

CARLOW CHEERLEADING HANDBOOK



2019-2020

Coach Matthew D'Amico

ATTENDANCE

- **ALL PRACTICES, GAMES, FUNDRAISERS AND OTHER EVENTS ARE MANDATORY!**
 - The only exception is emergencies or unexpected illnesses/injuries.
- Please give a two-week's notice regarding events such as weddings, scheduled appointments, vacations, etc. so that we can make necessary arrangements for the event or game that will be missed.
- Missing Carlow Cheerleading events for other clubs, sports, or activities will not be excused.
- The cheerleader is expected to show up properly dressed and on time for all games, events and practices.
- Continuously showing up late or leaving early will not be tolerated.
- If the cheerleader arrives late or unprepared to a game, the coach reserves the right to sit the cheerleader out of quarter cheers, halftime, and possibly the entire game.
- If a cheerleader is found to have been untrue about an absence, then he/she is subject to disciplinary action and possible suspension and/or dismissal from the squad.
- Being a Carlow Cheerleader requires time management. It is the cheerleader's responsibility to manage their time **EFFECTIVELY** to attend all team activities. Athletes will **NOT** be excused from games and or practices due to procrastination of school work and or personal endeavors. (I.E. birthday outings, hair and or nail appointments, work, etc.).

BEHAVIOR

- Cheerleaders are role models and community leaders. Remember that there are people watching everything you say and do. Because of this, the Carlow University Cheerleaders are expected to set high standards for Carlow University.
- The cheerleader will represent the squad in a professional, respectful, and appropriate manner and will act like a **LEADER AT ALL TIMES**.
- The cheerleader will always demonstrate respect to the authority in charge. He/she should be adhering to all directions given by that person (coaches, captains, faculty, etc.).
- Disrespect of coaches and teammates **WILL NOT** be tolerated. This kind of behavior could result in individual or team conditioning. If the behavior remains consistently disrespectful after addressed, the cheerleader will be removed from the team.
- The cheerleader must realize that he/she always represents the University, whether at practice or in public, whether in uniform or not. Poor representation of Carlow Cheerleading and Carlow University can result in individual or team conditioning. If the behavior remains consistently poor after addressed, the cheerleader will be removed from the team.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- All University policies will be enforced throughout the season.
- **These rules apply to infractions that occur 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.**
- Carlow University will NOT tolerate any form of hazing, harassment, bullying, racial or ethnic intimidation, or sexual harassment.
- Alcohol, steroid and drug violations will be handled according to University policy.
- All Carlow Cheerleaders must maintain a 2.0 GPA to be eligible to cheer. If they fall below this cumulative GPA, the cheerleader will be removed from team activities until their grades are at the acceptable GPA level.
- If the cheerleader is not eligible to cheer, he/she is still required to attend all practices, games, and events. He/she should be dressed appropriately for the event as well.
 - Cheerleaders who do not have grades to cheer will still attend practice and utilize this time to do assignments and study.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It is fully expected that no cheerleader is posting negative, vulgar, or defaming images or comments on social media regarding their teammates, coaches, University Faculty/Staff or anything related to Carlow University or the Carlow Cheerleading Program. This includes, but is not limited to, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat. By signing the rule/contract agreement sheet, the cheerleader is agreeing to behave and represent Carlow University appropriately on social media. If any violations to this agreement should occur, it will be at the coach's discretion as to how this will be handled and what punishment will be given.

GAME AND PRACTICE RULES

- **NO STUNTING, JUMPING OR TUMBLING without a coach present.**
- **NO ALCOHOL BEFORE OR DURING ANY CHEERLEADING EVENT.**
- Limit talking in between cheers at games or events.
- **Be ready and pay attention** for when cheers are called and/or directions are given.
- During breaks and half time when you are not cheering remember you are still in uniform and need to conduct yourself accordingly.
- Show good sportsmanship, even if the other team is taunting us, the players or other fans. Never yell or argue back – you are a cheerleader and there to cheer, not fight.
- Remember, safety first. Do not let friends and family attending the game steal your attention while stunting or spotting.
- No cellphones are to be used during games – cheerleaders are permitted to use them during breaks given by the coach or when given permission from the coach.
- No food or gum should be eaten during any cheerleading activities except when given permission from the coach.
- Have fun!!! You are here to cheer because you love doing so! Enjoy your time at the games (and even at practice) because your enjoyment is reflected in how you cheer and your years cheering in college will fly by!

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- Hair should be styled according to direction by the coach and/or captains at every game, event and practice.
 - Hair should also be kept to natural colors – when coloring hair, please consult with the coach prior to making any changes.
- **No jewelry is to be worn. NO EXCEPTION!**
 - All facial piercings must be removed or covered with a band-aid at all practices, games and events.
- Proper cheer or tennis shoes are to be worn at all times.
- For games and events, the cheerleader is to wear SOLID white socks, their briefs and a white sports bra.
- Nail polish must be clear or a pale neutral color for all games and events. Nails should not be grown significantly long over the edge of the finger tips.
 - Nail exceptions can be made if the cheerleader has an event to attend (ex: wedding). However, this will limit stunting and tumbling at that time. Nails will also need to be removed or painted back within 7 days of the event.
- **If a cheerleader is not properly dressed, then he/she will not be eligible to cheer until he/she makes those corrections.**

INJURIES

- If the cheerleader is unable to cheer, stunt, jump or tumble due to injury extending beyond **one week**, the cheerleader must have a note from a doctor or athletic trainer. The note must be specific and detailed as to what the cheerleader can and cannot do (stunt, tumble, jump, cheer, etc.), and it must also indicate the dates for the restriction (beginning and ending).
- If the cheerleader is injured, he/she is still required to attend all practices, games, and events. He/she should be dressed appropriately for the event as well.

CELL PHONES

- **No cellphones** are to be used during practice or games! Cell phones may only be used during breaks given by the coach.
- If parents, relatives, friends, etc. need to reach you in the event of an emergency during a practice or a game they can call the coach on his/her cell phone.

ENFORCEMENT OF RULES

STRIKE SYSTEM

- Carlow Cheerleading will operate on a strike system. Each rule violation *may* result in a strike. Once 5 strikes have been received, the cheerleader is removed from the team.
 - 1st offence = 1st strike and a verbal warning
 - 2nd offence = 2nd strike and written warning – cheerleader will sign and acknowledge this warning.
 - 3rd offence = 3rd strike and automatic benching for 1 week.
 - 4th offence = 4th strike, meeting with coach to evaluate future on team and punishment. Minimum punishment at 4 strikes is 2 weeks benching, max is removal from team.
 - 5th offence = 5th strike and immediate removal from the team – no exceptions.
- **Please note:** while this strike system is in place, the coach holds final discretion as to what punishment should be given. Depending on the severity and type of the offence, the punishment may be as minimal as conditioning to as severe as immediate removal from the squad even if no prior strikes have been given.
- **Excessive tardiness and absences from cheerleading activities will also result in strikes.**
- **A cheerleader may be removed from the Carlow Cheerleading Squad at any time if the coach finds it necessary for the betterment of the team.**
- **If a cheerleader engages in a physical fight with another person (whether in uniform or not), there will be immediate disciplinary action taken, which could result in removal from the team.**
- As other rules or requirements are necessary, the coaches will make them known to the cheerleader. The cheerleader, will, in turn, follow these rules.
- **If a cheerleader is removed from the team for any rule violation, he/she may not be eligible to tryout for Carlow Cheerleading the following season.**

EXPENSES/FUNDRAISING

- Carlow has covered the cost of all uniforms, warm-ups, cheer bags, and poms. These uniforms, warm-ups, cheer bags, and poms are property of Carlow University and must be returned in the same condition you received it. If the uniform or warm up are in unacceptable condition, you will be expected to pay the cost of replacing the item.
- At the beginning of the year you will be instructed on what additional items each cheerleader needs to purchase and by what date. These items will be yours to keep. Examples of items are: cheer shoes, socks, hair bows, and boy shorts/cheer briefs.
- Each cheerleader is responsible for fundraising \$550 for Carlow University Cheer during the academic year. All cheerleaders are required to participate in each fundraiser to raise their required funds.
 - When the fundraisers are chosen, attendance and/or cooperation with the efforts will be mandatory so that everyone has an equal part in the fundraising to meet our team's goals.
 - **If a cheerleader fails to meet the minimum required amount to fundraise per semester the remaining balance will be paid by the individual cheerleader.**
- If you quit the team before the end of the season you will be expected to pay back any money Carlow has invested in you as a cheerleader during the season.
- If a cheerleader decides to leave at any time during the season all equipment that belongs to Carlow University must be returned within one week of leaving or the full cost of the items will be charged to their student account.

COMMUNICATION

- Please save the following in multiple locations for reference.
 - Coach: Matthew D'Amico
 - Cell Phone: 412-596-1047
 - E-mail: carlowcheer@carlow.edu
- All communications from the coach will be sent via e-mail and/or a group text message via theBand app.
 - Please download the application so you can remain up to date with the communication from the cheer coach and captains.
 - Cheerleaders should check email regularly for updates made by the coach or teammates.
- If a cheerleader would like to challenge a decision made by the coach, the cheerleader must meet with the coach in person to discuss the issue and not address it by email or text message.



CARLOW
CHEERLEADING
