



Special Olympics Iowa Cheerleading and Dance Competition Rules & Regulations

All Special Olympics Iowa Cheerleading and Dance Competitions will be run according to the rules and regulations in this manual.



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Coaching Guidelines

All practice sessions must be supervised by the coach and held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders / dancers (i.e. use of appropriate mats, away from excessive noise and distractions, suitable athlete to coach ratio, etc.)

Coaches' should recognize an athlete's ability level and focus on providing fundamentals. Athletes should not be pressed to perform activities until everyone has a fundamental understanding of safety requirements.

All cheerleading squads and dance teams should adopt a comprehensive conditioning and strength building program.

Tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps should be limited to appropriate surfaces during practice and competition.

If a cheer squad or dance team needs additional help from an assistant with their stunts, you must fill out a Special Privilege form and turn it in with your registration. Assistants shall be dressed in contrasting attire compared to official team members. For example, assistants shall wear a dark t-shirt and pants in contrast to the athletes' lighter colored uniform (or vice versa).

Spectator Guidelines

Please refrain from using abusive or offensive language towards anyone; officials, coaches, opponents and fellow spectators.

Please remember that the athletes are amateur athletes and the coaches and officials are all volunteers.

Let the coaches' coach the athletes – **PLEASE** refrain from shouting instructions.

Spectators and fans are prohibited in the competition areas. Only registered/approved coaches' and athletes should be in the competition area.

ALL CHEERS should stress the spirit of good sportsmanship. Negative comments directed to athletes, coaches' or officials will not be tolerated.



Registration Entries

Entries that need to be mailed can be mailed to Tanner Nissen at the State Office at 551 SE Dovetail Road, PO Box 620, Grimes, Iowa.

Please email the following forms to the appropriate email address below:

- classa@soiowa.org (use this email to submit Class A applications)
- registrations@soiowa.org (use this email to submit your state registration entries, etc.)
- physicals@soiowa.org (use this email to submit athlete's physicals)

Entry forms will be available online at www.soiowa.org. To find these entry forms follow the steps below:

- Click on competitions tab at the top of the website
- Then click on Participation Forms
- Scroll down the page to find Mid-Winter Tournament
- Print the following forms:
 - Coach/Volunteer Roster
 - Mid-Winter Tournament Registration Form
 - Mid-Winter Tournament Housing Form
 - Cheer/Dance Rules and Regulations
 - Cheer/Dance Entry Form
- **A delegation may sign up more than one team for cheer or dance; however, an athlete or Unified Partner can only participate on one team.**



Appropriate Attire

Uniforms- Team members must wear outfits alike in style and color. All team members must have athletic shoes with a non-marking sole. Consider the athlete when choosing uniforms (No boots may be worn). **A deduction of 5 points will be giving for uniform violations.**

- Women / Men-
 - **Bottoms:** Pants, shorts, skorts or skirts (**must be at least mid-thigh and /or knee in length**). No slit allowed in skorts, shorts or skirts. (If a slit exist in uniform it must be sewed up or fabric behind the slit). Briefs or bloomers must be worn with all skirts.
 - **Tops:** Tank-top, collared shirts or tee shirts (no pockets). No halter tops will be allowed. Straps must be at least 1" inch wide. Spaghetti straps will not be permitted. Apparel must cover the midriff at all times.

Jewelry- No jewelry of any kind including but not limited to ear, nose, tongue, belly button and facial rings, clear plastic jewelry, bracelets, necklaces, stickers, glitter or **artificial nails** is allowed. Pins on uniforms are prohibited. Jewelry must be removed and may not be taped over. **A deduction of 5 points will be giving for jewelry violations.**

- **Exceptions:** Medical ID tags/bracelets, and temporary tattoos are allowed.

Hair- For safety reasons, long hair should be out of the face and secured (if possible).

Gum- No gum is allowed.



Traditional vs Unified Team

Traditional Special Olympics teams are made up of all athletes (people with an intellectual disability). All athletes competing must have a current physical form on file at the state office by the registration deadline.

For a Unified Team, the number of Special Olympics Athletes must be equal to, or exceed by one, the number of Unified Partners. Athletes who are involved in a Unified Team must also have a physical form on file at the state office by the registration deadline. All Unified Partners must have a Class A on file with the state office before the registration deadline. Please see below for the athlete/Unified Partner configuration:

Squad Members for a Unified Team:

2 member squad	1 athlete	1 Unified Partner
3 member squad	2 athletes	1 Unified Partner
4 member squad	2 athletes	2 Unified Partners
5 member squad	3 athletes	2 Unified Partners
6 member squad	3 athletes	3 Unified Partners
7 member squad	4 athletes	3 Unified Partners
8 member squad	4 athletes	4 Unified Partners
9 member squad	5 athletes	4 Unified Partners
10 member squad	5 athletes	5 Unified Partners
11 member squad	6 athletes	5 Unified Partners
12 member squad	6 athletes	6 Unified Partners
13 member squad	7 athletes	6 Unified Partners
14 member squad	7 athletes	7 Unified Partners
15 member squad	8 athletes	7 Unified Partners
16 member squad	8 athletes	8 Unified Partners

Squad / Dance team size is limited to a minimum of 2 up to a maximum of 16.



If at any time during the competition, the number of Unified Partners exceeds the number of Special Olympians; the squad and /or team will compete for participation ribbons only. There will be **NO** exceptions to this rule. **Registration forms will not be accepted without the proper ratio of athletes and Unified Partners.**

Cheer Competition

- There is **no** music allowed in this competition. A squad must perform 2 different cheers. **If a squad performs only 1 cheer and repeats, there will be a 5 point deduction. If a squad exceeds 3 or more cheers there will be a 5 point deduction. Poms, signs and megaphones are the only props allowed.**

Having a 5 second pause between cheers will help the judges identify where one cheer ends and the other cheer begins:

- There will be two ping pong paddles that are labeled, “cheer 1” and “cheer 2” These will be available to use to allow for the 5 second pause but are not a requirement nor will deductions be made if they are not used.

Divisioning: Divisioning will be based on ability, squad size, and age. The oldest age on the squad will dictate what age group the athletes will compete in. Co-ed teams are allowed but must follow the rules of size, age and ability.

- **Size:**
 - Individual
 - Small squad: 2-8 members
 - Large squad: 9-16 members
 - **No more than 16 athletes are allowed.**
- **Age:**
 - Junior: 8-21
 - Senior: 22 and over
- **Ability: (see appendix for definition of ability levels)**
 - **Beginner:** Team non-mount & non-tumble
 - Must perform at least 1 jump **and** 1 kick by at least 1 athlete
 - **Advanced:** Team mount & tumble
 - Must perform at least 1 jump **and** 1 kick along with **at least 1** tumble, stunt or pyramid by at least 1 athlete
 - **Unified Team**



Time: This performance time includes changes in signs, pompoms or other props. Judging and timing of your performance will start with the first word. **So for example, if you have an entrance cheer, it will count towards one of your cheers.**

If you exceed the allotted 3 minute time the following deductions will be made:

- **If we have to ask you to stop after the 3 minutes has passed there will be a 5 point deduction made.**

Coaches' Box: two coaches will be allowed to coach the squad from the coaches' box in between the judges' tables. Coaches' must remain inside the box. You may not be in front of the judges table or on the floor. **It is not required to have a coach in the coaches' box for either cheer or dance. We encourage teams to be as independent as possible.**

See appendix for Judges' Sheet.

Dance Competition

A team must perform 2 different dance routines to 2 different songs. **Sound effects are allowed but actual cheers are not.**

The following deductions will be made:

- 1 dance to 2 songs, 5 point deduction
- 1 dance to 1 song, 5 point deduction
- Exceeding 2 dances and 2 songs, 5 point deduction

Divisioning: Divisioning will be based on ability, team size and age. The oldest age on the team will dictate what age group the athletes will compete in. Coed teams are allowed but must follow the rules of size, age and ability.

- **Size:**
 - Individual
 - Small team: 2-8 members
 - Large team: 9-16 members
 - **No more than 16 athletes are allowed.**
- **Age:**
 - Junior: 8-21
 - Senior: 22 and over



▪ **Ability: (see appendix for definition of ability levels)**

- **Beginner:** Team non-mount & non-tumble
 - Must perform at least 1 jump **and** 1 kick by at least 1 athlete
- **Advanced:** Team mount & tumble
 - Must perform at least 1 jump **and** 1 kick along with **at least** 1 tumble, stunt or pyramid performed by at least 1 athlete
- **Unified Team**

Time: A team has a maximum performance time of 2 minutes and 30 seconds. The time will begin once the music starts. **The performance time includes changes in signs, poms and megaphones.**

- **If we have to ask you to stop after the 2 minutes and 30 seconds has passed there will be a 5 point deduction made.**
- **Flags, banners, signs, poms, megaphones and pieces of cloth are the only props allowed. Props with poles or similar support apparatus may not be used in conjunction with any kind of stunt or tumbling. All props must be safely discarded out of harm's way (example: throwing a hard sign across the mat from a stunt is not allowed). Any uniform piece purposefully removed from the body and used for visual effect will be considered a prop once it is removed from the body.**

Music: Music must be suitable for family listening **and be free of any vulgar and inappropriate language.** Music must be in a CD format. Hand signals from the coach in the coaches' box will be used to indicate to the volunteer when the music should be started and stopped.

All music recordings mixed together in routines should be properly licensed and written confirmation of such license should be available upon request. Under U.S. copyright law, music is not permitted to create a re-mix, mash-up or medley without proper written authorization from the copyright owners.

Music must be ready to start once the volunteer pushes play for the music to begin:

- **For example:** Time will not be allotted for a team's music that a volunteer must fast forward to a 1 minute and 30 seconds for to push play for the dance routine to begin.
- The volunteer must be able to push play right away for the dance routine to begin and end.

Coaches' Box: Due to formations, two coaches will be allowed to coach the team from the coaches' box in between the judges' tables. Coaches' must remain inside the box. You may not



be in front of the judges table or on the floor. It is not required to have a coach in the coaches' box for either cheer or dance. We encourage teams to be as independent as possible.

See appendix for Judges' Sheet.

Performance Space

Performance space should measure at least 40ft x 25ft for both cheer and dance competition. The competition floor will be a plain gym floor. If you need mats for safety reasons please provide those.

- The performance floor will be outlined by blue tape on the day of competition.

Appropriate Equipment

Practice Surfaces

Practice sessions must be held in a location suitable for spirit activities, i.e. appropriate surface/area, reasonably free of obstruction and excessive noise, etc.

Performance Surfaces

Use of mini-tramps, springboards, spring-assisted floors or any height-increasing apparatus is illegal for use during performances/competitions.

Appendix

Base: The bottom person of a partner stunt or pyramid who is in contact with the ground.

Cheer: A long phrase that involves motions, pompoms, stunts, jumps and/or tumbling. Cheers can resemble a song that has a beginning, middle and end.

Dance: A routine performed to music with no verbal chants, cheers, etc. May incorporate props, pom poms, gymnastics and/or stunts.

Flyer: The flyer (top person) of a partner stunt or pyramid.

Front Leg Kick: Step left or right and kick opposite foot to the front with arms extended straight over head.



Jump: A spring from one or both feet with landing on one or both feet.

Motions: Movements using straight and/or diagonal arms; in combination with head/foot movements.

Partner Stunts: Any type of stunt that uses two persons and one of those persons is using the other persons for support.

Props: Any type of pom poms, signs, megaphones, etc.

Spotter: A person that assists with any tumbling move or who is responsible for assisting or catching the top person. A spotter does not provide primary support to another person. The spotter must spot the climber until the climber returns safely on the ground.

Stunt / Mount: Any skill in which a top person is supported above the performance surface by one or more person. Can only be 1 ½ persons high; also known as a stunt. All stunts above floor level must have a back spotter.

Team Mount & Tumble: “Advanced.” Tumbling, stunts, and pyramids are allowed along with jumps and kicks.

Team Non-Mount & Non-Tumble: “Beginner.” There are no tumbling, stunts or mounts allowed in this level. Only jumps and kicks are allowed.

Thigh Stand: Limited to two person high. “Two high” is defined as the base (bottom person) having at least one foot on the ground and one on the climber.

Tumbling /Gymnastic: Any type of individual or partner stunt performed other than jumps and motions’ such as mounts, splits, rolls, cartwheels and handsprings.



Squad Name _____

Division - Beginner - Traditional _____ Unified _____

Judge's Signature: _____



PERSONAL APPEARANCE & UNIFORM

Possible Score Squad Score

PERSONAL APPEARANCE & UNIFORM		Possible Score	Squad Score
A.	Hair-neat	5	
B.	Uniforms - pressed and clean	5	
C.	Appropriate length for bottoms and tops	5	
D.	Jewelry (none)	5	
SUB TOTAL		20	

CHEER

Possible Score Squad Score

CHEER		Possible Score	Squad Score
A.	Clarity/Loudness	5	
B.	Pep/Enthusiasm	5	
C.	Poise/Confidence	5	
D.	Creativity	5	
SUB TOTAL		20	

HIGH V / LOW V

Possible Score Squad Score

HIGH V / LOW V		Possible Score	Squad Score
A.	High V/Low V	5	
B.	High V - Straight Arms	5	
C.	High V - Position	5	
D.	Low V - Straight Arms	5	
E.	Low V - Position	5	
SUB TOTAL		25	

LEG KICK(S) / JUMP(S)

Possible Score Squad Score

LEG KICK(S) / JUMP(S)		Possible Score	Squad Score
A.	Straight Arms Overhead	5	
B.	Legs Extension	5	
C.	Height of Kick(s)/Jump(s)	5	
D.	Toes Pointed	5	
SUB TOTAL		20	

PENALTY POINTS (to be removed from total)

Possible Score Actual Score

PENALTY POINTS (to be removed from total)		Possible Score	Actual Score
A.	One (1) short cheer	-5	
B.	Three (3) or more cheers	-5	
C.	No jump(s) or kick(s) - (must be one (1) of each)	-10	
D.	Exceeds the three (3) minute maximum performance	-5	
TOTAL PENALTY POINTS		-25	

SCORE SHEET TOTALS

Possible Score Actual Score

SCORE SHEET TOTALS		Possible Score	Actual Score
A.	Total Score	85	
B.	Penalty points deducted	-25	-
CHEER TOTAL			

Comments:

Squad Name _____

Division - Advanced - Traditional _____ Unified _____

Judge's Signature: _____



PERSONAL APPEARANCE & UNIFORM

Possible Score Squad Score

A.	Hair-neat	5	
B.	Uniforms - pressed and clean	5	
C.	Appropriate length for bottoms and tops	5	
D.	Jewelry (none)	5	
SUB TOTAL		20	

CHEERLEADING SKILLS

Possible Score Squad Score

A.	Variation of Motions	5	
B.	Timing and Rhythm	5	
C.	Voice	5	
D.	Spacing	5	
E.	Formation Changes	5	
SUB TOTAL		25	

COMPOSITION AND PRESENTATION

Possible Score Squad Score

A.	Degree of Difficulty	10	
B.	Incorporation of tumbling, stunts, pyramids	5	
C.	Safety Techniques	5	
D.	Pep and Enthusiasm	5	
E.	Facial Expression	5	
F.	Poised and Confidence	5	
G.	Originality	5	
SUB TOTAL		40	

LEG KICK(S) / JUMP(S)

Possible Score Squad Score

A.	Straight Arms Overhead	5	
B.	Legs Extension	5	
C.	Height of Kick(s) / Jump(s)	10	
D.	Number of Kick(s) / Jump(s)	10	
E.	Toes Pointed	5	
SUB TOTAL		35	

PENALTY POINTS (to be removed from total)

Possible Score Actual Score

A.	One (1) short cheer	-5	
B.	Three (3) or more cheers	-5	
C.	No jump(s) or kick(s) - (must be one (1) of each)	-10	
D.	No tumbling, stunts or pyramid -(must be a total of one (1))	-10	
E.	Exceeds the three (3) minute maximum performance	-5	
TOTAL PENALTY POINTS		-35	

SCORE SHEET TOTALS

Possible Score Actual Score

A.	Total Score	120	
B.	Penalty points deducted	-35	-
CHEER TOTAL			

Comments:

Dance Team Name _____

Division - Beginner - Traditional _____ Unified _____

Judge's Signature: _____



PERSONAL APPEARANCE & UNIFORM

		Possible Score	Dance Score
A.	Hair-neat	5	
B.	Uniforms - pressed and clean	5	
C.	Appropriate length for bottoms and tops	5	
D.	Jewelry (none)	5	
SUB TOTAL		20	

PROJECTION

		Possible Score	Dance Score
A.	Spirit	5	
B.	Enthusiasm	5	
C.	Eye Contact	5	
D.	Poise	5	
E.	Appropriate Music	5	
SUB TOTAL		25	

COMPOSITION AND PRESENTATION

		Possible Score	Dance Score
A.	Technique (motions, precision, sharpness)	5	
B.	Effective Incorporation (use of props and costumes)	5	
C.	Overall impression (difficulty, showmanship, flow, variety)	10	
D.	Perfection of Routine (lack of mistakes, knowledge of routine)	10	
E.	At least one (1) jump(s) and one (1) kick(s)	5	
SUB TOTAL		35	

PENALTY POINTS (to be removed from total)

		Possible Score	Actual Score
A.	One (1) dance to two (2) songs	-5	
B.	One (1) dance to one (1) song	-5	
C.	Exceeds two (2) dances and two (2) songs	-5	
D.	Exceeds the 2:30 seconds maximum performance	-5	
TOTAL PENALTY POINTS		-20	

SCORE SHEET TOTALS

		Possible Score	Actual Score
A.	Total Score	80	
B.	Penalty points deducted	-20	-
DANCE TOTAL			

Comments:

Dance Team Name _____

Division - Advanced - Traditional _____ Unified _____

Judge's Signature: _____



PERSONAL APPEARANCE & UNIFORM

		Possible Score	Dance Score
A.	Hair-neat	5	
B.	Uniforms - pressed and clean	5	
C.	Appropriate length for bottoms and tops	5	
D.	Jewelry (none)	5	
SUB TOTAL		20	

PROJECTION

		Possible Score	Dance Score
A.	Spirit	5	
B.	Enthusiasm	5	
C.	Eye Contact	5	
D.	Poise	5	
E.	Appropriate Music	5	
SUB TOTAL		25	

COMPOSITION AND PRESENTATION

		Possible Score	Dance Score
A.	Technique (motions, precision, sharpness)	10	
B.	Effective Incorporation (use of props and costumes)	5	
C.	Overall impression (difficulty, showmanship, flow, variety)	10	
D.	Perfection of Routine (lack of mistakes, knowledge of routine)	15	
E.	At least one (1) jump(s) and one (1) kick(s)	10	
E.	At least one (1) tumble, stunt or pyramid	5	
SUB TOTAL		55	

PENALTY POINTS (to be removed from total)

		Possible Score	Actual Score
A.	One (1) dance to two (2) songs	-5	
B.	One (1) dance to one (1) song	-5	
C.	Exceeds two (2) dances and two (2) songs	-5	
D.	Exceeds the 2:30 seconds maximum performance	-5	
TOTAL PENALTY POINTS		-20	

SCORE SHEET TOTALS

		Possible Score	Actual Score
A.	Total Score	100	
B.	Penalty points deducted	-20	-
DANCE TOTAL			

Comments:

