

USA Cheer Background Check Policy

It is the policy of USA Cheer that all USA Cheer Professional members, Coach members, and STUNT Official members must complete a background check every year. Further, all coaches and anyone who works regularly with youth athletes should receive a primary screening from the hiring organization in addition to this secondary background screening.

Primary Screening

It is the responsibility of the hiring organization to utilize a selection process that includes screening for any behavior or history that would warrant prohibiting someone from working with youth. Such screening should include an application, information and reference check, interviews, a criminal background check, and comparing the information to any organizational disqualifiers (see [NAYS: Background Screening in Youth Sports](#)).

Secondary Background Screening

To obtain a USA Cheer Professional, Coach level membership (Cheer Coach and STUNT Coach), or Dance Membership, an applicant must successfully pass a criminal background check. Background screening is one step to help ensure a positive and safe environment. It is important to note that background screening is a snapshot in time of recorded and reported criminal behavior or potential criminal behavior. A successful background screening should never warrant relaxing protocols for preventing abuse as outlined in the free [USA Cheer Athlete Protection Course](#) and the [Athlete Protection Course for Athletes](#).

This secondary screening, which is done during the membership application and eligibility process with USA Cheer, serves to establish criteria that would disqualify from membership those persons who have something in their background that would preclude them from working with children. The USA Cheer screening is consistent with the standards used by similar youth serving organizations, sport organizations and governing bodies.

Automatic Disqualifiers

Section 1: An individual will be automatically ineligible for membership in USA Cheer if a background search reveals that such individual has been convicted of, received a deferred sentence or adjudication for, or pled guilty or no contest at any time for, or has been charged with (a diversion agreement will be considered a charge unless and until the agreement is fulfilled and the charge(s) dismissed), any of the following:

- a. Any felony involving:
 - i. Murder or homicide.
 - ii. Sex crimes, involving violence, lack of consent, or inability to consent, including rape and sexual assault.
 - iii. Sex crimes involving a minor
 - iv. Child endangerment, neglect or abuse.
 - v. Violent crimes involving weapons (e.g., armed robbery v. unlawful possession)
 - vi. Animal abuse.
 - vii. Drug use or possession within the previous five years.*
 - viii. Other drug-related crimes including distribution, intent to distribute, manufacturing, trafficking, or sale within the previous seven years.*
- b. Any misdemeanor involving:
 - i. Sex crimes involving violence, lack of consent, or inability to consent, including rape and sexual assault.
 - ii. Sex crimes involving a minor
 - iii. Child endangerment, neglect or abuse.
 - iv. Drug use or possession within the previous three years.*
 - v. Other drug-related crimes including distribution, intent to distribute, manufacturing, trafficking, or sale within the previous seven years.*

* Period of ineligibility calculated based on offense disposition date.

Section 2: An individual will also be automatically ineligible for licensing by USA Cheer if USA Cheer receives notification that the individual is currently subject to any sanction, whether temporary or permanent, by (1) the U.S. Center for SafeSport; or (2) another national governing body, for SafeSport-related violations.

USA Cheer will mirror and apply any sanction issued by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, or by another national governing body for SafeSport-related violations, and will enforce its own sanctions.

Potential Disqualifiers

An individual may be ineligible for membership in USA Cheer if a background search reveals that such individual has been convicted of, received a deferred sentence or adjudication for, or pled guilty or no contest at any time for, or has been charged with (a diversion agreement will be considered a charge unless and until the agreement is fulfilled and the charge(s) dismissed), any of the following:

- a. Any felony involving:
 - i. Non-violent sex crimes, including lewd conduct, indecent exposure, public indecency, prostitution, voyeurism, pandering and offender registration violations.
 - ii. Violence against a person not included in the Automatic Disqualifiers above.
 - iii. Any other felony.
- b. Any misdemeanor involving:
 - i. Non-violent sex crimes, including lewd conduct, indecent exposure, public indecency, prostitution, voyeurism, pandering and offender registration violations.
 - ii. Violence against a person within the previous five years, including harassment and stalking.*
 - iii. Animal abuse.
 - iv. Financial crimes, including financial fraud, forgery, and embezzlement.
- c. Multiple alcohol and/or drug-related offenses.
- d. Multiple felony and/or misdemeanor offenses not otherwise included in the Automatic Disqualifiers.

* Period of ineligibility calculated based on offense disposition date.