

# Moon-Crescent Athletic Association

## Cheerleading Rules

It is the purpose of the MCAA Cheerleading Program to hold the ideals of leadership as established in these rules. They will promote good sportsmanship among the cheerleaders and the organization by serving as examples in every way and encourage enthusiasm among members of the organization and the community. The MCAA Cheerleaders are representatives of our organization.

The following guidelines must be followed to assure that, as cheerleaders, a positive example is being displayed at all times. THESE RULES ARE IN EFFECT AS SOON AS YOU HAVE REGISTERED FOR A MCAA CHEERLEADING SQUAD.

The Head Coach, Commissioner, and the MCAA board members will take disciplinary actions if the guidelines set forth by MCAA are not followed. Please refer to the MCAA By-Laws posted on [www.mcaafotball.org](http://www.mcaafotball.org) for additional information regarding the rules of the organization.

### **Coaches**

Every board member, head coach, assistant coach, and safety coach must have completed a successful PA Criminal Background Check and PA Child Abuse Clearance, and be MCAA board-approved prior to July 1, in order to participate in the capacity of a coach within the organization. Our board strongly believes in the safety of your children and you can feel comfortable leaving them in our care.

### **Uniform**

A complete cheerleading uniform consists of the wearing of the skirt, shell, and midriff in the combination with selected cheer shoes, socks, briefs, and hair accessory requested by the Cheer Commissioner for MCAA cheerleading games/events.

The uniformed skirt, shell, and pom poms are property of MCAA. Shoes, socks, briefs, midriff, warm-ups, rain jacket, coat, and cheer bag are property of the cheerleader. Families are responsible for purchasing cheer accessories.

The cheer uniform is easy to keep clean. You may have all pieces dry-cleaned or you can wash them by hand or together on the gentle cycle. Always use a mild detergent and cold water. Lay flat to dry or line dry. Never put uniform in dryer.

Upon completion of the season, each cheerleader will be expected to return the same uniform and pom poms that was issued to that cheerleader at the beginning of the season. All uniforms must be cleaned. Coaches have the right to refuse a uniform that is not cleaned or returned properly. Do not make any alterations to any uniform piece, as an altered uniform will be considered damaged. In order to be eligible for rewards, recognition, or to attend the MCAA end-of-year banquet, or to return to cheer next season, all uniform components must be returned in the condition in which they were distributed. Damage charges or replacement charges will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Failure to return the issued uniform pieces to MCAA, and/or if the uniform pieces are not paid in a timely manner, will result in the cheerleader being unable to cheer for the MCAA the following season.

### **Hair**

Hair must be worn away from face and off the neck and shoulders. Only elastic bands are permitted; these are to hold the hair in place and not as decoration. Beads, hair wraps, and other accessories are not permitted.

### **Jewelry**

Due to the types of stunts and tricks performed by each squad, there is absolutely NO JEWELRY worn to practice, games, and events. This includes visible or hidden chains, charms, bracelets, ankle bracelets, rings, etc. Cheerleaders may keep in newly pierced earrings as long as they are a small stud. The final ruling on the size of earring is at the discretion of the Cheer Commissioner. Cover-up techniques such as band aids will not be permitted.

### **Make-up**

Light makeup is permitted, at the Coach and Commissioner's discretion. No visible tattoos or face paint (unless deemed appropriate by the Commissioner). Sunscreen is recommended. Makeup is permitted for competitions.

### **Fundraisers**

All cheerleaders are encouraged to participate in fundraising activities as organized by MCAA. Parents are permitted to assist in fundraisers, but may not take the place of their child during the fundraising activity. Immediate dismissal will take place if you refuse to participate in a fundraiser.

### **Email**

"Cheer Mail" will be sent at the beginning of each week to the email address that was provided at registration. Each email will include MCAA cheer news with important

information and upcoming dates. It is advised that each cheerleader/parent/guardian supply the head coach with at least one email address for the "Cheer Mail" to be sent to. Email should be checked and answered often.

## **Practices**

To avoid distractions, ALL camp and practices are closed to spectators.

### Summer Cheer Camp

Cheer Camp is MANDATORY. This is the most important week of MCAA Cheer, as the cheerleaders are placed in their spots for the halftime routine and stunt groups. The halftime routine is taught during this crucial week.

### Summer Practice

Summer practice begins the week after Cheer Camp. Practice is held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 6:00-8:00pm during the month of July and August. Location for practices is at the discretion of the Commissioner. This time of year can be warm, sunny, and occasionally "buggy." Please send your child with sunscreen and bug spray already applied. Caution should be exercised to use "dry" lotions to avoid slippery skin which could lead to injury.

### Fall Practice

The MCAA Cheer fall practice schedule starts once school begins and ends in October. Practice times vary by team and will be shared with families and posted on the Facebook page "MCAA Youth Tiger Cheerleading." Families must remain outside of practice areas once practice begins. It is our experience that cheerleaders are easily distracted when parents and siblings are at practices. If we are holding practice inside a gymnasium, parents and siblings must wait outside the gym.

All cheerleaders should wear clothing that will not restrict movement. Cheerleaders are required to wear socks and firm sole shoes that tie, or your child will not be able to practice that day. Preferred clothing is a t-shirt, shorts, socks, and tennis shoes that tie. An absence will be recorded if a cheerleader is not permitted to practice because of inappropriate dress, jewelry, or hair items.

Cheerleaders must bring their own water bottles to practice to prevent dehydration. Absolutely NO soda or sugar-based drinks - they attract bees. Snacks are not permitted unless authorized by the coach.

Chewing gum is not permitted.

## **Attendance**

Cheer Camp is MANDATORY. Family vacations should not be planned during camp week. Failure to attend camp will result in the cheerleader not participating in the halftime routine or team stunting.

Practice attendance is mandatory. Practices are designed to teach the skills required for safe performances at games, exhibitions, and other cheer-related events. It is imperative that each cheerleader attends ALL practices. Coaches will make every effort to maintain the practice schedule and will communicate with team members in advance of any changes or cancellations. It is mandatory that families contact the head coach in advance of an absence. Cheerleaders with unexcused or excessive absences will meet with the head coach and commissioner to discuss consequences.

Excused absences include:

- Medical/ Injury (cheerleaders ineligible for practices, due to injury, will not be allowed to participate in any manner until a doctor's note is presented to the head coach giving clearance to return to full capacity)
- Academic
- Religious (worship or education)
- Family emergency
- 1 week of family vacation (one week is 3 consecutive days of practice; these days cannot be split up and used on different occasions)

If your child is being picked up by someone other than you, your child will not be released without a personal phone call to your head coach prior to practice or pick up time. This includes carpooling. Please be prompt when picking up your child.

Practice will be held rain or shine as scheduled, unless your coach notifies you. If practice is cancelled, the determination will be made by the commissioner by 5:00pm. Team practices missed due to inclement weather will be made up at a later date determined by the head coach.

Cheerleaders will not be permitted to participate in a game if she has not learned the cheers sufficiently. This will be left up to the discretion of the coaches. When a practice is missed, it is the cheerleaders responsibility to call someone on the squad and learn what was missed during her absence. Practice will not be held back so that one individual can learn what she missed.

## **Game Day**

Cheerleaders are required to cheer at ALL games throughout the season; this includes all playoffs games as well.

It is your responsibility to make sure you have obtained the date, location, time, and directions (if away) to each game in order to arrive at the designated time. Cheer Mail is sent 1-2 days prior to the game and will contain Game Day Information.

You must arrive at least one hour before each game. At the coach's discretion, the cheerleaders may be required to report earlier/later.

Promptness is required. Upon arrival to the field, the cheerleading team must check in with their head coach and then stay together as a unit. Cheerleaders not reporting to their coach at the designated time will not be permitted to cheer the first half of the game, resulting in the loss of a paw point..

To avoid distractions during games, parents/family members/friends will be asked to remain in the stands or in the spectator area. During the game, no member of the team is permitted to leave unless excused by one of the coaches and then escorted by a coach, instructor, or designated parent.

Cheerleaders will be required to cheer at all games, regardless of the weather. Final decisions to call a game will be made by the Commissioner. If a parent chooses to pull their child due to weather before the decision is made by the Commissioner, this will count as a missed game.

In case of inclement weather, the Commissioner or the head coach will use their discretion to determine the relevance of wearing warm ups, rain jackets, midriiffs, gloves, and/or coats. MCAA is not responsible for providing these items. Parents are responsible for their child being dressed properly.

Cheerleading is an outdoor sport and there will be game days where they will cheer in heat, cold, rain, etc. The Commissioner will make the determination if and when the cheerleaders will be allowed to leave without the loss of paw points.

Cheerleaders should have all uniform components in their cheer bag in case there is a need to change due to changing weather. If you are not prepared to change, you will not cheer. If a cheerleader is in the wrong uniform components, in a dirty uniform, or missing uniform components, the cheerleader will not cheer. This will count as an unexcused absence which will result in an automatic loss of 2 paw points.

Cheerleading captains will be assigned for each game, which is up to the discretion of the head coach.

A water bottle should be brought to the game. No other food or drink is permitted during the game. Cheerleaders are encouraged to eat lightly prior to coming to the game. Food is not permitted on the track area.

Chewing gum is not permitted during games

No use of cellphones during the game or practices. Cell phones must be left in the cheer bag until after practice or games.

### **Chain of Command**

If a problem arises you must follow the following steps for resolution:

1. Head Coach
  - a. Discuss the problem with the head coach. You may contact the head coach before practice/game begins or after practice/game has ended. If you feel it necessary to call the coach, please be considerate of the time when calling. When emailing your coach, please allow a 24-hour courtesy for a returned email.
2. Commissioner
  - a. If unresolved, contact the Commissioner to discuss or to arrange a private meeting with yourself and/or the head coach.
3. Executive Board
  - a. If you are still not satisfied, please submit your issue in writing to the Board President.

**Public confrontation or any type of harassment of a head coach, assistant coach, instructor, commissioner, or other parents/children will not be tolerated, including during membership meetings. Appropriate disciplinary actions will be conducted. Be aware that unacceptable behavior will result in you and your child being removed immediately from the program.**

### **“PAW” POINTS SYSTEM**

All cheerleaders start the season with 8 paws or points. For each absence from a practice, the cheerleader will lose 1 paw point. For each absence from Summer Cheer Camp, the cheerleader will lose 1 and a half paw points. Each game missed will result in the loss of 2 paw points. When a cheerleader has lost 4 paw points, the head coach will bring it to the attention of the parent/guardian and Commissioner. Once a cheerleader loses all of their paw points for the season, they will be immediately dismissed from the squad. Dismissal will result in ineligibility to return the following season. If a senior cheerleader is removed from the squad, they will not be able to attend the end-of-year banquet and/or receive gifts.

### **Excused Absences**

An excused absence will not result in the loss of paw points. Excused absences are up to the discretion of the head coach and Commissioner. An excused absence is defined as having an emergency, attending a funeral, sickness or injury with a doctor's excuse, religious reasons, or 1 consecutive week of family vacation.

If you are planning a family vacation or are aware of a time you will miss, vacation slips must be turned into your coach by the first week of regular practice. While we encourage vacations, after one week they do count as paw points lost. Giving notice to the head coach allows them ample time to plan accordingly for that practice or game.

### **Automatic Dismissal**

An automatic dismissal will result from the following, with or without warning:

- Use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes at any point in time during the MCAA season
- Vulgar language, gestures, or swearing during or after practice/games or while representing MCAA
- Physical or verbal abuse of advisors, instructors, teammates, or other MCAA representatives and members by a participant or parent/guardian
- Non-participation in MCAA fundraisers

Cheerleaders dismissed or who quit for non-medical reasons are not entitled to a refund. The MCAA uniform components must be returned upon dismissal. If they are not returned, you will be billed for the uniform total, which must be paid within 30 days of dismissal.

### **MCAA Instructors**

In order to participate as an instructor for one of the cheerleading squads, you must be a Moon area middle school or high school student, a former cheerleader, or instructor for MCAA who can teach the cheers sufficiently and supply MCAA with clearances if over the age of 18. You must sign the commitment forms, which include parent signatures.

Instructors must wear the issued MCAA shirt during games. No ripped jeans or short shorts; you are role models to our youth and must dress respectable.

Only approved instructors by our Commissioner are allowed to cheer at practices and on the field during games. All instructors have signed waivers regarding liability.