

## Covington High School

### Cheerleading Bylaws and Expectations

\*\*\*NOTICE: The sponsor(s) and principal reserve the right to exercise discretion given the situation as it arises concerning any area within these Bylaws whether explicitly stated or not.\*\*\*

#### I. Academics

- a. Must maintain a GPA in compliance with LHSAA regulations. Cheerleader will earn a minimum of a 1.5 GPA and pass 6 out of 7 classes. Senior cheerleaders who elect for a short-day schedule must pass ALL classes.
- b. Grades will be checked by sponsors periodically in addition to the official interim date and report card distribution.
  1. Any squad member falling below the required academic regulations at interims will be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the grading period. Any squad member falling below the required academic regulations at the end of the grading period will be placed on academic probation until the next interim period. If a cheerleader is on academic probation for nine weeks, the member will be removed from the squad for the remainder of the academic year. However, a cheerleader who is removed from the squad for academic reasons will be eligible to tryout the following school year if she/he meets all LHSAA academic regulations at the time of tryouts.
  2. A squad member on academic probation will be required to attend academic clinic or other approved tutoring instead of practice. While on academic probation, the member will not participate in performances or cheer related events until grades meet the cheer requirements. She/he will not be in uniform.
  3. The cheerleader is responsible for learning any missed material.

#### II. School Attendance

- a. Must maintain good school attendance including check in/out and tardiness. Member is not allowed to miss any amount of the school day for any reason on the day of a performance, with the exception of the following two reasons:
  - death of a family member or close friend (must submit funeral program or copy of obituary)
  - serious injury or illness that results in medical care (must submit physician's note)
- b. If the student checks in/out for any reason other than the two listed above, she/he must be in attendance at the team event but is not allowed to participate in the performance.
- c. Student must be in attendance all day in order to participate in afterschool activities such as practice. A student who misses any portion of school for a doctor's appointment or other exempted excused absence on the day of practice will be allowed to participate in practice as long as he/she submits an official excuse (i.e., physician's note).

#### III. School Discipline

- a. Must display a positive attitude when dealing with teammates, sponsors, faculty, and staff of Covington High School.
- b. Gossip and/or verbal bullying will not be tolerated from any member of the cheerleading squad. If a problem occurs, the sponsor and/or principal will take action.
- c. Must maintain a positive discipline report (checked periodically by sponsor).
- d. Cheerleaders who exhibit behavior that warrants suspension from school will be dismissed from the squad.
- e. A morning detention, Friday afternoon detention, in-school suspension, or negative reports from teachers, administrators, or substitutes will be disciplined accordingly and will result in demerits, suspension, and/or dismissal from the squad.
- f. Squad members are to serve as role models for the school. Inappropriate dress and/or behavior from a member of the squad while at school or at a school function will result in demerits and/or disciplinary action.

- g. Squad members will refrain from public displays of affection with their boyfriend/girlfriend. Demerits will be given as a consequence of this action.
- h. Squad members that represent CHS or the squad in an unfavorable, questionable, or illegal manner through electronic media (i.e. websites, personal home pages, blogs, text messages, chat rooms, or similar websites/files accessible through a server or internet) or using electronic communication devices in such a way as to bring discredit, dishonor, or disgrace on their squad or members of any other school organization including themselves (i.e. camera phones, digital photos, electronic descriptions) will be subject to the disciplinary actions determined by appropriate school officials and/or sponsors/directors/coaches, including suspension or dismissal from the squad.
- i. Any member who is dismissed from the squad or quits the team will NOT be allowed to try out for any auxiliary team (cheer, dance, flag) the following school year and will not be awarded her/his senior blanket and letter jacket.
- j. Squad members must be in good standing to be eligible to try out the following school year.

\*\*\*Participants are to uphold the positive leadership image and responsibilities of a Covington High School Cheerleader. Failure to do so will result in demerits, suspension, and/or dismissal from the squad. Any consequences not mentioned are not necessarily excluded.\*\*\*

#### IV. Squad Participation

- a. Squad members must attend all practices, performances and any other team obligation deemed mandatory. (See calendar attached for information about practices through summer and into next school year.) Cheer events include, but are not limited to afterschool practices, summer camp, kiddie camp, and paint practices. For seniors, this also includes tryout clinic and tryouts for the following year.
- b. If a game / performance is rescheduled, cheerleaders are expected to perform on the new date / time. Exceptions will be made for events that fall on/at a previously excused date/time.
- c. Cheerleaders will be allowed FIVE (5) absences from practice for the year without receiving demerits. Any absences past five will result in demerits, regardless of the reason.
  - 1. Cheerleaders must attend and fully participate in the team practice immediately prior to a performance in order to perform. (This does not include a pre-performance run-through on the day of a performance.) If a cheerleader misses the practice immediately prior to a performance or cannot fully participate, the cheerleader will not participate at the performance in question. Any cheerleader not performing is expected to sit in uniform on the sideline with sponsor.
  - 2. If a cheerleader is going to miss practice, it is his/her responsibility to notify the sponsors by noon of the practice day. Neglecting to do so will result in a demerit.
- d. Squad members must participate in all performances at football games, team events, pep rallies, and basketball games. Absence from an event will result in demerits. An absence from an event will be considered as an excused absence for two possible reasons:
  - 1. death of a family member or close friend (must submit funeral program or copy of obituary)
  - 2. serious injury or illness (must submit excuse note)
- e. Squad members must be on time for all events (i.e. practices, games, and other assigned functions). Report time is determined by the sponsor. Cheerleaders are expected to be in uniform and prepared to warm up at the designated report time. Consumption of food past report time is not allowed, other than at half time after duties are complete.
- f. Weekly game duties will be assigned at the beginning of football season. It is each cheerleader's responsibility to know and perform her/his assigned duty. Failure to do so completely will result in demerits.
- g. If a cheerleader becomes injured during the season, the member is still held to all Cheerleading responsibilities outlined in this document. Any absences related to the cheerleader's injury still count toward absences in the records. The cheerleader must attend all functions within her/his ability as outlined by a doctor's note. Any cheerleader whose injury prevents him/her from full participation must provide written documentation from a medical professional that outlines limitations as well as clearance to return to full participation.

- h. Any member of CHS Cheerleading who misses an entire week's practices / events without notifying the sponsors will be placed on probation and must schedule a meeting with the sponsors before being allowed to return to squad participation. A cheerleader who reports to cheer after an extended absence without first meeting with sponsors will be sent home, and the absence(s) will count toward total practice absences and/or absence(s) from performance(s). It is the cheerleader's responsibility to contact the sponsors to discuss extended absences.
- i. Cheerleaders are required to ride the bus or transportation when provided by the cheer sponsor or athletic department.
- j. Any grievances that arise between cheerleaders or parents / guardians of cheerleaders and the sponsors can be discussed at a meeting time that is mutually agreeable for all parties. Public confrontations will not be allowed.

## V. Uniforms

- a. Cheerleaders will wear required uniforms to school-sponsored events ONLY. No Cheerleader should wear any portion of the uniform (practice or game) except at authorized functions. Cheerleaders are not to allow anyone not affiliated with cheerleading to wear any piece or part of their uniforms.
- b. Any Cheerleader in uniform must conduct herself/himself appropriately. Any negative conduct, (i.e., inappropriate language, smoking, drinking, fighting, etc.) will be severely reprimanded resulting in a minimum two-week suspension from the team or as much as dismissal from the team.
- c. Performance-ready makeup (eye shadow, liner, mascara, visible lip color) is considered part of the game / performance uniform.
- d. Fingernails, including artificial nails, shall be kept at a length appropriate for safe participation. Fingernails cannot be visible beyond the end of the fingers when viewed from the palm side of the hands. Extreme colors or decoration on fingernails is not allowed for a performance.
- e. NO jewelry of any kind may be worn at any time while cheerleader is in uniform engaging in cheer activities. A cheerleader who has jewelry who chooses not to remove it will not be allowed to participate and will receive demerits.
- f. Visible tattoos are not allowed at any time while performing cheerleading duties.
- g. Cheerleaders are responsible for the upkeep and replacement of all required uniforms, including alterations. If a cheerleader's uniform becomes damaged or for any other reason requires replacement, it is the cheerleader / parent's responsibility to purchase the uniform piece in question.
- h. Letter jackets: Cheerleaders are eligible to order letter jackets after two seasons of CHS football and two seasons of CHS basketball. Jackets will be ordered at the end of the spring semester of the second year (after team tryouts). First-time seniors will be eligible to order a jacket. Jacket expense is the responsibility of the cheerleader.
- i. Senior blankets: Cheerleaders who are currently in their senior year and have been members of the Covington High Cheer team for 6 semesters (3 years) will receive Senior Blankets. Must be in good standing as of the time blankets are ordered and remain in good standing through the end of the cheer season. For graduating seniors, cheer season ends upon completion of tryout week. Attending and assisting at tryout clinic and tryouts is a mandatory cheer event for senior cheerleaders. Failure to be present for tryout days will result in senior cheerleader not receiving his/her blanket.
- j. Cheerleaders are not allowed to wear clothing or accessories supporting other high school teams at school or at a CHS sponsored event. Anyone found wearing these items will receive 1 demerit per incident.

## VI. Monetary Concerns

- a. Cost includes game uniforms, shoes, camp, practice uniforms, bloomers, bag, poms, winter wear and a spring stunt clinic. (A purchase list will be go out shortly after the uniform fitting at which time you will know your exact beginning balance.)
- b. **Approximate** cost for the guardian can be as much as \$1400.00.

- c. No refunds will be provided.
- d. The cost of cheerleading includes items for your child specifically. Fundraising is a necessity to purchase items for the team as a whole. Examples of these items include, but are not limited to, transportation to games and other events, shipping, paint supplies, sign paper, homecoming flowers, senior night materials, team meals, judges for team tryouts, etc. Each cheerleader is **required** to participate in fundraisers to offset the cost of team items and lower individual cost. Failure to participate in fundraising will result in additional out-of-pocket expenses and potential demerits for missed activities.
- e. Other out-of-pocket expenses arise during the year such as summer camp goodie bags, gifts for big sis/lil' sis, holiday party gifts/refreshments, and candy/decorations for homecoming parade.

#### VII. Practices during the year

- a. Cheerleading practice in the fall/football season will be 2-3 days per week. Additional practice is necessary on the morning of pep rally performance at 6:55am until 7:24am in the gym (usually for Varsity only). The weeks leading up to homecoming or other special events could require additional practices.
- b. Practices for basketball season generally begin in December / January. The days of the week and time TBD. No more than 2 absences from practice will be considered "excused" once basketball cheer practice begins, regardless of the total number of absences used for the year. (This does not pertain to serious illness / injury or death of family member or close friend.)

#### VIII. Merit/Demerit System

- a. Merits can be earned for attending / participating CHS-sponsored events for which the attendance / participation is not required or for which the cheerleader is not getting other "credit." Events outside of Covington High for which a cheerleader can earn merits will be announced by the sponsors. These are the **ONLY** activities that can be used to gain merits. Merits—1 merit (1 hour) is equal to 1 demerit.
- b. Cheerleaders may "bank" up to 15 merits.
- c. Proof of participation in activities for merits must be recorded on an official CHS Cheerleading Merit form. The entire form must be completed and turned in no later than the Monday (first school day) following the event for which merits are earned. Merit forms submitted past the due date will not be accepted.
- d. Each cheerleader must submit a sheet for her/his own merits. A merit sheet with more than 1 name on it will not be accepted.
- e. Only CHS faculty members can sign merit forms for events at school. Accepted signatures for events not at Covington High will be discussed on an as needed basis and must be approved in advance.
- f. Cheerleaders can earn a maximum of 5 merits per event.

## Demerits:

<b>Infraction</b>	<b>Demerits</b>
Missed event (parade, game, pep rally, etc.) - unexcused	20 (and possible dismissal from squad)
Missed event – school function (with prior notice)	15
Missed event - excused, rescheduled, etc.	10
In-school suspension	15 (and possible dismissal from squad)
Friday after school detention	10
Lunch Detention (less severe infraction)	5
Missed Mandatory Meeting	3
Teacher/Classroom Behavioral Complaint	2 (min; sponsor discretion based on complaint received)
Missed practice (after 5 <sup>th</sup> absence)	6 (and possible refusal to perform)
Late to sidelines after halftime / break	3
Disruptive behavior at practice, event, or performance	1-5
Early departure from or tardiness to practice	1 for each 5-minute increment; More than 25 minutes will be considered an absence.
Early departure from or tardiness to a performance	5 demerits for each 10-minute increment, after 30 minutes cheerleader is considered absent (unexcused)
Uniform Infraction - Practice	1 per item (including reminders such as hair, jewelry) 2 - fingernail infraction and no stunting
Neglecting to perform game duty fully	2-3
Game Uniform Infraction / Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hair, ribbon - 1</li> <li>● Body liner or uniform piece missing, including shoes and/or poms– 5 and forfeit right to perform</li> <li>● Fingernails – 5 (no stunting)</li> <li>● Jewelry – 2 (reminder; non-compliance forfeit performance)</li> <li>● Makeup 2 for reminder, 10 for refusal to make necessary adjustments and forfeit right to perform</li> </ul>
Gum chewing at practice / performance / event	1 (per infraction)
Consumption of food (during practice or performance)	1 (per instance of occurrence)
PDA	2 at school; 3 at any time in uniform
Non-participation in team fundraising	10 (and additional out-of-pocket expense for cheerleader's share)

\*\*\* Other situations could arise that are not covered by these bylaws. These cases will be handled with by the sponsors in cooperation with the school administration. .\*\*\*

**Good Standing:** Member has merit balance of -9 or higher. Participation in all events.

**Probation:** Member has a merit balance between -10 to -19. Member will have a weekly meeting with sponsors until merit balance is greater than -10. Member will still be allowed to participate in practice but not performances until he/she is in good standing. When the member is back in good standing, he/she will be allowed to resume performances. Parent will be contacted.

**Suspension:** Member merit balance is -20 and -25. Member is suspended from team for four and a half school weeks. During that time member must attend all activities but is not allowed to participate or be in uniform and must sit or stand with the sponsor. Sponsor will communicate with cheerleader and parent. Member must earn merits by the end of the suspension period to bring merit balance to above -10. Failure to earn required merits will result in additional four-and-a-half-week suspension from team; member will be dismissed from team if, after nine weeks of suspension, the merit balance is not above -10.

**Dismissal Hearing:** Member merit balance is –26 or lower or member has been suspended and earned additional demerits while on suspension. Meeting will be called with parent, sponsors, cheerleader, and administration to discuss the cheerleader’s status on the team.

Questions regarding merits or demerits should be addressed in a scheduled meeting between the cheerleader, parent/guardian and sponsor. Administration may attend if deemed necessary by the sponsor. Parent/Guardian should contact the sponsor to set up the meeting at least 24 hours prior to the requested meeting day/time.

Please see calendar of dates for the spring and summer. Attendance is mandatory according to the schedule.

### **Mandatory Dates if you are selected as a CHS Cheerleader:**

The list below is the schedule for the 2024 – 2025 CHS Cheerleading Squads. If you are selected to be a Covington High School cheerleader, the dates in **bold print** are REQUIRED for your participation. Playoff games will be announced at the end of each season, and participation is required. The schedule below can change, and sponsors will give as much advanced notice as possible.

### **February 2024 – June 2024**

- February 19 – March 4: Turn in completed tryout packet / paperwork. **Due no later than March 4.**
- March 7: Tryout Workshop (4:00 – 5:15, CHS gym) – Band dance, general sideline, tryout tips
- **March 9: Tryout Day (9:00 a.m. start, CHS gym) – Sideline material, tryouts following (M)**
- **MARCH 14: UNIFORM FITTING (LIBRARY); VARSITY SQUAD ONLY REPORT AFTER SCHOOL; JV SQUAD REPORT AT 3:45. (M)**
- **MARCH 14: MANDATORY PARENT MEETING 5:30, CHS CAFETERIA; FIRST PAYMENT DUE TO CHS (\$250.00) (M); FRESHMEN PARENTS CAN PAY AT MEETING; CURRENT STUDENTS PAY ON MYPAYMENTSPLUS**
- **MARCH 22: PAYMENT DUE TO VARSITY PAYMENT PORTAL FOR INDIVIDUAL CHEERLEADER’S UNIFORM ITEMS (Amount will vary by cheerleader) (M)**
- March 18: practice begins, every M and Thur (3:00 – 5:00, CHS commons); incoming freshmen will not be penalized for late arrival. NO PRACTICE during the week of April 1st.
- April 8: After school practice resumes M and Thur, 3:00 – 5:00, CHS commons; last after school practice is May 9th.
- **April 29th: 2<sup>nd</sup> payment to CHS due via My Payments Plus (\$200) (M)**
- **May 4<sup>th</sup>: Stunt clinic (time TBA) (M)**
- May 29: Practice begins every M, W, Th 8:00 – 11:00, CHS commons
- **JUNE 17 – 20: UCA CAMP AT SLU (M)**
- **JUNE 24-28: CHS COMMUNITY “KIDDIE” CAMP, 7:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M FOR CHS CHEERLEADERS (M);** parent volunteers will be needed and appreciated!

### **August 2024 – Until (Fall 2024 Semester)**

- August 5-6: practice, 3:00 – 5:00, CHS commons
- August 13 – end of semester; practice every M, Tu, Th, 3:00 – 5:00, CHS commons
- Football schedules will be distributed as information becomes available
- Extra practice can be added in the two weeks leading up to homecoming and for special events. Missing additional HOCO practice *could* lead to member not performing at event.
- Basketball season practice will begin once football is over.

### **January 2024 – March (Spring 2024 Semester)**

- Practice 2 days per week in January to prepare for basketball season, days TBA
- Additional practices added as needed to prepare for special events.

Basketball schedules will be distributed as game information becomes available.