



UIL Spirit Safety FAQs

1) Who must comply with the cheerleading safety requirements pursuant to the revised UIL Constitution and Contest Rules section 1208 (y) and (z)?

The rule change applies to any person designated by the school as a cheer coach or sponsor.

2) What is the penalty for a school that does not comply with the UIL C&CR section 1208(y)(z) and/or the TEC Section 38.158?

The range of penalties as described under the UIL C&CR Section 29 that the District Executive Committee can impose.

3) How does a cheer sponsor/coach meet the requirements for concussion education and cheer risk minimization training?

A cheer sponsor or coach must complete the described training and education requirements, then submit written documentation to the appropriate school district personnel.

The concussion education requirements include completion of one hour of concussion every year or two hours of concussion education every two years.

4) How often will cheer sponsors/coaches be required to complete the required risk minimization cheer specific safety training?

This will vary depending on the provider of the training. A risk minimization course will have requirements that vary from course to course for completion and certification. Documentation must be submitted and kept on file by the school administration. The risk minimization safety training provided by AACCA is good for four years.

5) Where do cheer coaches/sponsors locate a qualified training course for concussion education or safety/risk minimization for cheerleading?

For purposes of compliance with the TEC Section 38.158, the UIL authorizes all Continuing Professional Education (CPE) providers that are approved and registered by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) as approved individuals and organization to provide education training.

A current list of providers is found on the TEA website and the TEA link can be found on the UIL website:

[http://tea.texas.gov/Texas Educators/Preparation and Continuing Education/Continuing Professional Education \(CPE\)/Continuing Professional Education Information/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Preparation_and_Continuing_Education/Continuing_Professional_Education_(CPE)/Continuing_Professional_Education_Information/).

Concussion training can also be located online through either:

Texas High School Coaches Association www.thsca.com

Texas Girls Coaches Association www.austintgca.com

Cheer safety and risk minimization courses are available through the National Federation of High Schools website. NFHS has two specific online courses available to meet the UIL requirement prescribed for cheer safety (<https://nfhslearn.com/courses>)-

The Cheer and Dance: Fundamentals of Coaching Cheer and Dance (\$50)

AACCA Spirit Safety Certification (\$75)

6) Do cheerleaders and a parent/guardian need to sign the UIL Concussion Acknowledgement Form?

Yes. All cheerleading program participants must complete the UIL Concussion Acknowledgement Form and file it with school district personnel for the current school year.

7) Will a cheerleader, who is believed to have a sustained concussion, be required to complete a return-to-play protocol?

Yes. Under the revised UIL rule, cheer participants will follow the same concussion rules as athletes. Any student participating in a cheerleading program suspected of having a concussion must be evaluated by his or her treating physician. The participant's treating physician must provide a written statement that, in his or her professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return-to-play before the participant may begin the school districts COT return-to-play.

8) Are teacher or other school personnel comments, that may be used as a part the selection process of cheerleaders and drill team members, subject to disclosure if a parent requests to review the comments?

Yes. Under the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA), an educational agency or institution shall give full rights under the Act to review the educational records of a child to either parent unless circumstances exist that revoke these rights (such as a court order related to divorce, separation, or custody issues). An educational record is defined under FERPA as "...those records that are directly related to a student; and maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution." Parents have the right to review records that only pertain to their child, not the children of other parents.

The recommendations may not be anonymous. In order to provide a parent with full information about a child's school activities under Section 26.008 of the Education Code and to allow the parent to be a full partner in the child's education under Section 26.001 (a), an evaluation or recommendation that determines whether a student may participate in a school-related program must contain the name of the person who submitted the evaluation or recommendation. Additional information on teacher evaluations and student privacy should be directed to the Texas Education Agency.

9) *Are cheerleaders allowed to schedule school practice on a Sunday?*

Yes. The local school district may allow a cheerleading practice session on a Sunday. State law limits schools to no more than eight hours of practice outside of the school day during the school week, per activity. School week is defined as Monday to the end of school on the last instructional day of the week (usually Friday).

10) *Can an ineligible student who has failed a class try out for cheerleading squad?*

If the actual participation does not occur until the next school year, it would not be considered violation if the district chooses to permit currently ineligible students to participate in the tryout performance. This response does not require schools to allow academically ineligible students to try out for cheerleaders, but it permits schools to do so.

11) *How does the one contest per school week apply to cheerleaders?*

It would not be a violation for cheerleaders to cheer at a double header (two contests at same site on one school night) or to participate in a pep rally prior to a contest and also lead cheers at the contest even though both occur during the school week. However, cheerleaders are not permitted to lead cheers for contests held on separate school nights during the school week unless an exception allowed under §76.1001 (cited above) applies to one or both of the contests.

12) *How are cheerleaders selected for the school squads?*

UIL does not set tryout procedures for cheerleading or any extracurricular activity. The local school district determines the parameters for selections of all squads and participation level.

13) *May practice for drill team and cheerleading be conducted during tutorial time, study hall time, or during homeroom time?* No.

14) *May a cheerleader enroll in an athletics class and a cheerleading during a school day?*

Yes. The Texas Administrative Code does not prohibit a student from enrolling in any number of state approved courses. However, UIL rules specifically prohibit students from being enrolled in

more than one physical education and/or athletic class that is considered an activity class. The cheerleading activity period is an exception and may occur with local school approval.

15) *May ineligible students attend pep rallies?*

All students may attend. Only eligible students may be in uniform and actually take part in pep rally performances to include leading cheers, participating in dance routines, playing in the band, giving speeches or other types of participation.

16) *May ineligible drill team members and cheerleaders travel with their group to a competitive activity?* No.

17) *May ineligible drill team members and cheerleaders travel on educational field trips?*

Yes, but they may not participate or assist with a public performance.

Additional Cheerleading Resources

Texas Girls Coaches Association

www.austintgca.org

The America Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators

www.aacca.org

Universal Cheerleaders Association

www.uca.varsity.com

National Cheerleaders Association

www.nca.varsity.com

United Spirit Association

www.varsity.com

United States Cheer

www.usacheer.net

National Cheer Safety Foundation

www.nationalcheersafety.com