

Freedom Rec. Cheer Youth Recreational Cheerleading Program

2026 Parent & Athlete Handbook

The Freedom to Cheer



Welcome to Freedom Rec. Cheer – 2026 Season

Congratulations and welcome to **Freedom Rec. Cheer!** We are excited to have you join our program for the 2026 season. This handbook contains important information regarding our organization, program offerings, expectations, and policies.

If you have any questions after reviewing this handbook, please contact:

Kelly: (585) 297-5493

Jenn: (585) 356-8276

Email: freedomreccheer@gmail.com

Who We Are

Freedom Rec. Cheer is a **non-profit youth cheer organization** operated entirely by dedicated volunteers. Our mission is to inspire a love for cheerleading while teaching proper fundamentals in stunting, tumbling, conditioning, and performance at all levels.

We offer multiple seasonal and skill-based programs throughout the year, including our traditional recreational competition season, ½-year program opportunities, and additional training sessions such as tumbling and clinics.

Our programs are built on **positivity, safety, discipline, teamwork, and physical fitness**. We strive to instill confidence, encourage healthy habits, and promote a positive body image in all of our athletes.

Freedom Rec. Cheer is led by a **Board of Directors and an experienced coaching staff** with backgrounds in youth, recreation, high school, and Allstar cheerleading, as well as judging. All coaches are certified and required to

complete background checks and training. Our teams have proudly earned **Top 3 placements in numerous competitions.**

We value the strong relationships we build with our athletes and families. Community involvement and giving back are important parts of our organization, and our teams actively participate in community events throughout the year.

Important Notice

All registration requirements must be completed in full before an athlete is considered officially registered and eligible to participate in any Freedom Rec. Cheer program. A board member will reach out prior to the start of the season if any paperwork or registration items are still missing. Please note that athletes must have all forms, payments, and documentation completed before they are eligible to participate in any practices or program activities.

Registration & Tuition – 2026 Season

Registration for the 2026 season opens on **February 14, 2025.**

Program Costs:

- ★ **\$60 Registration Fee** (due at sign-up)
- ★ **\$60 Monthly Tuition** (4 payments)
 - Due: **June 20, July 20, August 20, September 20**
- ★ **Sibling Discount:** \$10 off monthly tuition per additional athlete
(applied after registration is completed)
- ★ **Fundraising:** Participation in the **mandatory 2026 fundraiser** is required
(details provided in registration packet) unless you selected the \$75 buyout option.

Payment Option:

- ★ Families may choose to **pay tuition in full at registration: \$300**

Required Expenses:

- ★ Parents are responsible for purchasing **athlete bloomers and designated cheer shoes**
 - Athletes must have designated all-white cheer shoes. We aim to keep the same style each season so athletes can reuse them when possible. (We do have a shoe sizer in the gym if needed)
 - Chasse Ace II ([omnicheer.com](https://www.omnicheer.com), Amazon) **Average \$47.00**
 - Red Chasse Boy-Cut Briefs 2.0 (*or approved equivalent*)
 - Chasse Boy-Cut Briefs 2.0 ([omnicheer.com](https://www.omnicheer.com), Amazon) **Average \$10.00**



Additional / Optional Expenses:

The following items are optional but may be offered throughout the season:

- ★ Team or gym spirit wear/apparel
- ★ Competition spectator admission tickets
- ★ Event parking fees
- ★ Team photos, videos, or merchandise
- ★ Additional private lessons or extra training

** All optional purchases will be communicated in advance; participation is not required for team placement or involvement, and pricing and availability may vary depending on the event or vendor.

Tuition Breakdown (Regular Teams)

Fee Type	At Registration	June	July	August	September
Registration Fee	\$60	-	-	-	-
Monthly Tuition	-	\$60	\$60	\$60	\$60

Mini Team Registration

Program Costs:

- ★ **\$60 Registration Fee** (due at sign-up)
- ★ **\$25 Monthly Tuition** (4 payments)
 - Due: **June 20, July 20, August 20, September 20**
- ★ **Fundraising:** Participation in the **mandatory 2026 fundraiser** is required (*details provided in registration packet*) unless you selected the \$75 buyout option.

Payment Option:

- ★ Families may choose to **pay tuition in full at registration: \$160**

Required Expenses:

- ★ Parents are responsible for purchasing **athlete bloomers and any white sneakers**
 - Any all white sneaker with laces (no velcro)
 - Red ruffle shorts - RRHSS Girls Athletic High Waisted Ruffle Shorts - Comfy Yoga Dance Workout Gymnastics (Amazon) **Average \$10.00**



Additional / Optional Expenses:

The following items are optional but may be offered throughout the season:

- ★ Team or gym spirit wear/apparel
- ★ Competition spectator admission tickets
- ★ Event parking fees
- ★ Team photos, videos, or merchandise
- ★ Additional private lessons or extra training

** All optional purchases will be communicated in advance; participation is not required for team placement or involvement, and pricing and availability may vary depending on the event or vendor.

Tuition Breakdown (Mini Teams)

Fee Type	At Registration	June	July	August	September
Registration Fee	\$60	-	-	-	-
Monthly Tuition	-	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25

Payment Policy

- ★ All F.R.C. fees including registration, monthly tuition, and fundraising obligations must be paid **in full by their assigned due dates**. All due dates will be communicated in advance.
- ★ Athletes who are not current on their account may be **suspended from participation** until all balances are paid. Continued non-payment may

result in removal from the program without reimbursement.

- ★ A **\$15 late fee** will be applied to any payment received after the posted due date. Late fees apply per item, regardless of the fee type or amount.
 - ★ Freedom Rec Cheer maintains a **strict no refund policy**. All payments are non-refundable. Families are encouraged to plan accordingly prior to registering.
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Open Gyms & Clinics

Throughout the season, we plan to offer open gyms and clinics. These sessions provide athletes with additional opportunities to focus on stunting, tumbling, and skill development. Participation is highly encouraged for all cheerleaders. A finalized schedule will be shared once available.

Member Benefit:

All open gyms, clinics, and training sessions provided by Freedom Rec Cheer will be offered at a discounted rate for current and/or aged-out FRC cheerleaders.

Parent & Athlete Pre-Season Meeting

There will be one **mandatory parent/athlete meeting** held during the start of the season. The official date and time will be communicated once finalized.

This meeting is required for both athletes and parents. We will review season expectations, practice schedules, competition dates, and provide details regarding any optional fundraising opportunities.

We strongly encourage both parents/guardians to attend to ensure all families are fully informed, especially in two-household situations.

Practice Requirements (All Teams)

Athletes are expected to come to every practice prepared with the following:

- ★ Practice shorts (no jean shorts)
 - ★ T-shirt or athletic top
 - ★ Clean cheer shoes or sneakers
 - ★ Hair pulled back and out of face
 - ★ A positive attitude and strong work ethic
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Competition Requirements (Cheer Teams)

The following items are required for all competitions:

- ★ Designated All-white cheer shoes
 - ★ Competition bow (*provided by the program*)
 - ★ Red Chasse Boy-Cut Briefs 2.0 (*or approved equivalent*)
 - ★ No-show white socks
 - ★ Full uniform (*provided by the program unless otherwise stated*)
 - ★ All uniforms and program-issued items must be **properly cared for and maintained** throughout the season.
 - ★ Families are responsible for the cost of any **lost, damaged, or unreturned items**. All items must be returned in a timely manner at the end of the season unless otherwise stated.
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Competition Requirements (Mini Teams)

The following items are required for all exhibitions/competitions:

- ★ All-white sneakers (*no Velcro*)
- ★ Exhibition bow and shirt (*provided by the program*)
- ★ Red ruffle shorts (*or approved equivalent*)
- ★ No-show white socks

Fundraising

Freedom Rec Cheer is a non-profit recreational organization. All board members, staff, and coaches are volunteers and do not receive compensation. Program expenses including competition fees, uniforms, music, and equipment are funded through tuition, fundraising, and sponsorships.

All funds raised go directly back into the program to support our athletes and ensure continued success.

2026 Fundraising Requirement

Each athlete is required to participate in **one** of the following fundraising options:

Option 1:

- ★ **\$75 Buyout Fee** - Due by **May 15th**

Option 2:

- ★ Participate in the **Ticket Raffle Fundraiser**
- ★ Each athlete is required to sell **\$120 worth of raffle tickets**
- ★ **\$60** will go directly to the program
- ★ **\$60** will be applied as a credit toward the **September tuition payment**
- ★ There will be **great prizes awarded through the raffle drawing**
- ★ Ticket distribution and submission dates will be **announced at a later time (TBD)**

Team Placement

- ★ Each team will have a roster limit of **25 athletes**
- ★ The program will consist of multiple teams, including a Mini team
- ★ Team placement is **first-come, first-served** during the registration period
- ★ Athletes will be placed on teams based on **age and grade**, in accordance with competition guidelines
- ★ Placement adjustments to a higher-level team may occur based on:
 - Coach recommendation

- Athlete experience and skill level
- Maturity and readiness
- Meeting division requirements

Final placement decisions must be approved by program leadership.

Please refer to the Team Placement Guidelines section below for additional details.

Team Divisions – 2026 Season

Placement Disclaimer:

Team placements are based on age and grade guidelines; however, final placement may vary depending on registration numbers, athlete skill level, and overall team needs. All placement decisions are made at the discretion of program leadership.

Freedom Minis

- ★ **Age:** 4 (2022), 5 (2021)
 - ★ **Grade:** Pre-K, Kindergarten
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Ruby Rebels

- ★ **Age:** 6 (2020), 7 (2019)
 - ★ **Grade:** 1st, 2nd
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Lady Liberties

- ★ **Age:** 8 (2018), 9 (2017)
 - ★ **Grade:** 3rd, 4th
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Royal Phantoms

★ **Age:** 10 (2016), 11 (2015)

★ **Grade:** 5th, 6th

Freedom Elites

★ **Age:** 12 (2014), 13 (2013)

★ **Grade:** 7th, 8th

Season Dates – 2026 Season

★ **Start Date:** Monday, July 20, 2026

★ **End Date:** Sunday, November 15, 2026 (*following the NYSAA State Competition*)

Practice Schedule

All practices will be held at:

Freedom Rec Cheer Gym

3 West Avenue, LeRoy, NY

**** Important Notes:**

Practice schedules are subject to change based on facility needs, team requirements, or scheduling conflicts. Additional practice days may be added during competition weeks or in cases of attendance concerns to ensure athletes are fully prepared. Any updates will be communicated in advance.

Freedom Minis

★ Tuesday & Thursday | **6:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

Ruby Rebels

★ Tuesday & Thursday | **6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Lady Liberties

★ Tuesday & Thursday | **6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Royal Phantoms

★ Monday & Wednesday | **6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Freedom Elites

★ Monday & Wednesday | **6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

Practice Expectations

Attendance is **mandatory**. Cheerleading is a team sport, and there are no substitutions for absent athletes. Each athlete is a critical part of their team, and absences directly impact team progress, safety, and performance.

All absences must be communicated in advance. Excessive absences may affect an athlete's position, participation in routines, or eligibility for competitions, at the discretion of program leadership.

Please review the **Practice Rules** section of this handbook for full attendance and absence policies.

Competitions

Competitions are **mandatory with no exceptions**. By registering for the program, families are committing to all scheduled competition dates.

While the official schedule has not yet been finalized, the season is expected to follow this general timeline:

★ One competition toward the **end of September**

- ★ Up to three competitions during **October**
- ★ One competition during the **during the first two weekends of November**

Competitions are typically held on **Saturdays or Sundays**, with the possibility of full weekend events (Saturday and Sunday). Attendance at all competitions is required. Failure to attend may result in removal from portions of the routine or further action at the discretion of program leadership.

Please refer to the **FAQ section** for additional competition details.

Team Communication

All families are required to join the Band App, with at least one parent/guardian registered.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to stay informed by regularly checking for updates, announcements, and schedule changes.

For communication, please follow the appropriate chain of contact:

- ★ **Team-related questions** → Team Coaches
- ★ **Athlete support, concerns, or general questions** → Athlete Relations Manager (Katie 585-703-6369)
- ★ **Program-related questions** → Director (Kelly 585-297-5493) or Assistant Director (Jen 585-356-8276)

Following this structure helps us respond as quickly and efficiently as possible. Not using the proper communication channels may result in delays.

Team Events

Throughout the season, the program will host team events such as parades, team dinners, award ceremonies, community service activities, and team bonding opportunities.

While these events are **not mandatory**, participation is strongly encouraged. Athletes who engage in team activities tend to build stronger relationships, improve teamwork, and contribute to a more positive team environment.

Event details and updates will be communicated through the **Band App**.

Commitment Is Key

Our Commitment to Your Athlete

- ★ To provide a **safe and supportive environment** for all practices and competitions
 - ★ To deliver **qualified, knowledgeable coaching and instruction**
 - ★ To begin and end all practices **on time whenever possible**
 - ★ To ensure all eligible athletes have the opportunity to **participate in practices and competitions**
 - ★ To promote a healthy balance between **academic achievement and athletic performance**
 - ★ To ensure athletes are **supervised at all times** and not released until properly picked up
 - ★ To emphasize **sportsmanship, respect, and teamwork** over winning
 - ★ To create a **positive, rewarding, and memorable cheer experience** for every athlete
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Your Commitment to the Program

- ★ To ensure your athlete is **dropped off and picked up on time** for all practices, events, and competitions

- ★ To communicate openly and make every effort to **prioritize attendance** by planning vacations and other activities around the cheer season
 - ★ To understand that tuition covers only a portion of program expenses and that **fundraising and financial commitments are essential** to the success of the program
 - ★ To return all **paperwork, uniforms, and equipment** in a timely manner
 - ★ To demonstrate **good sportsmanship**—showing humility in success and respect in defeat
 - ★ To follow all **Freedom Rec Cheer guidelines and Codes of Conduct**
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Parent Code of Conduct

Parents and guardians play a vital role in creating a positive and supportive environment for all athletes. By participating in Freedom Rec Cheer, all parents/guardians agree to the following:

- ★ To support **all participants**, including teammates, opponents, coaches, judges, spectators, and fellow families
- ★ To model and promote **good sportsmanship** at all times by setting a positive example
- ★ To maintain a **respectful and positive attitude** toward the program, refraining from negative comments about athletes, staff, parents, or other teams
- ★ To behave appropriately at all events, avoiding disruptive behavior such as yelling, arguing, or creating scenes, and to show support in both victory and defeat
- ★ To **refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances** at any practices, competitions, or program-related events

- ★ To address any concerns in a **calm and respectful manner**, at an appropriate time and place, and not in front of athletes, spectators, or on social media platforms. Practice time is not considered an appropriate time for discussions
- ★ To **never engage in verbal, mental, or physical abuse** toward any athlete, coach, staff member, or participant
- ★ To refrain from posting any **practice, competition, or routine videos** on social media without prior program approval
- ★ To understand that threatening to remove an athlete from the team may result in **immediate removal from the program**.
- ★ To contribute to a **positive, fun, and supportive environment** for all participants

Code of Conduct Violations

Failure to adhere to the Parent Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension from practices, competitions, fundraising events, or removal from the program.

Athlete Code of Conduct

All athletes are expected to represent Freedom Rec Cheer with respect, responsibility, and integrity at all times. By participating in the program, athletes agree to the following:

- ★ To treat all coaches, staff, volunteers, parents, teammates, and others with **respect**, both in person and through all forms of communication, including social media
- ★ To refrain from the use of **abusive language or disrespectful behavior** at any time

- ★ To **not possess or use alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, or vape products** while participating in the program
- ★ To avoid any form of **verbal, physical, or visual harassment** toward others
- ★ To refrain from any **behavior that may endanger the safety, health, or well-being** of themselves or others
- ★ To **not engage in bullying** or take unfair advantage of any participant
- ★ To maintain appropriate behavior on social media and **not post or share inappropriate content**
- ★ To **follow directions and cooperate** with all coaches, staff, and program leadership

Code of Conduct Violations

Failure to follow the Athlete Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension from practices, competitions, fundraising events, or removal from the team.

Social Media Code of Conduct

Social media can be a valuable tool for communication, sharing achievements, and celebrating our athletes. It should be used to highlight positive moments, encourage teammates, and support the Freedom Rec Cheer community. However, misuse of social media can lead to poor sportsmanship and cyberbullying, which will not be tolerated.

As a member of Freedom Rec Cheer, all social media activity related to the program must reflect positivity and respect. The following guidelines apply to all participants, parents, coaches, volunteers, and board members:

- ★ All posts, comments, photos, and videos involving Freedom Rec Cheer must be **positive and respectful**

- ★ Posting negative, harmful, or inappropriate content about athletes, coaches, staff, parents, or other teams is **strictly prohibited**
- ★ Any content that is **detrimental to the Freedom Rec Cheer program** will not be tolerated
- ★ Social media posts are **permanent and public**; members are expected to think carefully before posting.
- ★ Posting online should be treated the same as speaking publicly—**be responsible and respectful at all times**

Applicable Platforms

This policy applies to all forms of digital communication, including but not limited to:

- ★ Social networking sites
- ★ Video and photo sharing platforms
- ★ Messaging apps and text communication
- ★ Public or private forums and discussion boards

Parent & Athlete Responsibility

Parents and guardians are expected to **actively monitor their child's social media use** to ensure compliance with this policy.

By participating in Freedom Rec Cheer, all members agree to:

- ★ Maintain **positive and respectful online behavior**
- ★ Refrain from posting any negative content involving the program or its members
- ★ Support a safe and encouraging environment both **in person and online**

Violations & Reporting

I understand that if I or my child violates any part of the Social Media Code of Conduct, we will be required to attend a meeting with program leadership and the content (post, photo, or video) must be removed immediately.

Continued violations may result in disciplinary action, including suspension from practices and/or removal from the program.

If you believe there has been a serious violation of this policy, it should be reported directly to the **F.R.C. Director or Assistant Director**.

Cheerleading Team Rules & Attendance Policy

Practice Rules

To ensure a safe, productive, and respectful training environment, all athletes are expected to follow these guidelines:

- ★ Athletes must wear **appropriate cheer practice attire**, including shorts, leggings, t-shirts, or athletic tank tops, along with cheer shoes.
 - **Not permitted:** jeans, jean shorts, sandals, or any clothing that restricts movement
 - **No jewelry** is allowed during practice
 - Nails must be kept **short (no longer than fingertip length)**; artificial nails are not permitted
 - Hair longer than shoulder length must be **secured and pulled back**
- ★ Athletes are strongly discouraged from getting **new ear piercings during the season**. Any athlete arriving at practice with earrings even newly pierced will be required to **sit out until they are removed** for safety reasons

- ★ **Practice attendance is mandatory.** Athletes must arrive on time and ready to participate
 - If an athlete is unable to attend, a parent/guardian must notify **ALL team coaches at least 3 hours prior** to practice via phone or in person
 - Excused absences are limited to **doctor's appointments or pre-approved special circumstances**
 - Injured athletes are still required to attend practice unless otherwise approved, or the absence will be considered unexcused
- ★ Athletes are allowed a maximum of **3 unexcused absences** for the season. Exceeding this limit may result in **removal from the team**
- ★ **No gum chewing** is permitted at any time during practice
- ★ For safety reasons, **no parents, siblings, or guests** are allowed in the practice area during practice unless prior permission is given by coaching staff
- ★ **Cell phone use is strictly prohibited** during practice
 - Phones must remain stored in the athlete's bag for the duration of practice unless otherwise directed by a coach
 - Violation of this policy may result in the phone being held by coaching staff until the end of practice
- ★ Athletes are expected to **respect the facility at all times**, including cleaning up after themselves and properly caring for equipment
- ★ If an athlete becomes injured, participation will be adjusted based on safety and the severity of the injury.
 - A doctor's note may be required for an athlete to return to full participation. Injured athletes are still expected to attend practices unless otherwise approved by coaching staff.

- Freedom Rec Cheer reserves the right to limit participation to ensure the safety of the athlete and team.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY EMBRACE YOUR LOVE FOR
CHEER AND BEING A FREEDOM REC. CHEERLEADER!**

