

# Cheer and Dance

Revised 2025

***Special Olympics***  
*Iowa*





# Registration Entries

Entry forms are available online at [www.soiowa.org](http://www.soiowa.org)

- ▶ Website: Competitions tab > click on Participation Forms > scroll to Spring Classic

## State Competition Entries

- ▶ Entries can be emailed to: [registrations@soiowa.org](mailto:registrations@soiowa.org)
- ▶ After your entries have been put into GMS you will be sent a Delegation Report
  - Review the report and return to the State Office with any corrections

# 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 your cheer squad or dance teams needs additional help from a coach with their stunts you must fill out a Special Privilege form and turn it in with your registration entries.

# Spectator Guidelines



- The use of abusive or offensive language towards anyone (officials, coaches, opponents or fellow spectators) is prohibited.
- 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.

# 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 five points will be given for uniform violations.
- Bottoms: Women/Men – pants, shorts, or skirts (must be at least mid-thigh and/or knee length). Brief or bloomers must be worn with all skirts.
- Tops: Tank-tops, collared shirts or T-shirts (no pockets). Apparel must cover the midriff at all times.
- Jewelry: must be removed for competition.
- Hair: must be out of the face and secured (if possible).
- No gum is allowed.

# Squad Size and Unified Team



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

Unified team – Unified Partners and athletes must be equal number or may exceed number of athletes by one.

If at any time during the competition, the number of Unified partners exceeds the number of Special Olympics athletes, the squad or team will compete for a participation award.

# Cheer Competition



## Size:

- Individual
- Small squad: 2-8 members
- Large squad: 9-16 members

## Age:

- Junior: 8-21
- Senior: 22+

## Ability:

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

## Time

- 3 minutes – judges will start time with first word. Allotted time will include changes in signs, pompoms or other props.
  - 5 point deduction for exceeding the 3 minute allotted time

# Cheer Competition



- There is no music allowed in this competition. A squad must perform two different cheers.
  - 5 point deduction if a squad repeats the same cheer twice
  - 5 point deduction if a squad performs more than three cheers
- **Divisioning:** Will be based on ability, squad size and age. The oldest age on the squad will determine the age group. Co-ed teams are allowed but must follow the rules of size, age and ability.
- **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.



# Dance Competition



## Size:

- Individual
- Small squad: 2-8 members
- Large squad: 9-16 members

## Age:

- Junior: 8-21
- Senior: 22+

## Ability:

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

## Time

- Maximum performance time of 2 minutes and 30 seconds– the time will begin once the music starts. Allotted time will include changes in signs, pompoms or other props.
  - 5 point deduction for exceeding the 2 minutes and 30 second allotted time

# Dance Competition



- A team must perform two different dance routines to two different songs. Sound effects are allowed but actual cheers are not
  - 5 point deduction if one dance to two songs
  - 5 point deduction if one dance to one song
  - 5 point deduction if exceeding two dances and two songs
- **Divisioning:** Will be based on ability, squad size and age. The oldest age on the squad will determine the age group. Co-ed teams are allowed but must follow the rules of size, age and ability.
- **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.

# Performance Space



## Performance Space

Performance space should measure at least 40ft by 25ft for both cheer and dance competition. The competition floor will be a plain gym floor. If a team will need mats for safety reasons, delegations must provide their own.

Use of mini-trampolines, springboards, spring-assisted floors or any height-increasing apparatus are prohibited for practice and competition.

# Additional Resources



## Special Olympics North America

- [Competitive Cheer Rules and Coaches Guide](#)
- [DanceSport Rules and Coaches Guide](#)

# Quiz



Click the link to take the quiz:

[Cheer and Dance Quiz](#)