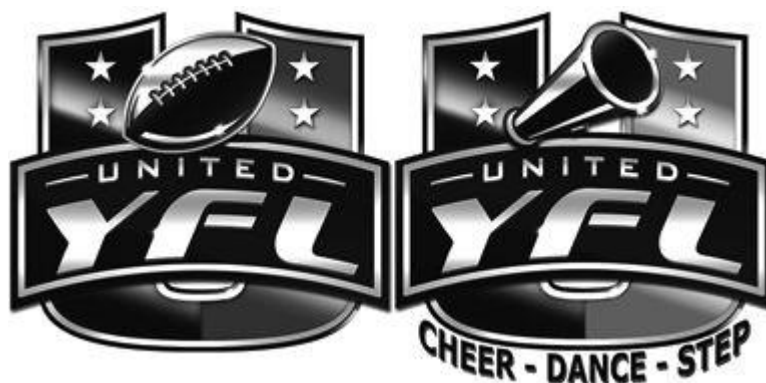


# United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.



## **OFFICIAL FOOTBALL – CHEER – DANCE – STEP RULES AND REGULATIONS 2017**

The United Youth Football and Cheer Rulebook and all of its Rules and Regulations have been created and are enforced/administered with the following philosophy: Provide an all-inclusive, fair, and safe environment where any child can learn and participate in the sport of football/cheer/dance/step without overbearing unrealistic un-enforceable restrictions.

The United Youth Football – Cheer – Dance – Step Rulebook has been written with the minimum requirements allowing each conference, association, team to strengthen and govern as they see fit customizing to the community they serve. All Rules and Regulations should be reviewed with Common Sense and understanding of the intent of each rule. The intent will be to create a fair and consistent team formation and opportunity for all participants/teams across the country. Any and all recommendations/changes/clarifications are welcome and may be submitted through your conference directors.

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## GENERAL RULES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL (Football/Cheer/Dance/Step)

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. reserves the right to enforce any and all of its rules and regulations and the spirit of its rules and regulations as it sees fit and may refuse participation or limit participation to any team or individual at any of its sanctioned events at its sole discretion. United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. offers no right to appeal and will not be obligated to refund any participation fees and/or travel and related expenses.

### ***Section 1 – Membership Requirements and Membership Types***

#### **MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND MEMBERSHIP TYPES**

##### **A) Membership Requirements**

All applications for membership must include, at a minimum, the following information:

- 1) Conference/Association/Team Name (organization)
- 2) Organization Address
- 3) Organization Web Site Address
- 4) President Name, Daytime Phone, Email
- 5) Football Director Name, Daytime Phone, Email
- 6) Cheer Director Name, Daytime Phone, Email

All email addresses must be unique and directed to the named individual. Members must employ a minimum standard of conduct and must maintain the players best interests at all times. All applications for membership must be approved by the national office in writing prior to promoting as such.

##### **1) Insurance Requirement**

All teams must furnish proof of General Liability and Accident Insurance prior to participation in any United Youth Football sanctioned event. Additionally United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. must be named as an additional insured. All members, not covered under the UYFL endorsed insurance policy are required to deliver, via fax, (708) 562-8364 a certificate of insurance prior to conducting any games or practices.

##### **B) Local Independent Membership Type**

Local Independent Membership includes organizations that DO NOT plan to participate in the National Championship Tournament but may wish to enter a State Championship, National Bowl Game, or National Conference All-Star Division for Independent Members. Independent Members receive all benefits of membership including the opportunity to have players selected for the National All-Star game. Independent Members play by their own locally developed structure and are responsible for the compliance with their own rules and regulations but must always insure the morals, values, and integrity of the game of football is honored and every child actively participates. A strict Code of Conduct must be in place. Independent Members have the freedom to choose if they wish to participate in Nationally Sponsored Competitions or not but must make their intentions known by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Independent Members do not have to abide by this rulebook to qualify for the National Bowl Games. If the independent member wants to compete in the National Championship Tournament they must join as a National Championship Member.

##### **C) National Championship Tournament Membership Type**

National Championship Tournament Membership pertains to those organizations that plan to participate in the United UYFL National Championship Tournament. These organizations must strictly abide by United Youth Football – Cheer – Dance – Step Rules and Regulations as outlined in this Official Rulebook.



## Section 2 – Structure Definitions

### STRUCTURE DEFINITIONS

#### A) Region

A Region is defined as a geographic territory. The geographic territory will be determined by the UYFL National Office and the Board of Governors. A Region is comprised of National Championship Member Conferences within territories that has applied for and have been granted membership, by the National Office.

#### B) Conference

A Conference is defined by the geographic boundary of its membership. A Conference membership is comprised of the Associations that have applied for, and have been granted membership, by the Conference's governing body.

#### C) Association

An Association/Team is an organization, whether legally formed or not, assembled for the purpose of organizing and operating a youth football, cheer, dance and/or step program. Associations may be organized by locales, cities, towns or community groups. The Association must be restricted by its Conference from drawing participants from certain geographic territory/boundaries. The acceptable method and determination of what participants can register within any given Association will be governed by the Conference/National Office to which it is a member. The movement of a participant from one member Association to another must be strictly governed and enforced by the Conference/National Office to which it is a member and/or by this rulebook. When controversy exists over player movement or territorial boundaries or draw areas the national office will have the final say. An Association's members are the Participants that have applied for, and have been granted membership, by the Association's governing body. Applications must be taken on a first come first serve basis and teams must be formed regardless of player ability (see Formation of Teams contained in this rulebook) no application for membership should be unreasonably withheld and under no circumstances will a participant be discriminated against.

#### D) Participant

A Participant is defined as a minor child that has applied for and has been granted membership within a given Association/Team.

#### E) Programs

A Program is defined as a grouping of Divisions in specific Program. United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. now offers the following Programs: **Age & Weight Program, Grade Based Program, Senior Youth Program, Conference All-Star Program, United Cheer Program, Conference All-Star Cheer Program, United Traditional Dance Program and United Step Program.** These Programs are further defined in this rulebook.

#### F) Division/Classification

A Division is defined as a grouping within a Program as in the following example:

Football – “Age & Weight” is the **Program** and “PeeWee, Junior Midget...” are the **Divisions**.

Cheerleading – “United Cheer” is the **Program** and “United 9, United 11,” are the **Divisions**.

## Section 3 – Governing Rulebook

### GOVERNING RULEBOOK

United Youth Football (UYFL) Championship Tournament Members follow their state and/or high school governing rulebook for their regular season games, except where superseded by this Rulebook. UYFL Championship Tournament Members will be governed by the National Federation of State High School

Association (NFHS) for all inter-conference / tournament games including, but not limited to, State, Regional and National competitions. All UYFL Rules and Regulations supersede any and all other rulebooks. The UYFL National Office will determine and be the final adjudicator on any and all rule conflicts. UYFL requires that all coaches receive and read this rulebook in its entirety. For purposes of rule enforcement UYFL will assume that the requirement that all coaches receive, read and understand this rulebook in its entirety has been met and will not be held responsible for any other form of announcement of this rule as all reasonable members are aware that a rulebook exists. UYFL will not entertain any claim of ignorance of its rules as a form of defense. UYFL strongly recommends that the local organizations supply the appropriate state and/or high school rulebook, NFHS to all of its coaches. Any organization found to have allowed a variance to this rulebook, the rules regulations and the spirit of the rules and regulations without filing and receiving written approval from the National Office may be suspended. Members always retain the right to make any rule stricter as they see fit.

#### **Section 4 – Rule Enforcement Authority**

### **RULE ENFORCEMENT / AUTHORITY**

#### **A) National Staff**

All Conferences, Associations, Administrative Personnel, Coaches, Volunteers, and Participants are subject to disciplinary actions including, but not limited to, Permanent Suspension or Non-Renewal/Revocation of Membership for violation of the Rules and Regulations and/or the spirit of the rules and regulations including but not limited to the Code of Conduct and/or what behavior, conduct, actions or inactions would be reasonably expected. The National Office will not interfere with local matters, and/or local rule violations, unless asked to do so by the governing body, but does reserve the right, at its sole discretion, to enforce any and all of its Rules and Regulations and/or the spirit of the rules and regulations including but not limited to the Code of Conduct and/or what behavior, conduct, actions or inactions would be reasonably expected, at any time including, but not limited to, Post-Season activities. United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. may, with the recommendation from its member Board of Governors, and/or National Cheer Board, impose consequences upon any of its members without conducting hearings or appeals including the right to deny entry into any of its nationally sanctioned events.

#### **B) Board of Governors, National Cheer Board Level of Authority**

The Board of Governors and/or the National Board of Cheer Directors, hereinafter referred to as the “Board”, may be called upon, by the National Office, from time to time to: (1) mediate disputes between member organizations and individuals, (2) discipline both adult and juvenile members, (3) adjudicate rule violations, including participant qualifications, (4) adjudicate questionable actions or inactions by administrators, coaches and/or volunteers. In these events the Board, may, at the request of the UYFL national office conduct investigations / hearings, and will make disciplinary or dispute resolution recommendations to the National Office. The National Office will then at its sole discretion decide on the course of action to be taken.

#### **C) Conference / Association Level of Authority**

Conferences/Associations are hereby required to enforce the UYFL Rules and Regulations contained herein. Conference / Associations have the obligation and authority to enforce the UYFL Rules, Regulations and the Spirit of the Rules and Regulations and its own rules, by-laws and other organizational governing instrument. Additionally, Conference / Associations have the right to make any rule more stringent, but do not have the right to make these rules less strict. Any organization found not enforcing this rulebook, the rules regulations and the spirit of the rules and regulations may be suspended until compliance is achieved.

United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. is not required to hold hearings or appeals. Conferences, Associations and Teams are advised to set up their own procedures to handle these matters in a timely fashion.

## Section 5 – Hearings and Appeals

### HEARINGS AND APPEALS

Conferences/Associations shall have complete jurisdiction over hearings and appeals within their programs and may or may not be required to hold hearings or appeals depending on their governing instrument.

All hearings and appeals must be conducted in the manner the Conference has constructed in its bylaws/organizational documents. Should no process exist it will be at the complete discretion of the Conference to allow or disallow a hearing or appeal.

The National UYFL office will **only**, get involved, arbitrate/hold hearings and/or appeals on local issues if (1) is asked to do so by the Governing Body, and, (2) it is agreed to by all involved, and, (3) all involved must agree that the national office has the final say on all of its decisions. The national office always reserves the right to refuse to get involved in any and all local issues.

The National UYFL office at its sole discretion may or may not allow a hearing or appeal of any of its decisions and rulings.

See section on “Rule Enforcement Authority” for additional information.

## Section 6 – Minimum Penalties

### MINIMUM PENALTIES

#### A) Coach / Administrators

The following are the minimum penalties to be enforced for violation of, but not limited to the following rules:

**1) Rulebook Variance:** Any organization found to have allowed a **variance** to this rulebook, the rules regulations and the spirit of the rules and regulations without filing and receiving written approval may be suspended.

**2) Rulebook Enforcement:** Any organization found not **enforcing** this rulebook, the rules regulations and the spirit of the rules and regulations may be suspended.

**3) Cheating:** Permanent Suspension. (Roster / Participant Manipulation will be considered Cheating)

**4) Badgering of Game Officials with Threats and/or Inciting Fans to Display Poor Sportsmanship:** Suspension for two games and two weeks of practice and could be a suspension for the remainder of the season or permanent suspension depending on the severity of the incident.

**5) Fighting Of Any Kind:** Suspension for the remainder of the season and subject to arrest.

**6) Teaching Players Dirty Tactics:** First offense: suspension for one game and one week of practice. Second offense: suspension for the remainder of the season or permanent suspension.

**7) Falsifying Or Altering Documents:** Falsifying birth or any other documents to make a participant eligible is grounds for forfeiture of all games in which they have participated and permanent suspension of the adult(s) responsible for the act and all evidence will be turned over to the local authorities for any criminal prosecution that may be relevant. UYFL recommends that a full investigation is conducted by an impartial committee when document falsification or alteration is suspected. UYFL has provided a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification program to avoid these issues.

**8) Failure to Keep Faith with Juveniles and Parents:** Defined as any deliberate practice of a coach, 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. First offense: suspension for one game and one week of practice. Second offense: suspension for the remainder of the season or permanent suspension.

**Special Note:** Any Coach, Administrator or Team Personnel found to have advised, encouraged, or tolerated any "Sweat Down" or "Extreme" weight loss techniques will be grounds for immediate suspension. Suspension will be anywhere from 1 year to permanent depending on the severity. Head Coaches will be held responsible for the actions and/or inactions of all team personnel.

**9) Player Manipulation:** Excessive team or individual conditioning drills, disciplinary actions or assigning individual players laps or intentionally placing player in intimidating hitting drills for the purpose of encouraging weaker players to quit is not acceptable. Coaches determined to be using this or any other tactic to drop weaker players will be immediately dismissed for the remainder of the season and may be permanently suspended.

**10) Mandatory Play Rule:** See Section 21

**11) Playing Ineligible Players:** Suspension for rest of season. League will review status for next season. Suspension may be appealed, if an appeal process exists, to the Conference depending on the nature of the ineligibility. UYFL requires a full investigation by an appointed impartial committee be conducted prior to any suspension for use of ineligible players.

- a) When ineligible players are found, all games of which the ineligible players have participated in are forfeited and will count in the league standings as such.
- b) When ineligible players are found the Team is ineligible for post-season play of any kind regardless of the number of losses it has suffered for playing ineligible players.

## **B) Participant Offenses**

*In the absence of local rules and regulations regarding participant extreme behavior, the following minimum penalties should be enforced whether in game or practice when the act is not covered by the governing state or high school rules, within the coach/administrators discretion:*

**1) Fighting:** First offense: Suspension for one game and one week of practice. Second offense: Suspension and parental/guardian conference.

**2) Disrespectful Behavior:** Disrespect for coaches, participants, game and team officials: First offense: removal from the game/practice and parental/guardian conference. Second offense: suspended for one game and one week of practice. Third offense: Suspension and parental conference.

**3) Badgering/Bullying:** Badgering/Bullying opponents and or teammates by word or act with the purpose of intimidation: First offense: removal from the game/practice and parental/guardian conference. Second offense: suspended for one game and one week of practice. Third offense: Suspension and parental/guardian conference.

**4) Extreme Weight Loss:** Any "Sweat Down" or Extreme" weight loss used by a player to make weight will be grounds for immediate suspension for the players own safety.

## **C) Organization Offenses**

*In the absence of local rules and regulations regarding the following, it is UYFL's recommendation that the guidelines below be implemented.*

**1) Assault:** Any Player, Coach, Administrator, Parent/Guardian, or Fan should strike (hit) a game official, or member of the coaching staff, shall be subject to arrest by local law enforcement agencies, and permanent suspension including but not limited to being banned from all Events and Activities.

**2) Failure to Control Parents or Fans:** Suspension of the Association from the Conference until the administration of the Association can submit evidence satisfactory to the Conference that the problems/conditions which allowed the issues to exist have been rectified.

**3) Mandatory Play Rule:** See Section 22

#### **4) Failure to Control Coaches from Actions Contrary To the Health, Safety and Welfare of Players:**

Suspension of the Association from the Conference until the administration of the Association can submit evidence satisfactory to the Conference that the problems/conditions which allowed the issues to exist have been rectified.

See section on “Rule Enforcement Authority” for additional information.

### **Section 7 – Coaching Appointments & Requirements / Background Checks**

#### **COACHES**

All coaches, by their appointment to coach, are bound by the “Standard of Conduct”.

#### **A) Coaching Appointments**

All coaches must be approved by and serve at the pleasure of the Local Association. Coaching assignments are for one playing season only and is therefore automatically terminated at the close of each season. Coaches must re-apply for coaching positions annually. The close of the season will be determined by the local Association but must not extend past the “End of the Year Banquet”.

*All Coaching appointments and their appropriate contact info must be included on any and all rosters.*

#### **B) Coaching Requirements**

##### **1) Head Coaches:**

- a) Head coaches must have a general knowledge of the sport of football, cheerleading, dance, step and all safety rules respectively.
- b) Head coaches must be at least 21 years of age. The coaching staff will be under his/her direction and supervision.
- c) Coaches are required to maintain in their possession, at any and all times the team is assembled, the team’s **EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT, CONSENT AND INFORMATION** form and **Parent/Guardian Emergency Numbers**.
- d) Each Team must have a Coach or Volunteer that is the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent. This person must be present at all practices, games/competitions, gatherings of the team.
- e) Head coaches are in complete charge of their players. They are responsible for their own actions or inactions, their assistants’ actions or inactions and the actions of their players.
- f) Head coaches may be required to be trained through any training program available to their Association/Conference. The Association/Conference may also make this a requirement of assistant coaches.

**2) Assistant coaches:** must be at least 18 years of age and have graduated from high school or hold a GED certificate. They must have a general knowledge of the sport of football, cheerleading, dance, step and all safety rules respectively.

**3) Coach Trainees:** must be a minimum of 16 years old and may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant coaches. Coach Trainees are not permitted to conduct a practice.

**4) Student Demonstrators:** Cheer, Dance, and Step only, should be 14 years of age or older, however if a student demonstrator is attending high school, they may be 13 years old. Student Demonstrators may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant coaches. It is recommended that all Student Demonstrators work with teams a min of 2 years younger than his/her current age. Student Demonstrators are not permitted to conduct a practice.

**5) Coach Trainee, Demonstrator, Volunteer Registration Requirements:** all coach trainees, student demonstrators, volunteers under the age of 18 must be registered as a minor participant on rosters and

have the following documentation on file: “Youth Athletic Waiver & Release Of Liability Assumption Of Risk Agreement – Minor”, “Medical Clearance Form”, “Image Release Form”, “Emergency Medical and Consent Form”. These are the only documents required by the national office this does not preclude the local association from collecting/requiring any other documentation, this simply states the minimum.

### **C) Background Check**

Associations are required to perform Background Checks on all of their Coaches and any and all volunteers deemed to have repeated contact with the participants, each year. Conferences are required to obtain an Affidavit that all background checks have been completed from their member associations. Conferences who have teams that will travel to any UYFL sanctioned event must submit respective Affidavits to the UYFL National Office at check-in or through 3rd party certification. United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. has no control over the selection of volunteers, each Association shall be required to indemnify and hold harmless United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. against all legal actions based upon allegations arising from a failure to enforce all or part of this regulation and or the decision making process used in volunteer selection.

### **D) Paperwork Requirement**

See Section 9, A) Paperwork Notice

#### **1) Waiver and Release Adult:**

The United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) **Waiver and Release Adult Form** is required for post season play. UYFL recommends all organization make this document part of the appointment of all adult volunteers and/or those who have significant contact with the minor participant members or who will be on the field during any practice/game and must be received and held by the local association.

The Waiver and Release Adult Form will be provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.

This document will be collected by the UYFL national office prior to any sanctioned post season play. UYFL has authorized a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification vendor to collect and verify all required documentation prior to any UYFL hosted event.

#### **2) Image Release Adult:**

The United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) **Image Release Adult Form** is required for post season play. UYFL recommends all organization make this document part of the appointment of all adult volunteers and/or those who have significant contact with the minor participant members or who will be on the field during any practice/game and must be received and held by the local association.

The approved Image Release Adult Form will be provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.

This document will be collected by the UYFL national office prior to any sanctioned post season play. UYFL has authorized a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification vendor to collect and verify all required documentation prior to any UYFL hosted event.

## ***Section 8 – Coaches, Administrators and Volunteers Standard of Conduct***

### **COACHES, ADMINISTRATORS and VOLUNTEERS STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

All Administrators, Coaches, and Volunteers will abide by a Standard of Conduct, which includes the provisions listed below. If any of these provisions are violated, the Association / Conference shall have the authority to impose any penalty they see fit. If any violations of these provisions become known to the National Office or are violated during a UYFL Sanctioned, State, Region, or National Event including those sponsored or hosted by a National Partner, the Board of Governors and National Board of Cheer Directors (Board), will make disciplinary recommendations to the National Office. The National Office will then at its sole discretion decide on the course of action to be taken, in this event there will be no right to appeal.

Administrators, Coaches, and Volunteers, having already accepted and agreed to abide by the “Coach, Administrators and Volunteers Standard of Conduct”, by their accepting and active participation in membership, shall follow the intent of all rules contained in this rulebook, expected reasonable behavior, shall assist the intent to have all involved serve as role models for all of our children and will report to the proper authority’s anyone not following what is expected, and shall inclusively and/or additionally agree to:

- a) Treat each participant equally, excessive team or individual conditioning drills, disciplinary actions or assigning individual players laps or intentionally placing player in intimidating hitting drills for the purpose of encouraging weaker players to quit is not acceptable. Coaches determined to be using this or any other tactic to drop weaker players will be immediately dismissed for the remainder of the season and may be permanently suspended.
- b) Coaches are not to allow, nor encourage, any form of weight loss for the purpose of making the maximum weight in an Age & Weight Program / Division – See Minimum Penalties. This does not preclude your ability, if professionally trained/educated to do so, to provide nutritional and proper diet advice to obese participants.
- c) Not smoke and/or use smokeless tobacco on the field or in front of participants at any time.
- d) Abstain from the possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages and the possession or use of any illegal substance on the field or in front of participants at any time.
- e) Accept decisions of the game officials and judges on the field and in competitions as being fair and called to the best of their ability.
- f) Not criticize an opposing team, its players, spirit participants, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture.
- g) Together with team officials, be jointly responsible for the conduct and control of team fans and spectators. Any parent, guardian, or fan that becomes a nuisance and out of control must be asked to leave.
- h) Not use abusive or profane language at any time.
- i) Not encourage their team to intentionally run up the score on an opponent. In the event of a commanding lead every effort shall be made to let all players play.
- j) Not permit or encourage, “extreme dieting”, or “sweating down” tactics of any kind for any reason. Must report any instance witnessed or suspected to the parent/guardian and local administrator.
- k) Not recommend or distribute any medication, controlled or over the counter
- l) Not deliberately incite unsportsmanlike conduct.
- m) Not criticize/berate participants ever, to provide constructive criticism, in private, or in the presence of team/squad members if others might benefit.
- n) Remove from a game or practice any participant when his/her health is in question, whether or not as a result of injury, until competent medical advice is available.
- o) A coach will not use ineligible players and will take the responsibility of having proper and legal documents on each and every player proving his eligibility at all times.
- p) Insure that all participants meet the minimum required number of plays under the Mandatory Play Rules and Regulations.
- q) Uphold all rules and regulations.
- r) A coach must discourage the wearing of Gang colors or any gang symbol and the use of any gang related forms of communication during any and all team related activities including but not limited to team practices.
- s) Refrain from posting anything derogatory or antagonizing on any social network/internet or public communication of any type.
- t) Remember to win without arrogance and lose without excuses.

In addition to the aforementioned basic expected behavior Administrators, Coaches and Volunteers additionally agree to the following:

*“One athlete of character will improve a team. One team of character will improve a school. One school of character can impact an entire community.” – Bruce E. Brown*

**Make a conscious choice to uphold the best of values:**

- a) Each game and practice I participate in or administer over will provide me with an opportunity to teach and be a role model for positive character development. As a member of United Youth Football and Cheer (UYFL) I accept the challenge and will do my best to represent UYFL, my Conference, my Association, my Team, and myself by: respecting my opponent, the officials, my team, my administrators, coaches, myself and the game; taking responsibility for my actions in all areas of my life; having the integrity to stand by my word; providing leadership where I serve others while striving to be a personal and team leader; and being an example of sportsmanship by holding myself to the highest standards of fair play.
- b) Athletics provides another opportunity for the training of youth for a strong and efficient democracy.
- c) Athletics provides another opportunity for the building of good character and personality.
- d) Athletics is a significant part of a sound educational program.
- e) UYFL considers the privilege of guiding youth through participation in sports as a sacred trust.
- f) Coaches must always keep the best interests of each participant as their aim. Coaches should never be guilty of enhancing his/her progress by the use of a participant's skill for his/her benefit.
- g) Coaches must forever keep before the participants under his/her direction the high ideals, honesty, sincerity, and integrity which have made our nation great. Coaches must not encourage, or tolerate, any form of trickery or evasion of rules in order to gain an advantage over an opponent.
- h) UYFL members will do all in their power to instill in those under their direction a tolerance for all races and creeds, and stand out against intolerance wherever it may occur.
- i) UYFL members should strive to instill in every youth great purposes and aims in living and use the desire to play not as an end, but as a training ground for the participant's highest development.
- j) Coaches should strive to teach each participant's to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat, to be above bragging or using alibis, and shall help develop inner strength and poise.
- k) UYFL members will use only fair and honest means of securing talent for athletic teams and never stoop to trickery or insincere promises in influencing participants in the selection of their experience.
- l) Coaches should use every means at their command to protect the moral, mental and physical health of the participant's under their guidance.

**A) Special Warning Regarding Rumors**

No one should be allowed to participate in a Local, Regional or National event until all of their paperwork, grade and/or weight have been verified. Any allegations of Cheating or Violations of this rulebook or any local rule or regulation should be immediately reported, in writing, to both the Association and Conference presidents and/or their appointed representatives for dealing with such issues. Associations and Conferences are required to fully investigate all claims and keep on file a written record of all investigations.

Once the allegations of cheating or rules violation has been reported, in writing, to the respective official, be it Association or Conference, there shall be NO further discussion until it is reviewed, investigated and acted on appropriately by the Association and/or Conference. The act of spreading rumors which is general talk not based on fact will not be tolerated in United Youth Football and Cheer, it not only hurts your credibility, it affects your team and other teams that may become involved in the rumor.



Any allegation of Cheating or Violations of this rulebook during Post Season Play should be reported in writing to the National Office for investigation. Given these facts any Organization, individual or group of individuals (which includes any member of the organization) spreading rumors of cheating, special treatment or any other false information whether causing an incident or not during Post Season Play/event may be banned from participation in any future Post Season Play/event(s) for a period of time deemed reasonable by the National Office.

### **B) Social Media Policy**

Due to the nature of the Internet, each Team, Association, and/or Conference, depending on your structure, must develop, communicate and enforce a “Social Media Policy” on all members who represent all of us as their actions/words are a reflection of us all collectively.

- > Social media is largely about connecting, helping others, and having fun.
- > Social media is also a valuable resource to learn and to contribute.
- > Social media is more than just Facebook and Twitter. It includes blogs, online networks, and any other Internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information.

Please remember these points:

- a) Be respectful to others.
- b) Each individual is responsible for what they post online.
- c) Understand that you are legally liable for anything you write or present online.
- d) Anyone can be sued for commentary, content, videos, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or create a hostile environment.
- e) Post knowledgeably, accurately, and use appropriate professionalism.
- f) Be quick to correct your own mistakes and admit when you are wrong.
- g) No one is authorized to speak on behalf of United Youth Football and Cheer, or to represent that they are.
- h) Do not cite anyone without their approval.
- i) Never reveal any confidential and/or proprietary information.
- j) Never identify players, parents, or league members/officers by name without their permission.
- k) Understand that any threats, potential threats of violence of any kind, online bullying or any other criminal act that is posted by any member, association, league officer etc, will be forwarded to law enforcement for prosecution and will be cause for revocation of UYFL membership.

Please make all of your members aware that United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) reserves the right to revoke anyone’s membership who seeks to defame or use the social media in any form to disrupt the mission, goals and purpose of UYFL and/or violates any of the suggested Social Media Policy.

### ***Section 9 – Participant Registration / Eligibility***

#### **PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION / ELIGIBILITY**

##### **A) Paperwork Notice**

Any and All Paperwork/Form/Document/Contract should be reviewed by your local council to insure compliance with any local and/or state statutes. United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. provides no legal advice, makes no representation nor warrantee that any Paperwork/Form/Document/Contract provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. will provide you the proper protection, coverage and/or will comply with any statute.

United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. recommends that all Paperwork/Form/Document/Contracts be kept in a safe and secure place where the information that may be contained in the documents is released (1) with Parent/Guardian permission, (2) on a limited “need to know” basis, (3) in compliance with any and all statute(s). United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. also recommends that all Paperwork/Form/Document/Contracts be kept

on file for a minimum of 7 years, longer in the event of an injury. Please confer with your local attorney for advice as to the appropriate security procedures, maintenance and storage term for this and all such paperwork.

By using any Paperwork/Form/Document/Contract supplied, offered, or provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. you agree and understand you do so at your own risk.

**NOTE:** *Falsifying birth or any other documents to make a participant eligible is grounds for forfeiture of all games in which they have participated and permanent suspension of the adult(s) responsible for the act and all evidence will be turned over to the local authorities for any criminal prosecution that may be relevant. UYFL recommends that a full investigation is conducted by an impartial committee when document falsification or alteration is suspected. UYFL has provided a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification program to avoid these issues (see Section 12 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Certification).*

## **B) Required Minor Participant Paperwork / Documentation and Certification**

Documents listed in this section (9.B) are required prior to participation

No participant will be allowed to participate in any way until all required paperwork is collected and verified. No participant will be certified or assigned to any roster until all required paperwork is collected and verified. Any organization that does not follow any and all regulations set forth herein (Section 9 Participant Registration / Eligibility) will be held responsible for their actions and/or inactions and be subject to suspension and/or revocation of their membership.

### **1) Medical Clearance:**

The United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) **Medical Clearance Form** is required for registration and must be received and held by the local association prior to any participation, this includes but is not limited to preseason practice, regardless of parental consent including consent from Coaches for their participant children. You may accept, in addition to the Medical Clearance Form, any other documentation of physical fitness you would like however, you cannot replace this UYFL requirement.

The approved Medical Clearance Form will be provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.

**Please Note:** The Medical Clearance will be voided by any injury, accident, or illness, attended to by a trainer or any medical professional that results in the participant being withheld or limited in his/her participation and/or if the participant is removed from any participation as a result of a suspected concussion or heat related illness. It will be the responsibility of the Parent/Legal Guardian to notify the participants Coach and League Officials should any condition/concern exist. It will also be the responsibility of the Parent/Legal Guardian to obtain WRITTEN permission from his/her physician to resume participation. A "**Medical Clearance Resume Form**" is available from United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. or you may have the attending medical professional supply his/her own WRITTEN Clearance as long as it is on official stationery and includes some form of the following:

**Date**\_\_\_\_\_, **Participants Name**\_\_\_\_\_ **is hereby cleared for Full Unrestricted Athletic Participation.** This statement must be supplied by the physician and/or athletic trainer attending to the participant.

### **2) Emergency Medical and Consent:**

The United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) **Emergency Medical and Consent Form** is required for registration and must be received and held by the local association prior to any participation, this includes but is not limited to preseason practice, regardless of parental consent including consent from Coaches for their participant children. You may accept, in addition to the Emergency Medical and Consent Form, any other documentation you see fit however; you cannot replace this UYFL requirement.

The approved Emergency Medical and Consent Form will be provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.

**Please Note:** The Emergency Medical and Consent Form contains emergency medical information, emergency contacts and consent to treat in the event of a medical emergency. The ORIGINAL form must be in the possession of the team at all times in the event an injury/medical emergency occurs.

### 3) Waiver and Release Minor:

The United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) **Waiver and Release (Minor) Form** is required for registration and must be received and held by the local association prior to any participation, this includes but is not limited to preseason practice, regardless of parental consent including consent from Coaches for their participant children. This document includes a written statement, to be acknowledged and signed by the parent/guardian declaring their child has permission to participate in local and any and all UYFL activities and that they understand the risks involved.

The approved Waiver and Release (Minor) Form will be provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.

This document will be collected by the UYFL national office prior to any sanctioned post season play. UYFL has authorized a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification vendor to collect and verify all required documentation prior to any UYFL hosted event.

### 4) Image Release Minor:

The United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) **Image Release (Minor) Form** is required for registration and must be received and held by the local association.

The approved Image Release (Minor) Form will be provided by United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc.

This document will be collected by the UYFL national office prior to any sanctioned post season play. UYFL has authorized a 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification vendor to collect and verify all required documentation prior to any UYFL hosted event.

### 5) Age Verification Requirement:

United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) requires that all participants Age / Date of Birth be verified prior to any team/division assignment.

The following are the only acceptable documents for age/date of birth verification:

- a) Original birth certificate
- b) State/city/town raised seal certified copy of birth certificate /State issued sport birth certificate
- c) Notarized copy of original birth certificate
- d) Letter from School, on School Letterhead, certifying/authenticating copy of birth certificate
- e) DMV ID cards
- f) Military ID cards
- g) Passports, and/or any government agency issued photo id with birth date regardless of expiration date

#### NO HOSPITAL CERTIFICATES WILL BE ACCEPTED

For 3<sup>rd</sup> party verification and/or post season tournament play - The aforementioned documents must be accompanied by a copy of same for age/date of birth verification.

The following may be adopted by your local conference for regular season play but will not be acceptable for any post season play and if a participant is found to have been certified to a team/division he/she does not age/date of birth qualify for it will be considered a Rule Variance/Rule Enforcement violation for disciplinary purposes and may be a case of Falsification of Documents – see Section 6 Minimum Penalties.

- > The conference may at their sole discretion accept a copy of an original proof of age/date of birth document (see approved list above) along with the original, and with their own protected secure seal mark the copy as verified. This will allow the participant to retain the original document. If this system is

used the original will still have to be presented to verify the copy for all UYFL sanctioned post season play and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> party verification.

#### **6) Grade Verification Requirement (Grade Based Program Only):**

United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) requires that all participants, applying for assignment to a grade based division, have their current (fall playing season) Grade Level verified prior to any team/division assignment.

The following are the only acceptable documents for grade level verification:

- a) Prior or current years report card with the grade highlighted for ease of view, must be unaltered original (scholastic subject achievement/grades do not have to be disclosed).
- b) Letter from school, on school letterhead, listing participants Name, Address, DOB, and Grade Level for the 20XX (fall playing) season
- c) Home schooled students must provide official documentation verifying the students present grade level equivalent from the sanctioning state/school districts governing body.
- d) Students currently enrolled in any remedial school program must be assigned to the grade level they are striving to achieve, within the protected age parameters.

#### **7) Photo Identification Verification Requirement:**

United Youth Football and Cheer, Inc. (UYFL) requires that all participants have their identification documented by a photograph. This photograph must be a close-up, from the shoulders up, to clearly show the participants head and facial features. This Photo ID must be verified prior to any final roster certification. Typically organizations will have the participants photograph as part of their Contract form and/or ID card. UYFL recommends that its 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification partner be used as they will produce the only Official ID card – see Section 12 - 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification.

#### **C) Scholastic Eligibility**

UYFL organizations will be able to accept all participants, regardless of their GPA, by providing educational programs to support the struggling student. UYFL will become the first youth organization to use its positive influence, inherent discipline and work ethic, to assist/support/convert a poor student into a strong one. UYFL will be a role model to the children and the community. UYFL will honor its responsibility to ALL students regardless of their GPA. UYFL will assist with tutoring programs to support local organizations who accept participants with lower than acceptable GPAs. Each organization may require participants achieve a passing grade point average prior to allowing full participation. However, local organizations may only accept struggling students when a support/tutoring program is in place. If no tutoring or support program is in place then all participants must have received a passing grade point average for the school year ending just prior to the beginning of the season (e.g., school year ending June, 2011 for the Fall 2012 season) to be eligible for Full participation. If verification of grades are necessary, or if passing grades are not achieved, Parent/Guardian/School administrator can make the final ruling regarding scholastic eligibility as to whether or not continued participation will benefit the participant.

### ***Section 10 – Formation of Teams***

#### **FORMATION OF TEAMS**

When programs form their teams, they must form them in a manner to ensure that each participant who is registered has a place to participate. This participation policy is established to insure that each child is afforded the opportunity to be taught the game of football, Cheerleading, Dance and Step, regardless of their ability. All programs in the UYFL are considered “standard” or Division 2 as they form their teams on a first come, first serve basis. If a standard program has two teams at a level, then they must divide their teams in a manner in

which both teams are equally competitive with the talent divided equally. Tryouts of any kind can only be done to determine what team level the participant will be placed on and to ensure that all teams are created equally and have similarly competitive skill levels. Cutting of players is not allowed in UYFL; however, there are certain guidelines that should be met if it becomes necessary to not assign a player to a team. UYFL strongly recommends that the coaching staff work closely with these players before the extreme measure of dropping a player takes place. UYFL believes that the game of football, Cheer, Dance and Step may just be a saving grace for this type of participant.

#### **A) Roster Size**

Football roster size, Minimum is 16, Maximum is not more than 36 participants, and some exceptions apply. Cheer roster size is as follows, Small = Max 16, Large = Max 36 (Mascots are not included). Dance and Step roster size is not more than 36 participants. (See “Roster” section for more information)

#### **B) Dropping a Player Will Be Acceptable**

When a participant is found to have signed as a result of parent or guardian pressure, or, he/she tells team management he/she does not really want to play football/cheer.

When a participant cannot furnish the required documents to be certified to a team roster, (e.g., Medical, Proof of Birth Date, etc...).

When a Participant shows no interest in football/cheer, is disruptive to other participants and the instructions of the coaching staff, and becomes a discipline problem.

When a Participant stops attending practices. Participants must have a valid excuse from the parent(s), guardian(s) or a physician.

When a Participant attempts to intimidate fellow participants by word and/or physical act.

When a Participant is actively a member of another football team or cheerleader squad while actively participating with an UYFL team (dual participation, some exceptions may apply).

When a Participant is found to be using any “Sweat Down” or Extreme” weight loss techniques to come under make the maximum weight will be grounds for immediate suspension for the players own safety. *Please note any coach, administrator or volunteer who is found to be tolerant or encouraging this behavior will be subject to disciplinary actions – see minimum penalties.*

#### **C) Dropping a Player Will NOT Be Acceptable**

Excessive team or individual conditioning drills, disciplinary actions or assigning individual players laps or intentionally placing player in intimidating hitting drills for the purpose of encouraging weaker players to quit is not acceptable. Coaches determined to be using this or any other tactic to drop weaker players will be immediately dismissed for the remainder of the season and may be permanently suspended.

Once a roster is full, no player may be dropped to make room for another player.

#### **D) Participant Recruitment**

Conferences are required to establish “Draw Area’s” or “Boundaries” for its member Associations. Should an organization/team wish to accept the application of a participant (special participant) who is (1) outside of the Associations defined draw area, or (2) previously played with another Association, it must provide full disclosure of these conditions to the Conference members they participate with and receive permission from the Conference in a manner to be determined by the Conference. Permission should only be granted on a limited basis when it is in the best interest of the participant and when it is determined that the participant has NOT been recruited. Conferences are required to create and enforce rules and regulations to prevent one Association from recruiting the players of another Association. Under no circumstances can a Conference allow any

individual team to accept the application of more than 3 “Special Participants” without written permission from the National Office.

### **E) National Division I Squads**

Associations may declare themselves Division I at any time. Division I teams may also be assigned by their own conferences based upon a program’s boundaries, historical success, size of program and/or recruitment boundaries, and teams that have multiple teams at a level with their teams divided in a manner such that one team intentionally places all of the most talented players on a team in order to qualify for Tournament play. Remember you cannot cut players or put them on a waiting list with the sole intention being to form a superior squad as all programs must provide a place for everyone to play regardless of ability.

### **F) All-Star / Select Teams**

At no time during regular season play or for post season non all-star divisions, is a team allowed to form by moving participants from existing certified rosters or draw areas. In this event this newly formed team will be considered an All-Star/Select team and be considered “Cheating” for purposes of determining disciplinary actions.

At no time is a team allowed to form what a reasonably prudent person would consider an All-Star or Select team based on the spirit of all the rules contained in the previous “Formation of Teams” paragraphs. Violators will be considered to be “Cheating” for purposes of determining disciplinary actions.

### **G) DUAL PARTICIPATION**

At no time beyond the certification deadline set forth by each individual conference, will any player be allowed to actively participate on any other nationally affiliated team. Players who up for sign up any league outside of UYFL or appear on 2 different organization rosters MUST commit to the UYFL team only, by thier UYFL leagues final add player deadline, ( no later than October 15), or said player will deemed ineligible for any UYFL event. The only exception to this rule will be middle school participation, and requires complete review by UYFL to asses if an waiver will be issued. This is due to, and allowed to allow a child to play with his schoolmates and represent his school as long as it does not interfere with UYFL, and all other roster and certification rules are followed. Each situation will be approved on a case by case basis to assure no team advantage is being created.

## **Section 11 – Rosters**

### **ROSTERS**

*AT NO TIME CAN YOU LIST PARTICIPANTS ON YOUR ROSTER WHO DO NOT OR WILL NOT ACTIVLY PARTICIPATE IN YOUR WEEKLY LOCAL GAME SCHEDULE.*

#### **A) Roster Certification and Timeline**

Associations must have all UYFL Required Participant Paperwork collected, complete, and inspected for compliance by August 31<sup>st</sup> (prior to first game, whichever comes first). Conferences must certify that their Associations have met this requirement and have a system in place for paperwork and roster certification or utilize UYFL’s 3<sup>rd</sup> part certification partner (see Section 12). A Certified Roster means that all of the participants listed on the roster have submitted the UYFL Required Paperwork and that all paperwork is authentic and compliant with UYFL Rules and Regulations, and the participant fits the criteria established for the specific program/ division to which The Participant is assigned and certified including but not limited to the Participants Age/Weight and/or Grade. Conferences must maintain in their possession a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters. Players added to rosters after August 31st must be certified prior to participating in any game but no later than September 15th. *If UYFL’s 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification partner is used all participants added to the roster must be done through the 3<sup>rd</sup> party company and the conference to which it is a member.*

Conferences must receive all of their Associations rosters and certify all of their player documentation by September 15th. Conferences must maintain in their possession a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters.

Conferences must then submit all (final) rosters to UYFL National Office by October 1st. Failure to submit rosters may result in the loss of certain services provided by UYFL, including post-season and championship game eligibility.

IF FOR ANY REASON YOU WILL NOT MEET THE OCTOBER FIRST (1ST) DATE YOU MAY REQUEST AN EXTENSION FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE. ALL REQUESTS MUST BE MADE BY OCTOBER 1ST.

### **B) Roster Submission Procedure**

Each Conference must print a copy of their certified (Final) rosters, paperclip each Association roster together oldest team to youngest team, then mail the hard copy to the address provided to the conference directors. Anyone utilizing UYFL's 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification partner will not have to submit rosters.

### **C) Roster Size**

Football roster size, Minimum is 16, Maximum is not more than 36 participants, and some exceptions apply. Cheer roster size is as follows, Small = Max 16, Large = Max 36 (Mascots are not included). Dance and Step roster size is not more than 36 participants. **Special Note: Cheer Roster size at the National Tournament can be determined by the National Cheer Director.**

*Special Note Football:*

The Minimum number of participants required to certify a roster is 16. Conferences may allow less than 16 for regular season play only but not less than 12 and must always consider the safety of all participants prior to and during any and all games. The minimum of 16 participants (players ready and able to play) is required to enter post season play.

### **D) Movement of Rostered Participants**

Once a roster is full, no player may be dropped to make room for another player.

After Rosters have been certified, Participants can be moved up to a higher level of play for any reason up and until September 15th. After Rosters have been certified, A Participant can only be moved down to a lower level prior to the second regularly scheduled game, as long as that game is prior to the roster add/drop deadline of September 15th. Any movement of a certified participant to a level lower than the level that the participant was originally certified at should only be done if the participant is determined to have been placed on a level above his/her ability to participate safely. There must also be room on the roster as no one can be dropped just to make room. There can be no roster movement for any reason after September 15th.

*If UYFL's 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification partner is used all roster movement must be done through the 3<sup>rd</sup> party company and the conference to which it is a member.*

## **Section 12 – National Certification**

### **NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM CERTIFICATION WEIGH IN AND SECURITY PROCEDURES**

#### **ALL ASSOCIATIONS WILL NOW BE ON THE NATIONAL ROSTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**ALL ATTENDING TEAMS WILL HAVE ROSTERS IN NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 1**

**ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ISSUED A TEAM AND LEVEL SPECIFIC ANKLE ID**

**ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST POSSES A PICTURE ID**

**ALL TEAMS WILL HAVE A CERTIFICATION TEAM PHOTO TAKEN**

**ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A TEAM AND LEVEL SPECIFIC UV ARM STAMP**

**ALL ROSTERS/MANDATORY PLAY SHEETS WILL BE UV MARKED AND APPROVED**

**ALL WEIGH-INS WILL BE CONDUCTED ON AWARD STAGE WITH PARTICIPANT NAME AND WEIGHT ANNOUNCED LIVE ON UYFL TV**

**ALL TEAMS WILL BE BOOK CHECKED BY FIELD MARSHALS PRIOR TO EACH GAME**

### **Section 13 – Important Dates**

#### **SUMMARY OF DUE DATES**

July – Fourth Monday in July is the Official First Practice

August 15<sup>th</sup> – DII Status Requests / Approval Due

August 31<sup>st</sup> – Roster Certification Deadline (prior to first game)

September 15<sup>th</sup> – Final Roster Certification Date (last chance to add, drop, or move participants)

September 15<sup>th</sup> – Date Conferences must commit programs/divisions to the national tournament

September 15<sup>th</sup> – Commitments to participate in the National Bowl Games Due

September 15<sup>th</sup> – Commitments to participate in the Conference All-Star Tournament Due

October 1<sup>st</sup> – Final Certified Rosters Due (to national office, only roster/players for post season play)

November 1<sup>st</sup> – National All-Star Nominations Due

### **FOOTBALL SPECIFIC - RULES AND REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Section 14 – Football Age Determination Definition**

##### **AGE DETERMINATION DEFINITION**

For determining the Participants Age and/or Protected Age, the term “On or Before” and the term “As Of” is intended to have the same definition (Age Cut Off Date): An age cutoff date of (on or before/as of 7/31) July 31st of the current season is as follows: 14 year old on July 31st, turns 15 years old on August 1st, the participant is registered as a 14 year old. If the participant has a birthday on July 31st in which they turn 15 they would be considered 15 for registration and/or division placement purposes. This method would be the same for the “Protected Age” used in the All American Program.

#### **Section 15 – National Age & Weight Program**

##### **NATIONAL AGE & WEIGHT DIVISIONS**

| <b>NATIONAL DIVISION AGE &amp; WEIGHT PROGRAM</b>  |   |                                       |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Division</b>  | <b>Age (as of July 31<sup>st</sup>)</b> | <b>Tournament Max Stripped Weight</b> |
| <b>*Bandits</b>  | <b>5 – 6 – 7</b>                        | <b>95 lbs</b>                         |
| <b>* Instructional Division</b> – <i>instructional divisions can be configured to best fit your local area/participants, this chart is just a recommended guideline as this division is for the youngest entry level players and is intended for instruction only.</i> |   |                                       |
| <b>Mitey Mites</b>   | <b>7 – 8 – 9</b>                        | <b>105 lbs + 5 lbs</b>                |



|   |                      |                                     |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cadet   | 9 and Under, 10 O/L  | 115 lbs + 5lbs,<br>95 lbs + 5lbs    |
| Jr. Pee Wee   | 10 and Under, 11 O/L | 125 lbs + 5lbs,<br>105 lbs + 5lbs   |
| Pee Wee   | 11 and Under, 12 O/L | 140 lbs + 5lbs,<br>120 lbs + 5 lbs  |
| Jr. Midget  | 12 and Under, 13 O/L | 160 lbs + 5 lbs,<br>140 lbs + 5 lbs |
| *13 Under   | 13 and Under         |                                     |
| *15 Under   | 15 and Under         |                                     |
| *14 Under   | 14 and Under         |                                     |
| Pre-Game Weigh-In Must Be Conducted Prior To Each Game              |                      |                                     |
| * These levels have an unlimited weight limit with age restrictions |                      |                                     |

### Section 16 – Age & Weight Program DI & DII Explanation

#### AGE AND WEIGHT DI & DII PROGRAM

The UYFL Age & Weight Program is the only program that offers a Division I (DI) and Division II (DII) level of play. The default level of play for all Age & Weight Program Divisions is DII. For Conferences that offer both levels of play for inter-conference, Region / National tournaments must have approval from the National Office by August 15th. Any Conference may offer a DII level structured in any way they see fit, however they will be entered into inter-conference, Regional / National tournament play as a DI level if they have not received DII Level approval for inter-conference, Regional / National tournament play.

### Section 17 – Age & Weight Program Weigh-In Rules

#### WEIGH-IN RULES

*Anyone who is determined to be over the maximum weight limit listed in the Age & Weight Program will not be allowed to participate in any Local, Regional or National game or event.*

*If a participant within your program is determined to be over the maximum weight limit at any post season event sanctioned by United Youth Football they will not be allowed to participate. You are hereby obligated to inform all that there will be no exceptions, no travel refunds, and no appeals of the weigh masters decision. All Weight verifications conducted at the National Championship Tournament will be conducted by UYFL's 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification see Section 12 for more detail.*

#### A) Definition of “Max Stripped Weight”

The definition of the term “Max Stripped Weight” is as follows:

The participants weight wearing Gym Shorts, Jersey, and Flip Flops as the minimum clothing.

#### B) Definition of “Max Dressed Weight”

The definition of the term “Max Dressed Weight” is as follows:

The participants weight while wearing the minimum uniform allowance of Game Socks, Football Pants with Pads, and Game Jersey as the minimum clothing. No Clothing, Padding, etc. can be exchanged once the weigh-in has been conducted.

If your participant is so close to the weight that you are concerned at all then your participant is on the wrong team level. Understand that the participant will not be allowed to play if they do not make weight

Associations and Conferences may alter the weights in any of the Weighted Divisions/Teams to a weight Less Than BUT NOT More Than the listed Maximum weight to accommodate any special condition that may exist in your local organization such as the desire to allow for in season growth. There is a variance for a striper rule.

### **C) Weigh-In Procedure/Rules**

*Associations, Conferences, Regions must adopt and agree on weigh-in rules and procedures but must meet the following minimum requirements:*

- a) Weigh-ins MUST be conducted prior to each game.
- b) When Pre-Season practice begins, all players must be weighed to insure proper team placement. Parents MUST be informed of the possibility of the participant not being allowed to play if they do not make weight prior to each game.
- c) When Pre-Season practice begins, any participant found to be ten or more pounds above the Max Stripped Weight for their specified team level, at the Pre-Season, or In-Season weigh-in, must move up a level prior to the roster certification cutoff date, or be dropped if no Grade Based Division exists. No child may practice or remain on a team if they are 10 or more pounds over the Max Stripped Weight.
- d) Any “Sweat Down” or Extreme” weight loss used by a player to make weight will be grounds for immediate suspension for the players own safety.
- e) Any Coach, Administrator or Team Personnel found to have advised, encouraged, or tolerated any “Sweat Down” or “Extreme” weight loss techniques will be grounds for immediate suspension. Suspension will be anywhere from 1 year to permanent depending on the severity. Head Coaches will be held responsible for the actions and/or inactions of all team personnel.
- f) The only two acceptable methods of verifying a participants weight are as follows:
  - a. Maximum Stripped Weight – As defined above
  - b. Maximum Dressed Weight – As defined above
- g) Any Participant that exceeds the maximum weight for his registered team must not be allowed to play in that week’s game.
- h) Conferences / Regions can adopt their own Weigh-in procedures as far as who conducts the weigh-in but must allow at least one member from each coaching staff to attend/witness. United Youth Football recommends that each head coach be present as they will be held responsible should any weigh-in rules be violated.
- i) The Team Books including participant picture, documents, (or 3<sup>rd</sup> party player ID badge) and MPR form must be available to the weigh-in officials for player verification.
- j) No player jersey numbers can be changed once the official weigh-in has been completed.
- k) Two players cannot have the same jersey number under any circumstances.

### **Section 18 – All American Unlimited Weight Program**

#### **ALL AMERICAN UNLIMITED WEIGHT PROGRAM**

#### **ALL AMERICAN UNLIMITED WEIGHT PROGRAM**

| Division  | Age (as of July 31 <sup>st</sup> ) | Grade Level Restrictions        |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8 Under   | 8                                  | None                            |
| 10 Under  | 10                                 | None                            |
| 12 Under (Division I and II)  | 12                                 | None                            |
| 14 Under (Division I and II)  | 14                                 | 9 <sup>th</sup> grade or lower  |
| 15 Under  | 15                                 | 10 <sup>th</sup> grade or lower |
| <p>United youth football strongly supports school football programs and will encourage all participants to join their local school team over any youth league. Grade based programs may participate in the levels they fall into based upon their oldest player's age as of July 31<sup>st</sup>.</p> |                                    |                                 |

### Section 19 – Conference All-Star Program

#### CONFERENCE ALL-STAR PROGRAM

| CONFERENCE ALL-STAR PROGRAM  |                                    |              |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Division   | Age (as of July 31 <sup>st</sup> ) | Weight       |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Max.   | 14 and Under                       | Unrestricted |
| <p>The conference all-star program was created to allow the older participants, those leaving youth football, the opportunity to travel and experience participation in a national tournament. It will allow some better understanding and friendships to develop and require coaches from different organizations the opportunity to work together to further the objective of providing and giving back to the youth of their communities. It should be understood that while the participation is in a championship format it is the exposure and experience being offered to the kids that is the most important feature of this effort. Winning is the result of the contest the reward is the wisdom one will gain from this opportunity. All Star Teams cannot be formed from only one association.</p> <p><b><i>Cheerleading teams assembled in any form are welcome to come and cheer for their team on the sideline.</i></b></p> |                                    |              |

#### A) Conference All-Star Guidelines

- 1) Participation Commitment deadline is September 15th. Commitment means that each player's parent/guardian has committed and understands the financial, practice and travel obligations, you must have a committed team of players and coaching staff prior to making your commitment to the national office.
- 2) You must declare, and receive approval for your uniform Shirt Color upon declaring your commitment to participate. Jersey colors will be accepted on a first come first serve basis with prior year's participation having priority.
- 3) Conference All-Star teams will be required to pay the tournament registration fee upon commitment and acceptance into the tournament, this fee will be non-refundable and therefore forfeited should a

team back out of the tournament. In addition any Conference that commits to sending a team to the tournament and does not compete will be suspended from participation for 1 year; repeated offenses will result in longer suspensions.

- 4) Conference All-Star teams must be made up from kids who participated on at least 4 different associations. You must have a system in place to establish a team with enough kids so that if a team of nominated kids were to make it into the national tournament you would still have a team and coaching staff.
- 5) Conferences will develop their own system for nominating and selecting coaches and players. The coaches and players will be those not involved in post season tournament play.
- 6) All Star Coach Nominations should be coaches who have a positive history with the organization and have demonstrated not only the competence one would expect from a football coach but one who demonstrates the understanding that while every game is played to win the point of this all-star event goes past the winning and losing, it is a great opportunity for the kids to experience lessons in life that will go way beyond the win or loss of the game.
- 7) Players cannot play on both the all-star and teams who are participating in post season play. Therefore you must select enough players that you will have a team with or without the players still in post season play.
- 8) The timing on the selection and formation of the team must be created by the conference. Understanding that practice will be limited to a total of 30 hours prior to arriving at the tournament venue.
- 9) Conferences must certify that each player nominated and selected were properly assigned to rosters and certified (submitted all of the required documentation) to their respective team by the September 15th deadline.
- 10) Conferences are required to provide each player's documentation, a photo copy of the roster they were certified to, one for each player even if 2 or more players are from the same team.
- 11) Conferences are required to insure that all coaches have received a background checks and have been cleared by the Association they are affiliated with as required during their regular season participation.
- 12) The Conference is to complete a new roster for this new All-Star team via the documentation provided by the national office.
- 13) The Conference is required to guard that the practice rules are adhered to.

## ***Section 20 – National All-Star Game***

### **NATIONAL ALL-STAR GAME**

See – Section 28

## ***Section 21 – Mandatory Play Rules – For All Programs/Divisions***

### **MANDATORY PLAY RULES**

All UYFL participants **MUST** play an active role in each game. Unless noted prior to the start of the game, by absence, by injury, or the participant fails to make weight.

All UYFL participants **MUST** play an active role in a minimum number of plays as follows:

30 - 35 Players = 6 Plays

22 - 29 Players = 8 Plays

16 - 21 Players = 10 Plays

The number of plays required is determined by the numbers of players eligible and physically able to participate at the start of each game.

All Minimum plays must be “Active” plays. Punt and Punt Return are considered Active plays from the LOS and will count. All other special teams plays **do not** count as “Active” plays. All plays must be from the line of scrimmage (LOS). Any Penalties resulting in the replay of the down do not count as plays. Plays that result in a quarterback dropping to his knee with the sole purpose of “playing it safe” will not count as “Active” plays.

All participants must receive their minimum mandatory number of plays by the end of the 3rd quarter. Any participant that has not received their minimum plays by the end of the 3rd quarter must enter the game and remain in the game until they have received their required number of plays.

Designating a player as “Disciplined” at the Regional or National tournament will not be an acceptable means of meeting the Mandatory Play Requirement. No player can be withheld from participation in a regional or national tournament for disciplinary reasons without the approval of the UYFL National Board.

No player may be designated as “Injured” as an acceptable means of meeting the Mandatory Play Requirement without the onsite Trainers evaluation and designation.

Each team will supply 2 adults, 18 years of age or older, to monitor the Mandatory Play Rule. Failure to supply 2 adults as described will be considered a violation of the Mandatory Play Rule and may result in the forfeiture of the game. Any issue with this provision must be resolved prior to the start of the game.

Any person assigned as a Mandatory Play Monitor must be instructed to be respectful while on the opponents sideline or working with the opponents volunteer. There is to be no excessive cheering, no cell phone use, and no coaching of any kind. At any time the opponent for any reason may ask that the volunteer be replaced and this request must be complied with immediately without question. Failure to comply will be considered a violation of the Mandatory Play Rule and may result in the forfeiture of the game. Head Coaches may request an Official Time Out to rectify MPR monitor behavioral issues; this time out is NOT to be charged to the team.

Conferences shall enforce the Mandatory Play Rule. Any team not meeting the Mandatory Play Rule shall forfeit their game. Additional minimum penalties: First offense for the head coach: probation. Second offense for the head coach: suspension for one game and one week of practice. Third offense: suspension for remainder of season. If it is the last game: suspension for the first half of the following season’s games. In the event a suspension should carry over into the next season, the Association that may appoint the offending coach will be obligated to enforce the suspension.

## ***Section 22 – Fall Playing Season / Practice***

### **FALL PLAYING SEASON / PRACTICE / SCOUTING**

#### **A) Start Dates**

No Conference shall commence team practice until the fourth Monday in July. The UYFL playing season starts on the fourth Monday in July and extends to December 31 of the current year. Start and end dates of the playing season may be modified for teams playing in regions with severe weather conditions. Written permission by the UYFL National Office is required before any such modifications may be made to the start date, a maximum of 6 weeks or 60 hours, prior to the first regular season game, must be maintained by any alteration to the start date. A later start date and less time may occur for any league.

The first week of practice must be dedicated to Ten (10) Hours of conditioning ONLY, before full contact is allowed.

#### **B) Practice Length**

Pre-season practice can be on a daily basis until Labor Day, but must not exceed 10 hours a week, and two (2) hours in duration. A mandatory 10-minute break (“Mandatory Break”) after each hour of practice is required. Mandatory Breaks are not counted against the hours per week or the maximum hours per day.

After Labor Day, all practices may not exceed a maximum of eight (8) hours, per week, with a maximum of two (2) hours duration per day. Mandatory Breaks are still required.

All players, regardless of when they join the team, must have at least one week of conditioning before they are allowed to have live contact. Even if a player joins the team after the start of the regular season schedule, this requirement must be met.

### **C) Practice Staff Requirements**

At least one coach must be present during every practice.

Each and every coach must have a background check preformed and reviewed/approved by the process established by the Association/Conference.

There shall be at least one person holding a Red Cross Card, or of similar equivalency, present at all practices. This can be a coach or any volunteer approved by the Association.

Conferences are required to enforce these “Staff Requirements” with its member Associations.

Coaches are required to maintain in their possession at any and all practices teams **EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT, CONSENT AND INFORMATION** form and Parent/Guardian Emergency Numbers.

### **D) Practice Restrictions**

There shall be no “inter-division” practice or games between divisions i.e., Pee Wee vs. Jr. Pee Wee, ... this does not prohibit individual fundamental coaching sessions as long as there is no full contact between players of differing teams/divisions.

The following Drills and Warm-up Exercises are hereby banned from all UYFL activities. Leg Lifts, Neck Bridges, Neck Rolls, Bull in the Ring, Barrel Rolls, and any and all drills and exercises not generally accepted as safe, and that may not be reflective of actions that would normally occur during the course of a football game.

The National Federation (NFHS) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rulebooks contain strong language on Blocking and Tackling. UYFL coaches are responsible to be fully informed, and abide by, all such rules of their states governing body (NFHS or NCAA). UYFL coaches are also responsible to review these rules every year. In addition to other specific prohibitions in the NFHS and NCAA rulebooks, butt blocking, chop blocking, face tackling or spearing techniques are strictly prohibited. If such techniques or any others forbidden by the NFHS or NCAA rulebooks are taught, the coaches responsible shall be subject to disciplinary actions including but not limited to probation upon the first offense and suspension for the remainder of the season upon the second offence. Associations are encouraged to establish their own rules regulations and monitoring of their coaches. Coaches assume all liability for their actions or inactions.

## ***Section 23 – Spring Football / Summer Passing Leagues***

### **SPRING FOOTBALL SUMMER PASSING LEAGUES**

UYFL recommends that any Conference, Association, Team participating in Spring Football and/or Summer Passing Leagues do so by following the format established by their local High School or State High School Athletic Governing Board.

Great care should be taken to not interfere with other winter, spring and summer sports such as Basketball, Baseball, Lacrosse, and family vacations. United Youth Football will require that NO pressure be placed on individuals to participate in any in winter, spring or Summer football programs. Coaches that “Require” or in any way manipulate regular season (fall) participants to join a winter, spring or summer program should be immediately suspended from coaching any team during the regular (fall) season.

## ***Section 24 – Fall Playing Season / Games / Scoring / Football Size / Scouting***

### **FALL PLAYING SEASON / GAMES**

### A) Game Clock Details

Only 10 minute quarters, will be utilized in all Divisions/Class of play within UYFL

Maximum half time allowed will be 15 minutes.

Three (3) timeouts per half in all UYFL games, Timeouts are not charged against a team for injuries or game officials' timeout. Head Coaches may request an Official Time Out to rectify MPR monitor behavioral issues; this time out is NOT to be charged to the team.

### B) Game Details / Minimum Number of Players

A maximum of 14 regular season games including Conference championships are allowed.

The minimum number of players eligible and able to participate and required to start and maintain a regulation game during the regular season is determined by each conference but must not be less than 12. A minimum of 16 players eligible and able to participate is required to enter post season play and must be maintained throughout post season or the game will be forfeited and the winner will advance. A minimum of 16 players eligible and able to participate is required to qualify and begin participation in the national tournament, some exceptions may apply.

Football games are to be scheduled no more than one (1) game per week with a minimum of 48 hours (2 days) between games. The UYFL National Office reserves the right to waive this rule when extenuating circumstances exist or to accommodate a championship tournament.

### C) Coaching Communications

There will be no electronic devices from the press box, coaching box, sidelines, or any other position on the field that may be used to relay messages to the coaches or players at any time. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, the use of a Cell Phone, Blackberry, PDA, Computer or other messaging device. All Bluetooth earpiece devices are not allowed within the field of play. A coach using a cell phone for emergency purposes must step outside the coach's box, off the playing field, (with an exception for on field emergency) and if it continues, may be asked to leave the field for the remainder of the game. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Conference.

### D) Game Day Medical Requirements

UYFL requires the home team or hosting organization to provide medical coverage at each game. In the absence of a physician and or ambulance on site, the minimum requirement will be the presence of an individual who is EMT qualified or is currently certified in Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety or its equivalent. Therefore no game shall start without this requirement being met.

Coaches are required to maintain in their possession at all times the teams **EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT, CONSENT AND INFORMATION** form and Parent/Guardian Emergency Numbers.

Home team or hosting organization is required to introduce the emergency medical personnel to the visiting team and to review the emergency medical plan with the visiting team. The emergency medical plan shall include but not be limited to (1) ambulatory access to the field, (2) directions to the facility, (3) location of the emergency communication device, in the absence of a cell phone, and the emergency medical services numbers as well as the local fire and police numbers when 911 services do not exist.

Once an injured participant is removed from the game, they may not re-enter the game unless first approved by the emergency medical personnel covering the game. If a participant is transported off the field to a medical facility or for any reason seeks medical attention whether from an injury sustained during a game or practice they may not resume participation without the written consent from the examining medical personnel.

### E) Football Size Requirement

The following is the recommended size breakdown per team level. The Wilson football is listed here for illustration purposes you may use any brand's size equivalent.

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Instructional Divisions | Wilson K2  |
| Cadet                   | Wilson K2  |
| Jr. PeeWee – PeeWee     | Wilson TDJ |
| Jr. Midgets – Midgets   | Wilson TDY |
| Senior                  | Wilson TDS |
| 8 & Under               | Wilson K2  |
| 10 & Under              | Wilson TDJ |
| 12 & Under              | Wilson TDJ |
| 14 & Under              | Wilson TDY |
| 15 & Under              | Wilson TDS |

### F) Scoring, Tie Breakers, Lopsided Score Rule

#### 1) Scoring:

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Touchdown                                  | 6 points |
| Point after touchdown (running or passing) | 1 point  |
| Points after touchdown (kicking)           | 2 points |
| Safety (awarded to opponent)               | 2 points |
| Field Goal                                 | 3 points |
| Forfeit                                    | (6-0)    |

#### 2) Tie-Breakers:

Tie games at the end of regulation play. UYFL will allow each Conference to set its own tie-breaker system if needed for regular season play. However, "Sudden Death" tie-breakers are prohibited. UYFL Inter-Conference, Regional and National Tournament/Championship Games will utilize the ten (10) yard Tie-Breaker System. As stated in the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) rule book. The NFHS Tie-Breaker rules amended to start from the 10 yard line. Conference standing tie-breaker used for establishing playoff brackets cannot use total points for or against as a tie-breaker.

#### 3) Lopsided Score Rule:

An intentionally run-up score is when a team continues to use its best players and its currently most successful plays to score as many times as possible even after the game is in their favor and far out of reach for their opponents. Coaches who practice this are to be disciplined by the local Conference / Association. UYFL considers this type of coaching contrary to its purposes.

The UYFL lopsided score rule is 35 Points or 5 touchdowns, whichever comes first. Once the score differential reaches 35 points, or 5 touchdowns, the game clock will become a running clock. Once the clock becomes a running clock it can only be stopped for injuries and official or team time outs. It will be the losing teams preference as to whether they will receive a normal kickoff or they may choose to take the ball on their own 40 yard line. The winning team is prohibited from running any misdirection, counter, reverses or "trick plays" of any



kind, or any play that has been consistently run with success during the game. Skill position starters must be replaced whenever possible. ***Conferences and Associations cannot limit the winning team to only running between the tackles.*** Mandatory plays must be completed regardless of the score or game clock. If the winning team does not complete their required mandatory plays, the full force of the mandatory play rules will be in effect.

Conferences are required to investigate/review all reported losses of more than 35 points or 5 touchdowns. Conferences are required to establish their own disciplinary actions for coaches that are determined to have intentionally run-up the score, ***in all cases an appeal process must be afforded to the coach***, unless the coach has signed acceptance of an agreement prior to the start of the season indicated that the conference will not allow appeals of its disciplinary decisions. Not all lopsided scores are intentional. Great care should be used when investigating these situations, the opponents (head coach) observations should be heavily considered, and no penalty or disciplinary action should be assessed if a team is determined to have shown restraint and respect for its opponent but is simply superior for whatever reason.

### ***Section 25 – Game Protests***

#### **PROTESTS**

***“Win without arrogance, lose without excuses” – Chris Corkum***

Conferences shall have complete jurisdiction over protests concerning all games within their programs. Conferences may choose at their sole discretion whether protests of any kind are allowed. Conferences must maintain consistency with this discretion.

Protests of nationally sanctioned post season games on matters of judgment rendered by any game official WILL NOT be heard under any circumstances.

### ***Section 26 – Post Season Bowl Games***

#### **BOWL GAMES**

Teams/Associations/Conferences wishing to participate in post season bowl games held during the United Youth Football National Championship must submit request through their Conference Commissioner/President. All requests must be made as soon as possible as space is limited; slots will be committed on a first come first serve basis.

Bowl Games in general do not require permission from the National Office.

### ***Section 27 – Regional/National Championship Eligibility***

#### **REGIONAL/NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP ELIGIBILITY**

The Board of Governors and/or the National Board of Cheer Directors, hereinafter referred to as the “Board”, or preferably, UYFL’s 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification partner will inspect and enforce all of the UYFL Participant Paperwork and Requirements for compliance with UYFL Participant Certification. No participant or team shall be allowed to compete in the National Championship Tournament who has not met all of these requirements.

Conferences must commit to the national office what programs and divisions they will be sending to the regional/national tournament by September 15th.

Associations that commit to their Conferences to participate in the Regional and National Tournament and then do not compete, will be subject to suspension from the following years post-season play including but not limited to, Regional and National tournaments. Any team participating in the Regional Tournament, Winning the right to advance and then not traveling will subject their entire association to suspension from the following year’s post-season play. Any team participating in the National Tournament and not participating in all scheduled games will cause their entire Association to be subject to suspension from the following year’s post-season play. Any team walking off the field during a regional or national sanctioned event without the prior

consent of the national staff will be subject to suspension and subject their entire association to suspension from the following year's post-season play.

Any team entered into post-season play of any kind must have filed a Certified Roster with the National Office by October 1st.

All teams must travel with a copy of the Certified Roster, all Participant and Tournament required paperwork. An Absentee form is required for any participant listed on a certified roster but not accompanying the team. All paperwork must be available for official weigh-in and player verification prior to each game. If the UYFL 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification was utilized then all participants must have their ID Badge and Coaches must have with them the **EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT, CONSENT AND INFORMATION** form and Parent/Guardian Emergency Numbers.

All Teams traveling to the National Championship tournament must have with them, in addition to the above, Proof of Insurance, Background Check Affidavits and Filled in UYFL Mandatory Play Forms.

### ***Section 28 – National All-Star Game***

#### **NATIONAL ALL-STAR GAME**

##### **A) Divisions**

United Youth Football together with its training partner, National Football Academies (NFA) will be providing a National All-Star game for participants currently in the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade. United Youth Football and NFA will also provide a Showcase Training event with a Culminating Competition for exceptional football players currently in the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade. These events will take place in late December or early January each year. These events are reserved for the best players from throughout the United States. Players must be nominated and will be selected by position specific coaches serving on a selection committee.

##### **B) Participant Nominations**

All organizations may nominate players and coaches currently in or coaching the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade, 10<sup>th</sup> Grade and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade. Please send all nominations to AllStar@UnitedUYFL.com

## **CHEER / DANCE / STEP - GENERAL RULES AND REQUIREMENTS**

United Youth Football and Cheer has established, in addition to its Cheerleading program, two programs of dance, Traditional Dance and Step. Each program will have its own set of specific rules. Each program, Cheer, Dance and Step will follow the current rules of National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and United Youth Football and Cheer General Safety Rules and General Routine Guidelines which will supersede the NFHS rules.

### ***Section 29 – Cheer/Dance/Step General Competition Guidelines***

#### **GENERAL COMPETITION GUIDELINES**

##### **A) Interruption of Performances**

1. At the discretion of the competition official, a routine that is interrupted because of failure of the official or host equipment, facilities, or other attributable factors and not the team, the team affected will be allowed a restart their performance from the beginning of the routine.
2. At the digression of the competition official, a routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment the team affected must continue. The team may redo their performance, as directed by competition official, but will not be re-scored, will be considered an exhibition only for competition purposes.

3. In the event of injury, the team is allowed to regroup and present their routing at the end of the division/order of appearance. If the team is the last to perform in the division/order of appearance then a 5 min/reasonable break will be allowed.

#### **B) Reasons for Disqualification**

1. Teams with illegal competitor(s) will be disqualified. Reasons for disqualification include but are not limited to overage competitor(s), competitor(s) not listed on official /United Youth Cheer league roster, and/or illegal competitor(s) listed on / United Youth Cheer official league roster. If a team is found with unregistered competitors, the team will be disqualified.
2. Teams registering and performing in incorrect divisions and/or categories will be disqualified.

#### **C) How to Handle Procedural Questions**

Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the event will be handled exclusively by the head coach of the team with the competition official(s).

#### **D) Finality of Decisions**

1. By participating in the event, each team agrees the decisions by the judges and officials will be final and will not be subject for review. Each participating team acknowledges that judges and officials will make prompt and fair decisions and therefore waives any legal equitable, administrative, or procedural review of any decisions.
2. All decisions of the judges including safety judges are final.

#### **E) Legality Questions (prior to event)**

Coaches and Coordinators are responsible to understand and comply with all United Youth Cheer, Dance and Step Age Divisions, Level Division Guidelines (cheer), United Youth Cheer, Dance and Step Safety Rules (NFHS Rules) and/or Cheer, Dance and Step Routine Guidelines pertaining to the competing division. Questions concerning any United Youth Cheer, Dance and Step Safety Rules, Level Division Guidelines (cheer), or questions regarding specific stunts and /or pyramids should follow the process as stated below:

1. All Legality questions must be addressed in writing prior to the event. Because of terminology and misunderstandings, no phone calls will be accepted. United Youth Cheer, Dance and Step Rule judges will address all questions in writing. All questions should be emailed to [Cheer@UnitedYFL.com](mailto:Cheer@UnitedYFL.com)
2. For Partner Stunt and/or pyramid questions a videotape/DVD must accompany the written legality question.
3. Questions must be submitted 14 days prior to the event to ensure a reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior to the event are NOT guaranteed an answer prior to the event.
4. When you e-mail your questions (14 days prior) make sure to include:
  - a) Event/Competition Date
  - b) Your name
  - c) Your association/team name and Conference
  - d) Your division
  - e) Your level category (for cheer)
  - f) A daytime contact number
  - g) Your Email Address

### ***Section 30 – Cheer/ Dance / Step Age Determination Definition***

#### **AGE DETERMINATION DEFINITION**

For determining the Participants age (Protected Age), the term “On or Before” and the term “As Of” is intended to have the same definition (Age Cut Off Date): An age cutoff date of (on or before/as of 7/31) July 31st of the

current season is as follows: 14 yrs old on July 31st, turns 15 yrs old on August 1st, the participant cheers as a 14 yr old. If the participant has a birthday on July 31st in which they turn 15 they would be considered 15.

### ***Section 31 – Cheer/Dance/Step Fall Competition Season / Practice***

#### **FALL COMPETITION SEASON / PRACTICE**

##### **A) Start Dates**

No Conference shall commence team practice until the Fourth Monday in July. The UYFL playing season starts on the Fourth Monday in July and extends to December 31 of the current year. Start and end dates of the playing season may be modified for teams playing in regions with severe weather conditions. Written permission by the UYFL National Office is required before any such modifications may be made to the start date, a maximum of 6 weeks or 60 hours, prior to the first regular season game, must be maintained by any alteration to the start date. A later start date and less time may occur for any league.

##### **B) Practice Length**

Pre-season practice can be on a daily basis until Labor Day, but must not exceed 10 hours a week, and two (2) hours in duration. A mandatory 10-minute break ("Mandatory Break") after each hour of practice is required. Mandatory Breaks are not counted against the hours per week or the maximum hours per day.

After Labor Day, all practices may not exceed a maximum of eight (8) hours, per week, with a maximum of two (2) hours duration per day. Mandatory Breaks are still required.

##### **C) Practice Staff Requirements**

At least one coach must be present during every practice.

Each and every coach must have a background check preformed and reviewed/approved by the process established by the Association/Conference.

There shall be at least one person holding a Red Cross Card, or of similar equivalency, present at all practices. This can be a coach or any volunteer approved by the Association.

Conferences are required to enforce these "Staff Requirements" with its member Associations.

Every Team shall have at least one Head Coach (21 years or older). After the first 12 participants (including mascots), there must be an Assistant Coach (18 years old or older) for every additional 12 participants. The number of adult volunteers will determine the maximum team size. Example: one 21 year old or older head coach - maximum 12 participants; 13-24 participants - one 21 year old or older Head Coach and one 18 year old or older Assistant Coach. Maximum team size (36 participants) one Head Coach (21+) and two Assistant Coaches (18+)

It is highly recommended that all coaches attend at minimum a sport appropriate safety program. The coaching staff should stay up to date on new techniques, progressions, league policy, and safety regulations.

The Head Coach, Assistant Coach(s) (over 21 years), or Association Coordinator must supervise all practice, games and functions.

The coaching staff should be knowledgeable in first aid techniques and emergency procedures. An emergency procedure should be developed for dealing with injuries at practices, games, or competitions. Participants and coaching staff should be prepared to act in an emergency.

Head coaches may be required to be skilled through any available training program available to their Association/Conference. The Association/Conference may also make this a requirement of assistant coaches. It is highly recommended that all coaches attend at minimum a cheerleading safety program. The coaching staff should stay up to date on new techniques, progressions, league policy, and safety regulations.

All coaches and participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner exhibiting good sportsmanship throughout the regular and post-season events. It is the Head Coaches responsibility to ensure the proper conduct is followed.

### ***Section 32 – Camps and Clinics***

#### **CAMPS AND CLINICS**

Cheer, Dance and Step teams are encouraged in part or full to attend either a camp or clinic (defined as a training session) during the off-season. These camps or clinics should be designed as instructional for youth/recreation leagues and should not be made mandatory by any coach, league, or personnel associated within a program. The focus of such camps should be on safety and proper execution of cheerleading skills to the teams' age level. It is important that the proper insurance be secured for any camps or clinics.

### **CHEERLEADING SPECIFIC - RULES AND REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Section 33 – United Cheerleading Program***

#### **CHEER DIVISIONS**

| <b>UNITED CHEER PROGRAM</b> |   |                    |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------|
| <b>Level 1 (Beginner)</b>   |   |                    |
| <b>Division</b>             | <b>Age (as of July 31<sup>st</sup>)</b> | <b>Roster Size</b> |
| United Tiny Tots            | 4 – 5 – 6                               | Small or Large     |
| United 9                    | 7 – 8 – 9                               | Small or Large     |
| United 11                   | 8 – 9 – 10 – 11                         | Small or Large     |
| United 13                   | 10 – 11 – 12 – 13                       | Small Only         |
| <b>UNITED CHEER PROGRAM</b> |   |                    |
| <b>Level 2 (Advanced)</b>   |   |                    |
| <b>Division</b>             | <b>Age (as of July 31<sup>st</sup>)</b> | <b>Roster Size</b> |
| United 13                   | 10 – 11 – 12 – 13                       | Large Only         |
| United 14                   | 11 – 12 – 13 – 14 – 15*                 | Small or Large     |

\*Individual conferences may apply for a variance if their programs accept 15 year old participants

Size – Small = Max 16 Participants

Size – Large = Max 36 Participants

Timing/Music of Routine not to exceed: Two and one half minutes (2:30).

Cheer mat size is 42' x 54'.

NFHS Safety Rules are to be followed.

| CONFERENCE ALL-STAR CHEER PROGRAM  |                                    |                                  |
|--|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Division   | Age (as of July 31 <sup>st</sup> ) | Level                            |
| Conference All-Star  | Max 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade          | No Level Restriction<br>Max – 36 |
| <p>The Conference All-Star Cheer Program was established to allow cheer participants who will be entering high school a final chance to travel and compete in a national event. This cheer squad will be made up of cheer participants from all teams within the conference. The team must be made up of participants from at least 4 different cheer teams.</p> |                                    |                                  |

#### A) Conference All-Star Guidelines

- 1) Participation Commitment deadline is September 15th. Commitment means that each participant's parent/guardian has committed and understands the financial, practice and travel obligations, you must have a committed team of participants and coaching staff prior to making your commitment to the national office.
- 2) Conference All-Star Cheer teams must be made up from children who participated on at least 4 different associations cheer squads.
- 3) Conferences will develop their own system for nominating and selecting coaches and participants. The coaches and players are also allowed to be on a team/squad involved in post season competitions.
- 4) All Star Coach Nominations should be coaches who have a positive history with the organization and have demonstrated not only the competence one would expect from a cheer coach but one who demonstrates the understanding that while every competition is entered to win the point of this all-star event goes past the winning and losing, it is a great opportunity for the kids to experience lessons in life that will go way beyond the win or loss of the competition.
- 5) The timing on the selection and formation of the team/squad must be created by the conference. Understanding that practice will be limited to a total of 27 hours prior to arriving at the tournament venue.
- 6) Conferences must certify that each cheerleader nominated and selected was properly assigned to rosters and certified (submitted all of the required documentation) to their respective team/squad by the September 15th deadline.
- 7) Conferences are required to provide each participant's documentation, a photo copy of the roster they were certified to, one for each cheerleader even if 2 or more are from the same team/squad.
- 8) Conferences are required to insure that all coaches have received a background checks and have been cleared by the Association they are affiliated with as required during their regular season participation.
- 9) The Conference is to complete a new roster for this new All-Star team via the documentation provided by the national office.
- 10) The Conference is required to guard that the practice rules are adhered to.

#### Section 34 – United Cheerleading Level Explanations

##### CHEERLEADING LEVEL DEFINITIONS

#### Level 1 Definitions (Beginner)

##### Standing Tumbling

- > All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. For example: front rolls, back rolls, front walkovers, back walkovers, cartwheels, handstands, round offs and handsprings are allowed.

- > Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. Ex: cartwheel/back walkover or standing back handspring series.
- > At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution. (Exception: both hands must remain in contact with the floor when performing front or back handsprings).
- > Flips and aerials are prohibited.

### Running Tumbling

- > All skills with hand support are allowed. (All flips are prohibited)
- > At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution (exception: both hands must remain in contact with the floor when performing front or back handsprings).
- > Series tumbling is allowed.

### Stunts

- > Two leg extended stunts are allowed.
- > A back spotter is required for all Stunts
- > One leg prep level stunts are allowed. (Single leg extended stunts are prohibited)
- > Twisting during the load-in is limited to one half (1/2) twist by the flyer only (base cannot turn during the load-in).
- > Split stunts and swing-up stunts are prohibited.

### Tosses

- > Tosses are prohibited.

### Pyramids

- > Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. (Single leg extended stunts are prohibited)
- > Moving/walking pyramids are allowed.
- > In pyramid transitions, the flyer (top) must maintain contact with at least one base at all times.
- > Hanging and collapsible pyramids are prohibited.

### Dismounts

- > Cradles from prep level one leg stunts and two leg extended stunts, may not exceed more than one and one quarter (1-1/4) twisting rotation. Other positions during cradles are allowed (i.e. arch, toe touch, pike, tuck, etc.)
- > Any inverted dismount, including double based suspended forward rolls, are prohibited.
- > Cradles may not land in prone position (on stomach).
- > Cradle dismounts to different bases that do not progress back to an upright/vertical position are prohibited.

### Release Moves

- > No release moves are allowed other than those mentioned in the Dismounts and Tosses sections. (**Yes** up and down release transitions that are braced by prep level or below stunts are allowed).

**Exception:** A single full twisting barrel (log) roll is allowed if it starts and ends in a cradle position.

### Level 2 Definitions (Advanced)

#### Standing Tumbling

- > All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed.

- > Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. Ex: cartwheel/back walkover or standing back handspring series.
- > Flips are allowed but may not exceed 1 flipping rotation and 0 twisting rotations.
- > Forward 3/4 flips to the seat and toe-pitch flips are prohibited.

### Running Tumbling

- > All skills with hand support are allowed.
- > Flips are allowed but may not exceed one flipping and one twisting rotation. Flips may ONLY be performed from a round off or round off back handspring entry.
- > Flips may be performed in alternate positions (layout, x-out, pike, etc.).
- > Aerial cartwheels and running front tucks are allowed.
- > Tumbling after a flip is prohibited. Exception: a forward or backward roll out of a flip for safety is permitted.

### Stunts

- > Single leg extended stunts are allowed.
- > Twisting during the load-in is limited to one full twist by the base(s) and/or flyer.
- > Split stunts and swing-up stunts are prohibited.

### Tosses

- > Basket and sponge tosses are allowed.
- > Tosses may not exceed one and one quarter (1 1/4) twisting rotations.
- > Half (1/2) helicopter tosses are allowed.
- > Flipping (front or back) and traveling tosses are prohibited.

### Pyramids

- > Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules.
- > Moving/walking pyramids are allowed.
- > Hanging pyramids are allowed but must remain stationary.
- > Collapsible pyramids are prohibited.

### Dismounts

- > Cradles from all stunts are limited to one and one quarter (1 1/4) twists.
- > **Inversions are allowed (Must follow NFHS Rulebook).**
- > Cradle dismounts to different bases that do not progress back to an upright/vertical position are prohibited.

### Release Moves

- > Release moves are allowed but must not exceed more than eighteen inches above extended arm level (i.e. tic tocks would be allowed).

## Section 35 – United Cheerleading Mascots

### MASCOTS

Mascots are at the discretion of any individual League. The following are guidelines for leagues who offer Mascots:

1. Mascot must be at least 4 years old
2. A participant can be a Mascot if they are not old enough to be included in any other age division, which is offered.



3. A Mascot will be registered as any other applicant and is required to fill out registration paperwork.
4. Mascots are our youngest cheerleaders and should not perform any stunts or any other activity with the exception of crowd participation sideline cheers/chants. Great care should be taken if allowed to be part of halftime activities. Mascots should not be in the area of stunt groups performing in a halftime routine. A safety concern exists due to the difference in age, maturity, and skill level between the mascot and certified participants assigned to the roster.

### ***Section 36 – United Cheerleading Routine Guidelines***

#### **CHEER ROUTINE GUIDELINES**

##### **A) Timing / Music**

Each cheer team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed two and one half minutes (2:30) two minutes and thirty seconds. Each team's performance must incorporate a cheer component AND a music component.

Time for all performances will begin with the first movement, sound of music or word by the team after the team name is set up on the performing surface following the teams' announcement. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team.

##### **B) Entrance**

Formal entrances (i.e. crowd response chants or cheers, tumbling or stunts) to the competition floor are prohibited. Entrances should be brief with the sole purpose of walking, running, etc to position. A quick team huddle prior to performance is allowed. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set-up for their routine. Starting a routine with a mount is permitted, however the build starts the clock.

The team's name will be called at least twice (once as the team is on deck, and again once the team is next to perform). Teams missing their performance time will perform at the end of the division/order of appearance.

##### **C) Props**

Poms, Megaphones, signs, and banners are encouraged. No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Hiding or hidden type props are prohibited. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited. Stepping on poms/signs/banners does interfere with safety of the performance and will result in the appropriate point deduction. A participant may kick a pom out of the way, step over a pom or pick them up and gently toss them out of the way.

##### **D) Movement / Routine**

Gymnastic skills are required. Stunts, Lifts, and Pyramids are required.

##### **E) Age Appropriate**

All choreography, material, music, and uniforms should be age-appropriate and appropriate for family viewing. Any vulgar or suggestive movements (inappropriate touching/slapping/positioning, hip thrusting), words, or music will result in a penalty. Removing improper language and replacing it with sound effects still is inappropriate. Extreme cases could lead to disqualification and will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

## F) Cheer Mat Size

The Cheer mat size that will be used at the National Competition will be 42' x 54' all cheer squads are encouraged to work with this size mat whenever possible.

## Section 37 – United Cheerleading Specific Safety Rules

### CHEER SAFETY RULES

All cheer teams must follow the NFHS Safety Rules. Please access the most up to date NFHS Safety Rules. Rulebooks may be purchased at [www.NFHS.com](http://www.NFHS.com). In addition to NFHS (National Federation High Schools) Safety Rules, UNITED YOUTH CHEER, cheer teams must adhere to the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supersede any conflicting NFHS Safety Rule as long as it is stricter (for participant safety)

1. All teams should be supervised during all official functions by a qualified Advisor/Coach.
2. Banners, flags, megaphones, poms, and signs are the only props allowed. The use of poms and/or props is prohibited during tumbling, stunt/pyramid load-in, stunt/pyramid dismounts, and during stunt transitions\*. The top person/flyer may obtain and use poms or props when secure in a stunt or pyramid.
  - a. \*a top person may safely obtain a prop while in a prep position and be transitioned to an extended position. A top person may not use props when the transition requires the use of the top person's arms, example reload. Props must be safely discarded before dismount.
  - b. Exception: a forward/backward roll may be performed with poms only in hands.
3. When discarding props (signs, etc.) that are made of solid material or have sharp edges/corners, team members must gently toss or place the props so that they are under control. The placement of props or poms should be a safe distance away from skills being performed to eliminate any safety hazards (not outside the performance area; see boundary penalty).
4. Hiding or hidden type props are prohibited. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
5. Supports, braces etc., which are hard and unyielding, or have, rough edges or surfaces (including Velcro) shall be appropriately covered. A participant wearing a cast (excluding a properly covered air cast) shall not be involved in a stunt. Please refer to the NFHS Safety rule on Supports and braces.
6. Glitter is not permitted. This includes shimmer.

## Section 38 – United Cheerleading Penalties

### CHEER PENALTIES

#### A) Safety Penalties

5 points will be deducted from your total score for each safety/general UNITED YOUTH CHEER Routine guidelines.

10 points will be deducted from your total score for any skill performed that is not appropriate to the category level.

Please refer to the Level 1 - Level 2 for skill allowances, UNITED YOUTH CHEER, Cheer Safety Rules, and UNITED YOUTH CHEER, Cheer Routine Guidelines (i.e. a basket toss performed by a level 1 team would result in a 10 point deduction)

Teams are responsible for following all SAFETY RULES, as well as the Level Category skill restrictions that further restrict permitted skills within UNITED YOUTH CHEER.

**B) Skill Execution Penalties**

0.5 point per occurrence will be deducted from your total score for minor errors during technical skills (i.e. hand(s) down on tumbling; obvious missed skills; shaky stunts/pyramids, incomplete twisting cradles; obvious errors during dance movements, etc.) These OBVIOUS mistakes would result in a fall or missed skill.

1 point per occurrence will be deducted from your total score for any falls during technical skills (i.e. falls from individual stunts; falls during tumbling skills; falls to the floor during dance movements, etc.) Any body part (except hands & feet) that hit the ground when transitioning would result in a 1-point deduction.

3 points maximum will be deducted from your total score for each occurrence per pyramid, stunt, or tumbling section with a maximum of 9 points per routine.

**C) Boundary Penalty**

0.5 point per occurrence will be deducted from your total score for each boundary penalty. A penalty will be given for stepping off (the entire foot or hand) or touching (other body parts) outside the performance area. Stepping or touching the edge of the mat does not count as a penalty. Props may partly touch out of bounds and be picked up. Props totally out of bounds that cause a team member to reach outside the performance area will result in a 0.5 penalty.

**D) Time Limit Penalty**

1 point will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 6 – 10 seconds over time requirements.

3 points will be deducted from your total score if your goes from 11 or more seconds over time requirements.

**E) Music / Choreography Rule/Penalty**

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used. This deduction will be taken as a violation of the UNITED YOUTH CHEER Routine Guidelines.

**Section 39 – United Cheerleading Scoring Ties****CHEER SCORING TIES**

All ties will be broken at Regional/National competitions. Ties will be broken by using the

Basic Fundamental scores on the score sheet. Categories include:

Stunts, Pyramids, Tumbling, Jumps, and Dance/Motions.

If it is necessary to break a second tie, the scores under Performance and Sportsmanship will be calculated along with the Fundamental score categories.

**TRADITIONAL DANCE SPECIFIC - RULES AND REQUIREMENTS****Section 40 – United Traditional Dance Program****TRADITIONAL DANCE DIVISIONS**

| UNITED TRADITIONAL DANCE PROGRAM |                                    |                           |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Division                         | Age (as of July 31 <sup>st</sup> ) | Roster Size               |
| United 11                        | 8 – 9 – 10 – 11                    | Maximum – 36 Participants |

| United 14   | 12 – 13 – 14 – 15* | Maximum – 36 Participants |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <p><i>Less than 6 participants on the United 11 Division, Participants may move up to United 14 Division with Conference approval.</i></p> <p><i>*Individual conferences may apply for a variance if their programs accept 15 year old participants</i><br/> <i>Size – Large = Max 36 Participants</i></p> <p><i>Timing/Music of Routine not to exceed 3 minutes.</i><br/> <i>All Dance teams must follow the NFHS Rules for Dance Teams.</i></p> |                    |                           |

### Section 41 – Traditional Dance Routine Guidelines

#### DANCE ROUTINE GUIDELINES

##### A) Timing / Music

Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 3 minutes.

Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music following the teams' announcement to take the floor. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team.

Music is required throughout this performance. If music is interrupted due to technical failure, performers will continue to be judged on dance skills outlined in the routine specifics.

##### B) Entrance

Formal entrances onto the competition floor are prohibited. Entrances to the competition floor should be brief with the sole purpose of walking, running, etc to position. A quick team huddle prior to performance is allowed. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set for their routine.

The team's name will be called at least twice (once as the team is on deck, and again once the team is next to perform). Teams missing their performance time will perform at the end of the division/order of appearance.

##### C) Props, Dress/Costuming

Props, Poms, and/or costuming may be used but is not mandatory. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited. Hiding or hidden type props are prohibited.

##### D) Movement / Routine

Each team's performance must consist of a cheer component AND funk (hip-hop) component. Routines may display a theme but must incorporate skills from both cheer and funk. Each team will be judged on:

Cheer skills: Basic cheerleading motions emphasizing uniformity, synchronization and strong/ sharp motions/arm placement as well as ground work, level changes and roll-offs and visual effect.

- Funk skills: Movements comprised of funk, hip-hop, and street styles with tempo variation. Dance style with an emphasis on uniformity, rhythm, body isolation, creativity, and execution.
- Technical skills (i.e. pirouettes/leaps) are not required, but if included will be credited towards the technical/difficulty score.

### **E) Age Appropriate**

Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Appropriate choreography and music **MUST** be used. The use of inappropriate choreography, music, or uniform/costume will be subject to a penalty. Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words, or music are subject to disqualification. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

### **Section 42 – Traditional Dance Specific Safety Rules**

#### **DANCE SAFETY RULES**

All Dance teams must follow the NFHS Rules for Dance Teams.

The following additional guidelines for United Youth Dance Teams supersede any conflicting NFHS rule.

1. All teams should be supervised during all official functions by a qualified Advisor/Coach.
2. Dance teams may wear approved jewelry as part of their costume. Jewelry is prohibited. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces may be worn, but should be secured to the body with tape.
3. Drops (knee, seat, thigh and split drops from a jump, stand or inverted position are illegal unless most of the weight is first borne on the hand(s) or foot/feet or is controlled, to absorb the impact of the drop. Front drops from an airborne position are illegal.
4. Tension drops and handspring/flips to any drop are illegal.
5. Soft-soled dance shoes (jazz boots, dance sandals, jazz shoes) are acceptable. At minimum, footwear must cover the ball of the foot. Dancing barefoot on a floor cover is considered appropriate. Wearing "socks only" is prohibited.
6. All dance lifts, stunts, pyramids, or tosses are prohibited. Partner lifts may be used if the flyers hips are not above the base's shoulders.
7. The use of partner stunts, pyramids, or gymnastics/tumbling is not permitted. Tumbling skills are not permitted except for forward rolls and one shoulder back rolls.
8. Back bends and handstands are allowed so long as they are choreographed as a progression to another skill. They may not be sustained and/or involve a hip over-head rotation.

### **Section 43 – Traditional Dance Penalties**

#### **DANCE PENALTIES**

#### **A) Safety Penalties**

Follow NFHS guidelines.

#### **B) Boundary Penalty**

Follow NFHS guidelines.

#### **C) Time Limit Penalty**

Follow NFHS guidelines.

#### **D) Music / Choreography Rule/Penalty**

Follow NFHS guidelines.

### **Section 44 – Traditional Dance Scoring Ties**

#### **DANCE SCORING TIES**

All Ties will remain ties; both teams will be awarded and allowed to advance. Trophies and/or Awards of any kind may have to be sent to team post event as ties will not be accounted for in any event/competition planning.

## STEP SPECIFIC - RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

### Section 45 – United Step Program

#### UNITED STEP DIVISIONS

Step is a form of dance that has been in existence for decades. This type of dance is sophisticated, synchronized chanting and rhythmic beats from participant hands, feet and mouth. Today, youth across America have embraced this art form, which provides groups with a sense of unity, teamwork, discipline, self-esteem, and responsibility. United Youth Cheer is PROUD to offer a STEP program to our membership.

**Note – the age of the oldest participant on the roster will determine the age bracket/Division.**

| UNITED STEP PROGRAM   |                                    |                           |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Division  | Age (as of July 31 <sup>st</sup> ) | Roster Size               |
| United 11   | Max Age – 11                       | Maximum – 36 Participants |
| United 14   | Max Age – 15*                      | Maximum – 36 Participants |
| <p>Minimum Age All Divisions = 5</p> <p>*Individual conferences may apply for a variance if their programs accept 15 year old participants</p> <p>Timing/Music of Routine not to exceed 3 minutes</p> |                                    |                           |

### Section 46 – United Step Routine Guidelines

#### STEP ROUTINE GUIDELINES

##### A) Timing / Music

Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 3 minutes.

Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music following the teams' announcement to take the floor. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team.

##### B) Entrance

All variable entrance styles are allowed as long as the participants' safety is considered.

The team's name will be called at least twice (once as the team is on deck, and again once the team is next to perform). Teams missing their performance time will perform at the end of the division/order of appearance.

##### C) Props, Dress/Costuming

Props may be used but is not mandatory. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.

Costuming is required because you will be judged on appearance, uniformity, originality, synchronization, style, energy, and showmanship.

##### D) Age Appropriate

Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Appropriate choreography and music MUST be used. The use of inappropriate choreography, music, or uniform/costume will be subject to a penalty. Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words, or music are subject to disqualification. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

## Section 47 – United Step Specific Safety Rules

### STEP SAFETY RULES

All Dance teams must follow the NFHS Rules for Dance Teams.

The following additional guidelines for United Youth Dance Teams supersede any conflicting NFHS rule.

1. All teams should be supervised during all official functions by a qualified Advisor/Coach.
2. Dance teams may wear approved jewelry as part of their costume. Approved jewelry includes legal post stud earrings and hair accessories. Jewelry such as hoop earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, belly, tongue, and nose rings etc are prohibited. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces may be worn, but should be secured to the body with tape.
3. Drops (knee, seat, thigh and split drops from a jump, stand or inverted position are illegal unless most of the weight is first borne on the hand(s) or foot/feet or is controlled, to absorb the impact of the drop.
4. Front drops from an airborne position are illegal.
5. Tension drops and handspring/flips to any drop are illegal.
6. A soft-soled dance shoe (jazz boots, dance sandals, jazz shoes) Wearing “socks only” is prohibited.
7. All dance lifts, stunts, pyramids, or tosses are prohibited. Partner lifts may be used if the flyers hips are not above the base’s shoulders.
8. All tumbling skills (with the exception of forward rolls and one shoulder backward rolls) are prohibited. Tumbling is defined as any hip over-head rotation.
9. Back bends and handstands are allowed so long as they are choreographed as a progression to another skill. They may not be sustained and/or involve a hip over-head rotation.

## Section 48 – United Step Penalties

### STEP PENALTIES

#### A) Safety Penalties

1. 10 points will be deducted from your total score for each infraction of the Step Safety Rules & Step Routine Guidelines (when applicable).
2. Please refer to the UC Dance General Safety Rules and Youth Dance Routine Guidelines for details.

#### B) Time Limit Penalty

1. 5 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 5 – 10 seconds over or under time requirements.
2. 10 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 11 or more seconds over/under time requirements.

#### C) Music / Choreography Rule/Penalty

1. Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.
2. 5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used. This deduction will be taken as a violation of the UC Dance Routine Guidelines.

## Section 49 – United Step Scoring Ties

### STEP SCORING TIES

All Ties will be broken at Regional/National competitions. Ties in Step dance will be broken by using Showmanship & Originality scores. If necessary, a second tiebreaker will consist of Showmanship, Originality, plus Appearance scores.

## TERMS, DEFINITIONS/EXPLANATIONS

### Section 50 – Cheer Terms Definitions/Explanations

#### CHEERLEADING TERMS DEFINITIONS/EXPLANATIONS

**NOTE:** This section contains definitions only. Refer to Rules for determining legality of specific skills, stunts, or transitions. United Youth Cheer specific Rules supersede any other rules.

#### A) STUNTS

**Stunt** – is a performance displaying a skill or dexterity. Any tumbling skill, toss, partner stunt or pyramid.

**Partner Stunt** – Any skill in which one or more persons supports one or more persons. Also referred to as a “mount”. A partner stunt is determined to be “Single” or “Double” leg by the number of feet that the top person has being supported by base(s).

**Pyramid** – Multiple partner stunts in which a top person is being supported by middle layer person. Multiple mounts or a group of stunts next to one another.

**Sponge** – A skill in which the base(s) absorbs the top person's downward momentum to push/lift the top person into position for the next stunt/skill.

**Tumbling** – Rolls (forward, backward), inverted extended skills (cartwheel, handstand, walkover, front/back handsprings, etc.).

**Forward Roll** – A non-aerial tumbling skill where one rotates forward through an inverted position by lifting the hips over the head and shoulders while curving the spine to create a motion of rolling across the floor.

**Backward Roll** – A non-aerial tumbling skill where one rotates backward through an inverted position by lifting the hips over the head and shoulders while curving the spine to create a motion of rolling across the floor

**Back Walkover** – A non-aerial tumbling skill where one rotates backward into an arched position, with hands making contact with the floor first, then rotate hips over-head and land on one foot/leg at a time.

**Front Walkover** – A non-aerial tumbling skill where one moves forward into an arched position, with hands making contact with the floor first, then rotate hips over-head and land on one foot/leg at a time.

**Cartwheel** – A non-aerial gymnastic skill where one supports the weight of the body with the arm(s) while rotating sideways through an inverted position landing on one foot at a time.

**Handspring** – Springing off the hands by putting the weight on the arm and using a strong push from the shoulders; can be done either forward or backward.

#### B) STUNTING PERSONNEL

**Base** – A person in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface who provides primary support for another person. **NOTE:** A prop that provides primary support for a person(s) is also considered a base.

**Post** – A person in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface, who supports a top person's weight during the execution of a stunt or who may assist a top person during a stunt or transition

**Flyer or “Top Person”** – A person who receives primary support from another person or a prop at any time during a stunt. A person who is either being supported by another while off the performing surface or who has been tossed into the air by another person.

**Spotter** – A person in direct, weight-bearing contact with the performing surface whose primary function is to minimize risk to the top person. A spotter shall be in a position and location to prevent injuries, with special emphasis protecting the top person's head, neck, shoulders, and back. A spotter who is positioned under the stunt is considered a base.



**Brace** – A second-level person who is in physical contact with another top person “top person” but does not provide primary support. A brace helps provide stability.

### C) BODY POSITIONS

**Inverted** – A body position where the shoulders are below the waist.

**Non-Inverted** – The body is upright; shoulders are at or above the waist.

**Layout** – Straight-body position.

**Pike** – Body position bent forward at the hips with legs straight and together.

**Tuck** – Body position where the knees and hips are bent and drawn toward the chest.

**Straddle** – Bent at the hips with legs straight and apart.

**Splits** – Legs extended in opposite directions at right angles to the trunk.

**Prep** – A skill in which base(s) hold(s) a standing top person at approximately chest (shoulder) height.

**Extended** – A skill in which the base(s) hold(s) a standing top person with arms fully extended.

### D) DISMOUNTS

**Dismount** - Ending a stunt by releasing the top person to:

- a. The performing surface.
- b. A cradled by the original bases.
- c. A cradled by catchers who are not the original bases.

***Note:** the movement from a cradle to the performing surface is not considered a dismount.*

**Cradle** – A release move where catcher(s) with palms up catches the top person in a face-up, pike position by placing one arm under the back and the other under the thighs of the top person.

### E) DROPS

**Front Drop** – Dropping to a horizontal, facedown position on the performing surface. Front drops from an airborne position are prohibited.

**Knee/Seat/Thigh Drop** – Dropping to the knee(s), seat, or thighs onto the performing surface.

***Note:** Knee/seat/thigh from an airborne position drops are BANNED from United Youth Cheer.*

**Split Drop** – Dropping to the performing surface, landing in a split position.

***Note:** Split drop from an airborne position are prohibited.*

**Tension Drop** – A partner stunt, e.g., shoulder stand, in which the base initiates a forward lean until the top person leaves the base without assistance.

***Note:** Tension drops are BANNED from United Youth Cheer.*

### F) AERIAL STUNTS

**Aerial** – A stunt performed free of contact with the performing surface.

**Flip** – An aerial stunt involving heels-over-head rotation in a tuck, pike, or layout position.

***Note:** Flips are BANNED from United Youth Cheer.*

**Swan Dive** – An aerial stunt in which a top person is caught in a prone (face down) position.

***Note:** A swan dive is BANNED from United Youth Cheer.*

**Twist** – An aerial stunt involving rotation around the body’s vertical axis perpendicular or parallel to the performing surface in a straight body position.

### G) EXTENDED STUNTS

**Extended Stunt** – A stunt in which the entire body of the top person is extended in an upright position over the base(s).

***Note:** Chairs, torches, flat backs, and straddle lifts are examples of stunts where the bases’ arms are extended overhead, but are NOT considered to be extended stunts.*

***Note:** Most extended stunts require a spotter.*

**Extension** – A specifically defined extended stunt in which the supporting arms of the base(s) are fully extended above the head and the top person has both feet in the hands of the base(s).

***Note:** All extensions require a spotter.*

### H) SUSPENDED STUNTS

**Suspended Roll** – A top person dismounts in a continuous heels-over-head rotation while having both hands in constant, hand-to-hand contact with bases or posts that control the top person’s descent to the performing surface or cradle. Bases or posts must be in direct contact with the performing surface.

**Suspended Splits** – A top person supported in a split position between two bases.

***Note:** Suspended Splits are BANNED from United Youth Cheer.*

**Swinging Stunt** – A top person is suspended and swung between multiple bases.

***Note:** Swinging Stunts are BANNED from United Youth Cheer.*

### I) SPECIALIZED STUNTS

***NOTE:** Stunts in this section may also be known by other names. This section attempts to list the most common stunts. Most specialized stunts are governed by safety rules. Please make all efforts to execute all the stunts you select safely and consider their legality under United Youth Cheer and NFHS Safety Rules.*

**Cupie** – A stunt in which both feet of a top person are in one hand of a base. Also called an “Awesome.”

**Deadman Lift** – A stunt in which base(s) fully extend a top person overhead, face up or face down, in a horizontal straight-body position.

**Flatback** – A stunt in which a top person is transitioned from a vertical position to a horizontal position between two original bases.

**Leap Frog** – A prep level stunt where a braced top person is transitioned from one set of bases to another by going through the arms of a brace. The top person remains upright and stays in continuous contact with the brace while transitioning.

**Pendulum** – A stunt in which the top person in a straight-body position falls forward and/or backward away from the base(s) to a horizontal position to catchers while maintaining constant hands-to-feet/legs contact with the base(s). This stunt requires conditions be met for safety.

**Totem Pole** – A multi-base stunt that creates a tiered appearance by connecting stunts of increasing height, one behind the other.

**Vault** – A stunt in which the hands of the top person are used to assist in clearing a base(s) or prop(s).

**Chorus-line Flip** – A stunt in which a participant performs a backward flip while being supported by the arms of other participants.

**Note:** A Chorus-line Flip is BANNED from United Youth Cheer.

**Liberty** – A one-leg stunt, (either extended or prep-level) that may include variations such as a hitch (front or side), a torch, a heel stretch, an arabesque, a scorpion, etc...

**Swedish Fall** – A stunt in which the top person is in an extended prone (face-down) position, generally supporting her own upper body on a base, while being supported on her lower body by a base(s) with extended arms. One of the top person's legs may be lifted above her body. Spotter is required.

**Side T-lift** – A stunt in which the base(s) fully extend(s) a top person overhead in a forward-facing, horizontal straight-body position.

**Assisted Inverted Floor Stunt** – A stunt in which an inverted participant is partially supported by non-inverted participant(s) on the performing surface. The non-inverted participant is in direct contact with the performing surface.

## J) RELEASE SKILLS/STUNTS

**Pop** – A controlled upward pushing motion by a base(s) to increase the height of a top person to initiate a dismount or a transitional stunt.

**Sweep** – A controlled forward pushing motion by a base(s) to release a top person to a cradle.

**Toss/Pitch** – A forceful upward throwing motion by base(s) to significantly increase the height of the top person, who is then caught by the original bases.

**Basket Toss** – Toss involving no more than four tossers, two of whom have their hands interlocked. This stunt requires conditions be met for safety.

**Release Stunt** – A specifically designated stunt when the bases(s) and top person become free of contact with each other by a moderate upward throwing motion to increase the height of the top person. The top person returns to the original base(s).

**Helicopter** – A release stunt in which the top person in a horizontal position is released upward then rotates like helicopter blades in a horizontal plane before being caught by the original bases.

**Log Roll** – A release stunt in which a top person in a horizontal position is released upward then twists parallel to the performing surface before being caught by the original base(s).

**Load In Toss** – A pop/toss that begins with the top person in weight-bearing contact with the performing surface and ends in a partner stunt or pyramid.

## K) TRANSITIONAL STUNTS

**Transitional Stunt** – Involves a top person moving from one stunt to another. The transition may involve changing bases.

**Release transition** – A transitional stunt in which there is a loss of physical contact between a top person and her/his bases.

**Tick-Tock** – A one-legged static release transition stunt in which a top person switches from one support leg to another.

## L) PROPS

Props are items, which may be:

- a. Manipulated (Banners, flags, megaphones, poms, and signs are the only props allowed.)
- b. Used as a base (in dance).

**NOTE:** A single, unfolded mat on the performing surface is not considered a prop.