

## Rockaway Rockets Football and Cheer Program: Parent/Child Handbook

### 1. Organization

The Rockaway Rockets Football and Cheer Program is organized into three divisions: Football, Cheerleading, and Boosters. Football is composed of a Director of Football, Treasurer, Secretary and Division Coordinators. A Coaches Review Board that handles disciplinary issues for the program and determines coaching assignments. Cheerleading is composed of a Director of Cheer, Asst Director, Treasurer, Secretary and Team Coordinators. Boosters is composed of a Director, Asst Director, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Chairs and Division Coordinators and handles awards, pictures, apparel, fundraising, etc. A Cheerleading Executive Board handles disciplinary issues for the program and determines coaching assignments. All operate under a not-for-profit corporation which is composed of a President, Vice President, Corporate Treasurer and Corporate Secretary and Board of Directors.

### 2. Code of Conduct

Rockaway Township requires that all participants (and their guardians if participant is a minor) sign and adhere to the town's Code of Conduct (the Code). It is expected that all will read and abide by this code. In short, the Code can be summed up by requiring you to respect all players, parents, coaches, guests, and officials at all Rockets functions, on and off the field. Some violations include: foul language, derogatory comments, arguing with officials, heckling, shouting in non-encouraging way or to intimidate or to demean. You are expected to read and understand the Code. Questions should be brought to the Director of town recreation. The Code extends to all family and guests.

### 3. Parent and Child Obligations

All parents and children are required to follow the obligations listed below:

- a) Parents are obligated to support the program through a minimum of 2 hours of service to boosters. Typically these hours are served at the concession stand.
- b) Parents and Children are obligated to follow the rules and regulations as specified in our bylaws and the Township Code.
- c) Parents are obligated to follow the complaint process as defined by our bylaws for all issues.
- d) Children are obligated to fulfill their commitment to the sport through attendance, sportsmanship in accordance with our bylaws and the Township Code, and giving their best effort when participating in football/cheer activities.
- e) During the season, the program may conduct a fundraiser to help support the program and the efforts of our volunteers. We will expect your participation in such fundraisers. All proceeds of any fundraisers go to the program to maintain and expand the program, as well as provide extras for the children to improve their experience as Rockets.
- f) At the end of the season, parents are responsible to return all Rocket's owned equipment and uniforms in the same condition that they were issued to your children. If you do not, the following actions will be taken:
  - The cost of the equipment/uniforms will be added to your Rockets account and you will not be able to register your children the following season until you pay the balance.
  - The following season you may be charged an equipment deposit fee (amount to be determined by program head) when you register your child. At the end of the season the deposit fee will be returned to you if you return your children's equipment and uniforms in acceptable condition (as determined by program head).
  - If your child is in Varsity Football or Cheerleading, they will not be able to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> grade banquet until you return the equipment/uniforms or pay for them to be replaced.
  - If after all of the aforementioned measures you still have not returned or paid for your children's equipment, we will file a report with the local police department.

#### 4. Practice and Games

The season begins August 1st. Practices and games are not optional. All children are required to attend all practices and games or provide adequate notice as defined by their football coach or cheer coordinator. Excused absences will not affect a child's eligibility. However, unexcused absences may affect participation and excessive unexcused absences may ultimately end in the removal of the child from the program with no refund. As long as the football coach or cheer coordinator are notified in advance, the following are considered to be Excused Absences:

- a) Illness (child was absent from school that day due to an illness that would be validated by a doctor's note, or has symptoms that would cause a child to miss school based on school guidelines),
- b) Religious holiday or event (ceremony only),
- c) Death in family,
- d) Mandatory school function (part of a child's grade, not an optional function; eg: band or chorus recitals) and
- e) Family Life Event (family wedding, reunion, etc.).

Unexcused absences are any absences not Excused, some of which are as follows:

- a) Family vacation,
- b) Another sport,
- c) A party,
- d) Babysitting duties
- e) An optional school function (participating is excused),
- f) Failure to notify a football coach or cheer coordinator prior to absence will count as unexcused no matter what the reason.

#### 5. Communication

Nearly all communication in the program is done through email. While coaches/coordinators may also utilize group text applications, you are responsible for checking email also. If you do not have access to email during certain times, it is your responsibility to call a teammate, coach, coordinator or team mom to find out if you missed any important information such as cancellations or time/location changes. Every effort is made to minimize changes in scheduled events, but changes may occur with minimal notice, so if you have a question, reach out to the appropriate contact.

#### 6. Rockets Name and Logo

All usage and applications of the Rockets Name and Logo are reserved by the corporation. This means you are not permitted to use the Rockets name or logo to produce your own signs, banners, apparel, etc. without express prior permission from the corporation. This includes coach's gifts that are personalized for Rockets, t-shirts with the rockets name or logo, etc. All designs must be approved. Artwork for logos will be supplied free of charge once approval has been given and in most cases you will be able to take advantage of screens and templates already created if you use the same vendor we use. We require this

policy to preserve the integrity of the name and logo, as well as to ensure uniformity, style, identity, and to not undercut our Boosters apparel sales.

## 7. Complaint Process

The Rockets have a very specific process for complaints which must be followed. It is your right and your obligation to make a formal complaint should your concerns not be addressed to your satisfaction. Once the formal complaint is made, you will be heard by the appropriate division and a close eye will be kept on the situation. Rockaway Rockets Football Association does not condone any "blackballing" of concerned parents or affected participants. We are committed to resolving your concerns. However, without going through this specific process, we cannot help you. Should your concern involve an administrative member, that member will be removed from the investigation and any rulings concerning the issue. A complaint form can be found on [www.rtrockets.com](http://www.rtrockets.com) and is outlined below:

- a. For Football, an attempt must be made to resolve any conflict with a coach or administrator. For Cheerleading, an attempt must be made to resolve any conflict with the Team Coordinator.
- b. For Football, if no resolution can be reached, the issue should be escalated to the head coach and then division coordinator for that level. For Cheerleading, if no resolution can be reached, the Cheer director must be notified in writing or via email.
- c. For Football and Cheerleading, if no resolution can be reached, a complaint must be filed with the Coaches Review Board through the online system. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
- d. Once the Coaches Review Board (CRB) or Cheerleading Executive Board (CEB) has validated the complaint, it will be brought to the board for discussion and every effort will be made to reach a resolution within 72 hours. All parties may be questioned and have the right to address the board prior to resolution.
- e. The decision of the CRB/CEB will be made and reviewed by the Executive Board, to determine all the complaint and decision for fairness and thoroughness. The determination of the Executive Board is final. All parties are expected to continue to act within the guidelines of the Code of Conduct and bylaws.
- f. Failure to follow all steps in the process will not be looked upon favorably and will most likely result in no change. This process is in place to protect you, your child, and the program.

## 8. Boosters Club

The Boosters Club is responsible for generating the money used to fund the majority of the Rockets program needs. Many of the things your children experience during their time as Rockets wouldn't be possible without the incredible efforts of the Boosters. Booster's coordinates concession, fund raisers, pep rally, awards, 8th grade dinner, and more. Much of the Boosters work requires the cooperation and assistance of the parents. Volunteers are always welcomed and needed. Please contact Boosters to ask how you can help or fill out the Boosters Club Signup Sheet.

## 9. Concession

Concession accounts for a large portion of our fundraising and it takes help from the parents of the program to make it successful. As parents, you are obligated to support the program through a minimum of 2 hours of service to boosters. Prior to the start of the season you will be able to go on our on-line system and select a shift that fits your schedule. Shifts are selected on a first come first serve basis. It is each family's responsibility to schedule and work their selected shift. If you are scheduled to work and cannot fulfill that obligation, you need to provide at least 24 hours notice. Boosters will do our best to reschedule you for another date/time, but cannot guarantee you will be rescheduled. If you do not register

for a shift or do not work your selected shift, the following actions will be taken based on your child's level within the program:

- a. Flag/Pom Poms/Pre-Clinic through JV Football and Cheer - Your Rockets account will have a \$50 booster forfeit fee added to your account. You will not be able to register your child the following season until you pay the \$50 charge.
- b. Varsity Football and Cheer- The cost of your ticket for the year end banquet will be increased by \$50.

**Please note, when you are working at the concession stand, all food must be paid for.**

#### 10. Awards

Awards are presented to all children who participate and complete the season. To receive an award, you must be in good standing with the program (all fees paid, all equipment and uniforms returned in clean condition, etc). Anyone not in good standing with the program will not receive an award and will be charged for anything not returned. In addition, you may be charged a deposit to enroll the following year. When the children graduate from the program, they are invited to a dinner for 8th graders and their parents. Participants with unexcused absences may forfeit their invitation to the 8th grade graduation dinner. Special awards are given at this dinner as well.

#### 11. Fees and Paperwork

In order for your child to receive their equipment/uniform the following must be completed:

- a. You must have registered your child(ren) on-line at <https://rrockets.sportsignup.com/>
- b. All outstanding fees (registration fee, booster forfeit fee, equipment deposit/cleaning charge, etc.) must be paid in full.
- c. All applicable paperwork (code of conduct, emergency medical treatment form, cheer rules and regulations, physical form, birth certificate, etc.) must be turned in.

The registration fee will only be returned if the child has not participated in any practices/games and your Rockets account is in good standing (all outstanding fees paid up to date and all equipment cleaned/returned). The following fees will be deducted from any registration fee returned based on the scenario.

- a. An equipment cleaning/refurbishment fee if your child has participated in practice or games.
- b. Any outstanding fees on your Rockets account.
- c. Equipment cleaning/deposit fee if you do not return all uniforms and equipment in clean condition.

#### 12. Specific Team Guidelines

This handbook is intended to be a general guide to the Rockets Football and Cheer Program. Each team/level/division will have more specific guidelines for you and your child, by which you are also bound.

Website: [www.rrockets.com](http://www.rrockets.com)

President: Tim Fortune  
Football Director: Bill Bray  
Cheer Director: Kerri Boralsky  
Booster Director: Christine Bray