

2011-2012 General Guidelines

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Cancellation Policies

If your team needs to cancel their performance at an event please contact us IMMEDIATELY at (877)322-2310. Although subject to terms and eligibility, the following policies apply:

- If your team needs to cancel for ANY reason, 90 or more days out from an event, you are eligible to receive a **FULL** refund.
- If your team needs to cancel for ANY reason, 89-22 days before an event, you are eligible to **TRANSFER** your fees to another event. This must be submitted in writing. The event must occur within the same competition season.
- If your team needs to cancel for ANY reason, 21 days or less before an event, there is **NO REFUND**.
- If your team needs to reduce participant numbers for ANY reason, there is **NO REFUND** of the difference.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS FOR A NO-SHOW, DROPOUT OR SCRATCH AT A COMPETITION.**

If an event is cancelled by EPIC Brands and not rescheduled, the team may transfer the payment to another event, or may receive a FULL refund.

Weather Cancellation Policies

If the facility is open, the competition WILL take place. (Exception: If the venue is located inside of a hotel, or another 24 hour facility, the venue may still be open. However, EPIC Brands reserves the right to postpone an event for any reason).

If the facility is closed, the competition will be rescheduled if at all possible.

NO REFUNDS will be given:

- If a team cannot make an event due to weather.
- A team not attending the rescheduling of the event due to weather.
- **Full refunds will only be given if the event is cancelled and NOT rescheduled.**

Eligibility

In order to be eligible to compete at Epic Brands events, all teams, regardless of division and classification, MUST follow the published Rules and Guidelines for Epic Brands, USASF (All-Star Cheer teams) and the US Finals (Recreation and School Cheer teams, Dance teams). College Cheer teams are to register in International Open/Open Co-ed Level 6 and follow their school mandated safety guidelines.

Proof of Age

If a dispute regarding a participant's age arises, the coach/director **must** provide an official document that legally verifies and certifies the correct name and age of the team member in question. Acceptable forms of certified identification include, but not limited to a birth certificate, passport, school-issued photo identification card, USASF ID card or a valid, state-issued driver's license. If the dispute is found to be accurate, the team may be disqualified from competition.

Challenges of Age

Coaches are required to bring documentation of ages (see above "Proof of Age" for list) for every participant. Coaches ONLY of a competing team within the same division may challenge the eligibility of another team to an Epic Brand Manager. The challenging coach must provide actual proof of ineligibility. Saying "she is too tall to be a Youth 8 years and under" or "she looks too old to be in our division" is not proof. If sufficient evidence warrants at that point, Epic Brands will require the challenged team to provide proof of eligibility.

An administrative fee of \$200 (cash only) will be charged to the challenging coach for this challenge (payable at the time of the challenge which will be refunded if the challenge is determined to be valid). If a challenge is deemed to be valid, the challenged team may be disqualified at the Epic Brands' discretion. Challenges may ONLY be made the day of the event, no later than 1 hour prior to that division's award ceremony!

Music Time Limits

Timing begins with the first movement, cheer, or note of music, whichever comes first. Any organized entrances, chants, spell-outs, tumbling, etc. will automatically start the clock. Teams will be assessed a penalty if the routine exceeds two minutes and thirty-five seconds

- **Cheer Teams** – 2:30 minutes – may consist of all music or any combination of cheer and music.
- **Dance Teams** – 2:30 minutes (minimum 1:45)

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Music

Music may be on a CD, iPod or MP3 Player. If on a CD, it must be in the CDR format; it SHOULD NOT be in the CDRW (CD re-writable) format. It is to your advantage to use a high quality CD. Please bring back-up CDs; Epic Brands will not be responsible if your CD, iPod or MP3 Player cannot be read by the sound equipment. Please label all CDs, iPod and MP3 Players, clearly with your team's name. When your team is called 'on deck', a coach or adult affiliated with your organization must report to the sound station. This representative is responsible for starting, pausing, and stopping your music and must be instructed to remain at the sound station, throughout your team's entire performance. **Tapes and CDRW's will not be able to be played by our DJ's equipment.**

Routine Start

- **Cheer Teams** – Prior to the start of your routine, participants must be positioned inside the performance area boundary and must have one foot, hand, or body part on the floor. (**Exception:** Flyer may have their feet positioned in their base(s) hands as long as the base(s) hands are resting on the performance surface). Please remember that hair is not a body part!
- **Dance Teams** – Timing begins with the first movement or note of music, whichever comes first.
- **Tiny/Mini Teams ONLY** – For those teams who have Tiny or Mini division teams, the coach may assist in placing the participants into their first formation in a timely fashion, but then must exit the mat immediately. Those coaches may remain seated in the front of the mat to help visually guide the routine. (**NOTE:** Excessive motions, words, jumping up and down, etc that could be distracting to the judges in any way will NOT be permitted.)

Out of Bounds

- **Cheer Teams:** There is no penalty for cheer participants stepping off the mat. Any element (i.e. jump, tumbling, basket toss, or pyramid and partner stunts) performed off the competition mat is NOT permitted. All elements/tumbling passes must begin and end within bounds. Landing of tumbling passes or dismounts from stunts off the performance surface is also illegal and will be subject to a penalty.
- **Dance Teams:** There is no penalty for stepping out of the performance area. However, all technical skills performed out of the performances surface are illegal and will be subject to a penalty.

Crossovers

Epic Brands allows cheer and dance participants to perform for more than one team and/or additional performances within the same organization. Each participant must pay the full registration fee for the first performance. Second performances will be a discounted price. If a member of one organization crosses over to a new organization, (**Example:** school team to an all-star team) then that participant **must pay the full registration fee for BOTH organizations.** Both organizations must contact the Epic Brands with what participant is a crossover from one organization to the other. Registration forms must indicate all crossover information and payment. Epic Brands will do its best to allow time in between performances. However, Epic Brands cannot guarantee separations between practice times, awards ceremonies or if a coach is responsible for multiple teams.

Performance Area

Epic Brands, will provide a 54'x 42' (9 strips) spring floor on the main performance floor. A 54'x 42' (9 strip) foam mat and a 12'x 60' spring tumble track for warm-up floor (Depending on the floor plan of the venue, these dimensions may vary slightly.) Additionally for dance teams, Epic Brands will provide, at selected events, a 42' x 42' Marley floor. At other events, when a Marley floor is not available, dance teams will perform on a 54' x 42' spring floor (**Exception:** CheerStarz events may have a 54' x 42' foam performance floor and not a 54'x 42' spring floor.)

Routine Interruption

Epic Brands sound technicians, and/or event staff will not be responsible for any labeling mistakes or poorly recorded music and will assume no responsibility for the quality of the recording or its compatibility with the venue's equipment. However if your routine is interrupted by our equipment failure, the failure of your CD or from Epic Brands staff you will have the following options:

- Your team must perform their routine full out, by using your own player or your back up copy of your music. Scoring will start at your point of interruption. Any deductions received prior to the interruption will stand as is.
- Your team may use the original performance with the interruption.

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Injury Interruption

Any member of Epic Brands staff, including the safety judge and/or head judge, or the organization's coach/director reserves the right to stop any performance due to an injury on the floor. Only under Epic Brands discretion, based on medical advice, will the injured team member be allowed to compete. If a participant is observed to be bleeding (i.e. nose bleed, scratch, etc) the routine must be stopped. Your team will have to be rescheduled within the same session as determined by the Epic Brands Manager. You will have to perform your routine in its entirety. However, any safety deductions already incurred will remain and all judging will restart at the point of interruption.

If an injury occurs during warm-up, Epic Brands will do our best to work your team back into the schedule, as close as possible to your original performance order. Furthermore, it will be up to the Epic Brands Manager whether or not to schedule your team's performance out of sequence.

Late Arrivals

If a team or member is late for their assigned warm-up or performance time, the team or member will either have the option of competing on schedule (no penalty) or being moved to a new performance time with a **10-point** penalty being assessed for going out of the performance sequence.

Scoring EXCEPTIONS

We reserve the right to combine, split, or delete divisions based on USASF and the US Final guidelines. Epic Brands may move your team to the appropriate division based on registration. All such changes will be indicated on the preliminary schedule that will be emailed to all directors and/or coaches.

- Competing against a score – a team must receive 75% or higher of the total possible score to be awarded 1st place.
- In the event of a tie the winner shall be determined by the team that has the highest total score in the "Overall" Category. If the tie remains because of identical totals in "Overall" Category, then the team with the least amount of total point deductions will be declared the winner.

Choreography & Appearance

Because cheerleading and its audiences are generally family-oriented, all choreography should be age appropriate. Additionally, any inappropriate uniforms, choreography or music (language, sexual gestures, explicit language, profanity and sexual moves including bumping/grinding and facials using vulgar movements) should be discouraged. Any infraction of this rule may result in a significant penalty being assessed by the Epic Brand Manager or Head Judge.

Sportsmanship

Epic Brands believes that sportsmanship is one of the most important aspects of cheerleading. We strive to keep all competitions positive, friendly, enjoyable and competitive. Unsportsmanlike behavior may include, but is not limited to: the use of any type of profanity; approaching or taunting fans, parents, cheerleaders, coaches, Epic Brands staff members, and or judges in a manner that does not show mutual respect and cooperation. Any display of unsportsmanlike behavior by a team member, coach, or parent and teams who don't remove themselves in a timely matter from the warm-up area/floor when their assigned time has elapsed will be penalized. Penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct will be as follows:

1. The first occurrence is a warning by an Epic Brands Event Producer, Manager or Head Judge.
2. The second occurrence will incur a **10-point** unsportsmanlike penalty against the team's overall score.
3. If Epic Brands staff finds a director, coach, participant or spectator displaying unsportsmanlike behavior, Epic Brands reserves the right to assess a **25-point** penalty against your team's overall score and/or disqualify your team immediately from the competition, with no further warning and no refund of fees.

In the event you witness unsportsmanlike behavior, please report the incident to an Epic Brands Manager or Head Judge, who will review the complaint and make a decision whether or not, a penalty will be imposed.

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Spotters

Competition routines and individual cheerleading skills continue to become more dynamic each year. Routines are consistently featuring partner stunts, basket tosses, pyramids and tumbling sequences that are nearly impossible to spot effectively without the safety spotters having intimate knowledge of each routine prior to a competition. In an effort to address this concern and to maintain our long standing record of safety, Epic Brands has implemented the following guidelines with regards to safety spotters at all of Epic Brands events.

The following stipulations will apply:

- Epic Brands will NOT provide spotters at events.
- Each team will be permitted to provide a maximum of (5) five Safety Spotter during their routine.
- Safety Spotters:
 - Must be 16 year or older.
 - Must be affiliated with the organization.
 - Must be attired differently than the team performing (team warm-ups preferred).
 - Must follow all Rules and Guidelines. Rules governing jewelry, clothing, and all other safety concerns must be adhered to by the spotters or will result in a safety deduction.
 - Should be trained to know proper spotting and catching technique.
- There should be NO verbal coaching by the Safety Spotters while their team is on the performance surface or during their routine. Any occurrence will be considered a general rule violation and will result in a deduction.

Legality Questions

If you need a clarification or have a question regarding the legality of a particular skill (stunt, pyramid or tumbling), please adhere to the following guidelines:

- a. Provide a DVD (or email) of the stunt, pyramid and/or tumbling in question. Please submit your legality, at least, three (3) weeks, in advance of the event you are attending. Mail your video to:

Epic Brands
Attn: Legality Interpretation
6679 Santa Barbara Rd, Suite K
Elkridge, MD 21075

Include the team name, team division, team level, coach's name, phone number(s), and email address.

- b. Make sure you show the skill in question by both the front and side views along with a written explanation. All DVDs will not be returned and will become the property of Epic Brands.
- c. Epic Brands will contact you by email with the official ruling of the stunt in question.
- d. Epic Brands can only interpret the skill in question by how it is performed on the video. However, if the stunt, tumbling and/or pyramid are performed at our events differently than originally submitted on video, you will incur safety deductions

Please note: Please be aware that due to the fast pace of today's routines, it maybe possible that some safety violations during an Epic Brand event maybe missed. Therefore this does not mean that they are legal, and that your team will not be called for them during another Epic Brand event, the US Finals or any USASF sanctioned event.

Judging Procedures

Epic Brands judges are contracted employees. These judges are not full-time, salaried employees of Epic Brands nor do they hold any permanent affiliations or loyalties to Epic Brands. These cheerleading and dance judges are vetted from a selective pool of highly qualified and knowledgeable individuals whose attendance, at our events, varies. Our judges may serve on a panel at one event, and may not serve on a panel until the end of the season. Scores will sometimes vary slightly between each event, but our judges are reminded to retain objectivity. Moreover, safety violations are infractions based on the rules and guidelines set forth by Epic Brands, USASF, AACCA and the US Finals. We realize that organizations attend many different events like the US Finals/USASF sanctioned events throughout the season and some infractions are never "called" or given warnings. When a skill is performed illegally at an Epic Brands event, that team will receive a deduction. Our philosophy is to deduct for these infractions because they violate safety issues and concerns laid out by Epic Brands, USASF, the US Finals and AACCA Rules.