

The logo for Cobb Challengers features a stylized 'C' on the left, composed of a dark blue outer arc and a red inner arc. To the right of the 'C' are the letters 'OBB' in a large, bold, dark blue sans-serif font. Below 'OBB' is the word 'CHALLENGERS' in a smaller, bold, dark blue sans-serif font.

# COBB CHALLENGERS

Cobb Gymnastic Center Parents Club Handbook  
542 Fairground Street  
Marietta, GA 30060  
770.528.8477

[cobb@cobbchallengers.com](mailto:cobb@cobbchallengers.com)  
[cobbgymnasticsboard@gmail.com](mailto:cobbgymnasticsboard@gmail.com)  
[www.cobbchallengers.com](http://www.cobbchallengers.com)

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# Welcome Letter

Dear Parents and Gymnasts,

Welcome to the Cobb Challengers competitive gymnastics team! Cobb Challengers is a highly competitive program, and the athletes selected for this program are asked to strive to always perform to that level. Gymnastics is one of the greatest overall body conditioning activities your gymnast could experience. Some physical attributes you will find developing in your young gymnast will be strength, flexibility, kinesthetic awareness, muscular control, muscular endurance, coordination, timing, agility, balance, and grace. Some of the mental attributes we hope to help them develop are self-motivation, tenacity, patience, goal setting, courage, and teamwork.

We encourage each of you to take an active part in the club. Our main goal is to provide the best opportunities for all our gymnasts. Volunteering your time and talents will help the Cobb Challengers continue to improve and grow.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline various policies that affect the gymnasts and their families and to explain the purpose of the Cobb Gymnastic Center Parents Club. Please read the entire handbook so you can become familiar with the functions and requirements of your team and club. If you have questions about the information contained in this handbook, please contact the program Coordinator or a member of the Board.

Please take the time to read through this handbook with your gymnast. Once you have read through, please return the signed acknowledgement page to your gymnast's coach. This indicates that you have read, understand, and agree to follow the rules and policies of the Handbook of the Cobb Challengers and the Cobb Gymnastic Center Parents Club. Failure to agree to follow the rules and policies will result in your gymnast being removed from practice.

Thank you,

CGCPC Board of Directors

## **Gymnastics Team Overview**

Cobb Challengers is a year-round gymnastics training program, supported by the Cobb Gymnastic Center Parents Club and the coaching staff, and supervised by the Program Coordinator. Consistent training is needed to progress through the levels. Our program gradually increases the degree of commitment for each gymnast. The emphasis in the noncompetitive and lower levels is on fun and skill development. We believe that learning in a fun atmosphere is important for the young gymnast to develop a love for the sport. As a gymnast progresses, technique is continually stressed and more emphasis on training skills is added. At the optional levels, emphasis is on serious training and preparation for higher levels of competition. At this level, more demanding skills must be introduced to the gymnast, while maintaining an enjoyable atmosphere.

## **Parents Club Overview**

The Cobb Gymnastic Center Parents Club is a nonprofit corporation formed to run the gymnastics program and support the gymnasts financially, physically, and emotionally. The club is run by the Board of Directors, which is made up of officers and board members elected by the parents. The team program is supervised by the Program Coordinator.

The officers and board members are parents elected by the Club members to serve a one- or two-year term. They are volunteers who have agreed to represent the thoughts and concerns of those they represent regardless of whether they are consistent with their own.

The club is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and Secretary of State as a 501(c) (3) amateur athletic organization. Because of our nonprofit status, we are required by state and federal law to be transparent with our financial records. Club records must be made available to members as required by Georgia law, and our annual tax return is available for public inspection.

The club's fiscal year runs from July 1 - June 30. The Board of Directors presents a detailed annual budget to the membership for approval around the beginning of the fiscal year. Member input is extremely important as this budget serves as our guideline for the year.

# History

Cobb County gymnastics began in April 1971 largely due to Peg Adams, a former coach with Cobb County Parks and Recreation Department. The original instruction was at the Cobb Fairgrounds barn area with the gymnasts at home with nature in the form of all different types of farm animals stabled at the fairgrounds. This unorthodox "gym" was started with nine tufted mats, one set of small parallel bars, and a vaulting buck. In just one year, from such humble beginnings, the gym was able to enter a nine-girl team, ages 8-10, in Junior Olympic competition.

In the fall of 1973, Osborne Junior High School acquired gymnastic equipment that the county used. Coupled with better equipment, and the interest generated by the 1972 Olympics, enrollment in the county program leaped to 130 beginners and 40 intermediates. Also, in 1973, Griffin Middle School became a site for Cobb County Parks and Recreation Department gymnastics. In 1974 Floyd Middle School became another site for Cobb County gymnastics.

In the summer of 1975, money became available for two full-time employees, one of whom was to oversee competitive teams. From there, the program grew from 300 gymnasts and three competitive teams to 1,500 gymnasts and ten competitive teams in 1978.

In July 1977 the Cobb Gymnastic Center was built at 542 Fairground Street in Marietta. This facility is a Butler building containing an open area of 8,000 square feet with a tile floor, 40'x40' carpeted spring floor, concession stand, viewing area, offices, and restrooms. Gymnastic equipment now includes uneven parallel bars, balance beams, vaulting horses, high bar, rings, safety and landing mats, and trampoline. In 1985 we added a 3,600-square-foot room for instructional programs handled by the Cobb County Parks and Recreation Department, as well as facilities to train our gymnasts on the harder and riskier tricks necessary to further their levels of competition.

The Cobb Challengers have been the competitive branch of the Cobb County Parks and Recreation Department. Effective October 1, 1985, the Cobb Gymnastic Center Parents Club assumed the responsibility for the competitive programs in cooperation with Cobb County Parks and Recreation, which handles the instructional levels. Team competition is offered at Cobb Gymnastic Center at all competitive levels from beginners on the training team to the advanced levels.

The Cobb Gymnastic Center is managed by Dianna Nulty, supervisor for the instructional gymnastics program offered by Cobb County Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs. The Club, which is the competitive program, is run by the Board of Directors. The teams and coaching staff are supervised by the Program Coordinator, Nidra Bailey, and the Head Coach Fernando Pizarro.

# Cobb Challengers Gymnast's Bill of Rights

All members of Cobb Challenger Gymnastics are committed to ensuring that gymnasts have a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment in which to train and compete, and that each athlete can:

## 1. Participate in gymnastics

- Gymnastics is open and inclusive to everyone without bias or favoritism.
- Participate at a level commensurate with their maturity and ability and be given an equal opportunity to strive for success.

## 2. Train and compete safely

- Participate in an environment that is free from emotional, sexual, or physical abuse
- Train and compete in a safe environment, free from inappropriate physical hazards, bullying, hazing, harassment, stalking, violence, or similar threats
- Train and compete on equipment that is clean, appropriately fitted, and properly maintained.

## 3. Maintain their personal health and prioritize wellness

- Athletes have the right to pursue a healthy lifestyle and be themselves
- To train and condition based on their physical wellness
- Communicate injuries or pain without fear

## 4. Be treated with dignity and respect

- Athletes have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- They have the right to make mistakes and fail without fear.
- They have the right to be respected, encouraged and supported appropriately by other athletes, parents, coaches, judges, spectators, event officials and those in positions of authority.

## 5. Receive proper instruction

- Be coached by individuals who are knowledgeable and have received appropriate training.
- Be properly prepared for participation by those in positions of authority
- Question or report improper behavior or violations of the Safe Sport Code, including of coaches, without fear that doing so will negatively impact their participation or success.
- All athletes (and particularly minor athletes) are entitled to have their parents observe coach/athlete interactions.

## 6. Provide input on matters that directly affect them

- Athletes have the right to provide input, and have their voices respected, in matters that directly affect them.

## 7. Integrity and Transparency

- Athletes have the right to fair and equal treatment based on transparent procedures and policies
- To train in an environment free from conflicts of interest, impropriety, and favoritism.

The above is based on the USAG [Athlete Bill of Rights](#).



# Member Requirements

The Cobb Gymnastics Center is a non-profit organization that thrives thanks to the dedication of our volunteers.

We require each family to contribute 15 volunteer hours. This commitment must include:

- **Home Meets:** At least two sessions at one or more of our home meets.
- **Gym Clean-Up Day:** Participation in one gym clean-up day.

## Home meet requirements

The responsibility for hosting home meets is shared by the parents of all gymnasts. The Cobb Challengers have a reputation for hosting quality gymnastic meets, which is made possible by the support of our parents and gymnasts.

The opportunity to host meets is very beneficial to the Challengers program and our gymnasts and families. Home meets provide substantial revenue for our program and allow our gymnasts to compete in their home gym. Helping with home meets allows parents to learn more about gymnastics and to meet and become acquainted with other members of our club.

Because our home meets are so important to our program, very specific requirements have been established to ensure smooth-running, successful meets. Each family is required to work a certain number of competition sessions per season, determined on a meet-by-meet basis, depending on the number of sessions being held. New training team families will be required to work only half of all member requirements for the first year.

We generally host 2-4 meets during a competitive season. The home meet schedule will be provided to you early in the season as soon as the meets are scheduled. The volunteer sign up will be sent via Signup Genius a few weeks before the home meet, as final preparations are put in place. Please put these meets on your calendar so you will be available to volunteer when the link to the Signup Genius is sent out.

## Gym workdays

The gym needs to be cleaned, equipment repaired, etc. on a regular basis. There is an agreement between Cobb County and the Parents Club that we will hold 4 workdays per year. Workdays are usually held on Saturday mornings and last 3 hours. Families are required to attend at least one workday per year.

## Opt-Out and Fees

- **Failure to Complete Hours:** If the required volunteer hours are not completed, a \$150 volunteer fee will be added to your tuition at the end of the season in April 2025.
- **Opt-Out:** Alternatively, you can choose to pay the \$150 fee upfront to opt out of volunteering.

## Training Team Gymnasts

- **Volunteer Hours:** Parents of training team gymnasts are required to contribute 7.5 volunteer hours per season.
- **Opt-Out Fee:** Alternatively, you can opt out by paying a \$75 fee.

## Club meetings

Cobb Challengers Gymnastics Parents Club is run by parents, and parent input is essential. Club meetings are generally held twice a year. Your participation is welcome at all meetings, but you are required to attend at least one club meeting.

# **Cobb Challengers USAG Program Structure Overview**

## **Developmental levels**

The Developmental Team is intended to provide young gymnasts with the necessary fundamental training needed for competitive gymnastics. This training team is by invitation only and is for young athletes who have shown potential to be a team level athlete and wish to develop the strength and skill necessary to try out for a Cobb Challengers competitive team.

The developmental levels are as follows:

- Hot Shots - This level is designed for ages 4 ½ to 6, providing longer hours in the gym than the recreational classes while defining fundamental gymnastic skills on all four events: beam, floor, bars, and vault.
- Training team - This level is designed for ages 6 to 8, in preparation for competitive gymnastics and to transition into Compulsory/Xcel level competition.

## **USAG Xcel Program**

The Xcel Program is designed to offer a competitive experience outside the traditional Women's Developmental Program to attract and retain a diverse group of athletes. The USA Gymnastics Xcel program was developed as an alternative competitive program offering individual flexibility to coaches and gymnasts. The goal of Xcel is to provide gymnasts of varying abilities and commitment levels with the opportunity for a rewarding gymnastics experience. The program allows a wide choice in skills to meet requirements so selection may be based on an individual athlete's strengths.

The focus of the Xcel program is sportsmanship, leadership, teamwork, and fun. The emphasis in the Xcel program is on correct technique, form, and performance. Xcel has levels Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond, with difficulty progressing in each level. All levels of Xcel are considered Optional, allowing gymnasts to perform routines that meet specific requirements instead of requiring specific skills at each level. Xcel Silver through Diamond could qualify for state and regional competitions.

## **USAG Women's Developmental Program**

Cobb Challengers trains gymnasts to compete levels 3 through 10 in the USAG Women's Developmental program. Athletes train year-round, approximately 10 to 30 hours per week, depending on their level. Cobb Challengers gymnasts have competed statewide, regionally, and nationally with continual success occurring at every level.

## **USAG Compulsory**

Levels 1 - 5 are the "Compulsory" levels of USAG. Gymnasts assigned to these levels all have the same routines and requirements. The gymnast must be proficient in the skills necessary to perform the routines which are designed by USA Gymnastics. Levels 2 through 5 can qualify for State meets.

## **USAG Optional**

Levels 6 through 10 are the "Optional" levels of USAG. Each event is individually choreographed for the gymnast. Optional levels 6 through 10 may qualify for State/Regional competitions. Level 9 may qualify for Eastern National Championships, and Level 10 for the National Championships.

## **Men's Team**

Level 3, 4, 5, and 6: These are compulsory levels and are for any boy six years of age and older that is interested in team and individual competition. The primary focus is on learning how to compete as athletes and gradually working towards developing more advanced optional skills. Gymnasts will compete at USAG invitational meets receiving awards based on their scores for each event in their age level and division.

Level 7, 8, 9, and 10: The Level 7-10 optional track is designed to prepare an athlete for higher level competition using the Junior FIG rule structure with some modifications specific to each level based on ability or age.

(Note on Level 7): Level 7, as a simplified optional level, is designed to encourage continued participation for athletes desiring a less rigorous path to optional gymnastics skills. The rules are created to reward a greater variation of skill levels allowing competitive success and recognition, while continuing to gain skill difficulty and moving towards the Level 8, 9, or 10 optional levels. Additionally, Level 7 provides an opportunity for athletes to continue advancement on events where they may excel, without being held back on events that they find more challenging and without requiring them to participate in the All Around.

## Team Selection & Move-up Process

Athletes will be constantly evaluated throughout the practice and competition seasons in their current level regarding possible placement for the following season by their team level coach. Communication between the team coach and the athlete/parent will occur to ensure all parties are informed of progression and level placement. The coaching staff will select and place athletes into the appropriate levels for the following season based on numerous criteria such as:

- Skill, ability & potential
- Strength and flexibility
- Self-discipline & personal work habits
- Attendance & Commitment

This list is not all-inclusive but is a good indicator of the types of items the coaching staff will review with every team gymnast in our program. Coaches will make every effort possible to ensure the gymnasts are provided the opportunity to succeed and continue their movement through the competitive levels; however, many criteria are completely dependent on the athletes themselves and their ability to work hard, follow directions, and continue to refine their physical and mental abilities.

If a parent or athlete has questions or concerns regarding level placement, they should direct these concerns to the team coach. If after a discussion with the team coach, additional questions or concerns exist, the parent/athlete should reach out to the Program Coordinator.

The Program Coordinator has final authority over any training or competition-related decisions. Decisions will be based on the growth of the gymnast as well as consideration of any effect on other team members or the gym program.

# Payment Policies

## Registration fee

A \$100 registration fee is charged when a gymnast joins the program and at the beginning of each fiscal year. This amount covers individual insurance for the gymnast which is obtained through USAG. A gymnast who joins the program after January 1 will not be charged the registration fee again until the following fiscal year.

## Tuition

### 1. Tuition Payment Due Date

Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month.

### 2. Late Payment Policy

If tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, the following terms will apply:

- **Second Attempt:** Tuition will be charged, if not paid by the 15th of the month.
- **Late Fee:** If payment has not been received by the 15th of the month, a late fee of 10% of the outstanding balance will be applied on the 15th.
- **30-Day Delinquency:** If outstanding balance remains unpaid for 30 days, the Program Coordinator will call to the Parent(s) notifying them that the Gymnast(s) will not be permitted to attend practice, competition meets or other activities until the outstanding balance, including any late fees, is paid in full.

Failure to adhere to the payment terms above may result in the suspension of the Gymnast(s) from participation in practice, competition meets, and other activities until outstanding balances are settled, up to and including removal from the Cobb Challengers Gymnastics Program.

A statement is available via the member portal at any time during the month. You may also ask the program Coordinator to print a statement or check your account at any time. A \$20 service fee will be charged for any checks returned for insufficient funds.

A 12% tuition discount is given to families who have more than one gymnast enrolled in the program.

Notice of intent to cancel enrollment must be made in writing at least two weeks prior to the end of the month to avoid being charged for the next month's tuition.

## Travel fees

Meet expenses for coach travel fees (i.e., gas, mileage, food, lodging, etc.) will be shared by all gymnasts competing through their competitive team accounts. The \$100 travel fee will be charged along with the meet registration fee for all competing gymnasts. These fees are not refundable.

## Refunds

Refunds are not given for classes missed due to absences, vacation, holiday periods, etc.

# Attendance & Participation Policy

Gymnastics requires consistency and dedication. For a gymnast to realize their goals and be successful in the sport, they need to be at every practice.

## Attendance policy

The expectation for attendance is 100%, and the minimum requirement is 80%.

However, there may be times when a gymnast's health, family life, or education make this difficult. Should your athlete not be able to meet these expectations, please discuss this with your gymnast's coach. Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Missing practice due to illness

While attendance is important, a gymnast should not attend practice when ill. Please refer to the following chart to know when to stay home and when to return to the gym.

Strep throat or other bacterial illness being treated by antibiotics.	Until antibiotics have been given for 24 hours
Fever over 100.4	When you have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication.
Diarrhea or vomiting	When 24 hours have passed since the last episode
Head lice	After appropriate treatment
Pink eye (redness, itching, and/or pus draining from eye)	Until symptoms have resolved, or you have been cleared by a doctor

## Missing practice due to injury

Despite our best efforts, injuries can happen in gymnastics. If your gymnast is injured, the gymnast, coach, and medical team must work together to determine the best path forward. Unless an athlete is injured to a point where their physician completely removes them from all physical activity, the athlete is required to discuss a modified practice schedule with their coach to continue performing whatever limited actions are approved by their physician. Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Missing practice due to academics

School/Grades must be a priority for the Cobb Challengers athlete; however, so must be attendance and progression at practice. Time management is essential for a competitive gymnast. There may be times when school assignments or tests might mean a shortened practice for your gymnast. If your gymnast needs to miss practice, or a portion of practice, to ensure their homework is completed, please

inform their coach as early as possible. If the gymnast will miss only a portion of practice, please coordinate the absence with your gymnast's coach to determine which part of practice is best for them to miss (i.e., come in early/leave early or come in late/leave on time).

Please note that continuous conflicts between practice and school workload may result in the athlete being removed from the team to better manage their school workload.

Pre-Approved absences due to academics include standardized testing (ACT/SAT tests), and mandatory attendance at an event scheduled outside normal school hours.

## **Inclement Weather Closures**

In the event of inclement weather, practice will be canceled when the Cobb County schools are closed. However, if conditions improve later in the day and the coach feels practice is possible, the coach will notify the team parents. If a gymnast is not able to attend the practice at that point, it will not be counted as an absence. Practice is not canceled due to normal school holidays, teacher workdays, etc.

## **Makeups**

Makeup classes for individuals cannot be scheduled due to the nature of gymnastics instruction. When a coach cancels practice for an entire team, a makeup class will be scheduled. The exception is for classes canceled due to holiday gym closure, county closures, weather or classes canceled due to competition.

In general, if a family decides to miss a scheduled practice, a make-up day will not be scheduled.

## **Importance of the Attendance Policy**

CGCPC has this strong attendance policy for the safety of the athlete, and so the athlete can achieve their goals. Gymnastics is a year-round sport and one that requires the athlete to commit to a certain level of practice for them to safely progress.

When an athlete is placed on a team, their coach makes a commitment to them that they are going to do everything in their power to have them ready for competition. In return, the athlete is asked to do everything in their power to have themselves ready to compete at their best.

By accepting a position on a Cobb Challengers team, the athlete is making a commitment to their teammates that they are going to do everything in their power to help the team be successful. To follow through on that commitment, the athlete needs to be at practice.

Cobb Challengers limits the number of athletes that are accepted onto each team, and often your gymnast is being awarded a position on the team over another athlete. As such, they are making a commitment to the club that they will fulfill the responsibilities of the team position which was awarded.

Workouts are planned for a full year in preparation for competition; similarly, competitions are scheduled for the season in a manner that allows qualification to succeeding levels or meets. Missing consecutive



practices will put a gymnast out of phase with the rest of their team and could hurt their advancement in progress, level, or competition.

## **Attendance policy infractions**

Cobb Challengers is extremely strict regarding attendance for the team athlete. In extreme cases, habitual attendance infractions may result in removal from competition, their assigned level, or the team.

**NOTE:** Removal from the team for attendance issues does not absolve the family of their financial commitment. Please see the financial obligations section contained in this handbook for further details.

## **Schedules**

### **Schedule policy**

Cobb Challengers team schedules are subject to change, and it is not guaranteed that the stated schedule will remain constant throughout the entire time frame noted. Schedules can change based on numerous criteria such as equipment/rotation space availability as well as coach availability. If feasible, we will attempt to afford every team family affected by a schedule change an appropriate amount of time to plan for a non-scheduled change, but some circumstances beyond our control may cause an immediate change. Makeup practice will be made available if possible.

### **Known schedule changes**

Schedules will be evaluated and potentially changed:

- June - Summer schedule (See note below regarding summer practice.)
- August - Back to school schedule (typically released in July)
- Holiday practices (Thanksgiving break – Christmas – New year)

### **Summer practice (June/July)**

Teams will have some practice times moved to the daytime hours during the summer months with all attendance policies still being in effect. If you know your personal schedule will not allow you to get them to/from the gym during the day in the summer month, please start planning for other arrangements as soon as possible (i.e., potential carpools, etc.). The summer schedule is typically released in May.

### **Transportation and pick up**

Transportation to and from the gym is the responsibility of the parents. Gymnasts must be picked up promptly at the end of practice. Parents are strongly encouraged to come into the gym to pick up the gymnast. Alternatively, you may use the carpool line, but please adhere to the normal flow of traffic, and do not block cars in the parking lot. Please do not allow young gymnasts to enter the parking lot unattended. To ensure the safety of our gymnasts, we cannot allow them to wait outside for their ride. They may stand inside the door and watch out for you. If a coach must stay with a gymnast 20 minutes or longer after practice has ended for the evening, a \$20.00 fee will be charged to the parents.

# Private Lessons

In general, it is our opinion that our athletes all have sufficient practice hours for skill enhancement and achievement; however, situations do arise where a private lesson is warranted.

While you may always inquire with your gymnast's coach about private lessons, our staff has been instructed to only do private lessons for CGCPC athletes in the following circumstances:

- Short term concentration/corrections on a certain required skill that has eluded the athlete during normal practice.
- Long term scheduled private lessons for the advanced athlete to work future requirement progressions that they are unable to perform in normal class due to time/curriculum limitations.

## Private lesson guidelines

- Private lessons are not an acceptable substitution for regularly scheduled practice.
- Your payment account at CGCPC must be current and in good standing.
- The athlete must display an acceptable work ethic during regularly scheduled practices.
- Private lessons with coaches outside of the Cobb Challengers staff are not allowed.
- All private lessons must be coordinated and approved by your gymnast's team coach regardless of which coach you wish to perform the private lesson with (i.e., assistant coach, or coach on another team).
- All private lessons must be held at times that do not interfere with normally scheduled practice times.

Prior approval for private lessons by your gymnasts' team coach is imperative to:

- Ensure that any training plans the coach has in place with the athlete are not accidentally disrupted by a private lesson with another coach.
- Courtesy to the primary coach

Primary coaches, at their sole discretion, may rescind their approval for a different coach to do private lessons with the athlete if they feel the private lesson is impacting proper progressions or athlete approach/attitude in normal practice.

CGCPC cannot be held liable for any injuries sustained during a private lesson. At the coach's discretion, a waiver may be required.

## Private lesson scheduling and payments

Private lessons and payment for the lessons are coordinated directly between the coach and the athlete's parent/guardian. For each private lesson, a payment is required to the County for the use of the space and the staff required for the gym to be open. This fee will be separate from the amount due to the coach and will be paid through square.

Scheduling:

1. Gymnasts must coordinate with their assigned Coach to determine a suitable date and time for a group/private lesson.

2. The scheduling of group/private lessons is subject to the availability of both the Coach and the gymnast.

Payment:

1. Gymnasts are required to pay the Coach directly for the cost of the group/private lesson.
2. Payment must be made in advance or as per the agreement between the Coach and the gymnast.

Recording:

1. Every group or private lesson conducted will be documented in the Group/Private Lesson Log.
2. For each private lesson listed, it will be noted whether the gymnast(s) are team members.
3. The Group/Private Lesson Log will be available in the office for reference and tracking purposes.

Rental Fee:

1. At the start of each lesson, the \$10.50 rental fee should be paid via Square Online. The QR code will be available on the Log.

## **Exclusivity In Training**

Gymnastics training for the CGCPC athletes is exclusive to this club. Gymnasts may not train at any other gym, camp, clinic, or open gym while training/competing and/or representing this facility without prior approval from the coaches.

## **Competitions**

### **“Making lineup” & scratching events**

All CGCPC competitive gymnasts must demonstrate proficiency in all skills appropriate to their competitive level to be allowed to enter any competition. In addition, the gymnast must be in good health and have completed all assignments and attendance requirements to enter a competition.

During the competition season, coaches may scratch a gymnast from specific events for several reasons:

- Excessive missed practices prior to the meet
- The athlete is not ready to compete in the event.
- The athlete has a minor injury that could risk their safety on the event.
- The athlete starts having a history of balking on skills during a meet or practice.
- Serious or recurring violations of gym rules.

Please note that scratching after warm-ups is a “meet time decision” for a coach and is not done lightly. If your athlete is scratched at a meet, the coaching staff will typically be unable to talk to you right away during the meet but will follow up with you as soon as possible to make sure you have all the pertinent information. Scratching an athlete from an event is at the sole discretion of the athlete’s coach.

Scratching as a disciplinary action is very uncommon and is only used for serious, or recurring, violations of gym rules. Please note that if the gymnast is suspended from a competition due to poor attendance, incomplete assignments, a poor work ethic, negative attitude, balking, or any other reason, the entry fee is not refundable if it has already been paid. The team level coach will decide whether a gymnast will compete. If a parent or athlete has concerns regarding the decision made by the team level coach, the concern should be addressed to the Program Coordinator.

The Program Coordinator has the final say in all competitive program matters, including coaching technique, skill implementation, and athlete discipline.

### **Meet etiquette for athletes**

- Conduct yourself with grace and courage during competition. Accept all scores in a positive manner and learn from any mistakes.
- Ensure you are in the proper attire; your hair is done appropriately with no unapproved bows/ribbons/etc. and no jewelry. Your hair cannot be a distraction and may not touch your nose or face. Talk with your coach in advance if you do not understand how your hair needs to be done for a competition. Your coach will make the final decision on hair and makeup.

- During awards, gymnasts are to pay attention, and wear their competition leotard and team warmups proudly. All gymnasts must be in their warmups for awards, which means shoes, jackets, and pants on with the jacket zipped up.
- It is highly recommended that all gymnasts stay until the award presentations are complete.
- Congratulate members from the opposing teams when they do well; you will see many of these gymnasts again over the years, and quite possibly might develop some new friends along the way!
- Gymnasts should not leave the competition facility without their parent or guardian.
- Gymnasts should not go in the stands during competition to socialize with friends and family.
- Never speak negatively about another club, coach, gymnast, or judge. If they are displaying a disrespectful attitude towards you, remove yourself from the situation and inform one of your coaches so they can handle the situation accordingly.

## **Meet etiquette for parents/spectators**

It is the philosophy of Cobb Challengers that the coaches, the gym administration, the parents, and the gymnasts are all part of the team, and each has a role to play. Having a strong cheering section does wonders for team motivation and gives pride to the team. As a parent of a Cobb Challengers gymnast, you represent the gym and your fellow team parents. Listed below are general guidelines for competition situations:

- Cheering for our team members: Cheer loud and often, but please do so in a courteous manner to other athletes who may be competing.
- Cheering for other athletes: Feel free to cheer for gymnasts from other teams. This shows great sportsmanship and is an excellent example for us to set not only for our kids but for other parents/spectators as well.
- Show your support: Show your support by proudly wearing your spirit wear!
- Negative talk: Never speak negatively about our club or athletes, another club, coach, gymnast, or judge while in the stands at practice or a meet.
- Restricted Areas: Under USAG rules the only adults allowed in the competitive area are the judges, those helping run the competition, and USAG professional members. Competitors are not permitted in the stands until after the awards ceremony.
- Talking to the meet officials: Under no circumstances is a parent or gymnast ever to approach a judge or a meet official before, during, or after competition to comment on, complain about, or even ask about a score. Failure to adhere to this policy can lead to our team being disqualified from the competition.
- Contacting your gymnast: Please do not contact or talk to your gymnast once they are on the competitive floor, doing so risks not only distracting your gymnast but risks having our entire team (or the entire meet) disqualified under USAG regulations.
- Injury Situation: Please do not rush out onto the floor if you think your gymnast may have been injured during warm-ups or competition. Please wait for your coach to give some indication that you should come into the competition area before doing so.
- If you will not personally be at the competition, please communicate transportation arrangements clearly with your gymnast, and provide them with an emergency number in case you are not available.

## Team attire requirements

All competitive CGCPC team members are required to purchase certain uniforms and minor personal equipment for the training & competition seasons. All athletes are required to wear the same uniforms, as designated by CGCPC coaching staff for the level assigned. Self-purchased uniforms will not be acceptable attire for competition meets, and if the assigned uniform is not purchased your gymnast will not be allowed to compete.

Once a year, CGCPC will facilitate a “gently used” item resale between parents. All used items must go through CGCPC for inspection prior to being accepted for resale to assure they are still in acceptable condition. Should you choose to purchase an item directly from another parent, you do run the risk of CGCPC declaring the item unusable, or ill-fitting, and being required to purchase an appropriate item.

For personal budgeting purposes, please plan on purchasing a new leotard every year based on the athlete’s growth patterns.

## Team travel policies and procedures

From time to time during the year, we will be attending competitions outside the state. The gym will distribute competition information and host hotel information as soon as we receive it. Gymnast families are responsible for making all their own travel arrangements. Regardless of travel arrangements the gymnast must be at the specified location by the specified time for them to compete.

- Optional gymnasts may have up to 2 in-season travel meets, and up to 3 post-season travel meets.
- Compulsory gymnasts may have one travel meet.
- If you are not traveling to the meet, you are responsible for finding a chaperone for your gymnast. **Due to insurance liability and Safe sport reasons, the athlete's coach cannot be designated as a chaperone.**
- The chaperone must be provided with a medical release form and all pertinent information along with enough money to cover all costs (i.e., meals, the share of the hotel room, share in car rental cost and incidental items).
- It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the coach of the designated chaperone.

Unfortunately, attending travel competitions may require the gymnasts to miss some school time. We highly recommend discussing your gymnast’s gymnastics endeavors with their school teachers, counselors, and principal to provide them with a better understanding of his/her gymnastics future, as well as to maintain a proper working relationship with them for missed school time. CGCPC will always attempt to find travel meets which will limit the amount of missed school time, but competition schedules are at the discretion of the hosted meet.

## **Practice Spectator Etiquette Guidelines**

Under no circumstances should parents attempt to communicate with their gymnast or their coach from the Lobby or Mezzanine. This is dangerous to the gymnast and other gymnasts on the floor. If you need to speak with your gymnast, please text your gymnast's coach and they will respond when possible. If communication between parent and gymnast becomes an issue during practice, the individual parent will be restricted from viewing practice.

## **Athlete Nutrition**

CGCPC does not promote that a gymnast should "diet" or have a specific "body shape" to be a gymnast. We do not subscribe to the "perfect" gymnast physique philosophy; however, we do highly encourage the athletes to maintain proper nutrition to allow their body to perform and recover properly.

Gymnasts require optimal nutrition to fuel physical training for athletic performance gains. No specific nutrition plan or set of foods will be appropriate for all gymnasts, as dietary needs depend on age, height, weight, gender, physical activity levels, and existing medical conditions. In general, a healthy, well-balanced diet is ideal to maximize energy and recovery needs. CGCPC highly recommends each athlete's family consult with a physician or health professional to determine their athlete's individual health needs.

## **Team Social & Publicity Policy**

Cobb Challengers Gymnastics and/or its appointed representatives may submit articles, advertisements, and/or photographs to newspapers, other publications, the internet, social media pages, and other news media concerning teams or individual gymnasts from time to time. The prime purpose of these submissions is to recognize team and individual achievements; although, the use of these photographs remains unlimited. Individual and family permission for these submittals is inherently granted when an athlete joins our team and the waiver of rights regarding this policy is included in your registration paperwork.

When a gymnast or family member wants to post something on social media, they should use the following guidelines:

1. Be honest about who you are.
2. Be clear that your opinions are your own.
3. Be respectful and humble in all communication.
4. Use good judgment in sharing only public information.
5. Be aware that what you say is permanent.

# Safe Sport Statement

Consistent with the mission and guidelines of USA Gymnastics, the Cobb Challengers Organization is committed to ensuring the safety of all members of the Cobb Challengers program – gymnasts, staff, and coaches. The organization will continue to take any reports of misconduct seriously, and act quickly and thoughtfully to resolve the situation and restore order and productivity to our gym.

As an effort to remain proactive and compliant with the USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Guidance, we would like to ensure that everyone is aware of the anti-bullying policy. Please review the link below from USA Gymnastics that provides information on how to recognize, reduce, and respond to bullying: [https://usagym.org/pages/education/safesport/articles/2017\\_0101.pdf](https://usagym.org/pages/education/safesport/articles/2017_0101.pdf)

Our goal is to continue a positive, cohesive, and motivational environment for our teams. We encourage parents and coaches to discuss this policy with your gymnasts.

If anyone witnesses or experiences bullying at our gym, please adhere to the following protocol for the most immediate resolution:

1. Contact your team coach. If written communication is preferred, please expect a response between 24/48 hours.
2. If a suitable resolution is not met or further action is required, please contact Program Coordinator, Nidra Bailey.
3. Issues needing further attention should be addressed to the board ([cobbgymnasticsboard@gmail.com](mailto:cobbgymnasticsboard@gmail.com)) and will be added to the upcoming monthly board meeting.

## Communication

We have an open communications policy on our team with gymnasts, parents, and coaches, and typically hold a minimum of one to two formal conferences with each gymnast and their parents per year. Situational or other meetings can be arranged upon request. Communication with the coach can be through text, email, and the Band App.

In the event a parent would like to discuss training/coaching of their gymnast, they should reach out to their gymnast's team level coach to arrange a time to discuss. Please do not attempt to address a concern with the coach before, during, or after a practice or competition. As youth sports universally recognizes a "cooling off" period of 24 hours before addressing an incident to enable all involved the opportunity to rethink and review the circumstances and details of the issue, please schedule time to speak with the coach keeping this in mind.

Please do not approach a member of the Parent Board to discuss training or coaching of your gymnast. You will be directed to your team level coach.

If the resolution given by the team coach is unsatisfactory, the parent or gymnast should contact the Program Coordinator to schedule time to discuss their concerns.

If the resolution at this point is still unsatisfactory, the parent/gymnast may file a formal written appeal to the Board of Directors and the Program Coordinator. To do so, written documentation of the concern along with a brief description of what has happened so far should be provided in an envelope to a Board



member, labeled "Appeal". The Board of Directors will then review the complaint and schedule a mediation session with the Program Coordinator and the parents to help resolve the issue. Any decisions made in this mediation session are final.

# Code of Conduct for Gymnasts

## Gymnasts agree to:

- Be friendly and supportive to everyone and offer help if needed
- Practice and participate fairly and be trustworthy.
- Behave with respect to others including coaches, venue staff, officials, other gymnasts, parents, and spectators.
- Respect the rules of the club, those of the facilities and Cobb County
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, nationality, political beliefs, socio-economic status or sexual orientation.
- Always strive to show the best of myself and refrain from inappropriate conduct towards others including physical, verbal, written or emotional, in person or through use of social media
- Be a positive role model and refrain from bullying and getting involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do
- Set a good example at all times in aspects of dress, punctuality, language, behavior and respect of equipment and others
- Not smoke, consume alcohol or drugs of any kind
- Report inappropriate behavior or risky situations to a member of staff
- Arrive at training sessions on time and ready to participate fully.
- Understand that chewing gum and wearing any jewelry while training and competing is not allowed.
- Only use my phone in training or competition for development purposes such as filming routines. Permission for filming must be given by the coach.
- Never post offensive or hurtful comments on social media that could be seen as disrespectful or upsetting. This includes making negative comments relating to coaches, officials, volunteers, coaches, gymnasts, and support staff.
- Refrain from gossip, spreading rumors, talking negatively about fellow gymnasts or coaches.

Breaches of the gymnast code of conduct shall be dealt with in line with the Progressive discipline policy.

# Code of Conduct for Parents

Cobb Challengers approach to gymnastics is athlete centered, coach led, and performance driven with athlete and coach well-being and development at the center. As a parent or guardian of a Cobb Challengers gymnast, you play a vital role in helping them succeed in gymnastics. We have created some guidelines which we believe will help you support your child.

## Your rights that we will champion are:

- Be able to ask questions, be listened to and respected
- Be supported if reporting suspected abuse or poor practice
- Know that reporting a concern will not affect you or your child's place in the club
- Be protected from abuse from spectators, other adults, coaches, parents, and gymnasts
- Be informed about problems or concerns about your child
- Be informed if your child is injured or unwell

## Supporting your Child:

- Always treat others with respect and care for their safety, wellbeing, and protection. This means not taking part in, or allowing any actions that harm others in any way, such as physical harm, emotional harm, neglect, extortion, bullying or sexual misconduct.
- Do not allow allegations of poor practice, abuse, or wellbeing concerns to go unchallenged, unrecorded or fail to act upon them
- Be a positive role model for your child by promoting fair play, good sportsmanship, and promoting performance over results. Maintain high standards of behavior.
- Ensure your child is prepared for all sessions with the appropriate clothing, footwear, nutrition, and hydration.
- Support your child to know, understand and follow the rules of the gymnast code of conduct
- Inspire your child to be the best they can be in the sport.
- Develop relationships with gymnasts, coaches, officials, and volunteers based on integrity, mutual trust, and respect.
- Encourage your child to speak with their coaches and accept responsibility for their own development and behavior.
- Help them understand the important life lessons to be gained from the sport, such as: leadership, handling adversity, teamwork, persistence, and compassion.
- Never belittle your child or their achievements no matter how small.
- To foster a positive environment, refrain from negative discussions with other parents while at the gym regarding your gymnast's development, level placement and coaching. Please arrange a meeting with the Head Coach and/ or your child's Coach if you have any concerns as we are happy to discuss all aspects of your child's progress within the Club.

## Supporting our Club:

- Ensure your child attends all sessions on time.
- Collect your child promptly at the end of a session and call the gymnastics club if you will be late
- Respond to emails and complete paperwork in a timely manner

- Proactively communicate with the coaching team in relation to your child's illnesses, injuries, medication, changes to contact details and attendance at club events.
- Never post offensive or hurtful comments or comments that could be seen as disrespectful or upsetting on social media. This includes making negative comments relating to Cobb Gymnastics staff, officials, volunteers, coaches, gymnasts, and other parents.
- Attend events and fundraising activities as per the guidelines in the Handbook.

**Supporting our club at events and competitions:**

- Ensure that family members and friends who are supporting at competitions are respectful to everyone. They must remain outside the competition ropes during competitions and accept the scores and decisions made by judges.
- Be a positive role model for your child by promoting fair play, good sportsmanship, and performance over results. Maintain high standards of behavior.

# Code of Conduct for Coaches

Cobb Challengers approach to gymnastics is athlete centered, coach led, and performance driven with athlete and coach well-being and development at the center.

## Your rights that we will champion are:

- Access to ongoing training and information on all aspects of your role, including safeguarding wellbeing & protection
- Be able to ask questions, be listened to and respected
- Be supported if reporting suspected abuse or poor practice
- To know that reporting a concern will not affect your place in the club
- Be protected from abuse from spectators, other adults, coaches, parents, and gymnasts

## Coaches agree to:

### 1. Promotion of a Safe, Positive and Healthy Environment for All

- Make decisions in the best interest of athletes.
- Maintain a safe training and competing environment.
- Promote a culture of trust and empowerment.
- Respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all participants.
- Encourage a healthy lifestyle and support nutritional well-being.
- Promote and respect all Safe Sport principles.

### 2. Commitment to Integrity

- Be knowledgeable of, understand, and follow USA Gymnastics rules and policies, and refrain from knowingly misrepresenting or misinterpreting such.
- Promote fair play.
- Maintain respect on the floor and refrain from intimidating, embarrassing or improperly influencing any individual
- Follow the established procedures for challenging a competitive result.
- Make honest certifications regarding compliance with USA Gymnastics' policies, procedures or membership requirements.
- Avoid engaging in business practices or behavior that are known to be unethical, illegal or a breach of contract.

### 3. Participation and Inclusion

- Ensure gymnasts only compete in activities or events where the gymnast is adequately prepared and able to participate safely.
- Promote positive participation and avoid behavior that is likely to interfere with the orderly conduct of the activity or other members' participation in, or enjoyment of, an activity or event.
- Respect the rights and opinions of others.

- Facilitate cooperation in order to serve athletes and other participants effectively and appropriately.
- Promote inclusion and an environment free of discrimination. Coaches may not:
  - Restrict the ability of a gymnast to qualify for or participate in competition because of the gymnast's association with any protected class.
  - Discriminate in the allocation of resources or opportunities to any person based on their association or affiliation with a protected class.

#### 4. Communication

- Respect the voice of athletes, particularly in matters that affect them.
- Strive to promote the sport and athletes.
- Provide all information and resources necessary to enhance a gymnast's enjoyment of the sport or reduce their risk of injury or illness.
- Refrain from unsportsmanlike comments or behavior.
- Address differences in a calm and respectful manner.
- Clearly communicate roles, responsibilities and expectations.
- Avoid making false or misleading claims; or, falsify, or omit any information, record or document or other evidence for any purpose.
- Accurately represent competitive achievements, professional qualifications, education, experience, eligibility, criminal record and other misconduct, and/or affiliations.

#### 5. Concern for the Welfare of Others

- Promote a culture of empowerment with a focus on athlete health and safety.
- Comply with mandatory reporting requirements established by federal law, the U.S. Center for SafeSport and USA Gymnastics Safe Sport Policy.
- Proactively address potentially harmful behavior or an unsafe environment.
- Be sensitive to any imbalance of power.
- Resolve conflicts in a professional manner.

#### 6. Professional Responsibility Members

- Prioritize athlete welfare.
- Faithfully complete and comply with USA Gymnastics membership requirements.
- Strive to maintain high standards and excellence.
- Seek to increase proficiency levels through continuing education and in consultation with other professionals.
- Participate only at a level of the sport in which an individual is qualified and prepared for.
- Accept appropriate responsibility for one's own behavior and report any unlawful or other inappropriate conduct of others in accordance with Section II below.

#### 7. Enforce an Alcohol and Drug Free Environment

The above is based on the USAG [Code of Ethical Conduct](#).

# Cobb Challengers Progressive Discipline Policy

## Procedure for inappropriate behavior shown by a gymnast

### Stage 1: Recorded Verbal Warning

1. If a coach feels a gymnast has displayed inappropriate behavior during training, at a competition or a Club event (such as being persistently disruptive, dangerous behavior, or not following the Club's code of conduct) they will be given a verbal warning stating what behavior needs to stop, and why.
2. On the second occasion, the gymnast will be asked to sit to the side of the session for a length of time deemed appropriate by the Coach. The Coach is responsible for explaining to the gymnast why they have been told to sit out.
3. On the third occasion, the gymnasts' parents will be called. The Coach will record the verbal warning on an incident form held by the Program Coordinator stating the date, warning given, reason for it and any specific improvements required within a given date. The incident form will be signed by both the parent and coach and placed in the gymnast file. In the event the parent refuses to sign the form, a witness will be asked to sign in their place and a note will be added indicating the parents refusal.

### Stage 2: Written Warning

If there is repeated inappropriate behavior by a gymnast where a recorded verbal warning has already been given in the previous 3 months, or an offense is serious, the Coach will issue a written warning. This will be approved by the Program Coordinator.

The written warning should be issued to the gymnast within 5 working days of the incident in the following format:

- Date of the inappropriate behavior
- Factual description of the incident
- What the coach's response was at the time
- Effect of the inappropriate behavior on the gymnast, other gymnasts, and coaches as relevant
- Any other points
- Actions for improvement
- Timescale
- Gymnasts' response

The Program Coordinator will work to agree to the actions needed with the gymnast and the parents/guardians concerned to improve the behavior.

### Stage 3: Final Written Warning

A final written warning is issued to the gymnasts by the Program Coordinator if the gymnast has failed to improve in the required timescale or if the misconduct is extremely serious. The format of the final written warning will be the same as for written warning.

### Stage 4: Suspension or Expulsion

Suspension or expulsion from the Club may result if the gymnast's conduct is still unsatisfactory or there is gross misconduct, such as aggressive or abusive behavior. The decision to suspend or expel

any member from the Club will be taken by a Disciplinary Committee within 3 business days. The Disciplinary Committee will be made up of the Program Coordinator, Head Coach, 3 members of the Board, and the Cobb County gymnastics coordinator. Any individuals with a conflict of interest will be excluded from the committee.

### **Procedure for inappropriate behavior shown by a parent/guardian/volunteer**

If any person feels that a parent, guardian, or volunteer has displayed inappropriate behavior, they should report the matter directly to the Program Coordinator (see Parents/Guardians' Code of Conduct for details). The Parent will be given the chance to discuss their behavior with the Program Coordinator and if appropriate, the Coach involved. In the first instance, the Program Coordinator will try to resolve any difficulties face to face with the Parent/Guardian concerned and agree a plan of action. It is recommended that a neutral 3rd party is present at this meeting and the outcomes of the discussions are written down. Depending on the seriousness of the inappropriate behavior, escalation will follow stages 2 to 4 above.

### **Procedure for inappropriate behavior shown by a coach or the Program Coordinator**

If any person feels that a coach has displayed inappropriate behavior they should report the matter directly to the Program Coordinator. If any person feels that the Program Coordinator has displayed inappropriate behavior, they should report the matter directly to the Board of Directors. The following process will be followed when the issue is directly related to the Program Coordinator except the Board of Directors will act in the position of decision maker.

#### **Stage 1: Verbal Warning**

In the first instance, a verbal warning will be delivered stating what behavior needs to stop, and why.

#### **Stage 2: Written Warning**

If there is repeated inappropriate behavior where a recorded verbal warning has already been given in the previous 3 months, or an offense is serious, the Program Coordinator will issue a written warning. The written warning should be issued to the individual within 10 working days of the incident in the following format:

- Date of the inappropriate behavior
- Factual description of the incident
- What the response was at the time
- Effect of the inappropriate behavior on the gymnasts and other coaches as relevant
- Any other points
- Actions for improvement
- Timescale
- Staff member's response

The Program Coordinator will work to agree on an action plan for improvement with the individual concerned.

#### **Stage 3: Final Written warning**



A final written warning is issued by the Program Coordinator if the individual fails to improve in the required timescale or if the misconduct is extremely serious. The format of the final written warning will be the same as for written warning.

#### Suspension

Suspension from the Club may result if the conduct is still unsatisfactory or there is gross misconduct, such as aggressive or abusive behavior.

#### Termination

Termination from employment may result if conduct is still unsatisfactory. If an employee is terminated, the Board of Directors should be notified immediately. Termination is not open to appeal.

# Cobb Challengers Gymnast Progressive Discipline Form

Gymnast Information:

Prior Disciplinary Action / Date

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal Warning \_\_\_\_\_

Written Warning \_\_\_\_\_

Level / Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Suspension \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Incident/Issue:

Please provide a detailed description of the incident or issue that led to this disciplinary action. Include relevant dates, times, locations, and any witnesses present. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Incident/Issue

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Gymnast's

Response/Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

Corrective

Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the above incidents/issues and considering any previous warnings or discussions, the following disciplinary action is being implemented:

Verbal Warning  Written Warning  Suspension  Program Explosion

Gymnast Acknowledgement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received and understand this Progressive Discipline Form. I understand the reasons for the disciplinary action taken and the expectations moving forward.

Gymnast Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator Signature (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please keep this form in the gymnast's personnel file for future reference.