

BLACKHAWK LI'L COUGAR CHEERLEADER POLICIES & RULES

MISSION STATEMENT

It shall be the purpose of the Blackhawk Li'l Cougar Cheerleaders to promote and uphold team spirit, to develop good sportsmanship by example, and to support good relations in the community. Acceptance of candidates is considered without prejudice of race, creed or color.

ELIGIBILITY

Acceptance of a candidate shall be on the basis of ability, through successful evaluation via cheering tryouts, acceptance of all squad rules and without prejudice of race, creed or color. Each cheerleader must be a member of the Blackhawk Li'l Cougar organization.

UNIFORMS/GENERAL APPEARANCE

A. General Appearance/Uniforms

All cheerleaders will be in proper uniform for all games. This is MANDATORY with NO exceptions. You MUST have ALL pieces of your uniform in order to participate. Uniform consists of vest, skirt, briefs, midriff, hair bows, shoes, socks, wind suit, head band, gloves, pom poms and rain coat and should be kept in the required garment bag at all times. **If you do not have all pieces of the uniform, you may be benched for the entire game or until you receive that missing item.**

Uniform Alterations – Upon prior approval from the Cheering Director, uniforms (skirt/vest) may be altered as necessary as long as no extra material is cut. This ensures that the uniform can be altered back to its original size.

- Cheerleaders are expected to be neat and clean
- Uniforms/shoes must be kept clean for all performances
- Makeup should be kept minimal
- NO hair paint, tattoos or excessive glitter unless given by squad sponsor
- Hair must be kept neat and pulled away from your face with required hair bow.

B. Before/After a Game

The uniform is to be worn for your game only. If you choose to come to another game before or after your game, a change of clothes will be necessary. The uniforms are very expensive and are not to be played in. After the parade in July you are NOT permitted to go to the carnival in your uniform. **Repeated offenses will result in a quarterly time out.**

C. End of Season

Uniforms (skirt/vest) will be returned on a date and time to be designated by the Cheering Director following the end of the season. Security deposits will be refunded at this time upon satisfactory return of both pieces.

CHEERLEADING CAMP

A. General Camp Rules

SAFETY IS OUR #1 PRIORITY! Therefore, the organization requires that all cheerleaders attend Cheerleading Camp. It is **MANDATORY** and there will be **NO EXCEPTIONS**. ***Failure to attend this camp in its entirety will result in dismissal from the squad. Any exceptions must be approved by the Cheering Director and ratified by the Board.***

Each squad will be executing mounts and tricks at varying degrees of difficulty. Camp will provide all girls with the proper training required in order to safely perform these maneuvers. The half-time cheer and dance for all squads will be choreographed by a professional cheering instructor. All cheerleaders will learn the dance and cheer at camp.

Beginning with the 2009 season and continuing thereafter, the camp will be a 5 day commitment. Dates will be announced at the beginning of the Try-outs. Please plan vacations accordingly.

B. Mounting

For the safety of all cheerleaders AND to meet insurance requirements for the Li'l Cougars Organization, there will be no mounting permitted until the cheerleaders have attended the yearly scheduled camp.

· It is mandatory that a cheerleader receive instruction on proper mounting techniques in each year she participates regardless of previous cheerleading experience. This is for the benefit of each girl individually as well as the squad working as a team.

· Injuries – If a cheerleader is injured and unable to participate in the mounting camp, she is still required to attend and observe.

· If there is an absence during camp when mounting instructions are being given, a cheerleader may not be permitted to mount during the current season.

· Mounting by any squad is not permitted without proper supervision.

TWERPS – The Twerp squad will only be permitted to do sitting mounts, knee mounts and half extensions. They will not be permitted to do cradle drops or full extension mounts.

TERMITES, MIGHTY-MITES AND MIDGETS – Mounts for these squads will be determined and taught at camp. Mounts that are not taught at camp are not permitted during practices or at games!

CONDUCT

All squad members are required to maintain the reputation of the Blackhawk Li'l Cougar organization by displaying a positive and sportsmanlike attitude at all times.

- All cheers and chants shall be of a positive and sportsmanlike manner.
- No profanity or fighting.
- Instructors, sponsors, fellow squad members, and members from any cheer squad will be treated in a respectful manner at all times. Please remember all instructors, sponsors, and the Cheering Directors are all volunteers.

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· ***Misbehavior or disrespect will not be tolerated. Any disrespectful comments or actions made by a squad member may result in her receiving a full game suspension. Repetitive occurrences will result in dismissal from the squad.***

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at practices and games is MANDATORY. All absences and tardiness will be recorded.

- Occurrences—Squad members are permitted a total of eight (8) occurrences. Consideration will be given to members who are absent due to bereavement, family emergency, legal matters or illness. (Documentation will be required)
 - Vacation/Other – Every day missed equals one occurrence
 - Tardiness/Early Dismissal – Four tardies/early dismissals equals one occurrence
 - Illness – Each illness is one occurrence (ie. If 3 consecutive days are missed for an illness, one occurrence is recorded. Documentation will be required)
- Tardiness/Early Dismissal – A cheerleader is tardy if arrival at practice/game is 15 minutes or later than the designated time without prior notification to a sponsor. Additionally, early dismissals more than 15 minutes prior to the end of practice will also be recorded.
- Penalties
 - 7th Occurrence – Written Warning
 - 8th Occurrence – One game suspension*
 - 9th Occurrence – Dismissal from squad

**If a cheerleader receives a game suspension, she must be present and in uniform at the game but will not participate.*

- Camp – Failure to attend camp in its entirety will result in dismissal from the squad. Any exceptions must be approved by the Cheering Director and ratified by the Board.
- Mandatory Practices (August 2nd – August 27th)

During this time period, a squad member may miss up to 8 total occurrences. (Example: 6 consecutive days for the purpose of family vacation may be taken during this time period. This would include absences Monday - Saturday. A cheerleader who does take advantage of this vacation allowance will be left with 2 occurrences). Any exceptions must be approved by the Cheering Director and ratified by the Board.

Practices from Week of August 30th – End of Season Including Playoffs

Practices during this time frame are typically held **once per week**. Therefore, a maximum of two occurrences are permitted during this time period before a written warning is issued on the third occurrence. Any exceptions must be approved by the Cheering Director and ratified by the Board.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ALTHOUGH WE ARE TENTATIVELY PLANNING FOR OUR ONE-A-WEEK PRACTICES TO BEGIN THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL (AUGUST 30TH), THIS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

NOTE: Any dismissals will be addressed directly with the Board and in accordance with the Li'l Cougar organization By-Laws

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PRACTICES

Mandatory practices will begin August 2nd and run Monday through Friday from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM until school starts. Then practices will be reduced to once per week provided the squads know the necessary material for game days. The day of the week practices will be held will be determined by the Cheering Director and announced in advance.

All cheerleaders must be in proper attire for practice. This includes comfortable clothes and tennis shoes. NO TENNIS SHOES—NO PRACTICE!!! Girls are required to bring their own water bottle or Gatorade to practice and game days. Practices can be rigorous and fluid replenishment—especially on warmer days—is vital.

GAMES

THIS IS WHAT YOU WORK FOR ALL SEASON—GAME DAY!!!

All cheerleaders must be prepared for the games and be in proper uniform. (Reference Uniforms/General Appearance). The Cheerleading Director will have the final decision regarding uniform pieces to be worn on game day.

- A. Before the Game
 - a. Squad members **MUST** be at the field 45 minutes prior their game time. This is very important so that there is enough time for warm-ups. Tardiness will be address according to the Attendance Policy.

- B. During the Game
 - a. All cheerleaders are to stay between the 30 yard line and the 10 yard line
 - b. Cheerleaders must be given permission to leave the filed to use the restroom and are not permitted to go alone.
 - c. Do not interfere with the players, coaches or referees
 - d. Cheerleaders are expected to stay in formation while on the sidelines
 - e. Snacks **MAY** be permitted on the field at halftime with the advance approval by the Cheering Director

FUNDRAISING

All squad members are responsible for completing the mandatory fundraiser for the current season. Money must be turned in no later than the date requested. In the event that monies are not collected by the due date, the responsible participant may be penalized by non-participation and by withholding all future awards.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Thank you for permitting your child to participate as a cheerleader for the Blackhawk Li'l Cougars. You will play a vital role in the season through the positive support of your child, squad, instructors, sponsors and all members of the organization. This guide is being provided to you so that you may have all the information necessary to be informed during the season. While our hope is to be as thorough as possible, please understand that some things may need to be added as issues arise.

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GENERAL

Parents, guardians and/or siblings are not permitted to observe practices. This is so that squad members can focus on the material being taught and distractions are kept to a minimum.

Slander, harassment and yelling toward cheerleaders, instructors, sponsors or directors by any parent or individual will not be tolerated. (*Organization By-Law Article 9 Sect. 3 Para. 3*)

First Offense – Warning by written notification

Second Offense – Individual will be suspended from a game via written notification

Third Offense – Dismissal of individual (parent/guardian) from organization via written notification.

A. Volunteerism

Without volunteers, your child would not have the opportunity to cheer. Therefore, all families are required to volunteer in accordance with Organization By-Laws.

There are many other areas where extra help is needed during the season included but not limited to practice field concession stand, uniform hand-outs, practice field maintenance/preparation etc. If you are able to volunteer in these areas in addition to your mandatory service time, your help is very much appreciated. If you have not completed your mandatory service hours before the last home game, your child will not receive her trophy as well as any additional items that may be distributed at the banquet. Note: If you have a senior cheerleader, you must have your service requirement in PRIOR TO SENIOR NIGHT. (*Organization By-Law Article 3 Section 1D*)

B. Problem Resolution

If you have a question or concern, please first refer to your squad sponsor. If the sponsor is unable to resolve your issue, the Cheering Director and then Commissioner(s) should be notified. Please keep in mind that instructors, sponsors and all Board Members are volunteers who need your support. Open and respectful communication is the key to a successful organization. Anything less is a poor example to our children and not in the spirit of our organization.

Your active participation in the Blackhawk Li'l Cougar Organization is vital in order to keep these opportunities to learn available to your children. Attendance at the monthly meetings is highly encouraged. These meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Chippewa Municipal Building at 7:30 PM or 8:00 PM.

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