



# 2025 TSSAA Dance Rules and Regulations

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\*All updates and changes displayed in **RED** font\*

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## DANCE GUIDELINES

*Only TSSAA member schools may compete at TSSAA Competition.*

*Dance teams may only compete in TWO categories/division (Example: Pom & Game Day) at the TSSAA Competition. Individuals are NOT permitted to compete in two (2) School teams. Dance teams may participate in Spirit Program in addition to their 2 dance routines.*

*FOUR registered coaches can enter the team entrance and stay with them throughout warmup and performance.*

*Alternates must be dressed in matching school cheer uniform or team warm-up. Alternates dressed in street clothes or dress other than cheer uniform/team warmup will need to purchase a spectator ticket and enter as spectator.*

*TSSAA strongly recommends that you have an alternate (not a member of another competing squad at the same event), who is prepared to substitute in the event of injury, probation, etc. No cheerleader/dancer may represent more than one Team, even in the event of injury or emergency. Once a team checks into the event, the team will not be allowed to change divisions.*

*The TSSAA reserves the right to add, modify, and/or combine divisions based on actual registration.*

*Divisions with less than 3 teams competing for 3 consecutive years will be combined or eliminated the following year.*

## DANCE DIVISIONS

### **All Junior High Divisions – 9th Grade and Below**

Junior High Divisions WILL be allowed 9th grade participants if (1) they attend a school that is under the administrative supervision of the same school board as the junior high school that they are representing AND (2) a minority of the team are 9th graders.

### **All Varsity Divisions – 8th Grade - 12th Grade**

7th grade and below participants will NOT be allowed on a Varsity team. 8th grade participants will be allowed to participate on a Varsity team if the school they attend is under the direct administrative supervision of the same school board as the Varsity team they are representing.

***\*At the discretion of the TSSAA, divisions may be added, modified, divided, adjusted and/or combined.***

Please visit <https://tssaa.org/sports/dance> for a complete listing of divisions for the TSSAA Cheer and Dance State Championships.

- Middle School = 5-40 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Game Day)
- Small Varsity = 5-14 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Game Day)
- Large Varsity = 15-40 members (Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop, Game Day)
- Varsity Kick = 5-40 members

## TEAM PARTICIPANTS

See above for division breakdowns.

The minimum number of participants a team can have for a regional competition is five (5) \*. The maximum number of participants a team can have is forty (40). Teams competing with two routines must stay in the same division but can have different numbers in both routines. Teams will be able to trade out, remove, or add a designated number of dancers between their 2 categories, based on their division. See below for division breakdowns. Teams may continue to trade out dancers and maintain the same number of performers in both routines.

Teams who compete in Kick and one other category will follow the rules based on how many dancers they have for their other category (ie Jazz, Pom, Hip Hop). Substitutions may be made in case of injury or other serious circumstance. Substitutes must also abide by the age restrictions in all divisions in which they compete.

#### Important Things to Note:

- The minimum requirement for TSSAA is 5.

#### Trade out Athletes:

1. Teams competing in multiple performance categories must stay in the same division size but can have different numbers in routines.
2. Teams will be able to trade out, remove, or add athletes between their categories, so long as they stay within the division size range.
3. Teams may also continue to trade out athletes and maintain the same number of performers in routines. Junior High teams may trade out, remove, or add athletes between their categories, but must also follow the Varsity division size rules.
4. Teams competing in Game Day will not be able to compete with less athletes than the performance category with the highest number of athletes.

#### Examples:

1. A Small Varsity team is competing Jazz and Pom. They have 9 dancers in Jazz. For Pom, they added 3 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 12 dancers in Pom.
2. A Large Varsity team is competing in Pom, Hip Hop, and Game Day. They have 15 dancers in Pom and added one dancer for 16 total dancers in Hip Hop. For Game Day, they added 4 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 20 in Game Day.
3. A Varsity team is competing in Jazz, Kick, and Game Day. They have the same 16 dancers in all three routines; therefore, they will compete in Large Jazz, Large Kick, and Medium Game Day.
4. A Junior High Team is competing in Hip Hop and Jazz. They have 18 dancers in Hip Hop. For Jazz, they traded out 4 dancers and added 2 dancers; therefore, they are dancing 20 in Jazz.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

TSSAA encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches in all facets of dance team including team/squad practice and performance.

To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, TSSAA asks that the following Code of Conduct be adhered to during TSSAA Dance Championship:

1. Any questions or concerns that affect a team's performance or experience must be communicated by the coach to the Event Director. The appropriate Official will then be called to discuss the situation with the coach.
2. Participants, coaches, or spectators are prohibited from contacting the Judges during the competition.
3. Judges' rulings are final related to deductions, final team placements and legalities.
4. Any unruly, aggressive, or belligerent behavior by participants, coaches or spectators toward any other attendee or Event Staff will result in a deduction, potential team disqualification, removal from the event and/or barred participation from future TSSAA Cheer and Dance State Championships.
5. TSSAA and Varsity Spirit reserves the right to remove any persons from a competition for unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct.

## SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY POLICY

1. All members of the dance team must be current members of the official school spirit squads and must attend the school they are representing. All members of the team must support the school's athletic endeavors throughout the year (games, pep rallies, half-time shows, etc.)
  - a. Exception 1: Single-gender schools may use athletes from affiliated schools if they are official members of the squad. These teams must support the school(s) athletics/ endeavors throughout the year, and not solely combined for competition purposes.
2. Dance squads may only compete in two categories/divisions at the TSSAA Dance Championships.
3. Individuals are NOT permitted to compete on two **different** School Teams at the event.
4. The team should display an overall behavior conducive to serving as public representatives and ambassadors of their school/organization.
5. All athletes and coaches must be registered and listed on the Event Roster to be submitted at check in for each event. Roster Forms can be found at [UDA Competition Required Forms](#) under Regional Competition Forms & FAQs.
6. Student-athletes who are subject to an open criminal proceeding relating to any offense involving sexual misconduct or violence, who have a criminal conviction for any offense involving sexual misconduct or violence, or whose names are listed on temporary or permanent ineligible lists maintained by USA Dance or the U.S. All Star Federation are prohibited from participating in any Varsity Spirit competition.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- A. All participants agree to behave in a way that displays sportsmanship throughout the event. The coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and any other person affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly.
- B. All programs should have, and review, an emergency action plan in case of injury.
- C. Coaches must recognize the entire team's ability level and limit the team's activities accordingly.
- D. No technical skills should be performed when a coach is not present or providing direct supervision.
- E. All practice sessions should be held in a location suitable for dance activities, away from noise and distractions.
- F. Warm-up and stretching should precede and conclude all practice sessions, pep rallies, games, competitions, performances, and other physical activities.
- G. The performance surface should be considered before engaging in any technical aspect of dance. The performance area should be reasonably free of obstructions. Dancers should not perform technical skills on:
  - a. Concrete, asphalt, or any other hard or uncovered surface
  - b. Wet surfaces
  - c. Uneven surfaces
  - d. Surfaces with obstructions
- H. The dance team coach or other knowledgeable designated representative should attend all practices, functions, and games.

## COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- A. Formal entrances which involve dance, technical skills, and all traditions/chants are not permitted. Dancers should enter the performance area in a timely fashion. Teams have 30 seconds from the team's introduction to start the routine. If a team exceeds this time limit, a penalty of a .25-point deduction for 1-5 seconds or a .5-point deduction for 6 seconds and over will be assessed.
- B. All staging, backdrops, special effects, or any items that may damage or otherwise alter the performance floor or environment are prohibited (water, powder, glitter, fire, sliding oil, etc).
- C. Center markers will not be allowed. This includes stuffed animals, toys, alternate dancers, etc. TSSAA Dance Championship will have a spacing rope marker provided by Varsity Spirit. These will be the only spacing rope markers allowed.

- D. All performers (unless injured) must remain within the performance area throughout the entire routine. Dancers can only enter the performance area through the designated entry at the beginning of the routine and exit at the designated exit at the end of the routine. Athletes will not be penalized for leaving the performance surface but must stay within the performance area throughout the duration of the routine.
- E. Time limit is as follows:
  - 1. SCHOOL teams will have a maximum of (2) two minutes to demonstrate their style and expertise. If a team exceeds the time limit by more than (3) three seconds, they will be issued a penalty.
- F. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement or note of music, whichever is first. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement or note of music, whichever is last.
- G. All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a ONE-point deduction.

## CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING

- A. All facets of a performance/routine, including costuming, choreography and music selection, should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing and listening. Examples of inappropriate choreography may include vulgar or suggestive movement appearing offensive or sexual in content, displaying acts of violence, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures. Music containing words unsuitable for family listening is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words may still constitute 'inappropriate.' Music, costuming or movement in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be assumed by the coach to be inappropriate and removed to not put their team in an unfortunate situation. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.
- B. Shoes, on both feet, are recommended but not required while on the performance surface. Please note that should dancers choose to wear shoes, anything with wheels is not allowed (example: roller skate, roller blades, heelys, etc.). Wearing socks and or footed tights only is not allowed.
- C. Teams competing at the National Dance Team Championship and/or any competition at Walt Disney World may NOT use Disney costumes that resemble a Disney character or movie. Any use of Disney music requires prior approval and must be sent to [musicinfo@varsity.com](mailto:musicinfo@varsity.com) at least one month prior to your first competition. Any use of Disney theme and costuming requires prior approval and must be sent to [udarules@varsity.com](mailto:udarules@varsity.com) at least one month prior to your first competition.
- D. When dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bra line down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable. This rule applies to all pom, jazz, kick, hip hop, and Game Day divisions.
- E. For the safety of all athletes, tights are HIGHLY recommended to be worn with costumes, but not required. Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.
- F. All male dancers' costumes must include a shirt that is fastened; however, it can be sleeveless.
- G. Jewelry as part of the costume is allowed.

## PROPS

Props are not allowed. A prop is defined as anything that is danced with that is not always attached to your costume and is used to enhance the routine. Articles of clothing, such as jackets, headbands, sunglasses, hats etc. may be removed from the body and discarded; these items may not have any choreographed movement done with them. If taken off and danced with, it becomes a prop. Items/articles of clothing brought onto the stage but not worn are considered a prop. This rule applies to the Game Day category as well. Poms being used in a pom and/or Game Day routine do not count as

props. Signs and/or rally towels being used in a Game Day routine ONLY will not count as props. **Megaphones and Flags are not allowed in the Dance ONLY Game Day (Spirit Program Game Day will have prop exceptions).** (See Game Day section for specifics).

## HANDS FREE POMS

The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free poms are defined as poms made so that performers do not have to hold them but are affixed to the performer's hand. Proper use means bars cannot be in the palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and the performance surface for skills, tricks, etc. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands-free pom.

## HIGH KICK

Each routine must have a minimum of 60 kicks. We suggest that your routine have more than 60 to ensure meeting the minimum requirements. A kick is defined as one foot remaining on the floor while the other foot lifts with force at least one inch from the floor. At least half the team must execute a kick for it to be counted. Teams with an odd number of dancers will have the allowance of one less (Example: A team has 15 members. Both 8 dancers executing a kick AND 7 dancers executing a kick will count as the "majority".)

1. Leg Holds: If the leg hold is lifted off the ground with force at or above 90 degrees and is performed by most of the team, it is considered a kick that counts towards the requirement.
2. Ripple/Contagions: When a kick is performed in a ripple or a contagion by most of the team, it will count as one (1) total kick toward the required minimum.
3. Chasing ripples/Pickups: These kicks will count as one (1) kick, however many times it is completed by most of the team.
4. Contracted/Can-Can Kicks: Any time the leg extends at or above 90 degrees, contracts and extends again at or above 90 degrees, it will be defined as separate kicks.
5. Passe, flick kicks which kick behind the dancer, turn sequences, toe taps, kicks while kneeling or sitting, etc. will not be counted as kicks. Leg placement in the attitude position will not be counted as a kick, **front or back attitude.**

## ROUTINE SAFETY RULES

### TUMBLING AND SKILLS (EXECUTED BY INDIVIDUALS)

1. Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms in the supporting hand. (Exception: Forward rolls and backward rolls are allowed). The proper use of hands-free poms for hip over-head skills is allowed. \*Please reference the Hands-Free Poms section for more details\*
2. Tumbling skills with hip over-head rotation:
  - a. Airborne skills with hand support may not be airborne in approach but may be airborne in descent if the approach is non-airborne (clarification: a round off is allowed- hands touch the ground before the foot leaves the ground).
  - b. Airborne skills with or without hand support that land in a perpendicular inversion may not have backward momentum in the approach.
  - c. **Standing back handsprings are allowed but cannot be connected to any other tumbling skill.**
3. Tumbling skills with hip over-head rotation is limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive headsprings are allowed; 4 are not allowed).
4. Airborne hip overhead rotation skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: Front aerials, Aerial cartwheels/side somis not connected to any other hip over-head rotation skill are allowed.)
  - a. Airborne hip overhead rotation skills without hand support may not involve any twisting motion or a blind landing. Exception: Round Offs with no hands will be allowed.

- b. Recommendation: If using non-hands-free poms in a front aerial, aerial cartwheel, and/or side somi, dancers should place both poms in non-dominant hand. If a dancer bears weight on the performance surface with a hand that is holding a pom during the skill, a penalty will be assessed.
5. Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
6. Choreographed drops to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
7. Landing in a push-up position onto the performance surface is allowed from a standing or kneeling position or from a jump with forward momentum. All variations of a Shushanova are not allowed.
8. Airborne skills without hip over-head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, head, back, shoulder, and/or hands. Any kip up motion must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground. (NOTE: This rule refers specifically and only to the "rubber band"/"bronco" kip up skill, as well as any skill jumping backwards into a headstand/handstand stall).

**\*Below are some examples of commonly known dance skills. This does NOT mean that they are required for your routine, nor does this list encompass all skills that are legal/illegal. The above rules still apply\***

ALLOWED:		NOT ALLOWED:	
Aerial Cartwheels	Front/Back Walkovers	Front Tucks	No handed kip ups
Front Handsprings	Round Off	Back Tucks	No handed headsprings
Barani	Stalls/Freezes	Dive Rolls	Toe Pitch Back Tucks
Side Somi	Head spins	Layouts	Shushanova
Backward Rolls	Windmills		
Forward Rolls	Kip Ups		
Cartwheels	Shoulder Rolls		
Headstands	Headsprings (with hands)		
Handstands	Backbends		
Front Aerials	Back Handsprings		

#### **DANCE LIFTS AND PARTNERING (Executed in pairs or groups)**

1. The Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer in direct contact with the performance surface through the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
2. At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with the Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill.
  - a. Lifting with poms is allowed.
  - b. Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed.
3. Swinging in and out of lifts and tricks is allowed in the prone and/or supine positions; swinging forwards, backwards, or making a complete circular rotation will not be allowed if the Executing Dancer is in a prone position (body facing the ground).
4. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) may occur if a Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
5. Vertical Inversions are allowed if:
  - a. The Supporting Dancer(s) maintain contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.
  - b. When the height of the Executing Dancers shoulders exceeds shoulder level of the Supporting dancer, there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear weight.

#### **RELEASE MOVES/UNASSISTED DISMOUNTS TO THE PERFORMANCE SURFACE**

1. An Executing Dancer may jump, leap, step, or push off a Supporting Dancer if:
  - a. The highest point of the release does not elevate the Executing Dancer's feet above head level of the Supporting Dancer.

- i. Exception: toe touches off a dancers back/leapfrog jumps will be allowed
- b. The Executing Dancer may not pass through the prone or inverted position after the release.
- c. Toe pitch back tucks are not allowed.
- 2. A Supporting Dancer may release/toss an Executing Dancer if:
  - a. The highest point of the release/toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above head level of the Supporting Dancer.
  - b. The Executing Dancer is not supine or inverted when released.
  - c. The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or inverted position after release.
  - d. Toe Pitch back tucks are not allowed.

## GAME DAY FORMAT

Please refer to the below rules and regulations section for a full list of rules and guidelines, including but not limited to division sizes, costuming, music, etc. Teams must show a clear separation between elements. **Music, voice-overs, recorded or overlayed words being played, are NOT allowed, during these transitions.** Teams are highly encouraged to show spirited interaction as a clear transition.

### Game Day will take place in the following order:

#### A. Fight Song

Skills and choreography should represent a traditional Fight Song that your team performs at games and community events. There is a max time limit of one minute (1:00)

#### B. Spirit Raising

Teams will choose to perform ONE of the following:

- Sideline Routine
- Stand Routine
- Drum Cadence

\*The performance of your choice should have an emphasis on crowd appeal. \* There is a max time limit of one minute (1:00) For Game Day routines only, Voice-overs and words may not be recorded or overlayed on the music tracks to make the team's vocal projection sound louder. **Any voices captured in the original recording are allowed.**

#### C. Performance Routine

A routine (can be any style) that is designed for crowd entertainment. This is the best time to showcase your team's energy and connection to the crowd. There is a max time limit of one minute (1:00). **Voice-overs and words recorded or overlayed on the music tracks are only allowed during Performance Routines.**

### General Notes

1. The performance will follow this order: Fight Song, Spirit Raising, and Performance Routine.
2. Teams are required to wear a traditional uniform that you would wear when representing your school. These should be in school colors; uniforms must follow all midriff rules, which states when dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bra line down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable.
3. Teams may use poms, but they are not required.
4. Signs/Props will be permitted in the Fight Song and Spirit Raising components ONLY.
  - i. Exception: Rally towels may also be used in the Performance Routine section. Signs are not allowed in the Performance Routine section.
  - a. Signs and/or rally towels being used in a Game Day routine ONLY will not count as props.
  - b. Signs must be made of poster board, corrugated plastic, or fabric.
  - c. **Flags, megaphones, and all other props are not allowed.**
  - d. Signs may not be larger than 3 feet in any direction.

- e. Signs and/or rally towels cannot be tossed or thrown off the stage or into the crowd and must be safely placed or dropped away from performing athletes.
  - f. Hip over-head rotation skills (with or without hand support) may not be done with signs in hand.
  - g. No other props will be allowed, and all other prop rules as outlined on Page 7 must be followed as well.
5. Mascots Performing in Game Day - Teams may add up to 2 (two) mascots in their routine and should be used to raise crowd energy and participation. The mascot will not count toward the number of participants allowed but may impact the overall impression score.
- a. Mascots may only perform in one role throughout the entirety of the routine. Mascot must remain in costume.
  - b. The mascot must enter the floor with the team and remain on the floor for the entire routine.
  - c. The mascot should not be involved in any stunts or skills with hip overhead rotation and should position themselves away from skills being performed.
  - d. Mascot Game Day Props:
    - i. Mascots will only be allowed to use traditional sideline props, such as signs and/or poms and/or rally towels.
    - ii. No other props are allowed, and all prop rules as outlined on page 7 will apply.
    - iii. Uniform/costume pieces must be worn from the beginning of the routine. Items/articles of clothing brought on to the stage but not worn will be considered a prop.
    - iv. If any part of your mascot uniform / costume is taken off, it must be immediately put down.
6. Bands/drum lines/pep bands are not allowed.
7. Voice-overs and words may not be recorded or overlayed on the music tracks to make the team's vocal projection sound louder.

#### **Time Limitations**

1. All components (Fight Song, Spirit Raising, and Performance Routine) should not exceed 1 minute. If a component exceeds the 1 minute time limit, a penalty will be assessed.
2. The overall time limit (including transitions) should not exceed 3 minutes 30 seconds (3:30). Timing will begin with your fight song music, or any choreographed movement- whichever happens first.
3. Teams must show a clear separation between elements. Teams are highly encouraged to show spirited interaction as a clear transition **with no music, voice-overs/recorded or overlayed words being played during these transitions.**

#### **GAME DAY TIME LIMITATIONS**

- Teams have 30 seconds from the team's introduction to start the routine. If a team exceeds this time limit, a penalty of a .25-point deduction for 1-5 seconds or a .5-point deduction for 6 seconds and over will be assessed.
- All entry and rules guidelines apply. The team's entry to the floor will not be judged; however, deductions will still be assessed. The overall routine time limit is 3:00.
- All components (Fight Song, Spirit Raising, and Performance Routine) should not exceed 1 minute. If a component exceeds the 1 minute time limit, a penalty will be assessed.
- The overall time limit (including transitions) should not exceed 3 minutes (3:00) for both regionals and NDTC. Timing will begin with your fight song music, any choreographed movement/chants or after exceeding the 30 seconds allotted after team introduction - whichever happens first.
- Teams must show a clear separation between elements. Teams are highly encouraged to show spirited interaction as a clear transition.

#### **GAME DAY ROUTINE SAFETY RULES**

Teams competing in the game day divisions must follow all the routine safety rules and regulations

## MUSIC GUIDELINES

1. I have read and understand the USA Cheer Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and all sound recordings used in our team's music shall only be used with written license from the owners(s) of the sound recordings.
2. For the most up to date music information, visit <http://varsity.com/music>. If you have any questions, cheer teams should email [musicinfo@varsity.com](mailto:musicinfo@varsity.com). Please check the Music Provider list for updates and changes periodically.
3. Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during registration at the event. For example:
  - a. Clementune – provide team's invoice from camp.
  - b. Itunes – provides a screenshot of the song you are using from your purchased playlist.
  - c. Music Provider – provide a printed copy with proof of licensing.
  - d. Band Music - If you'd like to perform to a recording of your band playing a single musical composition, you will need to provide documentation that confirms the following:
    - The team has secured a compulsory license to make copies of the recording made by the band or orchestra.
    - The band or orchestra recorded the song with the cheer/dance squad.
    - The school principal or dean was aware of and approved this recording.
    - The band or orchestra does not provide music to other cheer/dance squads.
    - No other musical compositions are embodied in the recording to be used by the authorized cheer/dance squad.
4. When recording your music for the event, coaches or music editors should edit their song in a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and ensure the song's volume is at 0. Things to note: Most DAW's have a default that sets a track at -6 when a track is added. Check to see if there is a normalization process after you render or save your work.
5. If you would like to perform your school's original fight song, you may bring a recording of your marching band playing the song. You will need to get the school's permission to use the song and recording. A letter granting permission for the cheer or dance team to use the fight song on school letterhead is enough. It should be signed by your program's administrative supervisor. Go to [varsity.com/music](http://varsity.com/music) for more details.
6. If a team does not have the required paperwork, they will be given the option to count the routine verbally or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts (Provided by Varsity Spirit).
7. If a team does not have the required paperwork and chooses not to count the routine or perform to an approved track of music or a track with counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not allowed to perform or compete.
8. It is required that each team have a responsible adult remain at the music station that knows the routine and music (no alternates or team members allowed). This representative is responsible for pressing "play". Should an adult choose not to stay at the music table for the duration of the routine, and a malfunction occurs, teams may or may not be permitted to perform the routine again.
9. It is not recommended that a smart phone be used for playing music, due to interference that may be caused during a routine. No cover may be on any MP3 player so that a jack may be easily inserted into the device.
10. All teams must provide their own device for use on the event provided sound system. Music should be on a digital music player/iPod/iPhone. CDs will no longer be allowed, and CD players will not be provided at competitions.
11. Please make sure that all devices have a headphone jack to connect to the sound system and are fully charged, volume turned up and placed in airplane mode.
12. Please ensure that jacks are clean and free of any debris which may impact connectivity. You will need to acquire an adapter in advance if your player does not have a headphone jack.

## INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

### UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition, venue (power outage, fire alarm, etc.), the coach of the team at the music stand affected should STOP the routine.
2. While masks are not required on the warmup floor and/or performance floor unless dictated by state or local guidance, an athlete may choose to wear a mask. If an athlete chooses to wear a mask during the performance and the mask restricts the athlete's view and/or interferes with skills or otherwise becomes a safety concern, the athlete should either secure or remove the mask. If the athlete does not secure or remove the mask, the routine is subject to being stopped by competition officials.
3. UNIFORM MALFUNCTION: As a precaution, each performer must take the necessary steps to avoid inappropriate exposure during the performance. Should a uniform malfunction resulting in indecent exposure occur, the routine should be stopped immediately. This is a shared responsibility of all parties involved to recognize a malfunction has occurred.
4. If allowed to perform again, judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the judges. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning of the routine. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over. If a team prefers not to re-work the routine, at the coach's discretion, they will take the score they have received up to that point. Teams that limit/mark skills prior to the point of injury could result in an adjustment in scores based on the skills performed.

### FAULT OF TEAM

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.

### INJURY / ILLNESS

1. The only people that may stop a routine for injury are competition officials, the advisor/coach of the team performing or an injured individual. This is a shared responsibility of all parties involved to recognize an injury has occurred.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team must perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated ONLY from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
  - a. The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) AND THEN the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
  - b. If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
  - c. An athlete who has a suspected concussion should be removed from the activity immediately and should not be allowed to return to participation the same day of the incident and without being cleared by a medical professional in accordance with state law or organizational policy.
4. In addition, the sponsor and all the coaches attending the competition must be familiar with all federal, state and local laws applicable to such individuals and relating to such individuals' duties and responsibilities regarding the recognition and treatment of injuries.

5. In an injury or emergency, 1 parent or legal guardian may be escorted backstage during the evaluation process. While backstage, they will need to remain with the athlete or an event staff member.

### RE-PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

1. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform later.
2. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed later, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials and must be within thirty minutes after the rest of the division is complete.
3. If allowed to perform again, judging will resume from the point at which the injury/interruption occurred as determined by the judges. The routine must be performed full-out from the beginning of the routine. All point deductions accumulated to that point will carry over.
4. Teams that limit/mark skills prior to the point of interruption could result in an adjustment in scores based on the skills performed.
5. If a team prefers not to re-perform the routine, at the coach's discretion, they will take the score they have received up to that point.

## PENALTIES

A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. The point value of this deduction will be as follows:

- 0.25 points – exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor by 1-5 seconds
- 0.5 points - performance error- any skill or trick executed incorrectly that then makes it an illegal skill/trick (example: touching down on an aerial cartwheel with non- hands-free poms in hand), exceeding the allotted 30 seconds to begin a performance once announced to the floor by more than 6 seconds
- 1 point - General rules violations including (but not limited to) timing infractions of 1-5 seconds over time, not enough kicks, costume/shoe rules, prop rules, excessive celebration following the team's performance, etc.
- 1 point- All teams should refrain from any type of excessive celebration following the team's performance. Any team in violation will receive a 1.0 deduction. Excessive celebration includes, but is not limited to, alternates/coaches entering the competition floor, head/hair swinging, inappropriate gestures, and/or other similar moves.
- 1.5 points - Timing infractions of 6 or more seconds over time, routine safety rule violations

If you have any questions concerning the legality of a trick or move, please email the video to [udarules@varsity.com](mailto:udarules@varsity.com). Include your team's name, your name, contact phone number, and the event attending. Videos sent via text message will not be accepted. Videos submitted for the TSSAA event must be received three weeks prior to the event and must be labeled with the event attending. If received after the deadline, the video is not guaranteed a response. Videos from choreographers will not be allowed.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

1. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.

2. The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
3. When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes and parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 1.0 deduction, removal of coach or disqualification.
4. If face coverings are required: athletes and coaches who do not comply with the face covering requirement may be assessed an unsportsmanlike deduction of 1 point.

## SCORES AND RANKINGS

1. Individual score sheets are for each judge's exclusive use. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches or captains at the competition's end. Judges' decisions are final.
2. Any deductions or violations will be taken off the final score final, and TSSAA will not change or overturn a judges' decision.
3. TSSAA TIE BREAK POLICY - All ties in each division or group will remain. In a first-place tie, the team with the lessor deductions will be awarded first. If the deductions remain equal, the tie will not be broken and both teams will be awarded first place.

## AWARDS AND PRIZES:

First and Second Place trophies will be given in each division.

## FINALITY OF DECISIONS

By participating in this competition, each team agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final, and TSSAA will not change or overturn a judges' decision. Each team acknowledges the need for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and so waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.

## DISQUALIFICATION

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these "Rules and Regulations" will be subject to disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition.

## HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

1. RULES & PROCEDURES - Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the advisor / coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be asked prior to the team's competition performance.
2. PERFORMANCE - Any questions concerning the team's performance should be directed to the Competition Director immediately after the team's performance.
3. Questions regarding another team and/or their performance will not be allowed.
4. Deduction sheets will be available shortly following each team's performance. Questions regarding deductions can be made by the Schools Official Advisor/Coach of the team only and must be done within 10 minutes of the team's deduction sheet being released to team or prior to final awards-whichever happens first. Challenges will NOT be accepted after teams 10-minute timeframe and/or after competition results have been announced.

## INTERPRETATIONS AND / OR RULINGS

Any interpretation of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will make a judgment to ensure that the competition proceeds

in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Rules Committee will consist of the Competition Director, Head Judge, and a designated competition official.

## VIDEO MEDIA POLICY

No commercial recording (audio or visual) or commercial live streaming is allowed in the event venue or other event-related venues (including, but not limited to, hotels and restaurants) or on the grounds of any such venues (collectively, “Event Locations”). In the event a team authorizes the commercial recording or streaming in any Event Location, the team will be automatically disqualified. In addition, the personal, noncommercial use of live streaming apps (such as Periscope, Facebook Live, etc.) to capture all or any part of a performance during the event is not permitted. By attending/purchasing admission to the event, each attendee grants permission to TSSAA, Varsity Spirit, LLC and its affiliates, designees, agents, licensees, and invitees to use the image, likeness, actions and statements of the attendee in any live or recorded audio, video, film, or photographic display or other transmission, exhibition, publication, or reproduction made of, or at, the event in any medium, whether now known or hereafter created, or context for any purpose, including commercial or promotional purposes, without further authorization or compensation.

## OFFICIAL PARTNER

Varsity Spirit is the official spirit partner of TSSAA Cheer/Dance. No other cheer/dance instructional organization, choreographer may present, solicit business, recruit, or distribute merchandise during the TSSAA State Cheer & Dance Championship. Exception: If the Vendor has expressed in an advanced Statement of Work and received written consent from TSSAA and Varsity Spirit.

## TSSAA and VARSITY COMPETITION RULES

While the final details and schedule of any competition could require up to the day adjustments, and all guidelines are subject to change based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), federal, state and local guidance, please be assured that Varsity Spirit is committed to delivering the same quality of competition experience for which we are known. We appreciate your understanding of the flexibility this will require. By accepting the Terms and Conditions as the authorized person from my program I agree and acknowledge to abide by the TSSAA and Varsity Competition Rules.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS AGREEMENT

By accepting the Terms and Conditions as the authorized person from my program I agree and acknowledge that

- (i) I am the sponsor/director of the team
- (ii) I have read and understand the foregoing
- (iii) I will be solely responsible for communicating the foregoing to all coaches/directors/choreographers in my program that will coaching and directing teams at the TSSAA Competition
- (iv) I will ensure that my teams will comply with all rules and regulations at all times
- (v) My team will support the results of the TSSAA competition, as I am a role model for my programs.