



## CFSA CHEERLEADING ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

(Applies to all levels, Flag through Varsity)

Although CFSA Cheerleading is an introductory level organization which seeks to teach the fundamentals of cheerleading as a sport, with emphasis on participation, sportsmanship & physical fitness, it is not an individual activity. Cheerleading is a unique sport in which each athlete's safety & knowledge is dependent upon teamwork, trust & responsibility of every member on the squad. A CFSA cheerleading squad is a group of girls about the same age working together towards common goals: supporting the football team to which they are assigned, developing their cheerleading skills, learning teamwork & participating in an organization wide cheer competition.

Squads cannot have effective practices or perform successfully with absent participants. Due to the nature of the sport, a practice missed by one cheerleader has a significant impact on the squad; particularly on that cheerleader's stunt group, who are unable to stunt without every member present. In addition, when the coach must reteach material to those who have been absent, the whole squad's practice time suffers.

As a result, attendance at all practices & games is a must, especially if practice is held at DEA or other contracted cheer facility for choreography or gym use. Absences should be avoided as much as possible. Squads may begin practicing as of August 1<sup>st</sup>. Thus, making August a critical month where skill sets are established, preparation for game sideline material is taught & choreography for Cheer Off routine(s) are being developed & learned. Please keep this in mind when scheduling family vacations and/or weekend trips.

### **Excused Absences**

Certain circumstances are unavoidable & understandable; however, communication is key. It is most important that coaches are notified of a cheerleader's absence as soon as possible so the coach can adjust & better plan for practices & games based on which cheerleaders will be in attendance. The following are considered to be excused absences, as long as the head coach has been notified prior to the activity (practice, game or event).

- Illness or injury
- Death in the family
- Religious instruction class
- Other extenuating situations (to be discussed on an "as required" basis)

\* Excessive Absences may result in reduced participation.

### **The following attendance guidelines will apply consistently to all cheerleaders on the squad.**

1. All absences are unexcused unless communicated with the Head Coach **PRIOR** to the practice, game or event being missed. (Each squad is allowed 3 activities a week during the regular season & 4 activities a week before school starts as well as the week before Cheer off.)
2. Being on-time is just as important as being at practice or game. Arriving more than 15 minutes late to a practice or game will be counted as a tardy. Four tardies will equal one absence.
3. A cheerleader with one or more excused or unexcused absences during a week (Sunday – Saturday) will sit in full uniform, on the sideline with the coach(es) for one quarter of the next scheduled football game.
4. A cheerleader with more than 6 absences during August & September may lead to a change in position within the competition routine(s) as not to adversely affect the rest of the squad & integrity of the routine(s). Changes that might occur are:
  - a. Removal from stunt or stunt position in routine
  - b. Position in formations
  - c. Being removed from a competition routine
5. More than 6 excused or unexcused absences may make the cheerleader ineligible for competition based on the coach's evaluation of the cheerleader's ability to perform.
6. Practice days, times & locations will be based on coach and/or location availability & could change throughout the season. Coaches will do their best to accommodate the majority of the squad.
7. If a coach feels a cheerleader's absences are affecting the squad negatively & any of the previous guidelines apply, the coach must notify the division commissioner & supply proper documentation, such as absence dates, times & reasons. If excessive absences are determined, it will be up to the division commissioner & coach to make a determination in regards to the cheerleader's ability to perform at Cheer Off.