

PARENT HANDBOOK

HLL participates in heads up football training.

HLL is proud to be a part of Empire West Youth Football &
Cheerleading League.

2026

Welcome to the 2026 Season!

Board of Directors

Executive Board:

President – Rob Sank

Vice President – John Robbins

Recording Secretary – Dakotah Poitras

Treasurer – Emily McCarthy

Board Member:

Kevin Ejbisz, Anthony Lewandowski, Mike Burke, Stephanie Hyde,

Mike Roberts, Megan Crandall, James Hill

Football Commissioner – Anthony Lewandowski

Cheerleading Coordinator – Kyra Philipps

To qualify for the Board of Directors, you must be a member of HLL for a minimum of 1 year and is in good standing. If you are interested in applying by completing an application online. Past applicants are encouraged to reapply.

Our Mission Statement

It is the goal of the Hamburg Little Loop, Inc. (HLL) to promote, develop, supervise, and voluntarily assist in a youth football and cheerleading program. The association is geared to provide an outlet of healthy activity and training under good leadership in the atmosphere of wholesome community participation.

The Association is dedicated to helping youths become good and decent citizens. It strives to inspire them with a goal of enriching their lives. It establishes for them the rudiments of teamwork, fair play, and ethical behavior.

We look forward to the 2026 season!

Membership Meetings

Regular meetings are typically held the third Monday of each month. Between April & November meetings are held at the Field house. Winter meeting location is to be determined. All parents and adults over 18 years are welcome to attend.

Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency, call 911 immediately. After contacting emergency services, notify the coach or a board member. It is important to stay calm and follow the instructions provided by emergency personnel.

Parking Notice – Restricted Access

The top parking lot near the field is reserved **exclusively** for:

- ✓ **HLL Board Members**
- ✓ **Head Coaches**
- ✓ **Handicapped Parking**
- ✓ **EMTs & Referees**

All other attendees must park in the main lot. The top lot **CANNOT** be used for drop-offs—this rule will be strictly enforced. **Unauthorized vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense.**

Emergency Access: Please park responsibly to ensure ambulances and emergency personnel can get through when needed.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our events safe and organized!

Pet Policy – No Dogs or Pets Allowed

HLL is in a **Town of Hamburg Park**, which has a strict **No Dogs Allowed** policy in all town parks.

If you bring a **dog or any pet**, you will be asked to **remove them from the premises.**

Please inform all family members and guests attending your child's games or practices to ensure compliance with this policy. Thank you for your cooperation!

Tryouts & Cuts

There are no Tryouts or Cuts. League rules and By-Laws allow us to carry a maximum of 35 players for Pee Wee and 30 players for Freshmen, JV & Varsity teams. Player/Cheerleader registration is considered complete, and a roster spot secured when all fees have been paid and there isn't an open account balance.

Coaching Staff

Head coaches must be at least 21 years old and submit an application to the Board of Directors. The Board will then review and vote on head coach applicants during their regular meeting in March. Afterward, each head coach will provide a list of assistant coaches for review by the Board, which will take appropriate action.

We conduct background checks on all coaches, board members, and team parents. All coaches are required to be certified through NAYS and complete the mandatory training as outlined in our league's bylaws.

Practices

Practice Schedule:

- Through the month of August, practice runs Monday to Friday from 6pm to 8pm. Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to start time so everyone is ready to begin promptly at 6pm. Unless stated otherwise.

Attendance Requirements:

- Attendance at all practice sessions is mandatory. These sessions are crucial not only for learning the sport but also for preparing players physically and mentally for the upcoming games. Football is a rigorous contact sport, and it is essential that every player is properly conditioned to avoid injuries. Poor conditioning can lead to a higher risk of injury.
- Chronic absenteeism will not be tolerated. If your child must miss a practice, please ensure that a parent contacts the coach before the start of the practice session.

Football Practice:

- **1st week** wear t-shirt, shorts, cleats, and helmets; No equipment shall be worn during the first 3 days of conditioning practice except helmets. No player on any team shall participate in physical contact until he/she has **five days of conditioning practice**.
- **2nd week until end of season:** practice jersey and pants, cleats, equipment. Unless Head Coach indicates otherwise.

Cheerleading Practices:

- Cheerleaders should not engage in stunting or tumbling during their first two practice sessions. After these initial practices, they must complete 10 consecutive hours of stunting practice before participating in a game. This policy ensures that our teams are well-conditioned and equipped with the best possible equipment.

Preparation and Equipment:

- To ensure your child is well-prepared for practice sessions, please make sure they bring a water bottle to every practice. Staying hydrated is crucial for maintaining energy levels and overall performance.

Rain & Cancelled Practices

Yes, we practice in the rain! Be prepared for all weather conditions—practices **continue rain or shine** unless conditions become unsafe. Keep in mind that weather can vary, so it may be raining where you are but clear at HLL (or vice versa).

Lightning Protocol:

- If lightning occurs, we will take cover.
- Practice will resume **15 minutes** after the last lightning strike.
- Depending on the severity of the weather, practice **may end early**.

Parent Responsibility:

- **Do NOT** drop off your child and leave during severe weather—stay nearby in case practice ends early.
- If practice is cut short, an **HLL staff member will wait** with your child until you return.

Cancellations & Notifications:

If practice is canceled in advance, updates will be posted on:

- **Website:** www.hamburglittleloop.org
- **Facebook:** Hamburg Little Loop FB CH

Football Information

Items purchased by the parents/guardians:

- Mouth guard - Must attach to the helmet. You can purchase these at the snack stand or at any sporting goods store. No Clear mouth guards allowed!
- Protective Cup
- All-In-One Football Pants w/Pads
- Cleats - No metal cleats allowed!

Football Equipment Care & Return Policy

HLL provides high-quality football equipment, with an average cost of **\$500 per player**. Proper care ensures future athletes receive it in the best condition. To ensure player safety, HLL mandates JV and Varsity football players to wear HLL provided guardian caps. We strongly encourage Freshman players to wear them.

Care Instructions:

- Wash in warm water with mild detergent—**no bleach or hot water**.
- Keep colors separate to prevent bleeding.
- Clean girdle pads, shoulder pads, and helmet interiors with mild soap and water. **Do not remove helmet pads.**
- Air dry all pads and uniforms—**no high heat**.

Return Policy:

- Equipment must be cleaned and returned by the **equipment turn-in date** (date TBD).
- **Failure to return equipment** will result in a **minimum \$500 replacement fee**.

Cheer Information

Cheer apparel will be purchased by you the parents/guardians **BEFORE** the season begins. All items are **mandatory** for the season:

- Dedicated Cheer Bag
- Spanks
- Cheer sneakers
- Crop
- Warm Up Jacket
- Black Wind Pants
- Clear rain poncho - can be found at the dollar stores or the camping department of Wal-Mart

Practice Attire:

- A T-shirt that can be tucked into shorts (no jean shorts/skorts, no spaghetti strap shirts)
- Cheer sneakers
- Hair is pulled back and out of face

Competition Practice Policy:

As we transition to a **three-day-a-week practice schedule**, these sessions will be dedicated to **competition practices** and will apply **only to cheerleaders who are competing**.

Competition Attendance Policy:

- Cheerleaders may miss **no more than two** competition practices.
- **School activities take priority** and will not count against your attendance.

Cheerleading Guidelines for Safety & Uniformity

To ensure the safety of all cheerleaders and maintain a consistent team appearance, the following rules must be followed:

- **Jewelry:** No jewelry of any kind is allowed, including earrings. Taping over piercings is not permitted.
- **Nail Polish:** Nail polish is not allowed.
- **Footwear:** Cheer sneakers must be worn at all times.
- **Hair:** Hair must be secured away from the face using jazz clips or bobby pins.
- **Uniform Care:** Avoid eating messy foods while wearing the uniform.
- **Cell Phones:** Cell phone use is prohibited except in emergencies.
- **Ear Piercings:** Do not get new ear piercings right before or during the season. Jewelry cannot be worn during practices or games—no exceptions. This is a safety requirement.

Adhering to these guidelines ensures a safe and professional environment for all cheerleaders. Thank you for your cooperation!

Cheer Uniform Care & Return Policy

The cheer uniform provided by HLL should be **washed on the gentle cycle and must be hung to dry. Do not place it in the dryer**, as this may cause damage.

Uniform Return & Replacement:

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for returning the uniform in the **same condition** it was received.
- If a uniform is lost, damaged, or not returned, a **\$200 replacement fee** will be charged.

Games/Competitions

Games are held on Saturday(s) beginning mid to late August. The cheerleaders will also attend up to 4 competitions. We expect the season to end by middle of November. There are risks and dangers in football and cheerleading and while we strive to keep participants safe, some serious injuries may occur.

Every player on the team(s) will participate in at least **five plays per half** of each game, unless unable to do so due to health, injury, or disciplinary reasons. When practices are reduced to three per week and a player misses two, they may not be guaranteed **five plays per half** in the game.

Academics Come First

At HLL, **school is the top priority**. If a child's participation in football or cheerleading begins to negatively impact their academic performance, they may be **released from their HLL obligations**.

Parents are encouraged to communicate with the **head coach**, who will take appropriate steps to support academic improvement.

From our experience, the **confidence and discipline** gained through football and cheerleading often lead to **better scholastic performance**. Our goal is to ensure that athletics and academics work hand in hand for each child's success.

Parent Behavior

Children often model their behavior after what they see adults do. Therefore, it is important for parents to maintain self-control and exhibit positive behavior at games. Healthy cheering and encouragement can significantly boost the children's spirits. Any inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated, and you may be asked to leave or be removed from HLL for the season.

Please avoid the following:

- Derogatory comments to or harassment of officials and the opposing team.
- Disparaging remarks about our own teams and coaches.
- Placing undue pressure on your own child, as this can take the fun out of the game.
- Interfering with a coach during a game or practice. If you need to speak with a coach, please come early before practice or plan to stay later after practice to discuss the matter. All the coach's attention needs to be on the players during practice for learning purposes and the safety of our participants.

Parent Responsibilities

- Conduct themselves as adults at all practices & games.
- Pick up children promptly from practices and games.
- Lend a hand when needed.
- If a complaint arises see your head coach first.
- Enforce equipment use rules!
- All HLL equipment is to be used at Hamburg Little Loop games & practices only. Not to be used for play.

Player Responsibilities

- Conduct themselves properly by using good sportsmanship and respect for their fellow players, coaches, staff & opponents.
- Report all injuries to their coaches immediately.
- Take care of and report all equipment problems as soon as detected. If a player demonstrates poor behavior on or off the field, he/she may receive a game suspension or be removed from HLL for the season.

Returned Checks

In the event we receive a bad check for any reason you will be assessed a \$40.00 fee which will be due 7 days after receipt of notification. We then have the option of not accepting checks in the future.

REFUNDS: No refunds will be given for participants who withdraw after 06/01/26 – NO EXCEPTIONS!

Volunteer Fee

To receive your volunteer fee back all you need to do is volunteer a total of 2 hours between from the 1st practice to the very last practice or otherwise identified by the BOD.

We do not expect you to help during your child(ern)'s game but there is plenty to do if you want to come a little early or stay a little after your child(ern)'s game.

You will need to first sign in on volunteer sheet located in the snack stand.

Refunds will be issued every Friday once hours have been completed and indicated on the sign in sheet.

Complaint/Grievance Policy

If you have a complaint, please adhere to the following steps to ensure a fair and respectful resolution:

- **The 24-Hour Rule:** Please wait 24 hours before addressing any concerns to allow time for emotions to settle.
- **Initial Contact:** If you are still dissatisfied, direct your complaint to the Head Coach. Please ensure the discussion takes place privately, away from children and other parents.
- **Escalation:** If the issue remains unresolved, you may escalate the matter to the Commissioner, Coordinator, or President for further assistance.
- **Formal Complaint:** If you are still not satisfied, you have the right to **submit a formal complaint in writing to the Board of Directors.**

Coaches dedicate considerable time and effort to the children and the program, and as a reminder, coaching is entirely voluntary. Please offer them your respect and support.

Camera Buffs

If you're interested in capturing moments during practices and games for the yearbook, feel free to snap as many photos as you'd like! Your contributions are greatly appreciated. The kids love seeing themselves in the yearbook!

If possible, upload your pictures to a Google Drive or send them via email to hamburglittleloop@yahoo.com. When submitting, please include the team's name to help us organize the photos. Thank you for helping make the yearbook memorable!

Sponsorship

Sponsorships help supplement the operations costs of HLL and help to keep the costs to families low. If you know of a business who would be interested in sponsoring HLL let them know about us. Contact any board member with any questions or a Sponsorship form.

Banquet/End of Year Parties

Each year a dinner is held for the children to recognize their achievements. Each football player and cheerleader attend for free and receives a yearbook for their participation. Children must turn in complete uniform before receiving their complimentary ticket! **Date: TBD**

Stay Connected with HLL!

- **Website:** www.hamburglittleloop.org
- **Contact Us:** hamburglittleloop@yahoo.com
- **Get Game Updates:** Download the **TEAM MANAGER – GAMECHANGER APP**

Follow Us on social media

- **Instagram:** @hamburg_little_loop
- **Facebook:** @HamburgLittleLoopFBCH

Stay informed, stay connected, and let's make this season amazing!