



POLICIES FOR TEAM CHEERLEADERS

Congratulations on the success of your school's football team and its section championship! It is an exciting time for your school and community as you prepare for your trip to the Minnesota State High School League State Football Tournament at U.S. Bank Stadium. We encourage you to enjoy this memorable opportunity and privilege.

The Minnesota State High School League has asked **Rachel Kienitz** to serve as the supervisor of cheer teams during the tournament at U.S. Bank Stadium. She will be present at the tournament to answer any questions that may arise during the tournament. Additionally, she will be ensuring all cheer teams are adhering to the cheerleading safety rules.

We want this to be a safe and positive experience for you and your cheerleaders. The following information should be helpful:

1. You may bring as many Varsity Sideline Cheerleaders as "were regularly rostered to the varsity football cheer team during the season, plus one mascot and one coach." JV Cheer teams will not be allowed to cheer on the sidelines. If your team has a mascot, a designated mascot assistant will be needed. This will need to be someone other than the head coach or school administrator. Coaches will need to go with their cheer team anytime they are on the field level. That includes meeting with MSHSL staff prior to going onto the field for a safety brief, and the entire time they are in the 'tunnel' area. If you are not able to attend the pre-meeting, another school appointed adult must fulfill your responsibilities. **If your team is stunting, there must be a coach with the proper certifications directly supervising your team from the field.**
2. Minnesota high school cheer teams must follow the rules found in the current edition of the *National Federation Spirit Rules Book*. This rules book and the corrections sheet were discussed at the rules meeting you needed to attend sponsored by the MSHSL. If you are not familiar with the rules book or do not have the corrections or the MSHSL cheerleading policy, ask your athletic director for help in obtaining them.
3. As a brief reminder here are some of the most often violated general safety rules in pages 11-17 of the 2024-25 NFHS Spirit Rules Book.
 - a. **Fingernails** (natural or artificial) can be a safety hazard. Nails must be at an appropriate length (which is **short, near the end of the fingers**) to minimize risk for the participants. (Page 11, Rule 2-1-4)
 - b. Hair must be worn in a manner to minimize risk to the participant. The MSHSL interpretation of this rule is, "to minimize risk during stunting or tumbling, hair must be tied back from the face and off the shoulders by all members of a stunting team." In other words, a ponytail or braid and secured on the sides. (Page 11, Rule 2-1-5 and page 13, hair situations)
 - c. Cheerleaders must remove **ALL** jewelry. Putting tape over piercing is not allowed. (Page 8, Rule 1, Definitions, page 15 Rule 3-1-1, and Page 15 -, situations and rulings).
 - d. Apparel and accessories must be appropriate for the activity involved to minimize risk to the participants. Cheer team members must wear athletic shoes (not gymnastics slippers). For walking boot, see Rule 2-1-11. (Page 15, rule 3-1-2).
 - e. In recent years glitter has become prevalent in cosmetics and lotions. Glitter that does not readily adhere ... is illegal. (Page 15, rule 3-1-5 and page 16, situation)
4. There will be an Athletic Trainer on site for all games. If necessary, you will be directed there.

POLICIES FOR CHEERLEADER SQUADS

* **NOTE:** Championship Game times WILL NOT start prior to the scheduled start time.

The following policies will apply to your cheer team during the tournament at U.S. Bank Stadium. Only officially recognized and school sponsored cheer teams are allowed on the field and must be in official school uniforms.

1. **CHEERLEADER SUPERVISOR:** Rachel Kienitz is the MSHSL representative for the cheerleaders and can usually be found with the other MSHSL workers at level at the bottom of section 138/140.
2. **SIZE OF OFFICIAL SQUAD:** The VARSITY football sideline cheer team, who were regularly rostered during the regular season. No JV cheer teams are allowed on the field. Per MSHSL and NFHS rules, **mascots must be in grades 7 – 12**. If your team has a mascot, a designated mascot assistant will be needed. This will need to be someone other than the head coach or school administrator.
3. **CHEERLEADERS ON THE PLAYING FIELD:** The number of cheerleaders admitted and allowed on the competition surface will be those varsity football sideline cheerleaders who were regularly rostered to the VARSITY football sideline cheerleading squad during the season. There must be a certified coach on the field with the cheerleaders when they are stunting. The cheerleaders and mascot who will work on the sidelines may enter the playing field after the previous game.
4. **ADMITTANCE:** Through the loading dock in uniform and with their team and advisor, or at the Pass Gate at the Legacy Entrance (they will then need to go down the stairs between Section 138/140 (to the right after entering the stadium) to field level and a security guard will direct them to MSHSL Staff or their team. Cheerleaders will be able to store items and warm-up in the Warm-up Room found off the loading dock entrance. It is recommended to arrive NO LATER than 1-hour prior to the start of your respective game.

Please do not bring valuables to U.S. Bank Stadium as lockers are not provided.

OPTION FOR ADDITIONAL CHEERLEADERS: Additional cheerleaders (non-varsity) MUST HAVE A TICKET and sit and cheer from the stands. They are NOT allowed on the playing field.

6. **PARKING:** NO reserved parking is available for the cheer teams. Cheerleaders should try to ride on the school buses or arrange for their own parking.
7. **SEATING:** Cheerleaders may sit in any open seat to watch other games.
8. **CERTIFICATES:**
NOTE: State Tournament Participation Certificate distribution has moved online. Your Athletic/Activities Director can use the following [link](#) to create a Participation Certificate using the; "Certificate Template" and "Certificate Data Template" with instructional video, for all participants, coaches, cheerleaders, and/or cheer coach.
9. **GENERAL REMINDERS:**
 - a. Cheerleaders must be in uniform approved by their school and wear athletic shoes.
 - b. ***Prohibited items: drums, noisemakers, cow bells, laser lights, etc.***
 - c. Posters or banners are permissible if in good taste but cannot be posted until 2 minutes left in the game prior to yours. They may not be in the 'end zones'. If you use a "run-through" banner for your team, it must be immediately cleaned up after your team has finished running onto the field.
 - d. Flags allowed if they are used in front of your school's fans.
 - e. No students below grade 7 allowed as team members, or on the sidelines.
 - f. Mascots must be students grade 7 – 12 who are approved by the school administration.

Good Luck and we look forward to seeing you!