

Argonaut Jr. Mustangs

2023 Cheer Participation Handbook

Welcome to the Amador County Argonaut Jr. Mustang Youth Football and Cheer (AJM). This handbook was developed to help our adult and youth members understand how our organization operates and what is expected of all players/cheerleaders, coaches, and volunteers. While we can't cover every contingency in this handbook, you are asked to follow the spirit of what is outlined here, and allow common sense to prevail. If you have any questions use the AJM handbook and bylaws available on our website as a guide. AJM was organized by and is operated entirely by volunteer members- your input and questions are welcome!

ORGANIZATION:

AJM, also known as the Argonaut Jr. Mustangs, is a nonprofit California Corporation, governed by By-laws on file with the Secretary of State. Members may download copies of these By-laws at any time at www.jrmustangs.com. We are affiliated with the Motherlode Valley Football League (MVFL), and are a feeder to the Argonaut High School Football Program.

Football- there are four (4) teams, based on age and weight policies established by MVFL (Varsity, Jr. Varsity, Novice and Jr. Novice). There is a maximum of 40 players per team. It will be the option of the Board of Directors to close registration at their discretion.

Cheer- there are four (4) regular squads with up to 40 participants on each, based on grade and policies established by the MVFL.

RULES AND POLICIES:

Every parent/participant is required to read this handbook and abide by the policies outlined here. All parents/participants are required to return a Parent/Participant Contract signed by both parents and participants certifying that they have read and understand this document. Failure to do so will result in the ineligibility of your child to participate.

COMMITMENT:

Games: We cheer ever weekend. There is an entrance fee for all games (**excluding cheerleaders, football players, and AJM staff**) Games will be on Saturday.

Transportation to games: Each parent is responsible for transporting their child to games; home or away. You may make arrangements with other parents to carpool if you like.

Location and game day details will be communicated in the GROUPME app.

Practice:

Practice begins week of : July 24th Monday-Friday

July 31st Monday-Friday

August 7th Monday - Thursday

August 14th Monday- Thursday

August 21nd Tuesday-Thursday (remainder of the season)

Practice is from 6:00 pm- 8:00 pm at Argonaut High school. On Thursday's beginning August 21st you will pick your cheerleader up from the lower level, (we give our football players good luck treats and they paint cars.) There is a mandatory practice uniform. Please refer to the calendar so you know what your child will wear. Warm-ups must be in your child's cheer bag, some nights can get chilly. There are two pairs cheer shoes one is for practice one is for games. Please make sure they wear the correct ones. Cheer shoes must be worn at practice. NO EXCEPTIONS. If your child comes to practice and does not have the correct attire she will have to run it off and may receive demerits, excessive demerits can result in sitting out of a half time performance.

We practice outside and take frequent water breaks. Please make sure your child has plenty of water with them at practice. We do not carry extra bottles of water at practice.

VOLUNTEER HOURS: Every family is required to contribute at least **4 hours per child** of volunteer time to the organization. If you don't volunteer your child(ren) may be benched for a game including halftime.

EATING: Is to be done before or after your child's game. They will have 10-15 minutes before each game to get something to eat, however, they will not be given time to eat during the game or halftime that they are cheering for (football players don't get to eat during their game.), so please make sure your cheerleader has eaten before she gets to the game. Each cheerleader needs to bring a 1 gallon water jug to each game to drink, no Gatorade is allowed on the tracks or fields we will be cheering on. Eating at practice is also not allowed and absolutely no gum.

CHAIN OF COMMAND: If you have any questions or concerns, the chain of command to follow is: **Head Coach, Mitigation Committee, Vice President Cheer, and then a written letter addressed to the Jr. Mustangs Board Members.**

A Mitigation Committee has been created to help address any questions or concerns. Individuals involved shall be notified of the board's action or plan within 72 hours of the reported issue. The Mitigation Committee has the right to suspend or terminate the member. The notification can be made via any form or communication the Mitigation Committee deems fit.

GROUPME: All communication will be through the GROUPME app by level. If you have not been added to the team chat then please talk with your head coach or Jolene/Jamie. We will not have group or individual text messages unless a private or sensitive matter needs to be discussed.

VP Cheer- Jolene Pimentel -209-256-1490

Assistant of Cheer- Jamie Monge 916-617-8189

Argonaut Jr. Mustangs Cheerleader Guidelines & Expectations

The purpose of the Argonaut Jr. Mustangs Cheer Program is to support the Argonaut Jr. Mustangs Football teams by leading cheers and raising the level of fan support. This program is a physical activity which involves a risk of physical injury, so please be aware of the risk.

ACADEMICS:

1. Participants in the AJM Cheer Program will be encouraged to maintain a minimum GPA of a 2.0
2. AJM has an Academic Excellence Program, any participant with a 3.0 or higher can bring a copy of their most recent report card and they will receive a special award to be worn on their warm up jacket.

PRIMARY SPORT:

While we encourage our participants to be active in other sports/activities, we do not recognize any other sport/activity taking priority over CHEER from July 24th until the final game of the season. ALL Cheer related obligations (fittings, camp, practices, games and special activities) will be viewed as priority functions over other athletic or social activities.

If you choose to participate in another sport/activity after making AJM Cheer, **you will be dismissed from the program.** It is not fair to your cheerleaders' teammates if your cheerleader is missing important practices, stunts and not being able to 100% all the time!

RESPECT:

1. A child must always show respect towards coaches, youth advisors, teaching staff and other members of the squad.
2. A child must always respect the uniform and the organization she represents.
3. Showing disrespect to coaches, youth advisors, teaching staff and other team members will result in consequential action at the coach's discretion. (i.e., extra conditions, sitting during a portion of their game and/or sitting out of their halftime performance.

SPORTSMANSHIP, BEHAVIOR & PROGRAM REPRESENTATION:

1. Games and practices– Loud, boisterous, rude, unrestrained, rough, offensive, harsh or unruly shall be subject to consequential action at the coach's discretion.
2. You must remember that you are a team and representing AJM and should always conduct yourself in a proper manner.

3. All Cheer Team members are responsible for the conduct in which they carry themselves. Team members are reminder that as a member of this team, they are highly visible within the community. All actions and behavior are under constant observation.
4. Any individual found to be in possession of or using alcohol, tobacco or drugs will be subject to immediate dismissal from the AJM Cheer program.
5. **No boyfriends or friends at practice or special events.** If they come to games, no public display of affection will be allowed.
6. No Foul language
7. Stunting is to be done at practice only with the supervision of a coach. Please talk to your child about not stunting at home or school. Stunting incorrectly or irresponsibly could potentially cause injury.

PRACTICES:

1. Hair must be pulled back and out of the face, including long bangs, and side bangs. ALL jewelry must be removed (even earrings) If earrings are not removable they must be covered **BEFORE** practice.
2. Everyone **MUST** wear proper attire for practices. This means assigned practice uniform shirts and shorts, spankies sports bra, no show white socks and their practice pair of cheer shoes.
3. Bringing your own water bottle is **REQUIRED**. If you cannot afford one please notify your coach.
4. Cell Phones are not allowed to be used during practice or games, unless it's an emergency. Their phone should be off or on silent. Parents should call their child's head coach if there is an emergency.
5. All cheerleaders must arrive at the scheduled time and place specified by the coaches. Once stretching and warming up has begun, you will be considered late and will receive a demerit.
6. Cheerleading is very athletic and aerobic sport. Cheerleaders must participate in all warm-up exercises, running of laps, conditioning, stunting, etc. unless previously excused by Dr.'s note.
7. If you are sick, please don't come to practice. Parent must contact coaches **PRIOR** to practice for absence to be excused.
8. Please be prompt when picking up your child at the end of practice. Please be considerate, coaches are volunteering their time.
9. All cheerleaders must stay together as a squad and not wonder off. If you have to go to the restroom or anywhere else we use the buddy system, and your coach must know where you are going.
10. You need to show up to practice ready to go. This means proper clothing and shoes on; hair is pulled up. If you are not ready to go when practice starts, you will receive a demerit.
11. Constant tardiness is a disruption to the whole team. As soon as warm- up music is started, practice has begun. If you show up after that you will be considered late.
12. If you are absent from any practice where new material is being taught, it is your responsibility to learn the material on your own time and come to the following practice prepared to practice.
13. Do not take correction from coaches personally. Practices are to help and correct mistakes.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES:

1. All team members must be in attendance at least one hour prior to games. If you do not arrive one hour prior to the game you will not be able to participate in the half time routine. Stunt groups will not be rearranged the day of, so if you are late your whole stunt group may be pulled from stunting, but not dancing, As soon as stretching begins, you are late.
2. All team members are to be ready for practices and games at the designated time. **No excuses!** Special practices could be set at various times during the season.
3. If you are absent from THURSDAY practice, excused or unexcused, you will be removed from the halftime routine. You are still required to come to the game and cheer.
4. If you have more than 5 unexcused absences you will be removed from that week's halftime routine. Each unexcused absence thereafter will cause you to be removed from further routines. An unexcused absence is showing up to practice unable, unwilling, or unprepared to practice, or your parent not calling your coach to let them know you are sick, or had a family emergency. Coming without the proper uniform is considered an unexcused absence. Excused absences are those accompanied by a Dr's note or a phone call from a parent stating why you were sick and family emergencies/funerals ONLY. Vacations, family weddings, birthdays or reunions are NOT excused.
5. If a cheer team member is unable to attend a practice or game, a parent MUST contact the coach PRIOR to the event. Contacting your coach after will still result in an unexcused absence.
6. All squads are required by AJM to cheer at all games regardless of weather. **If the football team plays the Cheerleaders cheer.**
7. If you are injured or unable to cheer, but still wish to attend the game you must wear your uniform and stay with your squad.
8. Gum, food, candy, Gatorade or soda will not be allowed on the track at games or during practices, ONLY WATER.
9. You are not allowed on the game field unless you are cheering, or support fellow cheerleaders at half time.

PERSONAL APPERANCE AND UNIFORM GUIDELINES

1. You must maintain a well- groomed appearance.
2. Make- up must look NATURAL.
3. Hair must be in a HIGH ponytail, and bangs clipped back. Bow is required in your hair at every game.
4. Hair colors such as pink, blue, green, etc. will not be allowed, natural colors only.
5. No dark or bright nail polishes, only green, white, yellow, black or clear allowed.
6. Uniform must be clean wrinkle free, and shoes washed and clean before each game.
7. You must always wear your spankies under your skirt and warm ups pants.
8. White socks only, no colors can be showing.
9. No undershirts are allowed to be showing under neither practice nor game uniform,

10. Sports bra must be worn at practice and games. We do not want colored straps hanging out of your shell.(halter sports bras can't be **worn.**)

ATTITUDE GUIDELINES

All members and parents are considered Ambassadors of Argonaut Junior Mustangs, In order to maintain a strong, positive and supportive program, we expect everyone to set a good example and display a positive attitude. Abusive behavior, lying, stealing, or any other negative behavior by a team member or parent may result in dismissal from the program. Bad attitudes, back talking, rolling of the eyes, and any other form of disrespect to the coaching staff or fellow team members is grounds for dismissal. Negative comments about coaches, team members, other programs, or other parents will not be tolerated. Positive attitudes are important with working with this group. The coaching staff reserves the right to discipline, in the event that a team member chooses to display, what the coach sees as, uncooperative, unpleasant, or non-caring attitude, If you are put into a stunting position or dance line-up that you are not happy about, please do not give your coach an attitude. You can talk to your coach on the side. Attitude problems could result in suspension from the team. Please be aware of this.

**** Please sign the next page and return to your Cheer Coordinator* **Argonaut Jr Mustangs Cheerleader Guidelines & Expectations Handbook**

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Acknowledgment Form

I have read and understand the Argonaut Jr. Mustangs Cheer Team Guidelines and acknowledge the obligations and physical risk that are associated with the cheer program. I realize that if I do not abide by these rules, it could result in disciplinary action or permanent suspension from the team. I also realize that poor attitude toward the coach; other team member(s) or a poor attitude in general could result in disciplinary action or suspension from the team.

Cheerleader First and Last Name

Cheerleader Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date