season starts.
 - Cheer shoes must be worn at all practices. Street shoes are prohibited to ensure safety during stunting, tumbling, and jumping.
3. **Cell Phones:**
 - Cell phones must be turned off and stored in backpacks for the duration of practice. This will be strictly enforced.
4. **Behavior and Participation:**
 - Participation at practices is mandatory. Cheerleaders exhibiting negative behavior or refusing to participate will be sent home, and the incident will be reported to the Cheer Director.
 - After three documented incidents, the Cheer Director reserves the right to dismiss the cheerleader from the program.
 - All cheerleaders are expected to treat each other with kindness, respect, and support, both in and out of practice. We foster an inclusive team environment where every member is valued and no one is excluded. Gossiping, cliques, and any behavior aimed at alienating or undermining teammates will not be tolerated.

- Disrespectful actions such as back talk, rolling eyes, or any other form of negativity towards coaches or teammates are unacceptable. We are a team, and mutual respect is essential to our success and unity.
5. **Punctuality:**
- Notify the coach in advance of any planned absence.
 - Consistent tardiness may result in an unexcused absence.
6. **Indoor Practice Rules:**
- Due to insurance regulations, parents are not allowed in practice spaces during indoor practices. Please remain in designated waiting areas.
 - Only rostered and CORI-certified coaches are permitted in the gym.
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Spectator and Parent Code of Conduct

Burlington Pop Warner Cheerleading is committed to creating a positive, respectful environment for all cheerleaders, coaches, officials, and families. Spectators and parents must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the values of our program at all practices, games, and competitions.

Spectator Behavior

- Any misconduct towards coaches, cheerleaders, teammates, officials, or other parents will not be tolerated.
- **Consequences for Misconduct:**
 1. First offense: Immediate removal from the event or competition venue.
 2. Second offense: Permanent banishment from the cheerleading program and a potential restraining order.
 3. Physical assault on any coach, official, or cheerleading volunteer will result in a one-year ban from the cheerleading program, and the child will be removed for that duration.

Parent Code of Conduct

As a parent or guardian of a cheerleader, I agree to support the core principles of sportsmanship and respect, and to uphold the following commitments:

1. I will not force my child to participate in cheerleading if they do not want to be involved. If my child is expressing a lack of interest, discomfort, or reluctance to continue in the sport, I will work with them to explore their feelings and consider their best interests, instead of pressuring them to stay in the program.
2. I will remember that cheerleading is about my child's enjoyment and development, not just competition.
3. I will model good sportsmanship by demonstrating respect and positive support for all cheerleaders, coaches, officials, and spectators during practices and competitions.
4. I will refrain from engaging in any unsportsmanlike conduct, including negative behavior towards any athlete or coach, and will not encourage practices that jeopardize the safety or well-being of the cheerleaders.

5. I will encourage my child to resolve conflicts without hostility and to treat all cheerleaders, coaches, and staff with respect, regardless of differences.
 6. I will teach my child that giving their best effort and working as a team is more important than winning or individual accolades.
 7. I will support the development of my child's cheerleading skills and the value of practice over simply focusing on competition results.
 8. I will respect the authority of the coaches and cheerleading director and will address any concerns in a calm and appropriate manner, respecting the coaches' decisions during practices and competitions.
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2025 Burlington Pop Warner Parental Acknowledgement Form

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the terms set forth in the 3 documents listed below:

- Burlington Pop Warner Cheerleading Attendance Policy
- General Rules of Conduct and Practice Guidelines
- Spectator and Parent Code of Conduct

I further agree to abide by all the conditions and stipulations outlined in this agreement. My signature below serves as confirmation of my understanding and acceptance of these terms.

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Cheerleader Name: _____

Date: _____

By adhering to these policies, we create a safe, respectful, and competitive environment that fosters success for all athletes. Parents and guardians, please ensure your child understands these expectations and commits fully to the team.

We look forward to a successful and fun season!

Fundraising, Key Dates, and Competition Info
2025 Pop Warner Cheer Season

Fundraising and Volunteer Requirements

Burlington Pop Warner is a 100% volunteer-driven program, and we are incredibly grateful for the dedication of our coaches, volunteers, and families. In order for our program to thrive and continue offering the best experience for our athletes, we rely on the support of our community to fundraise. The registration fees cover only a small portion of our operating costs, and we depend on donations from local businesses and fundraising efforts to cover expenses such as gym/mat time, coaches' training and certifications, uniforms, the end-of-season banquet, music, Nationals expenses, insurance, and more.

Every cheerleader's family is asked to participate in fundraising activities. If every family does their part, even if it's just a small amount, it will add up and make a big difference for the greater good of our program. Your participation is vital to helping us provide the best experience for all athletes. We appreciate your effort to support our program!

If you're interested in joining the fundraising subcommittee or know of a local business that might want to become a sponsor for Burlington Pop Warner, please reach out to Diana Segool at burlingtonpopwarnerfundraising.com. We would love to have your support!

Fundraising Initiatives for the Year

Here's a list of the fundraising initiatives planned for the season, so you know what to expect:

1. Parents Night Out Fundraiser

Join us at **Good Night Johnny's** for a fun night out with the BPW community and friends. The restaurant will be exclusively ours, with live music, dancing, appetizers, and a cash bar. Spread the word and help make this a successful event! **Date TBD in August. Stay tuned for more details and ticket sales information.** This event is open to everyone—no BPW membership required!

2. Cookie Dough Fundraiser

This fundraiser was very successful last year, and we received great feedback. We'll kick it off in September, **and we ask each cheerleader to sell a minimum of 5 boxes of cookie dough.** It's an easy task, and the cookies are both affordable and delicious. There will be prizes for the top 3 cheerleaders who sell the most cookie dough!

3. Corporate Sponsorships

Our fundraising team will be reaching out to local businesses for sponsorships. Each cheerleader will receive a BPW practice t-shirt at the start of the season, which will feature and thank all of our corporate sponsors. If you know any businesses interested in sponsoring BPW, please reach out to Diana Segool.

Nationals Fundraising

Cheerleaders advancing to **Regionals** in November will be required to sign up for canning shifts. The funds raised will be pooled and distributed equally among all cheerleaders advancing to Nationals. Additionally, each cheerleader advancing to Regionals will be asked to contribute at least \$25 towards a **raffle calendar**, which can be in the form of cash, gift card, or donation from a local business. The fundraising team will prepare the raffle calendar for the girls to sell post-Regionals, with all ticket sales going directly toward their Nationals expenses.

Key Dates and Competition Info for the 2025 Pop Warner Cheer Season

Date	Event	Details
TBD	"Cheers to the Season" Adults Night Out at Good Night Johnny's	A fun night of live music, dancing, and community to kick off the 2025 season!
Tuesday July 15th	Outdoor Practices Begin (MSMS/Memorial Field)	Practices for F Team : Monday & Thursday B, C, D, E Teams : Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM.
TBD	Parent Q&A Meeting	
Monday August 4th	G Team Outdoor Practices Begin (MSMS/Memorial Field)	Practices: Monday 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM.
TBD- September	Cookie Dough Fundraiser Begins	Deadline for orders: TBD . Details will be shared soon.
TBD - September	Picture Day	Date TBD
October 11th	League Competition	All competing teams participate and will advance to the Northeastern MA Competition.
TBD	BPW Friends and Family Showcase	A special evening to preview the routines and cheer on the girls. All teams, including G and F, will perform.
October 25th	Northeastern MA Pop Warner Competition	All competing teams and F Team participate. Only the top 2 teams in each division advance to Regionals.
November 15th & 16th	New England Regional Competition , Springfield, MA	Younger teams (E, D, C) compete Saturday; older teams (B, A) compete Sunday. Top 2 teams advance to Nationals, with possible score-based invitations announced at Regionals.
December 6th-12th	Pop Warner National Championships , Charlotte, NC	Teams compete on one day (TBD). Travel details will be provided to qualifying teams.
TBD	Team Parties During Competition Season	Coaches will schedule team-specific celebrations.

Competition Guidelines

- The **G Team** will not attend any competitions but will exhibit at the annual showcase in **October** at Burlington High School. Date TBD
- The **F Team** may compete but at a minimum will exhibit at the Northeastern MA Pop Warner event. This will be decided at the close of registration.
- **Participation in cheerleading competitions is mandatory.**
- Attendance at all practices during the week leading up to competitions is required. **No late arrivals or early departures** will be permitted.

Competition Dates (Subject to Change)

- **League Competition: October 11th** – All competing teams will participate and all teams will advance to the Northeastern MA Competition.
- **Northeastern MA Pop Warner Competition: October 25th** – All competing team and exhibiting teams will compete in this competition. Only the top 2 teams in each division will advance to Regionals.
- **New England Regional Competition: November 15th and 16th**, Springfield, MA – Cheerleaders will compete on one of these days (TBD). Historically, the younger teams (E, D and C) will compete on Saturday and the older teams (B and A) will compete on Sunday. The top 2 teams in each division will advance to Nationals. Teams may also receive invitations to Nationals based on their scores, which will be announced at Regionals.
- **Pop Warner National Championships: December 6th-12th**, Charlotte, NC
See the **Nationals** section of this handbook for more detailed information.

Advancement and Attendance

- **All cheerleaders are expected to attend Nationals if their team advances.**
- If a cheerleader does not participate in the E Mass Competition and/or New England Regional, they will not be eligible to advance to the next level of competition if their squad qualifies.
- The only exception is a documented injury with a **doctor's note**. No other exceptions will be made. If a cheerleader cannot compete at any competition level, written notice must be submitted to the Cheerleading Director in advance to allow the team to compete.

Additional Information

- The order of appearance for competitions is typically released 5–7 days before the event. Please be patient and know that we will provide meeting/competing times as soon as we receive it.
- Coaches will provide details about hair and makeup requirements as competition dates approach.

Competition Attire:

Cheer Uniforms

A cheer uniform consists of a skirt and top. The cheer uniform is the property of Burlington Pop Warner and must be returned to the organization either at the end of the season or upon a cheerleader's departure from the association prior to the end of the season. Uniforms are not to be worn outside of league-sponsored functions (e.g., Halloween).

Once a cheerleader receives their uniform, it is their responsibility to care for and clean it. Uniforms that are not returned or are returned damaged will be the financial responsibility of the cheerleader's parent or guardian. Failure to return the uniform or to meet this financial responsibility will result in ineligibility to participate in future seasons until the obligation is fulfilled.

Cheer Sneakers

Cheer sneakers must be purchased separately. You may purchase any all white cheer-designated sneaker. Please reach out if you have any questions or need recommendations. We have historically purchased Chasse or GK from OmniCheer. You can use this vendor and those brands, or feel free to use Amazon or any other cheer company you prefer.

Bow

The cost of the competition bow is included in your registration fee and will be provided to the girls at the first competition.

Uniform Fittings

Cheerleaders will be fitted for uniforms during the in-person registration nights, so we encourage all families to attend to ensure proper sizing.

Nationals

Nationals will be held in Charlotte, NC this year, from December 6th to December 12th. If your cheerleading team advances to Nationals, **all cheerleaders are required to attend.**

In 2024, two BPW teams advanced to Nationals, and we are hopeful that more teams will continue on this path. All cheerleaders and families on competing teams should plan for this potential trip. We understand that it may be a financial burden for some families, but rest assured, we have a strong fundraising plan in place to help every cheerleader attend and experience Nationals.

Estimated Costs

Based on the 2024 Nationals trip, we estimate the costs to be approximately **\$600-\$800 per cheerleader** and **\$350-\$550 for each adult** attending. This is for hotel, registration and admission to the convention center. These costs do not include flights or food. Fundraising last year for many cheerleaders was able to offset the full cost of their trip!

Hotel Accommodations

Cheerleaders will be required to stay at the Pop Warner-affiliated hotel assigned to their team and must stay a minimum of three nights. Costs may vary depending on the hotel and this will be the first year Nationals is held in Charlotte, NC, instead of Orlando.

Participation in Nationals Fundraising

Participation in Nationals fundraising is **optional**. Families who need assistance are encouraged to participate in fundraising activities. The more time and effort a cheerleader puts into fundraising, the more money they can earn to help cover trip costs. Last year, cheerleaders who participated in fundraising were able to cover most, if not all, of their trip costs.

Hardship Fund

We understand that the Nationals trip may create a financial hardship for some families. To help alleviate this, we will have a **hardship fund** available based on individual needs. Our goal is to ensure that no cheerleader is left out due to financial limitations.

We are committed to making this experience possible for all our athletes and families, and we are here to support you throughout this journey.

Team Placement and National Pop Warner Age/Eligibility Requirements

Team placement is one of the most challenging processes for the Association, coaches, and the families involved. The goal is to create balanced teams that provide a positive and successful experience for all athletes. Team assignments are made based on the National Pop Warner Age/Eligibility Requirements, as well as factors such as age, skill level, and the overall number of participants.

The following guidelines determine placement and the formation of cheerleading teams:

Pop Warner <u>Age as of 7/31/2025</u>	Team Eligibility
12-13-14-15-16	Varsity (A Division)
10-11-12-13	Junior Varsity (B Division)
9-10-11-12	Peewee (C Division)
8-9-10-11	Junior Peewee (D Division)
7-8-9	Mitey-Mite (E Division)
5-6-7	Tiny Mites (F Division)
4	Junior Tiny Mite (G Division)

Key Points Regarding Team Assignments

- **Team placements are at the sole discretion of the Cheer Director.** We ask that parents respect these decisions, as they are made with the best interest of each cheerleader in mind.
- There is **no requirement for a cheerleader to be placed in a team division aligned with their school grade.**
- A cheerleader may **remain on the same team division for more than two years** (except Tiny Mites and Junior Tiny Mites) as long as they meet the age criteria.
- **Annual Team Formation:** Each year is treated independently for team assignments. Cheerleaders can be placed in any team division that meets their age eligibility for that year.
- **Per Eastern Mass Rule:** A cheerleader must be placed in the **same division or higher** than the previous year. Cheerleaders are not allowed to move to a lower division.

Team Assignment Process

- Preliminary team assignments will be sent via email **in mid-May**, along with additional program information.
 - In the event of multiple teams within a division, **Burlington Pop Warner reserves the right to determine the method of placement** for cheerleaders on team rosters.
-