Membership Handbook 2021-2022

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Our Mission**

Cheer Miami is a charitable cheer team committed to raising awareness and resources for organizations that support the LGBTQ+ community in Miami and its surrounding areas.

## Our goals are simple:

* We cheer.
* We raise money.
* We give back to the community.

## Our mottos:

* We all feel love, that's what joins us all together.

#OneTeam #OneLove #CheerMiami

Founded in May of 2020, Cheer Miami is a nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of Florida.  In May 2020, the Internal Revenue Services approved our nonprofit status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**EIN: 85-0738705**

(*Donors* to Cheer Miami can deduct contributions made under IRS Section 170)

Beginning of each year members will nominate organizations to be selected as the primary beneficiary. The board of directors will have the final say in the selected beneficiary for the year. Although a beneficiary is selected for the year, allocation of funds may be donated to other organizations at the discretion of the board of directors.

**The Board of Directors, Leadership and Committees**

Cheer Miami is governed by a Board of Directors, which operates in accordance with the organization's bylaws. The Board of Directors has the right to make all decisions on behalf of the organization and can make changes to policies as needed at any time. While the Board reserves the right to make changes without notice, the Board is committed to providing appropriate notice to the team of changes that directly affect them. Directors may appoint coaches, captains, or form committees as needed to assist with the daily operations of the team. Directors have the right to add or remove members to/from the organization at any time, for any reason*.*

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The Cheer Miami Team is governed by a Coach. The Coach is appointed by the Board of Directors. Any member of the Board of Directors may act as a Coach. The Coach as well as the Team needs to observe the rules set forth in the Cheer Miami Handbook.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Team Membership**

Cheer Miami is an inclusive organization. There is a spot for everyone on the team who cares about our mission. We have both performing and non-performing roles available to interested volunteers. All team members must be 18 or older at the time of team member sign ups.

***All team members must sign the handbook, provide proof of health insurance at any time, and sign all Cheer Miami and IDOL Cheer waivers.***

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**Full-Time Performing Team Member**

Full-time performers are the public face of the organization. They perform acrobatic stunts, dances and cheerleading routines at community events. Prospective team members must attend a series of clinics and a tryout in order to be considered for this role. Performing team members must demonstrate a basic level of cheerleading skill and athletic ability. They should not have injuries or medical conditions which would prevent them from safely participating in stunts. Full-Time team members must attend weekly practices.

**Periodic Performing Team Member**

A periodic performing team member is an individual who participates with the performing team as they are able. They serve as valuable alternates on the team and fill into any spot as needed. This role is considered a privilege and must be earned. Periodic team members will never replace full time team members in routines regardless of ability level. Periodic team members will be placed into routines after all full time team members, and may not be given routine positions if they cannot attend certain required practices.

First year team members are *only* eligible for this role if approved by the board. Periodic status is offered to those cheerleaders which have been approved by the board, served on the team in a full time performing status for at least one year, or have previously served on another Pride Cheer Team in a full time performing status for one year, but can no longer commit to weekly practices. Time spent on a Leave of Absence will not count towards a member’s year of full time service.

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**Volunteers**

A volunteer team member is any individual who wants to donate their time to Cheer Miami. Volunteers do not perform but assist behind the scenes such as taking charge of the cheer booth, giving out information at events, taking care of teams personal items and equipment, etc. Volunteers may change to performing status by trying out during yearly tryouts in August.

**Practice Information**

We practice on **Thursday’s from 7pm to 10pm weekly**.

* Location: Idol Cheer (7310 SW 45th St. Miami, FL 33155)

An additional gym waiver will be provided in addition to this handbook. Team members are expected to follow all gym rules (including no profanity) and will be expected to assist with cleaning up after practice.

**Cheer Miami Clinic’s**

Individuals who wish to participate as a team member of Cheer Miami must complete the clinic process. The clinic process consists of skills evaluation, interview with leadership and complete an application. Applicants should demonstrate commitment, positive attitude and the ability to learn and perform choreography. This includes returning members. The board of directors will make final selections of all applicants.

**Attendance Requirements**

We cannot fulfill our mission without team members commitment. The cheer season will begin in November and end in July. Attendance will be monitored weekly. Please see tardies, absences and no-shows to learn more about our policies.

**Holiday Schedule and Breaks**

Federal Holidays that take place on practice days will be canceled in observance of the holiday. We will observe the following holiday weeks listed below.

* Thanksgiving Week
* Christmas Week
* New Years Week

**Tardies, Absences and No-Shows**

As adults we understand the balance of work, family and social events. Cheer Miami expects 100 percent commitment but we understand that tardies and absences will be inevitable. Open communication is key for success. If you will be tardy or absent from practice please call or text the coach. If you know you will be absent more than 24 hours prior to practice please send an email to cheermiami2019@gmail.com. Absences that are communicated 24 hours in advance will be excused. Please understand that cheerleading requires all participants present to make progress and to be well prepared for performance events. There is no guarantee that any team member spot is secure. Although you will have a spot in the routine. An absence or tardy may run the risk of you being removed from a specific spot.

Failing to attend an event after a team member has indicated they will be present is seen as a “No show”. No shows will not be tolerated and will place the team member on probation for 60 days. Re-evaluation will take place following the 60 day probation by the board of directors to have the probation lifted or membership revoked.

**Dual Participation**

We understand some team members are active participants in other organizations. Team Members may not simultaneously represent two organizations at one event. Cheer Miami requires focus for the safety of others and yourself. You may opt out of an event to participate with another organization without consequences or reprisals.

**Probation**

Please note communication is key. If a team member has 3 or more unexcused absences. It will result in probation. Unexcused absences mean you do not show up to practice and you do not notify the coach or do not send an email to notify the board of directors of your absence. Probation means you will be monitored for 60 days. At the end of the 60 days the board of directors will review your membership status. In those 60 days we expect you to be on time and not miss any practices or events. If your membership is revoked you will no longer be able to participate at events as a performing member and must try out again for the following season. This organization is adult based and we understand the process of life. Please communicate your needs and we will do our best to accommodate you.

 **Leave of Absence Policy**

We understand some situations will be out of our control. Rather than quitting the team, we encourage team members to communicate with the Board of Directors and request a leave of absence (LOA). A leave of absence will relieve a team member of duties for a certain amount of time as needed. Every case is different and will be handled on a case to case basis. A leave of absence request must be submitted in writing to the board of directors via email at cheermiami2019@gmail.com.

**Medical LOA’s**

Should a cheerleader experience an injury in or outside of practice, or any other medical condition which prohibits their safe participation on the team, the Board will grant a “Medical LOA”. A medical leave of absence must be submitted in writing and accompanied by a doctor's note to cheermiami2019@gmail.com. Upon return, the team member must provide medical documentation from the primary care provider to the board that they are fit and able to safely return to physical activity.

The Board reserves the right to extend medical LOA’s if they feel cause for concern of safety of the individual or their teammates.

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Cheer Miami respects our team member’s right to privacy. A doctor’s note only needs to state if a team member is physically fit enough to participate in activities such as stunting, dancing, jumping, tumbling, etc.

**Financial Obligations**

Cheer Miami does not raise money for our personal items or travel. Our money is intended to be given to other non-profit organizations, and therefore, each team member will be expected to pay for their own uniforms, practice wear, and travel. The initial cost of purchasing all wearable items may be upwards of **$200.00**. Cheer Miami wears their uniforms for 5 years before re-designing and requiring all team members to purchase new uniforms. Therefore, returning team members will only pay to update “out of season” styles such as practice wear every year. Uniforms are required for performing team members.

Performing team members must purchase the designated practice wear and uniform. Practice gear consists of two Cheer Miami tanks/ t-shirts. The uniform will consist of either

* Option A) Shell, Skirt, Bow, or
* Option B) Short Sleeve Shell Top and Shorts

Payments are accepted in the form of debit or credit via Cheer Miami venmo, or money order/cashier’s check. Personal checks are **not** accepted.

*Optional* Cheer Miami branded items will be sold separately and not required to purchase for participation.

### **Team Member Contribution**

Team members will have a monthly or annual contribution. Individual contributions assist Cheer Miami with overhead and administrative expenses. Donations from performances, Pride events and other events will *not* be divided and allocated towards individual contributions.

* All performing team members (including periodic): One time annual donation of $200.00, or $20 monthly donation.

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Team members delinquent with individual contributions will not be allowed to participate in the cheerleading routine. Team members may hold private fundraisers to raise money for their individual contributions.

**Standards of Behavior and Other Guidelines**

Team members will be respectful of each other, team leadership, and all other community partners. Team members will remain courteous, professional, and kind at any Cheer Miami function including but not limited to practices, events and social gatherings. Insults and fighting will not be tolerated. Team members are encouraged to reach out to leadership for advice and for assistance in resolving any conflicts that may arise.

**Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy**

Cheer Miami strives to provide a safe space for LGBTQ+ and ally’s. We are committed to providing an experience that affirms the dignity and value of all individuals without regard to age, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious or spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic status, physical or mental abilities, appearance, or any other basis for exclusion. In pursuit of these efforts, all team members of the organization are expected to adhere to the following Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy set forth by Cheer Miami. Violation of any of the following policies may result in disciplinary actions at the discretion of the Board of Directors on a case to case basis. Cheer Miami encourages all of its team members to report any instance(s) of bullying or harassment to any person in leadership at any time. Reporting may also be done via an email to cheermiami2019@gmail.com All reports will be treated seriously and investigated with promptness and impartiality. Every effort will be made to protect the reporter from retaliation and/or reprisal.

**Bullying**

For purposes of this policy, bullying shall be defined as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more person(s) and my involve: teasing, social exclusion, threat, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, sexual, religious, or racial harassment, public or private humiliation, or destruction of property.

**Harassment**

For purposes of this policy, harassment is defined as behavior, motivated by discriminatory animus, that is unwelcome and offensive to the person(s) towards whom it is targeted. Sexual harassment shall be defined as behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome or offensive to the person(s) it is directed towards.

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**Closed Practices**

Practices are closed to the public. Friends, family, children, and pets are not allowed inside the facility during practice times. The Board of Directors may approve the attendance of visiting Sister team members or other community partners as they see fit.

**Safety**

Safety is our number one priority at Cheer Miami. Members are required to follow the safety guidelines established by Coaches and Athletic Director for stunts, tumbling, jumps, cheers and dance, both in practice and at all events. **If in doubt, ask.**

Performing team members will remove all jewelry or tape over jewelry that cannot be removed at all events and practices. Performing team members whose hair is longer than shoulder length shall be secured with a hair tie. Hair may be worn down at events where the individuals are *not* performing. Nails should be kept short and free of sharp points.

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**Prescribed Medication, Alcohol and Drug Use**

While representing Cheer Miami in *any capacity, team* members may not drink alcohol, smoke, vape, or use any other recreational drugs, legal or illegal. Team members who wish to stay after events where alcohol is present must remove all branded apparel and team wear. Team members who violate this policy will have a proper investigation. If the investigation concludes violation of this policy membership will be revoked immediately.

Members who participate in practice or events under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances will not be tolerated. Safety is our number one priority. Team members found to be under the influence during practice or events are not only putting themselves at risk for injury but will be putting others at risk for injury. Being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances at practices or events will put your membership at risk for revoking following a proper investigation.

Team members prescribed medications that alter safety awareness or mental focus must notify leadership immediately. Such prescriptions will not prevent a member from performing but will be placed in a role with lower risk for injury for themselves and others. Team members with certain medical conditions must have appropriate life saving medications on hand all at all events (i.e. EpiPens).

**Risk Management and Incident Reporting**

Cheer Miami has a process for documenting all incidents and the Vice-President is the person on Leadership responsible for collecting information and keeping a log of all incidents, no matter how minor an injury is.

Coaches and other members of Leadership may support in the collection of information including dates, times, incident details, causes, recommendations, and follow up actions. In addition to communicating with a leadership team member in person to begin the process of incident reporting, team members can also email cheermiami2019@gmail.com to request a soft copy of the incident report template.

**T-Shirt Exchanging**

Exchanging T-shirts with sister teams at different events is tradition. If you choose to participate in such traditions please keep in mind, traded attire must be treated respectfully. All members must abide by our smoking, alcohol and drug use policies while in our sister teams attire. If Cheer Miami attire is traded, it is up to the trading member to educate others on our smoking, alcohol and drug use policies. Please contact leadership if any sister team members violate smoking, alcohol and drug policy so the matter can be resolved as soon as possible.

**Team Equipment**

Team members assigned equipment at events are responsible for managing and returning equipment to leadership at the end of the event or the following practice. Team members that misplace or abandon equipment will be responsible for replacing the equipment or may be billed for the cost of misplaced/ abandoned items.

**Collecting Donations**

Donations collected during events will be submitted immediately. All donations will be turned into the treasurer. If the treasurer is not present, specific instructions will be given on designated personnel collecting contributions. Any team member found or reported taking donations for personal use will be considered theft. Members who are found using donations for personal use will have membership status revoked immediately and Cheer Miami will have the right to take legal actions as seen fit.

**Team Communication:**

The bulk of our communication outside of practice takes place in our team’s private *Whatsapp group*. This has proven to be the easiest method to communicate, calendar events, track attendance, etc. A team member who chooses not to use Whatsapp is responsible for finding a teammate from which to gain information.

All communication regarding notification of absences, requests for a leave of absence, status updates, official financial reports, and personal documentation (i.e. insurance) must be done via email. Our team’s email address is cheermiami2019@gmail.com. You will be required to maintain and check a personal email address. Please do not post or send personally or sensitive information on Band.

Leadership may reach out to you from time to time to check on your status if we have not heard from you for a while. Official status check-ins will come to your email, but you may be reminded of receipt of a check-in via social media, text, etc. Please respond. Failure to respond within a reasonable time will be interpreted as a lack of interest in the team and may result in removal from any internal communication groups.

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**Open Door Policy**

Any teammate may reach out to any person in a position of leadership at any time, should the individual feel they have concerns that they would like to be addressed. Leadership includes all Board Directors, coaches, and captains. However, issues regarding money must be directed to the treasurer.

All team members shall have the opportunity to meet with the Board of Directors and Team leadership on a quarterly basis.  These quarterly meetings will be scheduled in the team calendar.

**Social Media Policy**

Team members of Cheer Miami should understand that if they publicly post photos or videos of themselves in Cheer Miami uniform to their personal social media accounts, they can and will be seen as representatives of Cheer Miami. Therefore, if team members connect their personal accounts to Cheer Miami (*hashtags, links, mentions, tags*) they should avoid any defamatory, offensive or derogatory content. It will be considered as a violation of our Cheer Miami’s anti-bullying and harassment policy.

 If the Board believes a team member's social media is inappropriate, the team member will be informed of what and why, and allowed the opportunity to remove such posts, or posts connecting their accounts to Cheer Miami. Please remember that we are an inclusive organization that welcomes people of all races, ethnicities, religions, sexual identities, and socio-economic backgrounds to the team. We do not tolerate discrimination of any kind, on or off the mat.

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By signing below, the team member agrees to all policies listed within the 2021-2022 Cheer Miami handbook. The team member understands that the handbook serves as a general outline of policy. The Board of Directors reserves the right to elaborate upon, or amend the handbook at their discretion as needed, at any time.

**Team Membership Status:**

* Full Time Performer
* Periodic Performer
* Volunteer

**Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Itemized Yearly Contribution by Active Team Members**

This shell serve as a guide to the yearly out of pocket contributions made to Cheer Miami.

* Monthly Membership- $20.00
* Uniform- $150.00
* Practice Gear- $50.00
* Travel Expenses- Team members own responsibility