

# 2025-2026

# WACPC

# CHEER HANDBOOK



<b>JEM Cheer Championships.....</b>	<b>January 10, 2026</b>
	<i>Portage High School 301 E Collins St Portage, WI 53901</i>
<b>Varsity Cheer Preliminaries.....</b>	<b>February 14, 2026</b>
	<i>Hartford Union High School 805 Cedar St Hartford, WI 53027</i>
<b>State Cheer Championships.....</b>	<b>February 20-21, 2026</b>
	<i>Resch Expo Center 840 Armed Forces Drive Green Bay, WI 54304</i>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PURPOSE of COMPETITION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WACPC ETHICS STATEMENT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WACPC CHEER PHILOSOPHY</b>	<b>4</b>
MENTORSHIP	5
SPORTSMANSHIP STATEMENT	5
<b>COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY</b>	<b>5</b>
AGE	6
ACADEMICS	6
ATTENDANCE	6
DETERMINING RESIDENCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS	6
DETERMINING RESIDENCE FOR NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS	7
TRANSFERS	8
<b>COMPETITION REGISTRATION</b>	<b>10</b>
REGISTRATION GUIDELINES	10
ADDITIONAL ROUTINES	11
LINEUPS	12
<b>DIVISIONS</b>	<b>12</b>
VARSITY CHEER DIVISIONS	12
TEAM DIVISIONS	12
STUNT GROUP DIVISIONS	12
ALL-STATE DIVISIONS	13
VARSITY DIVISION SPLITS	13
VARSITY CHEER FINALIST QUALIFICATION AND AWARDS	13
VARSITY STATE CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS	13
TIEBREAKER	13
JUNIOR VARSITY, MIDDLE SCHOOL/REC & ELEMENTARY CHEER (JEM) CHAMPIONSHIPS	14
TEAM DIVISIONS	14
JEM DIVISION SPLITS	14
JEM CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS	15
TIEBREAKER	15
COLLEGE CHEER CHAMPIONSHIPS	15
TEAM DIVISIONS	15
COLLEGE DIVISION SPLITS	15
COLLEGE CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS	15
TIEBREAKER	15
<b>CHEER TEAM ROUTINE GUIDELINES</b>	<b>16</b>
PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES & INFORMATION	16
TEAM ROUTINE TIMING	16

SCORESHEETS	17
VARSITY STUNT GROUP ROUTINE GUIDELINES	17
VARSITY ALL-STATE ROUTINE GUIDELINES	17
MASCOT ROUTINE GUIDELINES	18
<b>JUDGING</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>GENERAL SAFETY RULES</b>	<b>18</b>
OVERALL IMAGE	19
RULE/SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE DEDUCTIONS	19
SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE DEDUCTION APPEAL	20
<b>GENERAL COMPETITION INFORMATION</b>	<b>20</b>
COACHES INFORMATION & EVENT MEETING	20
ATHLETIC TRAINER	20
MAT TIME	20
MUSIC	20
<b>SPECTATOR INFORMATION</b>	<b>21</b>
NO CARRY-INS ALLOWED	21
BANNERS / SIGNS	21
ADMISSIONS	21
APPAREL & CONCESSIONS	21
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	<b>21</b>

# 2025-2026 CHEER COMPETITION INFORMATION

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this information is to provide an explanation of the safety and competition rules for WACPC events, the official Wisconsin State Cheer and Dance Championships, endorsed by WIAA.

**PLEASE NOTE:** *Competing and placing at WACPC State Cheer and/or Dance Championships does not under any circumstance mean a team has qualified for a national competition. WACPC does not endorse any national competitions. Competing at a national competition is a decision made by the coach, his/her team, and their school district.*

## PURPOSE of COMPETITION

WACPC believes competitions can provide opportunities for networking, developing new ideas, and raising the performance level of teams. Other objectives of WACPC are:

- To educate coaches and athletes about safety in our sports.
- To provide learning and character-building experiences for athletes in our programs.
- To promote our sports at the regional and state levels.
- To provide appropriate athletic challenges through competition, which leads to team improvement.
- To provide a sense of accomplishment for teams and individual athletes.

## WACPC ETHICS STATEMENT

**Coaching ethics** means conforming to professional standards or moral conduct. Cheer and dance coaches have a tremendous influence in the education of an athlete. Never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

- Coaches should consistently uphold the integrity of the profession and strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
- Coaches should have thorough knowledge of the safety rules.
- Competition administrators and judges shall have the respect and support of the coach. Public criticism of competing athletes, teams, coaches, competition administrators, or judges is unethical. Conduct that incites athletes or spectators against these personnel is unethical. Constructive criticism or concerns should be directed to the WACPC Board of Directors.
- Coaches shall actively use their influence to promote sportsmanship.

***While it is impossible for competition administrators or judges to monitor the ethical behavior of athletes, teams, or coaches, these rules exist on an honor system.***

### Examples of unethical coaching may be, but are not limited to:

- Using choreography from a camp, YouTube, or other video source in its entirety or in large sections.
- Displaying poor sportsmanship during or after a competition or awards.
- Using ineligible athletes.
- Failure to show proper respect during the National Anthem or Pledge of Allegiance.
- Using social media to publicly criticize or bully individual athletes, entire teams, coaches, competition administrators or judges.

## WACPC CHEER PHILOSOPHY

In order to ensure the safety of our athletes, WACPC holds execution as the first priority in all cheer skills. Routines should be crowd-engaging. Cheer involves athleticism and we encourage the advancement of skills without compromising fundamentals.

## MENTORSHIP

WACPC offers member cheerleading coaches who are looking to enhance their skills, gain fresh insights, and elevate their team's performance level. Designed to connect coaches with experienced mentors, this program offers personalized guidance, best practices, and strategies to inspire and lead with confidence. Open to members who are new to coaching or a seasoned leader, this program provides the tools and community to help coaches excel and make a lasting impact on their athletes.

- Mentorship is available to all WACPC Members.
- Member coaches with 3+ years experience coaching in Wisconsin can apply for the Mentor role.
- Mentorship runs for a full year, October through October.
- Full mentorship program guidelines and applications can be found on the WACPC website.

## SPORTSMANSHIP STATEMENT

WACPC promotes good sportsmanship at all events. Athletes, coaches, and spectators are expected to show consideration for others through their actions at all times. This includes during awards ceremonies.

- Demonstrate self control; your behavior reflects on your team, school, and community.
- Display humility and courtesy regardless of placement.
- Support and recognize performances by all teams. This includes remaining in your seats until all awards are distributed.
- Respect the decisions of the performance and safety judges.

**Repercussions for unsportsmanlike conduct may include, but are not limited to, point deductions and/or disqualification at current and/or future WACPC events.**

## COMPETITION ELIGIBILITY

WACPC follows WIAA eligibility guidelines and requirements in addition to those developed by WACPC. These guidelines do not apply to college athletes.

- The administration of a school is responsible for determining eligibility of all its athletes. School administration must verify the eligibility of each participating student prior to their first competitions each school year. A student must meet school and WIAA definition of a full-time student, be carried on a school's attendance roles and be meeting the minimum academic requirement in credits designated by the school in order to be eligible to participate in any interscholastic competition.
  - [Eligibility Waiver / Reporting Form](#)
- Teams must be composed of eligible, active athletes for the current school year.
  - All JV & Varsity scholastic teams may only use their schools enrollment, including charter schools, of full-time students in grades 9-12.
- Who may participate on public school teams:
  - Full-time public school students who attend the school in grades 9-12 and receive 100% of their education programming from that member school.
  - Full-time students enrolled in member charter schools are eligible only at the school of residence, that of which is affiliated with said charter school.
  - A home-based private education (home school) student who resides in the school district and meets the state law definition of a home based private education student. The law states: "3(g) HOME BASED PRIVATE EDUCATION PROGRAM. "Home-based private educational program" means a program of education instruction provided to a child by the child's parent or guardian or by a person designated by the parent or guardian. An instructional program provided to more than one family unit does not constitute a home-based private educational program."
  - If a district has multiple high schools, utilize the same method that is used for placement of full-time students attending your schools. Coaches should not recruit homeschool children. If

approached, coaches should direct families to the school athletic director or principal. Home school families should approach the district directly with the request for participation.

## AGE

- A student shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition if he/she reaches his/her 19th birthday before August 1 of any given school year.
- Students in grade 8 are ineligible to participate on JV or Varsity Teams.
- JV teams may consist of students from grades 9-12. These athletes can compete on both JV and Varsity teams as long as coaches and administration are both in agreement and it does not cause any harm, physically or mentally to the athlete.
  - Athletes competing on both JV and Varsity teams must be registered and rostered on the team prior to the mandated registration deadline.

## ACADEMICS

Academic eligibility is school specific. WACPC does not set any academic eligibility rules. Coaches must contact their school athletic director and/or administrators for specific guidelines on academic eligibility.

## ATTENDANCE

A student-athlete is eligible for interscholastic competition at a member school if he/she is carried on the attendance rolls as a duly enrolled full time Grade 9, 10, 11 or 12 student in that member school. (Subject to satisfying all other eligibility requirements.) Note: A full-time student is further defined as one where the member school is responsible for programming 100% of the student's school day. The student is eligible for like or similar awards, privileges, and services as all the other students and meets all obligations and responsibilities as other students, without exception.

- A student must complete eligibility in the four consecutive years starting with Grade 9 unless there are documented extenuating circumstances and a waiver has been provided.
- A student is ineligible if he/she has graduated from a school offering studies through Grade 12 or its equivalent.
- A student who graduated in May or June retains eligibility for any portion of a spring athletic schedule not completed by the end of the academic year. Mid-year graduation ends athletic eligibility on the last day of attendance.
- A student is ineligible if he/she has not been enrolled in some school by the 17th day of a semester or trimester, except upon request of a school in special cases involving sickness, accident, military service, social services assignment, etc.
- A student-athlete may not participate in school sports for more than four different years, and a student-athlete may not participate in the same sport for more than one season each school year.

## DETERMINING RESIDENCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

A full-time student, whether an adult or not, is eligible for varsity interscholastic competition only at the school within whose attendance boundaries his/her parents reside, within a given school district, with these additional provisions:

- Board of Education approved full-time student(s), paying their own tuition and residing full time with parents in their primary residence shall be afforded eligibility. Transfer students are subject to provisions outlined in the transfers section of this document and in the Senior High Handbook.
- The residence of a student's guardians shall determine eligibility in cases where both parents of a student are deceased. The execution of guardianship papers in situations where one or both parents are living does not by itself make a student eligible.
- In the event of a divorce or legal separation, whether pending or final, a student's residence at the beginning of the school year shall determine eligibility, except in situations involving transfer after the fourth consecutive semester following entry into grade 9. For the purpose of this rule, attendance at one day of school and/or attendance at one athletic practice shall determine 'beginning of school year.'

Under this rule, a student who transfers after the beginning of the school year shall be ineligible at the new school unless approval is granted by the Board of Control in accordance with the transfer and/or waiver provisions as described in the WIAA HS Handbook.

- D. A student whose tuition is paid by the school within whose attendance boundaries parents reside or by the state and is enrolled in a district approved program may be eligible at either school (first priority to school of residence) but (a) may not participate at both schools in the same year and (b) academic ineligibility accompanies student upon transfer. Transfer restrictions may also apply.
- E. A student whose tuition is paid by the school within whose attendance boundaries parents reside or by the state or who is participating full time in a legislated open enrollment option must meet all statutory timeline requirements. This provision extends the opportunity to decline attendance at the new school and continue at his/her school of residence. If the student begins the school year at the new school and then transfers back to school of residence after attending one or more days of school or one or more athletic practices, he/she shall be subject to transfer provisions as outlined in the transfer Section of this document.
- F. A student may continue being eligible in the same school even though parent(s) and/or student move from within that school's attendance boundaries, provided enrollment is continuous (unbroken in that school).
- G. After a student-athlete has not participated and/or has had their eligibility restricted for one calendar year due to reasons relating to residence and/or transfer, he/she becomes eligible.
- H. A student-athlete will not be eligible if his/her attendance at a particular school resulted from undue influence (special consideration because of athletic ability) on the part of any person.
- I. A student-athlete who has been declared ineligible at a school for disciplinary reasons, academic reasons or due to another State Association's provision retains that ineligibility status if he/she transfers to another school.
- J. Except in situations involving transfer after a student's sixth consecutive semester, a full-time student whose residence in a given district and attendance at a member school does not conform with any of the provisions outlined above shall be eligible for non-varsity competition only, for one calendar year, unless a waiver is provided as outlined in the WIAA HS Handbook under Waivers. Transfer students are subject to transfer provisions as outlined in the transfer section of this document and in the Senior High Handbook.
- K. Foreign exchange students can participate on a JV or Varsity team. WIAA rules allow for one year of eligibility for foreign students participating in exchange programs. All foreign exchange students must have a physical conducted in the United States prior to participating in practice or competition at a member school.

## **DETERMINING RESIDENCE FOR NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS**

A full-time student, whether an adult or not, is eligible for varsity interscholastic competition only if the student is residing full time with parents in their primary residence with these additional provisions:

- A. In the event of a divorce or legal separation, whether pending or final, a student's residence at the beginning of the school year shall determine eligibility except in situations involving transfer after a student's fourth consecutive semester. For the purpose of this rule, attendance at one day of school and/or attendance at one athletic practice shall determine 'beginning of school year'. Under this rule, a student who transfers after the beginning of the school year shall be ineligible at the new school unless approval is granted by the Board of Control in accordance with the waiver provisions as described in the WIAA HS Handbook under Waivers. Transfer restrictions may also apply.
- B. Residing full time with guardians shall determine eligibility in cases where both parents of a student are deceased. The execution of guardianship papers in situations where one or both parents are living does not by itself make a student eligible.
- C. A student may continue being eligible in the same school even though parent(s) and/or student move from within that school's traditional attendance area, provided enrollment is continuous (unbroken in that school).
- D. A student who has been in attendance in a nonpublic, self-contained school (i.e., grades K-12 or 7-12) for

- at least one complete school year prior to reaching Grade 9 and has not broken enrollment during that time is eligible in that nonpublic school upon entering Grade 9.
- E. Except in situations involving mid-year transfer and/or transfer after the fourth consecutive semester, students attending member residential schools shall be eligible at the member school provided they reside at the school or reside full time with parents in their primary residence.
  - F. Except in situations involving transfer after a student's sixth consecutive semester, a full-time student attending a nonpublic school but not residing in accordance with any of the provisions outlined above shall be eligible for non-varsity competition only, for one calendar year, unless a waiver is provided as outlined in the WIAA HS Handbook under Waivers.

## **TRANSFERS**

A full-time student may be afforded up to eight consecutive semesters of interscholastic eligibility upon entry into Grade 9. Transferring schools at any time may result in restrictions being imposed on eligibility, or in some cases a denial of eligibility. For the purpose of this rule, attendance at one day of school and/or attendance at one athletic practice shall determine 'beginning of school year.' These additional provisions relate to transfer cases:

- A. A student who transfers from any school into a member school after the sixth consecutive semester following entry into Grade 9 shall be ineligible for competition at any level for one calendar year, but may practice, unless the transfer is made necessary by a total and complete change in residence by parent(s). The calendar year (365 days) will be determined from a student's first day of attendance at the new school.
- B. Students entering 9th and/or 10th grade at the beginning of the school year and who are within the first four consecutive semesters of high school will be afforded unrestricted eligibility provided all other rules governing student eligibility are met.
- C. Students entering 11th grade are restricted to non-varsity opportunities for one calendar year.
- D. Students entering 12th grade as transfer students are ineligible to compete at any level for one calendar year but may practice.
- E. 9th grade students who transfer after the beginning of the school year and with written consent from both schools directly involved shall be restricted to non-varsity opportunities for the remainder of the school year. Restrictions are removed upon entering 10th grade.
- F. 10th or 11th grade students who transfer after the beginning of the school year and with written consent from both schools directly involved shall be restricted to non-varsity opportunities for one calendar year (365 days beginning with first day of attendance at the new school).
- G. In the event of divorce or legal separation, whether pending or final, residence at the beginning of the school year shall determine eligibility for students entering 9th and/or 10th grade. In situations involving transfer after the sixth consecutive semester following entry into grade 9 the student is ineligible to compete at any level for one calendar year but may practice.
- H. District policies with respect to intra-district transfer do not supersede WIAA transfer rules in situations involving post-sixth semester transfers. Intra-district transfers occurring after the sixth consecutive semester following entry into grade 9 result in the student being ineligible for competition at any level for one calendar year (365 days beginning with first day of attendance at the new school) but may practice.
- I. Unless transfer, including an accompanying total and complete change of parents' residence, is effective at the outset of a semester, a student cannot establish eligibility at his/her new school until the fifth calendar day of such transfer.
- J. If within the first six consecutive semesters following entry into grade 9, a student who transfers more than once in any given school year shall be ineligible for all interscholastic competition for the remainder of that current school year and will be eligible for non-varsity opportunities only for the balance of the calendar year. In situations involving transfer after the sixth consecutive semester following entry into grade 9 the student is ineligible to compete at any level for one calendar year but may practice.
- K. A student may not have eligibility in more than one member school at the same time. A parent or parents who move from a primary residence within one school's attendance boundaries, to a

- secondary residence within another school's attendance boundaries, may be required by the Board of Control to provide evidence of a total and complete move.
- L. A student who transfers from any school, whether or not a member school, with a status of ineligibility for disciplinary reasons, academic reasons and/or as a result of another State Association's regulation or sanction, retains such status at his/her new school for the same period as decreed by the former school. A student who transfers due to expulsion or removal for disciplinary reasons from the previous school is ineligible for the length of the expulsion as determined by the previous school's Board of Education. Note: A student who does not serve a penalty for violation by leaving the state and competing in another state, will be ineligible for the balance of the suspension upon return to the state.
  - M. No eligibility will be granted for a student whose residence within a school's attendance boundaries, with or without parents, or whose attendance at a school has been the result of undue influence (special consideration due to athletic ability or potential) on the part of any person, whether or not connected with the school.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION and PARENT'S PERMISSION**

A student-athlete, whether an adult or not, must have written permission from parents to participate in school athletics, an emergency information form, and he/she must have a physical examination (signed by a licensed physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice nurse prescriber) every other school year. A physical examination taken April 1 and thereafter is valid for the following two school years. Physical examination taken before April 1 is valid only for the remainder of that school year and the following school year.

## **TRAINING and CONDUCT**

A student-athlete must follow his/her school's code of conduct (training rules) on a year-round basis.

- A. A student-athlete who violates his/her school's code of conduct during the season of a sport (start of practice to final game) must be suspended from competition for a period of time specified in the code (minimum of one meet) if the violation involves (a) possession and/or use of alcohol, (b) possession and/or use of tobacco, including chewing tobacco and (c) use, possession, buying or selling of controlled substances, street drugs and performance enhancing substances (PES).
- B. The member school will determine minimum penalties for violation of any other provisions of its code of conduct, including out-of-season offenses and for any other unacceptable conduct contrary to the ideals, principles and standards of the school and this Association including but not limited to criminal behavior.
- C. Any student charged and/or convicted of a felony shall, upon the filing of felony charges, become ineligible for all further participation until the student has paid his/her debt to society and the courts consider the sentence served (including probation, community service, etc.).
- D. A student-athlete who violates his/her school's code of conduct at times other than during the actual season of a sport must be disciplined by the school, the nature of such discipline to be determined by the school as indicated in its code of conduct.
- E. A student-athlete who violates any part of the school or WIAA's code of conduct resulting in suspension for any portion of WIAA-sponsored tournament competition must be immediately declared ineligible for the remainder of tournament series in that sport. During the WIAA Tournament, an ineligible athlete may not suit up.
- F. A student-athlete, disqualified from a contest for flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct, is also suspended from the next competitive event at the same level of competition as the disqualification.
- G. Any player who, in the judgment of the official, intentionally spits on, strikes, slaps, kicks, pushes or aggressively physically contacts an official at any time shall be immediately ineligible for competition a minimum of 90 calendar days from the date of the confrontation. In addition, the player is ineligible to compete for the first 25% of the next season in that same sport.
- H. A school must provide an opportunity for the student to be heard prior to a penalty being enforced (except for felony charges). If a student appeals a suspension, according to the school's appeal procedure, the student is ineligible during the appeal process.
- I. Schools/individuals are prohibited during the regular season and the WIAA tournament series from practicing for regional, sectional, and state tournament preparation at sites and facilities hosting WIAA

tournaments.

## **AMATEUR STATUS**

A student-athlete must be an amateur in all recognized sports of this association in order to compete in any WIAA sport.

- A. A student-athlete may not accept, receive, or direct to another reimbursement in any form of salary, cash (including gift cards) or share of game or season proceeds for athletic accomplishments, such as being on a winning team, being selected for the school varsity team, or being a place winner in an individual tournament, etc.
- B. A student-athlete may receive: a medal, cup, trophy, or plaque from the sponsoring organization regardless of cost; school mementos valued not more than \$200; an award valued not more than \$100 retail for participation in an athletic contest in a WIAA recognized sport; and may retain non-school competition apparel worn by the student as part of the team uniform.
- C. A student-athlete may not receive compensation or benefit, directly or indirectly, for the use of name, picture, and/or personal appearance, as an athlete because of ability, potential and/or performance as an athlete.
- D. A student-athlete may not receive free and/or reduced rates on equipment, apparel, camps/clinics/instruction, and competitive opportunities that are not identical for any and all interested students.
- E. A student-athlete may not be identified (with or without permission) as an athlete, provide endorsement as an athlete or appear as an athlete in the promotion of a commercial/advertisement and/or profit-making event, item, plan, or service.
- F. A student-athlete may not participate in school athletics or in sports activities outside the school under a name other than his/her own name.

## **USE OF STUDENT IMAGE**

The participation of student-athletes in school and WIAA tournaments may result in the use of student-athlete images in promotion of school and WIAA events. In order to facilitate good communication, all questions regarding athletic participation at your school should be addressed to your athletic administrator.

## **COMPETITION REGISTRATION**

Only coaching members of WACPC may register a team for competition.

- It is the responsibility to attend a District Rules Meeting or view the presentation prior to registration.
- To register, the coaching member must be logged in to their account on [wacpc.com](http://wacpc.com).
- Full registration requirements can be found on the [Registration](#) page under Comps/Registration on [wacpc.com](http://wacpc.com).

## **REGISTRATION GUIDELINES**

- Registration Fees
  - Rates:
    - Varsity and JEM: \$25/Athlete - First Routine; \$125 flat fee/Second Routine
    - College: \$25/Athlete - First Routine; \$100 flat fee/Second Routine
  - Cancellations and Refunds:
    - Competitions will not be canceled due to inclement weather. In the event a facility is forced to shut down due to extreme conditions as directed by the municipality/district, WACPC will attempt to reschedule.
    - Registration fees are non-refundable.

- ALL team personnel must be over 18 and listed in team registration to be allowed in team-only areas.
  - Varsity athletes assisting with JEM teams must be in team registration in order to be in team only areas.
- Registration fees are applied per team, therefore:
  - any crossover athletes (allowable only from JV to Varsity) must be rostered and paid for on both team registrations. This must be done prior to the registration deadline to avoid late fees.
  - any Varsity athlete not performing at a regional competition may compete at state finals as long as they were registered with the team and are on the roster prior to the preliminary competition. The 75% rule will still apply.
- Alternates must be included when registering regardless of whether or not they perform.
- ALL student / adult managers, and/or coach's children must be rostered in team registration to be allowed in team-only areas. Fees are as follows:
- Registration must be completed with all information turned in by the registration deadline.
  - No team with an outstanding balance or missing registration requirement will be listed in the lineup. (Exception - team photo).
  - Coaches are responsible for checking the registration checklist on wacpc.com prior to competition to verify their registration is complete.
- Late Fees & Missing Requirements:
  - Payments for membership and competition entry fees must be received or postmarked by the mandated deadlines to avoid a late fee.
  - Late registrations will NOT be accepted for Varsity Cheer. Attempting late registration (including adding team members, alternates, team personnel, coaches, etc.) for JEM Cheer will result in a late fee.
  - All registration requirements must be completed before the mandated deadlines to avoid a late fee.
  - Late fees will be uniformly assessed and must be paid before teams will be allowed to compete.

## ADDITIONAL ROUTINES

Teams may choose to compete in either Gameday or Cheer Dance (not offered for College, or Elementary levels) as an additional routine.

If a team chooses to perform an additional routine, the 50% rule will apply. Teams competing in two routines must have 50% of the same athletes compete in their secondary routine who performed in their primary routine. The routine with the larger number of athletes performing will be considered the primary routine. **Failure to meet the 50% rule will result in disqualification of the second routine performed.** For instance, if a team performs a routine with 28 athletes, 14 of those SAME 28 athletes (minimum) would need to perform in the secondary routine.

## LINEUPS

WACPC will determine the division schedule (which divisions perform at which time of day) based on judging needs and avoiding the most number of conflicts between teams in multiple divisions. **Special requests for performance order/time of day will not be accommodated.**

All division lineups for Varsity Preliminaries, JEM Cheer Championships, and College Cheer will be generated by entering all competing teams into a randomizer and sorted to determine the performance order.

All division lineups for Varsity State Finals will be generated using a randomizer, however, the top qualifying team will not perform first in the division. As an example, if 6 teams qualify for finals, qualifiers 2-6 will be entered into the randomizer and sorted. The first team listed will perform first. The remaining qualifiers and the top qualifier will then be entered into the randomizer and sorted, determining the remainder of the performance order.

### **WACPC CHEER STATE SLIDE RULE**

For teams performing in two divisions, the team will receive no less than 20 minutes of break time following the end of the first routine and before they enter warm-up rotation for the second routine. After the lineup has been completed, if a team does not have an appropriate amount of break time between performances, the first routine will slide up to guarantee that time. If this team cannot slide up far enough to guarantee that time, the second routine will slide down.

## **DIVISIONS**

### **VARSITY CHEER DIVISIONS**

The Varsity Cheer State Championship series is for scholastic teams that may only use their schools enrollment, including charter schools, of full-time students in grades 9-12.

- **Varsity All Girl vs Coed** - A team competing in any All Girl division may not have any male athletes. A team with 1+ male athlete(s) on their team must register in the appropriate Co-Ed division.
- Teams may choose to compete in the **Cheer Dance division** as an additional routine only. Cheer Dance **MAY NOT** be an only routine.

### **TEAM DIVISIONS**

ALL GIRL TRADITIONAL (5-34 female athletes, 0 males)	COED TRADITIONAL (5-34 athletes; Small / 1 male; Large 2+ males)
ALL GIRL GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes, 0 males)	COED GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes)
ALL GIRL NON-TUMBLE (5-34 athletes, 0 males)	COED NON-TUMBLE (5-34 athletes; Small / 1 male; Large 2+ males)
CHEER DANCE (5-34 athletes) *Additional Routine ONLY*	

### **STUNT GROUP DIVISIONS**

ALL-GIRL INTERMEDIATE STUNT GROUP (4 female athletes)	COED PARTNER INTERMEDIATE STUNT GROUP (3 athletes)
ALL-GIRL ADVANCED STUNT GROUP (4 female athletes)	COED PARTNER ADVANCED STUNT GROUP (3 athletes)
Open to Varsity Athletes ONLY	

### **ALL-STATE DIVISIONS**

TUMBLE	LIMITED TUMBLE
Open to Varsity Athletes ONLY	

## **MASCOT DIVISION**

Individual division - Mascots may utilize teammates for set-up and break-down of routine props only.

## **VARSITY TEAM DIVISION SPLITS**

Coaches will enter in the appropriate amount of athletes performing in each routine/division. At the registration deadline, sub-divisional splits will occur with **Small (5-11 athletes), Medium (12-15 athletes), and Large (16+ athletes)** for *All Girl Traditional, All Girl Non Tumble, All Girl Gameday, and Coed Gameday*. Sub-divisional splits will occur with **Small (1 male), and Large (2+ males)** for *Coed Traditional and Coed Non Tumble*. *Cheer Dance* will **not have any sub-divisional splits**.

## **VARSITY CHEER FINALIST QUALIFICATION AND AWARDS**

All teams within a division will compete in a preliminary round with the top 50% moving on to finals. There will be no auto-qualifiers even if there are only 2 teams in a sub-division. If a tie occurs in the last qualifying position, all teams placing in that position will qualify for finals. Teams that earn **75% or more of their total possible score** will advance to **State Finals** in *all* Traditional and Non-Tumble divisions. All qualifying finalist teams will receive a plaque.

### ***Finalist Qualifying Information***

Upon qualification for finals, teams will automatically be placed in the performance schedule based on the lineup procedures. All information pertaining to the [State Cheer Championship Series](#), including performance lineups, will be available at [wacpc.com](http://wacpc.com).

## **VARSITY STATE CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS**

Trophies will be presented to the top half of each Varsity team division as follows:

# Teams per Division	# Awards
1 - 2 Teams	1 Award
3 - 4 Teams	2 Awards
5 - 6 Teams	3 Awards
7 - 8 Teams	4 Awards
9 or More Teams	5 Awards

Medals will be presented to the following:

- Individuals from the top three-placing teams in each division.
  - Medals are awarded and given to the number of athletes/managers/coaches that are registered.
- Individuals from the top three placing stunt groups in each division.
- The top three placing mascots will receive medals.
- Individuals named to the All-State teams will receive a certificate and a medal.

## **TIEBREAKER**

In the event of a tie, a tiebreaker will be utilized, using the following format:

1. Least amount of rule violations.
2. Least amount of performance deductions.
3. Highest sum of difficulty scores.
4. If the teams remain tied, the tie will stand and both teams will be awarded in that

place.

## **JUNIOR VARSITY, MIDDLE SCHOOL/REC & ELEMENTARY CHEER (JEM) CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The WACPC State JEM Dance Championships are designed for students in elementary, junior high, middle school, and non-varsity members of high school that include students in K - 12. Teams must follow NFHS and WACPC rules.

**Eligibility of a JEM Team** - A team is qualified to participate in the WACPC JEM Cheer Championships if:

- The team is affiliated with a school district as a school sponsored team.
- The team is sponsored by the district's rec department.
- The team operates under a 501(c)(3) as a government certified non-profit organization.
  - Teams under these circumstances may be asked to provide their 501(c)(3) certification.
- Teams are not eligible if any part of their organization has competed in an all-star gym based competition.
- Athletes may not crossover between Elementary, Middle School and/or JV divisions.

### **Age Definitions**

- JV teams may consist of athletes from 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. These athletes can compete on both JV and Varsity teams as long as they are registered and rostered on the team prior to the mandated registration deadline. Coaches and administration should both be aware of and in agreement with this decision.
- Middle School/Rec divisions may consist of athletes in 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Middle School/Rec divisions may include 9<sup>th</sup> graders if the school at which they are enrolled is considered a middle school and a letter from an administrator is submitted as verification.
  - No cheer program can create a team of only 9th grade students in the Middle School/Rec division. A team with only 9th grade students would be classified as JV, no matter if the students are coming from an intermediate school or a high school.
- Upper Elementary divisions may consist of athletes in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Lower Elementary divisions may consist of athletes in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- Students in grade 8 are ineligible to participate on JV or Varsity teams.

### **TEAM DIVISIONS**

<i>JV TRADITIONAL (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>MS/REC TRADITIONAL (5-34 athletes)</i>
<i>JV NON-TUMBLE (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>MS/REC NON-TUMBLE (5-34 athletes)</i>
<i>JV GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>MS/REC GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes)</i>
<i>JV CHEER DANCE (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>MS/REC CHEER DANCE (5-34 athletes)</i>
<i>UPPER ELEM/REC (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>LOWER ELEM/REC TRADITIONAL (5-34 athletes)</i>
<i>UPPER ELEM/REC GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>LOWER ELEM/REC GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes)</i>

### **JEM DIVISION SPLITS**

Coaches choose their team's division when registering for competition based on the listed divisions. At the registration deadline, divisions will be finalized. If 13 or more teams have registered in a division, the division will be split in half according to team size.

### **JEM CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS**

Trophies will be presented to the top half of each JEM team division as follows:

# Teams per Division	# Awards
1 - 2 Teams	1 Award
3 - 4 Teams	2 Awards
5 - 6 Teams	3 Awards
7 - 8 Teams	4 Awards
9 or More Teams	5 Awards

Medals will be presented to the following:

- Individuals from the top three-placing teams in each division.
- Medals are awarded and given to the number of athletes/managers/coaches that are registered.

### **TIEBREAKER**

In the event of a tie, a tiebreaker will be utilized, using the following format:

1. Least amount of rule violations.
2. Least amount of performance deductions.
3. Highest sum of difficulty scores.
4. If the teams remain tied, the tie will stand and both teams will be awarded in that place.

## **COLLEGE CHEER CHAMPIONSHIPS**

College teams from Wisconsin are eligible to compete at the WACPC State Cheer Championships competition. Teams will be scored with WACPC score sheets.

### **TEAM DIVISIONS**

<i>ALL-GIRL (5-34 athletes, no males)</i>	<i>COED (5-34 athletes, 1+ males)</i>
<i>GAMEDAY (5-34 athletes)</i>	<i>MASCOT (individual)</i>

### **MASCOT DIVISION**

Individual division - Mascots may utilize teammates for set-up and break-down of routine props only.

### **COLLEGE DIVISION SPLITS**

Coaches choose their team's division when registering for competition based on the listed divisions. At the registration deadline, divisions will be finalized. If 13 or more teams have registered in a division, the division will be split in half according to team size.

### **COLLEGE CHAMPIONSHIP AWARDS**

- A trophy will be presented to the top team in each division.
- Medals will be presented to the following:
  - Individuals from the top placing team in each division.
  - Medals are awarded and given to the number of athletes/managers/coaches that are registered.

### **TIEBREAKER**

In the event of a tie, a tiebreaker will be utilized, using the following format:

1. Least amount of rule violations.
2. Least amount of performance deductions.

3. Highest sum of difficulty scores.
4. If the teams remain tied, the tie will stand and both teams will be awarded in that place.

## CHEER TEAM ROUTINE GUIDELINES

### PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

- Cheer team routines will be performed on a mat with approximate dimensions of 6' x 42' x 1-3/8" (9 panel strips). Individual or stunt group divisions may have a smaller performance space that will be detailed in the competition information.
- All participants must begin the routine in a non-inverted position with at least one foot on the floor.

### TEAM ROUTINE TIMING

#### All routines have a maximum time limit:

- Traditional, Coed, and Non-Tumble routines have a maximum time of 2 minutes and 30 seconds.
- Cheer Dance routines have a maximum time of 1 minute and 30 seconds.
- Gameday routines have a maximum time of 3 minutes.

#### Start / Stop Timing of Routine:

- Teams will have a limit of one minute to take the floor. Timing to take the floor will begin from the announcement of the team to take the floor and end when the team hits their beginning pose; or the first beat of music/choreographed movement/sound occurs.
- After entering the performance floor, routine timing will begin with the first beat of music or choreographed movement/sound and stop with the final beat of music or choreographed movement/sound.
  - Team chants performed after the team has entered the performance surface will begin the routine time.
  - Circling the mat with flags/props will be considered the start of a routine time.

#### Calling for a Time Out

A coach may call a time-out by walking onto the performance area or otherwise signaling to event officials or judges under the following circumstances:

- An unsafe situation detected by a coach or team member(s).
- An injured athlete.
- Technical difficulties with music.

Procedures for dealing with a time-out will be determined by the situation. Minor adjustments in music and/or props must be corrected immediately, and the team will start their performance over. Please keep in mind that all performances are timed, and not calling a timeout for music difficulties may cause a timing deduction. In the case of an injury, the coach will remove the team from the performance area so the next team can perform. The trainer and coach will assess the injury to determine if the injured member can still perform. A competition official and the coach will then consult to reassign placement in the competition line-up. The team will be allowed to perform its entire routine without penalty or deduction. A competition official may call a time-out when deemed necessary.

**A TIME-OUT SHOULD BE VIEWED AS AN EMERGENCY MEASURE ONLY.**

## SCORESHEETS

Scoresheets for each routine type are posted on [wacpc.com](http://wacpc.com) and should be used as a reference for routine requirements. In addition, some divisions have specific restrictions or regulations that must be followed.

### **Reminders for Team Division Scoring:**

- **Any tumbling in a Non-Tumble routine will result in a disqualification.**
- **Cheer Dance** - Stunts are allowed but are limited to:
  - o Skills at prep level or below with the exception of T-lifts, waist-lifts, and skills passing above prep level that do not stop or stall.
  - o Pyramids are not allowed.
  - o **Failure to stay within these limitations will result in a 10-point Blatant Disregard for Rules deduction.**
- **Gameday** – Teams competing in the Gameday division must follow a set routine structure. Stunts and tumbling are limited, **no circling in with flags** and **props may not be placed in advance**. For details on the routine structure and restrictions, refer to the [Gameday Division Guidelines](#).

## VARSITY STUNT GROUP ROUTINE GUIDELINES

Coaches may choose to register athletes in the Varsity Stunt Groups divisions. There is no limit on how many stunt groups a team may register. **Athletes may NOT crossover from one stunt group to another.**

[Scoresheets](#) for stunt groups are posted on wacpc.com and should be used as a reference for routine requirements.

Stunt Groups have a maximum time limit of **1 minute** with or without music.

- The All-Girl division is limited to **four** female participants.
- The Coed division includes one female **top person**, one male **base**, and one additional **spotter** for a total of **three** participants.

## VARSITY ALL-STATE ROUTINE GUIDELINES

Coaches may choose to register varsity athletes to compete for the All-State teams. All-State teams are chosen to recognize the best athletes in the state of those who try out. There is no limit on how many athletes a coach may register to compete.

- All-State routines have a maximum time limit of **1 minute and 30 seconds**.
- All-State routine requirements are found on the [All-State](#) page under Recognition on wacpc.com.

### **Finalist Qualifying Process:**

- All State applicants will participate in two rounds of competition:
  - o Round 1: Applicants will be required to submit a video as outlined on wacpc.com;
  - o Round 2: Finalists will compete live at the Varsity & College State Finals.
- Approximately 50% of All State submissions will advance to the final round, taking into consideration the “natural break” in scores. Final All State selection will be approximately 20-30% of all submissions taking into consideration the “natural break” in scores.
- Finalists will be announced during Varsity State Preliminary sessions.
- Finalists will have a 24' deep x 42' long matted performance area.

## MASCOT ROUTINE GUIDELINES

Coaches may choose to register varsity or college athletes in the Mascot division.

- Mascot routines have a maximum time limit of **1 minute and 30 seconds**.

- Mascots will compete live in a single round at the Varsity & College State Finals.
- For mascot routine requirements and restrictions, please refer to the [Mascot Division Information](#).

## JUDGING

Every effort is made to provide qualified and objective judges.

- WACPC provides judges' training each year to ensure proper use of the scoresheets.
- Each judge completes a "Conflict of Interest" form. This tool helps the judge coordinator when assigning the performance judge panels.
- Performance judges are responsible for awarding scores for each routine. Judge coordinators will assign judges to achieve the fairest and most knowledgeable judging panels possible. For team routines, 2 performance judges are assigned to each scoresheet at minimum.
- WACPC utilizes review judges that perform checks on the scoresheets as they are completed.
- Judges will be monitored by a "lead" judge and judge coordinator. These positions are appointed by the Cheer Committee and reviewed yearly.

### Tally & Score Sheets

- Final scores will be posted on the Members Only page of the WACPC website within 24 hours of an event's conclusion.
- Members/Coaches may not post individual scores from other teams on social media.

## GENERAL SAFETY RULES

Safety and Education judges are responsible for rule violations and performance deductions. Safety and Education judges may be stationed near the performance floor and/or on the judging panel.

WACPC recognizes NFHS (National Federation of State High School Associations) as the authority on safety rules for cheer and requires all teams (high school age and below) to adhere to the rules found in the 2025-2026 NFHS Spirit Rules Book. Rulebooks are provided to all members upon completion of their membership. NFHS also provides a minimum (1) Spirit Rules book to all WIAA member schools. Coaches should inquire with their athletic director/administration. WACPC presents the NFHS rule changes in conjunction with the fall district meetings each year. [2025-2026 NFHS Rule Changes](#)

In addition to NFHS rules, WACPC follows the USA Cheer restriction for teams in Elementary, Middle School, and Junior High: **Rule 3.5.10 (USA Cheer Add-on): All tosses to cradles are prohibited for Elementary, Middle School, and Junior High cheerleading teams. Legal tosses to skills in Rule 3.5.4 are legal for Elementary, Middle School, and Junior High cheerleading teams.**

College cheer teams must adhere to the [2025-2026 USA College Cheer Rules](#).

WACPC expects coaches to know and follow these safety rules. Members may contact the Safety & Education Liaison at [cheerrules@wacpc.com](mailto:cheerrules@wacpc.com) to ask questions, receive clarifications, and request Legality Rulings on skills. Refer to the [Rule Interpretation](#) page of wacpc.com for instructions on how to submit requests.

**RULES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** An acknowledgement of the Cheer Safety and NFHS rules is required by coaches during the registration process in order to participate in any WACPC sanctioned competitions.

## OVERALL IMAGE

- Routine choreography should be appropriate and entertaining for all audience members.
  - Suggestive, offensive, or vulgar choreography and/or music inappropriate for family audiences will not be tolerated and may be penalized.
  - Vulgar or suggestive material is defined as any movement or choreography implying something improper or indecent, appearing offensive or sexual in content, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures or implications.
  - Choreography should be age-appropriate.
- Official school cheerleading uniforms and athletic footwear are required.
  - Apparel must be age appropriate.
    - Midriffs and undergarments must be covered.
    - Briefs must be long enough to completely cover the athletes' bottoms.
    - Tops must not expose cleavage.
  - Athletes must wear appropriate footwear throughout the routine. If a shoe comes off, the athlete must immediately replace it or a deduction may occur. The athlete should remove themselves from becoming a hazard to other performers, securely replace the shoe, then may return to the routine safely. A team will not be penalized if this procedure is followed. Failure to replace the shoe in a timely manner and/or performing a skill without appropriate footwear will result in a rule violation deduction based on the appropriate NFHS rule.

***Any of the above concerns could result in a violation or disqualification.***

## RULE/SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE DEDUCTIONS

Teams/individuals violating NFHS safety rules and/or WACPC competition rules may be assessed a deduction or a disqualification. Deductions will be given per infraction occurrence.

- **Performance Deductions** will be assessed for:
  - any falls and/or touchdowns that occur;
  - prohibited skills as defined for a division.
  - Additional information on deductions can be found in the Cheer Deductions sheets on the [Scoresheets](#) page of [wacpc.com](#).
- **Safety Deductions** will be assessed for:
  - Any team that displays a flagrant safety violation or blatantly disregards the safety rules will be disqualified from the competition.
  - Any team refusing to remove jewelry, glitter, or make any other safety compliant correction while “in the hole” may not enter onto the performing area until the correction is made.
    - Daith piercing ONLY allowed with valid medical notes. Any other piercing not removed will prohibit athletes from taking the floor.
  - Additional information on deductions can be found in the Cheer Deductions sheets on the [Scoresheets](#) page of [wacpc.com](#).
- **Noise Makers** - The WACPC Championship Series policy on noisemakers is in accordance with NFHS rules. Fans using noise makers will be asked to stop, and may be asked to leave by a WACPC official if there is continued use.
- **Teams may not throw** anything out to the audience during their performance.

**DECISIONS OF THE SAFETY & EDUCATION AND PERFORMANCE JUDGES ARE FINAL UNLESS CHALLENGED APPROPRIATELY. SEE WACPC SAFETY & EDUCATION AND PERFORMANCE DEDUCTION APPEAL.**

## **SAFETY AND PERFORMANCE DEDUCTION APPEAL**

After performing, coaches should pick up their teams' Deductions sheets (Rule Violations and Performance Deductions) and if applicable, Rubric Review forms. These forms will be available as soon as possible at the Review Table. Coaches will have the opportunity to appeal a deduction or rubricated score if they feel it is not correct. **Rubricated scores may only be appealed if the coach has submitted a skills inventory prior to the deadline listed on wacpc.com.** It is the coach's responsibility to verify their skills inventory has been received for each eligible routine.

- Coaches will have **15 minutes** from notification to pick up these forms to be eligible for appeal.
- Coaches will have **15 minutes** from the time the forms are picked up to request a review.
- Once the review is complete, a written decision will be provided to the coach. **This ruling is final and may not be appealed.** Any score changes will be indicated in the written decision and will be recorded in the tally. Any requests for clarification should be submitted to the appropriate judge coordinator after the event.

For further information on the review process, refer to [Review Process – Procedure and Timeframe](#).

## **GENERAL COMPETITION INFORMATION**

### **COACHES INFORMATION & EVENT MEETING**

Coaches will receive event details via email/social media/event BAND. No in-person meetings will be held the day of. Questions regarding rotation and process of the competition day should be directed to the Onsite Event Director listed in the coaches event information.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINER**

A qualified athletic trainer will be present. Athletes that require the athletic trainer to treat a preexisting condition must provide any materials needed (e.g., athletic tape and pre-wrap).

### **MAT TIME**

Teams will NOT be allowed to practice, warm up, or mark formations on the performance floor.

### **MUSIC**

It is the coach's responsibility to ensure any routine music is appropriate for competition. Music may be submitted for review to [music@wacpc.com](mailto:music@wacpc.com) following the Music Approval Submission Instructions found in the [Rule Interpretation](#) page on wacpc.com. Inappropriate music will be assessed a deduction.

WACPC recommends having routine music available to play from multiple sources. Coaches may be asked to submit their routine music prior to the competition.

### **STORAGE**

WACPC does not guarantee storage space for a team's personal belongings. It is highly recommended that teams arrive dressed and ready to compete. WACPC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **SPECTATOR INFORMATION**

### **VIDEOTAPING**

Videotaping others without the expressed consent of the team or individuals is not condoned by WACPC. Any

unsportsmanlike or unethical behavior by coaches, athletes and fans while videotaping of other routines could be considered a sportsmanship violation to be handled by the WACPC Ethics Committee.

## **NO CARRY-INS ALLOWED**

This is the policy of the venue and/or city health department regulations. Food deliveries will be refused. Prohibited carry-ins includes but is not limited to:

- water/beverages
- any type of food, including candy

Coaches must share this information with parents and athletes prior to arriving at the competition venue. Coaches should contact WACPC if an athlete has a medical/dietary need.

## **BANNERS / SIGNS**

Teams attending WACPC preliminary/regional/JEM events will not be allowed to tape or otherwise hang banners onto gymnasium walls, or other areas of the facility. State final event venues may allow banners to be hung the day of the event. Coaches should watch for competition information discussing what may be allowed. Events allowing banners must be hung in spaces that do not obstruct the view of officials, video/photography staff, or other spectators. Zip Ties and Command adhesive strips are allowed for hanging. Banners must be removed at the conclusion of a session.

Spectators are limited to one handheld poster sized sign and fan-sticks.

## **ADMISSIONS**

- JEM Cheer Championship: \$15.00 / person; Children under 5 - Free
- Varsity Cheer Preliminaries: \$15.00 / person; Children under 5 - Free
- Varsity and College State Finals: \$20.00 / person; Children under 5 - Free
  - Live Streaming will be available for this event.

## **APPAREL & CONCESSIONS**

- Pre-event Apparel Store - Select apparel and merchandise will be available for a pre-event order on [wacpc.com](http://wacpc.com). A limited amount of apparel and merchandise may be available for purchase the day of.
- Concessions will be available throughout the day at all events. A reminder that carry-ins are not allowed, and the venue/WACPC has the right to refuse any deliveries at the door.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

The following information should be used to determine where to send questions.

[cheerrules@wacpc.com](mailto:cheerrules@wacpc.com)

**NFHS & WACPC Rules Clarification**

**Help with definitions found in rubrics**

**Legality rulings (sending skill videos)**

**Questions regarding warnings/deductions received at event in Wisconsin**

**Interest in becoming a Tech Judge**

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[cheerjudges@wacpc.com](mailto:cheerjudges@wacpc.com)

**Requests for Judges**

**Feedback on Events**

Requests for scoresheet clarifications

Requests for scoresheets (without WACPC logo) to be used at local events

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[cheerinfo@wacpc.com](mailto:cheerinfo@wacpc.com)

All Other Questions!

Cheer Proposals/Concerns Form ([wacpc.com](http://wacpc.com))

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[membership@wacpc.com](mailto:membership@wacpc.com)

Membership related questions

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[registration@wacpc.com](mailto:registration@wacpc.com)

Competition registration questions