

Judging Policy

Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

- a) “Association” – Cheer Manitoba
- b) “Event Host” – The party responsible for organizing an event/competition. This party shall be the ones responsible for retaining the services of Cheer Manitoba judging.

Purpose

This policy describes how Cheer Manitoba provides judging services, the rules and regulations competitions must follow should they be Cheer Manitoba judged events and the requirements to become a Cheer Manitoba certified judge.

Scope and Application of this Policy

Any event where Cheer Manitoba judging services have been retained must adhere to the Cheer Manitoba judging policy.

Cheer Manitoba Judging Services

Cheer Manitoba will train and maintain a limited number of judges. These judges can be contracted by event hosts.

Scheduling Judges

Scheduling judges will be at the sole discretion of Cheer Manitoba. Cheer Manitoba will not take specific requests from event producers for certain judges to be added or removed from the panel.

When possible, Cheer Manitoba will make reasonable efforts to schedule judges who live geographically closer to the event. Event hosts who contract Cheer Manitoba judging services understand that scheduling judges is under the sole discretion of Cheer Manitoba. Specific panel/judge requests cannot be entertained to properly create the panels required.

Training

All judges will be appropriately trained, having passed Cheer Canada exams, and adhere to the Judges’ Code of Conduct, found in this policy, to ensure professionalism and impartiality in decision making when they are working on behalf of Cheer Manitoba. Cheer Manitoba judges will only judge based on the score sheets for which they have successfully completed Cheer Canada exams.

Cost

Cheer Manitoba will calculate and invoice the event host for the total cost of the judging honorariums and score sheet and/or electronic scoring system costs. Cheer Manitoba will then in turn pay the judges on behalf of the event host. Judges are paid an hourly rate based on experience. Annual rates will be determined by Cheer Manitoba at the start of the fiscal year.

Panel Set-up

A six-minute routine time frame is ideal; however, this is at the discretion of the event host. Should one panel be requested, there must be time scheduled in between routines to allow the judges to complete their scores sheets.

Each competition is unique therefore judging requirements and panels will be determined by the event host in conjunction with Cheer Manitoba and/or Judging Director.

Panels will have one or two judges for each scoresheet: Overall, Tumbling, and Building; these judges will also be responsible for judging Performance Cheer. It is recommended that each scoresheet have two judges working together to complete the scoring. The level and number of judges on each panel (minimum of 3, maximum of 6) is at the discretion of the event host, within the limits of judge availability. The cost of shadowing judges will be paid for by Cheer Manitoba.

A deductions judge and a legality judge will work together to complete the deductions score sheet. These roles may be combined at the discretion of the Judging Director.

Cheer Manitoba Judging Rules and Regulations

- 1) All Cheer Manitoba sanctioned events policies are to be followed and will be enforced by the
- 2) Cheer Manitoba Judging Director.
- 3) Cheer Manitoba follows Cheer Canada score sheets and deduction system for all divisions
- 4) and categories, including performance cheer.
 - a. Cheer Manitoba judging staff makes all final decisions regarding penalties incurred due to rule violations (including image policy and unsportsmanlike conduct) and routine infractions, not the event host.
 - b. All Cheer Manitoba sanctioned events must adhere to the Cheer Canada/IASF/ICU Image
 - c. Policy and the Unsportsmanlike Conduct Policy. Cheer Manitoba judging staff will enforce these policies.
- 5) The legality judge reserves the right to halt a routine if the following occur:
 - a. The mat splits or becomes unsafe.
 - b. An injury occurs.
 - c. The routine is deemed unsafe by the judges.
 - d. Coaches have the right to stop their team's routine at the music station if an injury occurs that places the injured athlete or other athletes at risk of further injury, as a result of the injured athlete being unable to participate to their normal skill level. An injured athlete may also leave the mat at any time during the routine, with no further penalty being incurred (a safety deduction will be given for the initial injury if it is the result of a fall or unsafe skill being performed, within the limitations of the score sheet being used, but there is no additional deduction for the athlete leaving the mat).
- 6) Should the routine be interrupted (see above 4 & 5), the safety judge must follow these steps:

- a. Note the time of the interruption.
 - b. Deduct for the fall/incident when applicable (if that was what caused the routine to stop).
 - c. During the second performance, the team must perform a full out routine from the beginning. The judges will only score the routine from the stoppage time onwards (do not rescore the portion before the interruption). The score will be determined by a combination of both performances. Any infractions incurred from the first run will be included on the second run's score.
- 7) If a routine interruption occurs which puts the athletes at a noticeable disadvantage, the coach or teacher advisor must speak to the Judging Director within 15 minutes of the conclusion of the performance in question to request a second performance. If the team chooses to perform again, the Judging Director, in conjunction with the event host, will determine when the team will perform.
- 8) All IASF/ICU approved props may be placed or safely tossed off the mat during performance without penalty.
- 9) In the event of a tie, at the discretion of the event host, the following tie breaking steps (in order of priority) shall be followed:
- a. Team with the highest unweighted Performance score.
 - b. Team with the least overall deductions.
 - c. Team with the least legality deductions.
 - d. Team with highest overall difficulty score.
 - e. Judges will be polled. Majority rules. All judging decisions are final.

Judging Appeal Process

Deduction score sheets will be made available to coaches as soon as possible after a team's performance.

Paper scoresheets:

Coaches can collect their sheet at the designated station and will be required to initial for the time they were collected.

Electronic scoring system:

Deduction score sheets will be put into the club and teams respective drop box folder when completed. Coaches can turn on notifications for drop box to be notified when the deduction sheet is added. Coaches have 15 minutes after collecting their sheet to fill out an appeal form if there is a discrepancy. Appeal forms must be filled out completely and correctly, with as much detail as possible. The Judging Director will review the appealed section of the routine with video feedback and complete the results section of the appeal form. If other legalities or deductions are discovered while under review, the Judging Director reserves the right to add the infractions to the score sheet. The coach will be contacted when the appeal is ready to be picked up. The Judging Director will be available upon request to discuss the results of the appeal in person. Please refer to Appendix A for the Cheer Manitoba Appeal Form. Coaches and club officials (no more than two) can only appeal the results of their own team/club. Requests for review of other team's routines will not be tolerated and could result in an unsportsmanlike conduct deduction for the team making the request.

Approaching the Judges' Table

Coaches, athletes, and spectators (including Cheer Manitoba board members and event hosts) may not approach the judging panel during or after the competition. If there are questions or concerns during the competition that are not addressed by the appeal form, coaches may approach the designated scoresheet pick up station and request to speak to the Judging Director.

Judging Complaints

Cheer Manitoba believes the introduction of the appeal process will prevent any errors from reaching the awards ceremony. All coaches will have the ability to review their deduction sheet prior to awards being given out for each session. Judging decisions for any subjective category on the score sheet are FINAL. The Judging Director will be available for 30 minutes after the last session to answer any questions or address any tabulation errors.

Direct confrontation of the panel judges, event host, or Judging Director is considered inappropriate. Coaches are not allowed to enter the judges' room to confront an issue.

Coaches and athletes may not approach any judges regarding scoring rules or competition results. This includes phone calls, text messages, in-person conversation and social media. Such actions could result in unsportsmanlike conduct deductions, disqualification, or suspension from future Cheer Manitoba competitions. For concerns or questions that arise after the completion of an event, the following steps should be taken:

- 1) Within 5 days of the competition, submit, via e-mail (judging@cheermanitoba.ca), a letter expressing your concerns to the Cheer Manitoba Judging Director with a copy to the Cheer Manitoba President, and the school teacher/advisor/principal or club owner of the team expressing the concern.
- 2) The Judging Director will address your concerns in a letter via email within 7 days after receiving the complaint, and after consulting with the judges and other persons concerned. This response will also be sent to those individuals copied in the original complaint letter.

Video Feedback

Should a coach request for a routine review using video feedback, new deductions or legality infractions viewed during the review will be deducted from the original run's score.

During the competition, judges are to use the video feedback for clarification purposes only. If a judge uses video feedback for clarification and a deduction or legality is viewed during the review, no deduction will occur. Video from each Cheer Manitoba judged competition will be retained for 14 days.

Non-Disclosure Agreement

All Cheer Manitoba certified judges are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement. This agreement prevents judges from discussing any routines, scores or judging decisions from all Cheer Manitoba judged events. Judges who violate the agreement will no longer be certified to judge for Cheer Manitoba. This agreement is in place for the following reasons:

- Judges may feel uncomfortable or intimidated when approached with questions.

- Questions directed at multiple judges may result in miscommunication. Directing concerns through the appropriate channels provides consistent and thorough answers.
- Judges volunteer their time. Approaching judges on personal time prevents them from being able to “hang up the judging hat”.
- Cheer Manitoba supports all judging decisions; therefore, it is not up to individual judges to “justify” or provide reasoning for competition results.

Judges Certification

All judges must attend a minimum of one Cheer Manitoba judging training clinic (all training material provided by Cheer Canada) prior to becoming a Cheer Manitoba/Cheer Canada certified judge. Certification for all cheer judges and performance cheer judges will be through Cheer Canada (online certifications). All judges must be registered members with Cheer Manitoba in order to judge at any Cheer Manitoba sanctioned event. All judges must complete the pre-season requirements as set forth by Cheer Manitoba in order to judge at any Cheer Manitoba sanctioned event.

All judges must pass the Cheer Canada Judging Competency Exams prior to judging each season upon release of the testing from Cheer Canada.

All returning judges must pass the Judging Competency Exams prior to judging for a new season. Returning judges may be required to attend the Cheer Manitoba judging training clinic in the event they do not pass the certification exam. In seasons where major rule changes and/or scoresheet changes have occurred, ALL returning judges will be required to attend the training clinic prior to challenging the Competency Exams.

Panel judges cannot judge any division that they are affiliated with in any of the following manners:

- they coach
- they have immediate family (children, sibling, partner, etc.) on
- they are a program owner of
- they are a teacher advisor of

Cheer Judges

Legality Judge training will not be provided by Cheer Manitoba. Training is available online through the IASF. When a local IASF legalities judge is not available, a judge that is certified by Cheer Canada on the building and deduction sheet may judge legalities. Out of province IASF certified legalities judge may be brought in at the cost of the event host if available.

Cheer judges will be trained to judge scholastic and all-star cheer divisions using Cheer Canada methodology. Cheer judges will be trained to judge group and partner stunt, as well as individual tumbling, using Cheer Canada methodology.

Performance Cheer Judges

Performance Cheer judges will be trained in safety following the scholastic and all-star dance Age Grid, Dance Rules & Age Divisions, which dictates routine requirements and limitations as set out by Cheer Canada and/or the IASF and ICU. Currently, Cheer Manitoba can only provide

performance cheer judges for the Pom, Jazz, and Hip-Hop categories. All dance divisions will follow the Cheer Canada or Cheer Manitoba approved image policy.

Tabulation

Tabulators will be trained to use the Cheer Manitoba tabulation spreadsheet system, along with the process of preparing ranks and score sheets for distribution. Tabulators are selected by the judging director and are specialized judges able to work the fast paced, intense, and high pressure situation that is ensuring the awards presentation occurs in a correct and timely manner.

Judging Duties

All members of the judging panel must arrive at the competition one hour prior to the start of the competition unless otherwise specified. A judges meeting will be held during this time and judges should use this time to review any issues or rules that pertain to the competition.

Judging Director

- Confirm the performance order and communicate to the judging panel.
- Give any athlete number changes to the panel.
- Double check the performance order and the athlete numbers filled out on the score sheets.

Deductions and Legality Judges

- Must be certified with both the cheer and dance Cheer Canada/IASF rules.
- Time each team's performance.
- Ensure routine limitations are followed.
- Record any time, general safety, and legality violations for each routine.
- Record any point deductions for each routine.
- These judges cannot be a panel judge as well.
- Add all safety deductions.
- Stay after the competition in the score check area to address any safety or other questions that arise.

This position should be appointed to a judge with more than two years' experience, who has experience judging both cheer and performance cheer, and has passed the Cheer Canada Deductions and IASF Legality exams.

Panel Judges

- Double check that your score sheets are correct and in the order of performance.
- Ensure that you know what you will be evaluating:
 - Cheer: Overall
 - Cheer: Jumps and Tumbling
 - Cheer: Building Skills
 - Performance Cheer: Choreography, Group Execution, Technical Execution
- Fill out any athlete number changes.
- Script routines and take notes as needed during the performances – this will help in an accurate evaluation.
- Consult with the safety judge and/or video feedback if unsure about aspects of your score sheet.

- At the discretion of the Judging Director, experienced judges may be paired with a first year or shadow judge to provide additional guidance and real-time training during a competition. If a judge is not comfortable in this role, they should discuss this with the Judging Director in advance of the event.

Scoring Rep

For multi-session events there will be a Scoring Rep to review any appeals of safety infraction errors during each cheer session before awards are given out.

- Ensure the judges have a private area.
- Deal with anyone that approaches the judging table (this is not allowed).
- Review any deduction appeals before the end of the session, using video feedback.
- Communicate with the panel judges involved as necessary between routines.
- Communicate with coaches when their appeal is ready and be available to discuss the results of the appeal in person if requested by the coach.

Judging Director

- Ensure that all judges arrive and are provided with pens, calculators, timers, and scrap paper
- Ensure the judging table is prepared with enough table space and seating space/chairs.
- Set up the video camera, iPad, printer, scanner, and laptop.
- Enter the marks into the division ranking excel spreadsheet while double checking all sheets for accuracy and tabulation errors.
- Scan all completed score sheets onto the Cheer Manitoba computer for record keeping purposes
- Double check the final ranking on the division score sheets. Print the division score sheets once the division is completed. Print a copy for the MC as well as for each team in that division.
- Hand out all original score sheets and rank sheets to coaches after the awards presentation.
- Handle any questions in a professional manner.
- Review the score sheets prior to the start of competition and ask head/safety judge for clarifications
- When the score sheets are passed to you at the judging table, complete the tabulation of each sheet.
- If a score is missing, immediately pass it back to the judge to fill it in.
- Organize the score sheets by team (if time permits)

Judges' Code of Conduct

In addition to following the Cheer Manitoba Code of Conduct policy, Cheer Manitoba certified judges must adhere to the following:

- Ensure that you have signed and comply with the Cheer Manitoba judges' non-disclosure agreement.
- Act and dress in a professional manner. Unacceptable behaviour, language or clothing will
- NOT be tolerated and will result in the relinquishment of your duties.

- Perform your duties in a respectful and unbiased manner.
- Ensure that you are properly educated to do your job.
- Ensure praise is consistent amongst teams.
- Do not have excessive contact with teams before, during, or after the competition.
- Ensure the performing team has your full, undivided attention.
- Minimize chatter during and between performances.
- All comments should be made in a positive manner and use gender neutral language.
- No talking, text messaging, or checking your cell phone at the judging table.
- Scores must reflect what has been presented on the competition floor at the time of evaluation – past performance or skill potential cannot be factored into the score. You score what you see.
- Do not comment on the performances to anyone outside the judging panel.
- Do not show favouritism.

Appendix A

- Judging Appeal

Review and Approval

1. This policy will be reviewed every two years.
2. This Policy was approved by the Organization’s Board of Directors in January, 2024.

Appeal Form

1. Upon picking up score sheets, the time will be recorded. Review of score sheets must be done at Score check, and no cell phones or cameras are allowed. Calculators will be available for use.
2. The Appeal Form must be completed in full and submitted to Score check within 15 minutes. Any Judging Appeals submitted after this time limit will be up to the discretion of the Judging Director as to whether it is addressed or not.
3. Appeal details:
 - a. Coach name & phone number (may be used to text once appeal is completed)
 - b. Club name and team name
 - c. Level and division
 - d. Appeal details (include as much detail as possible)
 - e. Event name/day (if applicable)
4. The Judging Director will review the appeal and address the matter. You will be called to Score check to pick up your appeal ruling once it is complete. Only appeals based on an error with regards to Deductions and Legalities will be considered.

NOTE: should a coach request for a routine review using video feedback, new deduction(s) viewed during the review may be deducted from the original score.

5. The Safety Judge will review appeals for deductions and legalities. This decision will be reviewed by the Judging Director.
6. The following will automatically void an appeal (Un-sportsmanship Conduct Deduction may be applied):
 - a. Failure to observe the time limit
 - b. Approaching or attempting to influence a Judge’s decision
 - c. Seeking explanation or appealing someone else’s score
 - d. Deliberate disruptive behavior by the coach, team or an individual
 - e. Verbally abusing, using profanity or disrespectfully addressing a judge, event host or volunteer

NOTE: All coaches and school representatives must always follow the Cheer Manitoba Coaches Code of Honour, signed upon registration with Cheer Manitoba.