



2026 Nebraska State Dance Handbook

REGISTRATION, PAYMENTS & ALL FORMS

Deadline:

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2025

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*All updates and changes displayed in **green** font*

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General Information

Please read, sign, and return the completed portion at the end of this booklet

- Location:** Heartland Event Center Website: <https://heartlandeventcenter.com>
700 E Stolley Park Rd
Grand Island, NE 68802
308-382-4515
- Dates:** Friday, February 20, Session 2 - (Class C2/D) One Ticket All Day
Saturday, February 21, Session 1 - (A/B) One Ticket All Day
Saturday, February 21, Session 2 - (C1) One Ticket All Day
- Admission:** Admission price information will be uploaded to the website www.ncacoach.org when it becomes available.
- Schedule:** The competition schedule will depend on the number of teams entered in the competition. The final schedule will be available in mid-January, 2026, on the NCA website at www.ncacoach.org. An email will be sent to all participating coaches when the schedule is posted.
- Entrance:** Team entrance will be on the SOUTH side of the Bosselman Conference Center.
Only participants, coaches, bus drivers, and media will be allowed to enter through the registration area.
- Regular spectator entrances are located on the SOUTHEAST side and NORTH side of the building.
- Food/Drink:** NO outside food or drink is allowed to be brought into the event center. Concessions will be available. Subway Team Orders will be available with eating area in the South Arena Upper Concourse.
- Parking:** School buses will be required to park between the Aurora Cooperative Pavilion and Tom Dinsdale Automotive Cattle Barn. A map will be provided upon arrival.
- Lodging:** Area hotels provide services that are critical to the success of the State Cheer and Dance Championships. The Grand Island/Hall County Convention & Visitors Bureau website has a complete listing of area hotels on their website. For lodging information, please visit www.visitgrandisland.com.
- Apparel:** Custom Sports will have apparel for sale. Please visit our website www.ncacoach.org for further information regarding state championship apparel. Click on the Cheer & Dance tab and follow the link for Custom Sports.
- Photos:** Callam Sports Photography will be providing team photos and action photography of the event. Information and order forms will be available on the NCA website www.ncacoach.org.
- Streaming:** Please visit our website www.ncacoach.org for the most up-to-date information regarding Video and Live Streaming information. Click on the Cheer & Dance tab and follow the link for Mr. Video.

Registration

***** DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2025 *****

- Only **varsity** teams from NSAA member schools are eligible to compete in the State Championship.
- Coaches **MUST** be a member of the Nebraska Coaches Association for their team to participate.
- **Schools may only co-op if the schools participate as an official co-op team in NSAA girls basketball. All other co-ops or mergers are strictly prohibited and will be denied entry into this event.**

Where to Register: Go to www.ncacoach.org – click on the Cheer & Dance tab and follow the link to Register for the 2026 State Cheer & Dance Championships.

The first page of the on-line registration will be for cheer teams. Dance teams should click on the link [Skip to the Dance Entry Form](#) near the top of the page.

Every student competing, including alternates, must be included on the on-line registration form. There will be a place to mark alternates on the registration.

If you need to make changes to the roster after you have registered, you will need to call Tina at the NCA office (402)434-5675 so she can make the necessary changes. DO NOT REGISTER AGAIN.

Cost:

- 1) There is a one-time cost of \$160.00 per team for up to 10 members.
- 2) There is an additional charge of \$20.00 per person over 10 team members.
- 3) If your team chooses to compete in more than one category there is an additional \$100.00 fee.
- 4) **Only TWO categories may be entered per team.**

Payment: Schools can make payment by sending a check or may call the office to make a credit card payment (4% convenience fee will be added) by **5PM DECEMBER 12.**

Required Forms:

1. **Liability Release and Waiver Form** (page 16-17) completed by each **participant and alternate(s)** (both sides). The coach must submit ALL forms together, by **5PM December 12**, with registration and payment to be considered registered for the event.
2. **Rules, Music, and Safety Course Acknowledgment Form** (page 18) must be signed by Athletic Director and Coach. **NEW INFORMATION NEEDED ON FORM - Certification of Squad Size – Number of Members Competing – NOT INCLUDING ALTERNATES.** The coach must submit ALL forms together, by **5PM December 12**, with registration and payment to be considered registered for the event.
3. **ALL** head coaches must complete the **Online NFHS Cheer & Dance Safety course by December 12th**. This is good for 4 years, so if you completed the course after **February 19, 2022** you are up to date.
4. **Music Proof of Purchase** must be submitted by the coach with registration and payment by **5PM December 12** to be considered registered for the event. (see page 11 for more details)

GOING ALL ELECTRONIC - DO NOT MAIL FORMS

ALL FORMS MUST BE SCANNED AS ONE FULL DOCUMENT AND SUBMITTED TOGETHER.

DO NOT send as separate scans.

Scan and email them to staff@ncacoach.org by **December 12.**

Your team will officially be registered once all forms and payment have been received. NO ENTRIES OR PAPERWORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 5PM DECEMBER 12.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST
(ALL ITEMS MUST BE COMPLETED, PAID FOR, AND RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 12th)

- _____ 1. Join 2025-2026 NCA as a PAID member by registering online- **REQUIRED AS A HEAD COACH**
- _____ 2. **ALL head coaches must complete the Online NFHS Cheer & Dance Safety course (\$85) by December 12th. This is good for 4 years - if you completed the course **after February 19, 2022** you are up to date. (Scan & email your certificate)**
- _____ 3. Register and Pay for team registration. **If using a credit card, payment must be made when registering OR you will need to call the office if paying later. (NOTE: There is a 4% convenience fee). You cannot go back in to pay later, you will have to call the office. DO NOT REREGISTER! Please plan ahead if your school requires pre-approval for check payments.** Check payments **MUST** be received on or before December 12th. Mail to NCA, 500 Charleston, Ste 2, Lincoln, NE 68508. Online Team Registration **OPENS NOVEMBER 17th.**
- _____ 4. Liability Release and Waiver Form (page 16-17) - Form **MUST** be completed on both sides by **each participate/alternate** and the parent.
- _____ 5. Rules, Music & Safety Course Acknowledgment Form (page 18) - Form **MUST** be signed by Athletic Director and Coach.
- _____ 6. Printed copy of Music Proof of Purchase/License if mixing music
- _____ 7. Submit items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 **ALL TOGETHER AS ONE SCANNED DOCUMENT**. SCAN and email them to staff@ncacoach.org PHOTOS OF DOCUMENTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED. **MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5PM DECEMBER 12th.**

*****NOTE*****

Your registration will not be complete until all the above items are completed and received by the NCA Staff.

No payments, registrations, or forms will be accepted after **5PM December 12th.**

CODE OF CONDUCT

NCA encourages and supports sportsmanship, integrity and fairness among participants and coaches. To ensure the most positive experience for all attendees, NCA asks that the following Code of Conduct be adhered to during the NCA State Cheer & Dance Championships:

1. Any questions or concerns that affect a team's performance or experience must be communicated by the coach to the Event Director. The appropriate Official will then be called to discuss the situation with the coach.
2. Participants, coaches, or spectators are prohibited from contacting the Judges during the competition.
3. Judges scores are final, and results may ONLY be reviewed for clarification.
4. In the event of a tabulation error, results will be reviewed and adjusted as deemed necessary.
5. Any unruly, aggressive, or belligerent behavior by participants, coaches, or spectators toward any other attendee or Event Staff will result in a deduction, potential team disqualification, removal from the event and/or barred participation from future NCA State Cheer & Dance Championships.
6. NCA reserves the right to remove any persons from a competition for unsafe or unsportsmanlike conduct.

CATEGORIES & CLASSES

Jazz	Hip Hop	Pom	High Kick
Class A	Class A	Class A	Class A
Class B	Class B	Class B	Class B
Class C1	Class C1	Class C	Class C1
Class C2	Class C2	Class C2	Class C2
Class D	Class D	Class D	Class D

At the time of registration closing (**12/12/2025**) there must be a minimum of at least FOUR TEAMS registered for the category (per class) to be included as a state championship event within the classification of schools. The NCA reserves the right to merge or combine classifications.

If your school enters a category that has fewer than four teams entered, your school will be able to select one of the following choices:

1. Accept the merger of classifications within the category during the same day of competition.
2. Move to a new category of competition.
3. Receive a full registration refund.

No refunds will be issued to a school that drops from an event after the schedule of the state championship is released. If the number of schools competing in a category drops below four school entries after the schedule is released, the category will remain as scheduled with full awards.

- 1) A team may opt to move up and compete in a larger class; however, a team may not move down and compete against a smaller class.
(Example: A Class B team competing in a Jazz routine may opt to compete against Class A Jazz teams. They may not compete against Class C or D Jazz teams.)
- 2) Only Varsity teams will be allowed to compete.
- 3) Teams must be from NSAA member schools only.
- 4) A school's class size is determined by using the NSAA classification for girls basketball. **Schools may only co-op if the schools participate as an official co-op team in NSAA girls basketball. All other co-ops or mergers are strictly prohibited and will be denied entry into this event.**
- 5) No All-Star or Studio teams are allowed.
- 6) There will be four categories in the Dance division. Teams may enter two of the four available categories. This must be specified on the registration form.
- 7) **Head coaches MUST have completed the NFHS Online Cheer & Dance Safety course (\$85) by December 12th. This is good for 4 years - if you completed the course after February 19, 2022 you are up to date.**

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

JAZZ - Jazz encompasses any range of jazz movement including but not limited to traditional jazz, contemporary, lyrical, musical theatre jazz, and jazz funk. Important characteristics include stylized dance movements and combinations, visual effects, and technical elements. Emphasis is placed on proper technical execution, control, musical interpretation, and team uniformity.

POM - Pom routines must utilize poms during 80% of the routine. Important characteristics include proper pom placement, strength of movement, dance technique, and routine staging. Emphasis is placed on precision, visual effectiveness, athleticism, and team uniformity. NOTE: If your team has any male dancers that choose to perform in pom, they are not required to hold poms.

HANDS FREE POMS – The use of hands-free poms will be allowed. Hands-free poms are defined as poms specifically made so that performers do not have to hold the poms but rather, they are affixed to the performers hand. Proper use means bars cannot be in the palm of the hand and only an elastic band can be between the supporting hand and the performance surface for skills, tricks, etc. A hair tie, rubber band, or tying pom strings/pieces together will not be counted as a hands-free pom.

HIP HOP - Hip Hop routines may include any street style movements (or combination of styles) that have evolved from the hip hop culture. Important characteristics include quality of movement, a grounded approach, creativity, flow, and control. Emphasis is placed on authentic style, execution, musical interpretation, originality, and team uniformity.

HIGH KICK - A kick routine requires teams to have a minimum of 60 kicks, performed by at least half of the dancers. A kick is defined as one foot remaining on the floor while the other foot lifts with force at least one inch from the floor. Important characteristics include variety of kicks/kick combinations, routine staging, creativity, and visual effects. Emphasis is placed on precision, timing, control, technique, and team uniformity (including height of kicks).

Teams with an odd number of dancers will have the allowance of one less. **Example:** a team has 15 members – both 8 dancers executing a kick AND 7 dancers executing a kick will count as the 'majority'

- Leg Holds: If the leg hold is lifted off the ground with force at or above 90 degrees and is performed by a majority of the team, it is considered a kick that counts toward the requirement.
- Ripple/Contagions: When a kick is performed in a ripple or a contagion by a majority of the team, it will count as one (1) kick toward the requirement.
- Chasing Ripples/Pickups: These kicks will count as one (1) kick, however many times it is completed by most of the team.
- Contracted/Can-Can Kicks: Any time the leg extends at or above 90 degrees, contracts and extends again at or above 90 degrees, it will be defined as separate kicks.
- Passe, flick kicks which kick behind the dancer, turn sequences, toe taps, kicks while kneeling or sitting, etc. will not be counted as kicks. **Leg placement in the attitude position will not be counted as a kick.**

TEAM PARTICIPANTS

There is no limitation on the number of team members. If teams perform in more than one category, it is recommended (but not required) to have the same number of dancers in each category. However, you must choose the category with the most dancers as the first category when completing the registration.

COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- 1) Alterations may be made in the event of injury or other serious circumstance. Alternates must also abide by the rules & regulations in all divisions in which they compete.
- 2) Formal, excessive, & choreographed entrances which involve dance, technical skills and all traditions/chants are not permitted. Dancers should enter in a timely fashion. **Teams have 30 seconds from the team's introduction to start the routine. If a team exceeds this time limit, a penalty of a .25-point deduction for 1-5 seconds or a .5-point deduction for 6 seconds and over will be assessed.**
- 3) All staging, backdrops, special effects, or any items that may damage or otherwise alter the performance floor or environment are prohibited (water, powder, feathers, glitter, etc.).
- 4) Marley is not available and center markers will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to stuffed animals, toys, alternate dancers, spacing ropes, etc. **A spacing rope marker, provided by UDA, will be the only spacing rope markers allowed.**
- 5) Teams will have a maximum of 2 minutes (2:00) to demonstrate their style and expertise. If a team exceeds the time limit by more than 3 seconds, they will be penalized.
- 6) Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement or note of music, whichever is first. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement or note of music, whichever is last.

CHOREOGRAPHY/COSTUMING

- 1) All facets of a performance/routine, including **costuming**, choreography & music selection, should be appropriate and suitable for family viewing and listening. Examples of inappropriate choreography may include, but are not limited to, vulgar or suggestive movement appearing offensive or sexual in content, displaying acts of violence, and/or relaying lewd or profane gestures. Music containing words unsuitable for family listening is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, swearwords and connotations of any type of sexual act or behavior, drugs, and/or violent acts or behavior. Removing improper language or words from a song and replacing with sound effects or other words may still constitute 'inappropriate.' Music, **costuming** or movement in which the appropriateness is questionable or with which uncertainty exists should be assumed by the coach to be inappropriate and removed, as to not put their team in an unfortunate situation. **Costuming must be well secured and appropriate for a family friendly environment.**
- 2) Shoes, on both feet, are recommended but not required while on the performance surface. Please note that should dancers choose to wear shoes, anything with wheels is not allowed (example: roller skates, roller blades, heelys, etc.). Wearing socks and or footed tights only is not allowed.
- 3) The use of powder, glitter or any airborne substance that lingers in the competition area is prohibited.
- 4) All costuming & makeup should be age appropriate & acceptable for family viewing.
- 5) When dancers are standing at attention, all costumes/uniforms must cover the midriff area completely. The midriff includes the entire midriff section from the bra line down, front of the body only. Nude body liners are acceptable. This rule applies to all categories. All male dancers' costumes must include a shirt that is fastened; however, it can be sleeveless.
- 6) Jewelry as part of the costume is allowed.
- 7) For the safety of all athletes, tights are HIGHLY recommended to be worn with costumes, but not required.

PROPS

Props are not allowed. A prop is defined as anything that is danced with that is not attached to your costume and is used to enhance the routine. Articles of clothing, such as jackets, headbands, sunglasses, hats etc. may be removed from the body and discarded; these items may not have any choreographed movement done with them. If taken off and danced with, it becomes a prop. Items/articles of clothing brought onto the performance floor but not worn are considered props. Poms being used in a pom routine do not count as props.

TUMBLING AND TRICKS (Executed by individuals)

Tumbling and/or tricks: An acrobatic or gymnastics skill executed by an individual dancer without contact, assistance or support of another dancer(s) and begins and ends on the performance surface.

Tumbling is allowed, but not required, in all divisions with the following limitations:

Note: The following are lists of commonly known dance skills. This does not mean that they are required for your routine, nor does this list encompass all skills that are legal/illegal.

ALLOWED

Aerial Cartwheels	Front/Back Walkovers
Front Handsprings	Round Offs (with or without hands)
Side Somi	Stalls/Freezes
Cartwheels	Forward/Backward Rolls
Head Spins	Windmills
Kip Ups	Headstands
Handstands	Headsprings (with hands)
Backbends	Shoulder Rolls
Front Aerial	Standing Back Handsprings (Not connected to other tumbling)

NOT ALLOWED

No handed Headsprings
Layouts
Toe Pitch Back Tucks
Barani
Dive Rolls
Front/back tucks
Shushunova

- 1) Hip over-head rotation skills with hand support are not allowed while holding poms in the supporting hand. (Exception: Forward & backward rolls are allowed.) The proper use of hands-free poms for hip over-head skills is allowed. *Please reference the Hands Free Poms Section (pg 7) for more details.*
- 2) Airborne hip overhead rotation skills without hand support are not allowed. (Exception: Front Aerials, Aerial cartwheels/side somis not connected to any other hip over-head rotation skill are allowed.)
 - a. Airborne hip overhead rotation skills without hand support may not involve any twisting motion or a blind landing. Exception: Round Offs with no hands will be allowed.
 - b. If using non-hands-free poms in a front aerial, aerial cartwheel/side somi, **it is recommended** that dancers place poms in one hand. If a dancer bears weight on the performance surface with a hand that is holding a pom during the skill, a penalty will be assessed. There are no exceptions to this rule.
- 3) Tumbling skills with hip over-head rotation:
 - a. Airborne skills with hand support may not be airborne in approach but may be airborne in descent if the approach is non-airborne (clarification: a round off is allowed- hands touch the ground before the foot leaves the ground).
 - b. Airborne skills with or without hand support that land in a perpendicular inversion may not have backward momentum in the approach.
- 4) Tumbling skills with hip over-head rotation is limited to 3 connected skills. (Example: 3 consecutive headsprings are allowed, 4 are not).
- 5) Simultaneous tumbling over or under another dancer that includes hip over-head rotation by both dancers is not allowed.
- 6) Choreographed drops to the knee, thigh, front, back, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are not allowed unless the dancer first bears weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
- 7) Landing in a push-up position onto the performance surface is allowed from a standing or kneeling position or from a jump with forward momentum. All variations of a Shushanova are not allowed.
- 8) Airborne skills without hip over-head rotation may not jump from a standing or squatting position backwards onto the neck, head, back, shoulders, and/or hands. Any kip up motion must initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground. (NOTE: this rule refers specifically and only to the 'rubber band'/'bronco' kip up skill, as well as any skill jumping backwards into a headstand/handstand stall).

There will be no additions or changes to skill restrictions for the 2026 state championships per the Nebraska Coaches Association. Below are the allowable lifts. Tier 1 is the highest possible lifts allowed at the NSAA Sub-District, District and State events. Tier 2 is the highest possible lifts allowed at the annual Nebraska State Cheer & Dance Championships.

Head coaches should consult with their local school administrators to ensure coaches, parents, athletes, and school officials are all in agreement regarding what restrictions will be followed outside of the Nebraska Coaches Association administered Nebraska State Cheer and Dance Championships and the Nebraska School Activities Association Sub-District, District and State events.

The Nebraska Coaches Association has no authority to regulate stunts or lifts outside of the annual Nebraska State Cheer and Dance Championships.

TIER 1 - DANCE LIFTS (Executed in pairs or groups)

- 1) Lifts in the pom category must be executed without poms in hand or with hands-free poms in hand.
CLARIFICATION: Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed.
- 2) A lift is defined as an individual being supported above the level of the floor by another individual or individuals of any time.
- 3) Stunts/lifts shall be limited to shoulder height or below. T lifts are acceptable and may be above shoulder height.
- 4) All vertical shoulder level stunts/lifts must have an additional spotter - 3 bases needed.
- 5) All vertical shoulder level stunts/lifts must remain on two feet except during the mount or dismount of the stunt/lift.
- 6) Twisting mounts and dismounts are limited to ½ twist. (Example - doing a walkover out of a lift does not violate this restriction)
- 7) All cradle dismounts, tosses, and inversions are prohibited. An athlete cannot be upside down (hips over head) at any point in a lift. Partner cartwheels or handstands over the back lifts include an inversion.

TIER 2 - DANCE LIFTS (Executed in pairs or groups)

- 1) The Executing Dancer must receive support from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the performance surface through the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
- 2) At least one Supporting Dancer must maintain contact with Executing Dancer(s) throughout the entire skill.
 - a) Lifting with poms is allowed.
 - b) Extensions, pyramids, and basket tosses are NOT allowed. (Extension is similar to a cheer full up.)
- 3) Swinging in and out of lifts and tricks in the prone and/or supine positions is not allowed; swinging forwards, backwards, or making a complete circular rotation will not be allowed if the Executing Dancer is in a prone position (body facing the ground).
- 4) Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) may occur if a Supporting Dancer maintains contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or is returning to the upright position.
- 5) Vertical Inversions are allowed if:
 - a) The Supporting Dancer(s) maintain contact until the Executing Dancer returns to the performance surface or returns to the upright position.
 - b) When the height of the Executing Dancers shoulders exceeds shoulder level of the Supporting dancer, there is at least one additional dancer to spot who does not bear weight.
(This is our caveat of inversions - PREP LEVEL.)

RELEASE MOVES - UNASSISTED DIMOUNTS TO PERFORMANCE SURFACE

- 1) Executing dancer may jump, leap, step, or push off a supporting dancer if:
 - a) The highest point of the released skill does not elevate the Executing Dancer's FEET above head level of the supporting dancer. (Exception: toe touches off a dancers back / leapfrog jumps will be allowed)
 - b) The Executing Dancer may not pass through the prone or inverted position after the release.
 - c) Toe pitch back tucks are not allowed.
- 2) Supporting Dancer may release/toss an Executing Dancer if:
 - a) The highest point of the release/toss does not elevate the Executing Dancer's hips above head level of the supporting dancer.
 - b) The Executing Dancer is not supine or inverted when released.
 - c) The Executing Dancer does not pass through a prone or inverted position after release.
 - d) Toe pitch back tucks are not allowed.

MUSIC GUIDELINES

- 1) For the most up to date music and copyright licensing information, visit www.varsity.com/music. If you have any questions, dance coaches should email dancemusic@varsity.com. Please check the Preferred Provider list at <https://www.usacheer.org/music/preferred-providers> for updates and changes periodically.
- 2) Teams must provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, **due by 5PM December 12th, 2025**
For example:
 - a. Clementune – provide team's invoice from camp.
 - b. iTunes – provide screenshot of the song you are using from your purchased playlist.
 - c. Music Provider – provide a printed copy of proof of licensing.
 - d. Band Music - If you'd like to perform to a recording of your band playing a single musical composition, you will need to provide documentation that confirms the following:
 - The team has secured a compulsory license to make copies of the recording made by the band or orchestra.
 - The band or orchestra recorded the song for and in conjunction with the cheer/dance squad.
 - The school principal or dean was aware of and approved this recording.
 - The band or orchestra does not provide music to other cheer/dance squads.
 - No other musical compositions are embodied in the recording to be used by the authorized cheer/dance squad.
- 3) Each team must have a coach/representative to play their music. This person is responsible for bringing the music to the music table and pushing "play" and "stop" for the team.
- 4) All music MUST be on MOBILE DEVICE. Please bring any necessary adapters for your device to fit a standard, 3.5mm auxiliary cord. Please have back-up music readily available on an alternate mobile device or CD.

INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE

A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

- 1) If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
- 2) The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.

B. FAULT OF TEAM

- 1) In the event a team's routine must be interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
- 2) The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.

C. INJURY

- 1) The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are a) competition officials b) the advisor/coach from the team performing or c) an injured individual.
- 2) The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
- 3) The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
 - a) The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) **AND THEN** the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
 - b) If medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
 - c) Any athlete who exhibits signs or symptoms consistent with concussion should be removed from the at that time and should not be allowed to return to activity that day. The athlete should not return to activity on a subsequent day until evaluated by and receive written clearance for such participation from a qualified physician (MD or DO specifically trained in concussion management).
 - d) In addition to Varsity Brands head injury policy, we encourage you to be familiar with the specific laws of the state.

PENALTIES

A deduction will be given for EACH safety/general competition rule violation. The point value of this deduction will be as follows:

- **0.25 points – Start of Routine - Time infractions of 1-5 seconds over time**
- **0.5 points – Start of Routine - Time infractions of 6 or more seconds over time**; Performance Error – any skill or trick executed incorrectly (ex. touching down on an aerial cartwheel with non-hands-free poms in hand)
- **1.0 points** – General Rules Violations including (but not limited to) time infractions of 3 - 5 seconds over time, not enough kicks, prop rules, costume/shoe rules, etc.
- **1.5 points** – Time infractions of 6 or more seconds over time, routine safety violations (ex. illegal lifts in all categories, lifting with non-hands-free poms in hands, etc.).

**** If you have any questions concerning the legality of any tumbling, partner work, or lifts please send a video to the NCA at staff@ncacoach.org. Videos may only be submitted by the head coach of the team.

Please include your name, the team name/school, and a contact phone number. Videos must be received prior to **January 23, 2026**. If received after the deadline the video will not be reviewed. ****

SPORTSMANSHIP

- 1) All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.
- 2) The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and any other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
- 3) When a coach is in discussion with an official, other coaches, athletes, and parents/spectators, they must maintain proper professional conduct. Failing to do so may result in a 1-point penalty, removal of coach, or disqualification.
- 4) Noisemakers of any kind are prohibited at this competition. (i.e. drums, horns, bells, etc.).

JUDGING PROCEDURES

Judges will be provided by Varsity Spirit, and they will be responsible for scoring each school performance according to the NCA competition score sheets. The identity and contact information of Judges will not be provided to schools, coaches, teams, or fans.

The judging panel will be split, with half judging Execution and half judging Choreography. Each section will be averaged, and then the Execution section average will be added to the Choreography section average. All judges will evaluate Communication/Projection and Overall Impression, and this score will be averaged among all judges.

SCORE CALCULATIONS

Below is a breakdown of score calculation. Sample scoresheets can be found on the NCA website under the Cheer/Dance tab. **ALL TEAMS BEGIN THE COMPETITION WITH 0 POINTS.**

Execution average – 40 pts

Choreography average – 40 pts

Communication/Projection average – 10 pts

Overall Impression average – 10 pts

Final Score – 100 pts

SCORES AND RANKINGS

Individual score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. All ties in each division or group will remain except for first place. In the event of a first-place tie, the tie will first be broken by carrying the decimal places out for the total score. If a tie remains, the ranking points from each judge will then be used to break the tie. Should a tie remain, the ranking points from the "Overall Effect/Impression" portion of the scoresheet will be used to break the tie. After the competition, teams will receive the judges' score sheets and comments for their team, as well as a ranking sheet with the names & scores of all teams in their group. No scores or rankings will be given over the telephone. **JUDGES SCORES ARE FINAL. TEAM RESULTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ANY OTHER PARTIES BY THE NCA OR VARSITY SPIRIT.**

FINALITY OF DECISIONS

- 1) By participating in this championship, each team agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final and results may ONLY be reviewed for clarification.
- 2) Any tabulation errors must be addressed on site, by the head coach, within **30 minutes** of the conclusion of the awards ceremony. In the event of a tabulation error, results will be reviewed and adjusted as deemed necessary.
- 3) Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative or procedural review of such decisions.
- 4) **JUDGES' SCORES ARE FINAL. TEAM RESULTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ANY OTHER PARTIES BY THE NCA OR VARSITY.**

DISQUALIFICATION

Any team and/or spectators that do not adhere to the terms and procedures of these Rules and Regulations will be subject to disqualification from the competition and will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition.

HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

- 1) **RULES & PROCEDURES** - Any question concerning the rules of the competition will be handled exclusively by the advisor/head coach of the team and shall be directed to the Event Director. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance.
- 2) **PERFORMANCE** - Any questions concerning the team's performance should be made to the Event Director immediately after the team's performance.
- 3) **Deduction Sheets** - All teams will have a deduction sheet, whether there is a deduction or not, following each performance. Head coaches can pick up the deduction sheet from the table located by the judging panels (Section 207). Questions regarding penalties can be made by the head coach of the team only and must be done within 20 minutes of their completed performance. Coaches will have 15 minutes from when their deduction worksheet is received to dispute the ruling. Any disputes made after that time frame will not be considered. If a dispute is submitted, the entire routine will be reviewed, including the deduction in question.

INTERPRETATIONS AND/OR RULINGS

Any INTERPRETATION of any aspect of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee will consist of the NCA, Event Director, and Head Judge. The Rules Committee will render a judgment to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition.

TROPHIES AND MEDALS

- 1) Trophies will be provided to the 1st and 2nd place teams in each category.
- 2) Individual medals will be awarded to participants on each first-place team.
- 3) The top five teams will be announced at the awards ceremony.
- 4) Teams will gather on the floor. Please follow the directions of the announcer.
- 5) Team photos of the 1st & 2nd place teams will take place on the floor as results are announced.
- 6) Teams will need to exit immediately following the awards ceremony so NCA Event Staff can prepare for the next session of competition.
- 7) **NO PARENTS or SPECTATORS WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE FLOOR. COACHES PLEASE COMMUNICATE THIS EXPECTATION WITH PARENTS/SPECTATORS PRIOR TO AND DURING THE COMPETITION. Coach's assistance to keep parents and spectators off the floor is expected.**

NOTE: For the awards ceremony to continue to be held in this manner the cooperation of coaches, teams, parents and spectators is required. Please communicate with families of participants prior to and during the competition.

EVENT FACILITY

- 1) The competition is scheduled to be held at The Heartland Events Center in Grand Island, Nebraska.
- 2) The performance floor will be the size of a regulation basketball court – **approximately 94 feet x 50 feet.**
- 3) The tournament officials shall have the right to alter the time and location of the competition, or cancel, in the event changes become necessary due to inclement weather, facility problems, or any other situation deemed by the tournament officials to be essential to the successful execution of the championship.

COMPETITOR WARM-UP AREA

Information regarding warm-up area, time and space will be available on the NCA event web page.

VENUE REGULATIONS

All individuals must adhere to Heartland Events Center Rules & Regulations:

1. All tickets are general admission and must be purchased online. Further information regarding ticket sales will be posted on the NCA [Cheer and Dance](#) page by mid-January.
2. Fans must stay off the performance floor before, during and after all sessions.
3. ADA Seating will be available during the event.
4. There will be a designated area for school affiliated nursing mothers.
5. No coolers or outside food or drink are allowed in the facility. Teams will be able to purchase Subway team orders which will be delivered to the team eating area in the South Arena Upper Concourse.
6. Use this [link](#) to see all of Heartland Events Center policies.

**NEBRASKA STATE CHEER & DANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
LIABILITY RELEASE AND WAIVER FORM**

Minor's Name _____ Parent/Legal Guardian Name _____
Address _____ City, State, Zip _____
Parent Phone Number _____ School _____
Cheer Category _____ AND/OR Dance Category _____

Liability Release: For good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, I _____, as parent or legal guardian of _____, a minor (hereinafter "Minor"), hereby grant the permission necessary to allow Minor to participate in the above Event to be conducted by Varsity Spirit Corporation ("Varsity Spirit") d/b/a Universal Cheerleaders Association ("UCA"), d/b/a Universal Dance Association ("UDA"), NSG Corporation ("NSG") d/b/a National Cheerleaders Association ("NCHA") and d/b/a National Dance Alliance ("NDA"), Nebraska State Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NSIAAA) and the Nebraska Coaches Association (NCA). I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, further agree to release and to hold harmless Varsity Spirit, NSG, The Heartland Event Center, on whose premises the Event will occur (hereinafter the "Location"), the affiliates of Varsity Spirit, NSG, and the Location, American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators, Inc., a not for profit corporation ("AACCA") and the respective directors, officers, representatives, members, agents and employees of Varsity Spirit, NSG and their respective affiliates, NSIAAA, and the NCA (hereinafter collectively "Releasees"), from any and all liability whether caused by negligence of the Releasees or otherwise for any claim, judgment, loss, liability, cost and expenses (including, without limitations, attorney's fees and costs) arising out of or connected with the Event, including any claim arising out of or connected with any illness or injury (minimal, serious, catastrophic and / or death) that Minor may incur or sustain during the Event, all activities associated with the Event and while traveling to and from the site for the Event whether or not the Event actually occurs. I further expressly agree to indemnify and hold harmless Releasees and Releasees' heirs, successors, assigns, executors and administrators against loss from any further claims, demands or actions that may subsequently be brought by Minor or by any other persons on the account of damages of any character resulting to Minor in any way from the foregoing activities. I further agree to reimburse and to make good to Releasees any loss or costs Releasees may have to pay as a result of any such action, claim or demand.

I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, hereby acknowledge the Releasees did not create and are not responsible for the choreography or execution of the competition routines (including stunts) performed at the Event and that none of the Releasees shall bear any responsibility for such.

I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, hereby warrant that I have read this Liability Release in its entirety and fully understand its contents. I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, am aware that this Liability Release releases Releasees from liability and contains an acknowledgement of my voluntary and knowing assumption of the risk of injury or illness. I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, further acknowledge that nothing in this Liability Release constitutes a guarantee that the Event will occur. I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, have signed this document voluntarily and of my own free will.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

(Page 1 of 2)

Supervision: A Coach/Adult (age 21 and over) is required to attend with participants. This Coach will be responsible for the participants at all times. Varsity Spirit Corporation d/b/a/ UCA and/or UDA, NSG Corporation d/b/a NCHA and/or d/b/a NDA, AACCA, NSIAAA and NCA are not responsible for participants' supervision.

Appearance Agreement: I understand that Varsity Spirit d/b/a UCA and/or UDA, NSG d/b/a NCHA and/or NDA, from time to time, produces promotional material relating to its programs. I understand that as participant and/ or a spectator at the Event that Minor may be included in videotapes, DVD's, podcasts and video casts or photographs taken during the Event. Therefore, without reservation or limitations, I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, hereby assign, transfer and grant to Varsity Spirit d/b/a UCA and/or UDA, NSG d/b/a NCHA and/or NDA, its successors, assignees, licensees, sponsors, any television networks, and all other commercial exhibitors the exclusive right to photograph and/or videotape Minor and to utilize such videotapes and photographs and Minor's name, face likeness, voice and appearance as a part of the Event or in any other media now in existence or hereafter developed, in advertising and promoting the Event, in advertising and promoting similar future events or in advertising and promotions relating to Varsity without reservations and limitations. I further understand that neither Varsity Spirit nor any third party is under any obligation to exercise any of the foregoing rights, licenses and privileges herein granted. I waive any right to inspect or approve the programs, copies thereof and any promotional materials related thereto.

Medical Release: I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, acknowledge and agree that such participation subjects Minor to possibility of physical illness or injury (minimal, serious, catastrophic and/or death) and that I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, acknowledge that Minor is assuming the risk of such illness or injury by participating in the event. In the event of such illness or injury, I authorize Varsity Spirit, NSG, NSIAAA, the NCA to obtain necessary medical treatment for Minor and hereby, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, release and hold harmless Releasees in the exercises of this authority. I further acknowledge and understand that I will be responsible for any and all medical and related bills that may be incurred on behalf of Minor for any illness or injury that Minor may sustain during the Event and while traveling to and from the site for the Event whether or not the Event actually occurs.

I represent that any medication to which Minor is allergic or medications that Minor is currently taking are listed below. I agree that Minor shall bring medications which Minor is currently taking with him / her to the Event and that he / she shall consume the prescribed dosage for such medications.

Medications (if any): _____

Allergic to (if any): _____

I acknowledge that the Minor suffers from the following conditions: _____

I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, hereby warrant that I have read this Participant Release and Waiver Form in its entirety and fully understand its contents. I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, am aware that this Participant Release and Waiver Form releases Releasees from liability and contains an acknowledgement of my voluntary and knowing assumption of the risk of injury or illness. I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, further acknowledge that nothing in this Participant Release and Waiver Form constitutes a guarantee that the Event will occur. I, in my own behalf and on behalf of Minor, have signed this document voluntarily and of my own free will.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Relationship to Minor _____ **Minor Birth date:** _____

RULES, MUSIC & SAFETY COURSE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

Complete AND return the form by December 12, 2025

**Scan and email it to:
staff@ncacoach.org**

Athletic Director/Coach – 2026 Rules & Regulations Acceptance Agreement

We have reviewed the Rules and Regulations with our entire team, and we hereby accept the Rules and Regulations as a fair and integral part of the tournament and agree to adhere to the rules, policies and procedures contained herein.

School

Date

Athletic Director Signature

Advisor/Coach signature

2026 Music Copyright Compliance Statement

I confirm that I have reviewed the Music Guidelines and understand the Copyright basics as presented by the Nebraska Coaches Association, and all sound recordings used in our team's music shall only be used with written license from the owner(s) of the sound recordings.

Advisor/Coach Signature

Advisor/Coach Name (please print)

Division/Category

Class A, B, C1, C2, D, Unified - based on NSAA
classification for Girls Basketball

**Certification of Squad Size – Number of Members
Competing – NOT INCLUDING ALTERNATES**

Date

NFHS Cheer & Dance Online Safety Course REQUIRED FOR ALL HEAD COACHES

***This certification is required for all head coaches and is good for 4 years.
I confirm that I have completed the online Cheer & Dance Safety Course
after FEBRUARY 19, 2022.***

Head Coach Name Signature

Date of Course Completion

Head Coach Name (printed)

FINALITY OF DECISIONS - By participating in this championship, each team agrees that the decisions by the judges will be final, and results may ONLY be reviewed for clarification. In the event of a tabulation error, results will be reviewed and adjusted as deemed necessary. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative or procedural review of such decisions. **JUDGES' SCORES ARE FINAL. TEAM RESULTS ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ANY OTHER PARTIES BY THE NCA OR VARSITY.**