

# Diocese of Cleveland CYO

## Cheer

*Giving the Very Best of Yourself!*

**Rules  
Fall 2025**



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***CYO inspires young people to know God, to love God, and to serve God through athletics.***

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Spirit Rules apply in this league with the exceptions contained within. CYO game contest rules may not be altered by mutual consent of the coaches. Only the CYO office may issue authorized changes.

### **SECTION 1 - OFFICIAL SQUAD**

- A. Defined as an individual or group of athletes from one or more members listed on the team roster that meet the eligibility rules and are approved by the Member Athletic Director, Member Administrator and CYO Office.
- B. A CYO Team refusing to continue playing a scheduled game for any reason without the consent of the game official or diocesan athletic representative may be subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 10. This also applies to Sanctioned Events.
- C. There is not a minimum number of cheerleaders on a squad. There is no maximum number in Fall Cheer.
- D. A partial roster or combined roster cannot be entered into any sanctioned event.
- E. Guest Players are not permitted in the sport of Cheer.

### **SECTION 2 - SQUAD FORMATION AND REGISTRATION**

- A. Cheer will be offered in the three divisions:
  - 1. 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Only athletes in Grades 5-8 may be rostered and compete on an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Squad
  - 2. 6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Only Athletes in Grades 3-6 may be rostered and compete on a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Squad
  - 3. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade: Only Athletes in Grades 1-4 may be rostered and compete on a 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Squad.
  - 4. 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Only Athletes in Grades 1-2 may be rostered and compete on a 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Squad.
- B. As outlined in Bylaw 3-2-1, an athlete must meet the grade and age requirements on August 1 before the school year starts to compete in the above divisions.
- C. Squads may consist of boys and girls.
- D. All squads must register with the CYO Office by the team entry deadline. Squads must register/re-register for each season of competition.
- E. In keeping with the CYO Philosophy standards have been set for the formation of squads and development of athletes.
  - 1. CYO prohibits "cutting" players from a squad. Tryouts are not to be held for the purpose of limiting participation.
  - 2. In the 4<sup>th</sup> grade division, if members sponsor more than one squad per division these squads must be split evenly. A & B (stronger/weaker, stacked/weaker teams) are not permitted. Violations are subject to penalties as outlined in Bylaw 10.

### **SECTION 3 - UNIFORMS**

- A. All athletes are required to wear member issued uniforms. When standing at attention, the uniform must cover the midriff.
- B. Excessive face paint or other inappropriate items may not be worn during the game.
- C. An American flag and or a commemorative/memorial patch not to exceed 2 by 3 inches and with the approval of the CYO Administration may be worn on each of the uniform apparel provided neither the flag nor patch interferes with the visibility of the squad's name.
- D. Jewelry of any kind is prohibited except:
  - 1. Religious medal worn UNDER the uniform
  - 2. Medical alert/medical id which can be visible

### **SECTION 4 - PRE-CONTEST COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Coaches must be CYO certified.
- B. CYO Credentials are to be worn and visible at all times.
  - 1. Credentials cannot be given to another coach at any time.
  - 2. Coaches who give their credentials to another coach, even for one game, will have their coaching privileges revoked for one year.

- C. Coaches are responsible for the supervision of their team before and after the game and are asked to plan accordingly.
- D. At each game and practice, coaches are to have in their possession: an official team roster, a copy of each athlete's Pre-participation Form, Emergency Medical Authorization Form and a first aid kit.
- E. If a coach has lost or forgotten their credential, they must inform the Site Director and show proof of certification with a photo ID and either the photo of the credential or the coach's name on the certification list.

## **SECTION 5 - PARTICIPATION**

- A. Each player must be treated with dignity regardless of their ability.
- B. A player on a CYO squad may not participate on any other cheer squad during the CYO season. For purposes of defining eligibility, a player may not be on another squad from the published CYO roster due date to the published end of the season date for the sport.
- C. Mandatory participation applies to all games/competitions.
- E. Violation of these rules will result in a forfeit of the match and disciplinary action against the coach and/or parish.

## **SECTION 6 - GAME & TIME LIMITATIONS**

- A. Events on Sunday cannot begin until 1:00 PM.
- B. No event can start after 8:00 PM.
- C. Practice sessions must be completed by 9:00 PM.

## **SECTION 7 - LIGHTNING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- A. The OHSAA lightning and inclement weather policy is in effect.
- B. When thunder is heard or a lightning bolt is seen at a practice or competition, the squads must suspend cheering and take shelter immediately. Once play has been suspended, a period of at least 30 minutes after the last thunder heard or lightning flash is witnessed must be honored prior to resuming play/practice.
- C. Contest or CYO officials assume authority for competitions when they arrive on the field. When the officials recognize inclement weather they are duty bound to suspend the game. Coaches and member athletic directors are responsible for application of this policy at practice.
- D. Announcements related to the status of competitions will be posted on the main page of the schedule website or telephone announcement lines and media as needed.
- E. **Weather Statement**
  - 1. Weather conditions are continuously monitored by CYO staff and weather professionals.
  - 2. Weather delays or cancelation decisions will be made ONLY BY CYO STAFF and communicated promptly.
  - 3. Official contest delays or cancellations re weather is available on the scheduling page of the CYO website.
  - 4. When lightning is detected within a 10-mile radius, all outdoor activities will be suspended immediately.
  - 5. When heat index thresholds become too high, outdoor events may be delayed or canceled.
  - 6. Events may be delayed, relocated, or rescheduled due to field or facility conditions.

## **SECTION 8 - GENERAL RULES**

- A. All cheers must be reviewed by the coach for good taste and propriety. The Coach must review each cheer. If there is any doubt of the appropriateness of the cheer the member athletic director or member administrator should review the cheer.



- B. All cheers are to be original & developed by the squad & coaches. Cheers or routines are not to be derived from other schools or squads. If cheers or routines performed in competition are proven to be derived from other squads/schools, the squad and coach shall be subject to penalties.
- C. With parental approval, a participant may use a minimal amount of makeup.
- D. Chewing gum is prohibited.
- E. Cheerleaders should be cheerful, friendly, provide team spirit, and shall not belittle an opponent or another squad.

## **SECTION 9 - PROHIBITED ELEMENTS**

- A. Pyramids - defined as two people supporting one person or three people supporting two people, or any other position when one person has both feet off the floor and is in contact with another person who is in a supporting position.
- B. Mounts/stunts - defined as a duo-mount, shoulder sit, thigh stand or sitting on the shoulders of another person.
- C. Use of mini trampolines.
- D. Knee-drops, slams or fireman catches.
- E. No tumbling skills that requiring an individual to have both feet and hands off the floor at the same time

## **SECTION 10 - GAME PERFORMANCES**

- A. Cheerleaders may not, at any time, obstruct the view of spectators or interfere with the athletic competition in process.
- B. During games, squads are permitted to perform from the sidelines within reasonable distance of the out-of-bounds line.
- C. Specific Guidelines when cheering at football or soccer games.
  - 1. The performance location shall be behind the bench area of their team.
  - 2. If time allows, prior to the game, each squad may perform one (1) short cheer on the field.
  - 3. At half time each, each squad may perform two (2) cheers or dance routines of no longer than 2 minutes total per squad, time permitting.
  - 4. On-field cheers are not allowed during timeouts.

## **SECTION 11 - CAUTION AND DISQUALIFICATION**

- A. Squads are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that the game officials and CYO administration feel shows respect and dignity towards its opponent.
- B. Athletes, coaches, parents, and fans who have been ejected, asked to leave, or removed by Officials or CYO personnel must depart immediately. If they refuse to leave the premises immediately, one week is added to their suspension. Their suspension begins the next day, with no option to appeal. There may be additional consequences and disciplinary actions for those individuals as stated below and in Bylaw 10.
- C. Anyone besides the coach or athlete on the team that enters the court or field of play is immediately suspended for one week and may be suspended for a longer time as determined by CYO Administration.
- D. Athletes who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practices or CYO games for seven days including sanctioned events. They may not be on the premises of the next CYO scheduled game of any grade and may not attend or participate in any sanctioned event games during the seven-day period. They must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions. They must complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be reinstated.
- E. Coaches who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practice or CYO games for fourteen days including sanctioned events. They may not attend or be on the premises of the next two CYO scheduled games of any grade and may not attend any

sanctioned event games during the fourteen-day period. They must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions. They must complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be reinstated.

- F. Parents or fans who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an athletic event are automatically prohibited from attending any practices or CYO games for twenty-one days including sanctioned events. They may not attend or be on the premises of the next three CYO scheduled games of any grade and may not attend any sanctioned event games during the twenty-one-day period. They must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator requesting permission from CYO Administration to attend future competitions. They must complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be reinstated.
- G. Athletes, coaches, parents, or fans who are ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an event for a second time are not permitted to attend any competitions for the remainder of the season, including tournaments. The individual must meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter from the Member Administrator only requesting approval from CYO Administration. They must also complete the Code of Conduct online session and worksheet to be permitted to attend events in the next season.
- H. Coaches ejected, asked to leave, or removed from an event for the second time in the same season will immediately surrender their coach's credential to the Site Director or Member Administration. They must attend a Coaches Development Program, meet with the Member Administrator and obtain a signed letter requesting permission to coach in the subsequent season.



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