

# **Gotta Dance 2025-2026 Competition Team Rules and Policies**

**At Gotta Dance, we pride ourselves on providing all dancers and parents with expert dance training and a positive learning experience for all involved. Our structured rules and policies will result in a positive and successful competitive dance education experience. The following outline has been created to clearly explain all expectations that are put forth for all dancers and parents involved in this program.**

**Dancers**, Congratulations on being selected to be a part of our competition program. Be proud of your accomplishments. Always stay committed to your classes, dance full-out, and pay attention to your teachers. Those who listen to every correction and apply themselves in every class and rehearsals shall succeed. Remember to show respect to all faculty members, your parents, and all students at the studio. We are all in this together.

**Parents**, our competitive program requires a positive atmosphere from all involved. Cooperation between all parents is expected at all times. Please show respect for faculty members, other parents, and all dancers. A positive and enthusiastic outlook on this program extends to your child. Negative comments and feedback can be harmful to your child's progress and education.

Most communication among the studio and parents shall be conducted via email. Please be sure to check your email regularly for information and any updates. If you do not have access to email, please be sure to inform the studio. For any specific inquiries and questions, please contact the office manager, Crystal Swinimer.

The rules and policies listed in this handbook are subject to change at any time. Failure to comply with any of the rules, policies, and procedures of **Gotta Dance** will result in immediate removal from the competition program.

## **A: Mandatory Components**

The **Gotta Dance** Competition season generally runs from October through April. Sometimes rehearsals may start as early as September and sometimes competitions may not end until July. Parents and students are expected to give a 100% Dance commitment during this time. **More than 3 absences in ANY competition or required class (ballet team, or competition rehearsal) during our season will result in termination.** Serious injuries, illness, or family emergencies are the only exceptions. Our performance/competition calendar listing all specific dates and locations is included in your dance team handbook. Some dates and locations are tentative. **Competition students will be expected to attend some performances throughout the year.**

*\*All dates and locations are subject to change annually and are at the discretion of the studio director.*

- The Competition Team will attend 3-4 competitions this year including a Nationals event. Each member of the Competition Team will compete in 1-5 routines. Some students may be asked to compete in an extra "specialty number". This will be by invitation only and at the discretion of the choreographer depending on age, level, ability, or a certain look they may need to fulfill a part in their routine. It is not appropriate to ask to be included in extra numbers.
- Last minute withdrawals from any competition will not be tolerated. Serious injuries or family tragedies are the only exceptions. All entry fees are non-refundable due to each competition's policies.
- All competition scheduling is set by the competition itself, not our studio. Any requests to alter specific days and times of performances cannot be accommodated and will not be accepted.
- Parents are not allowed to contact the offices of competitions. This is prohibited by the competitions. All questions are to be addressed through the studio.
- Competition Team jackets and black jazz pants are the mandatory uniform for all dancers at all competitions. Team uniforms are to be worn for all **Gotta Dance** events and performances. Jackets will be ordered in November for all newly enrolled competition dancers as well as any existing students who may need a new one.
- All dancers may be required to purchase competition jewelry or other accessories as part of costuming. A list of mandatory items will be distributed to all parents at the start of the performance/competition season. The studio reserves the right to change and/or update styles at any time.

**During the competition season dancers are prohibited from altering their hair color involving any color that is not natural such as bold streaks, blue, red, green etc., permanent hair accessories such as feathers, colored extensions etc. are not allowed. No body piercings or tattoos are allowed while competing. Absolutely no nail polish allowed while competing. No jewelry allowed unless otherwise specified.**

- All dancers are required to purchase competition team make-up. Specific color information will be decided at a later date. All dancers are expected to follow the specific guidelines for the application of their make-up. Make-up that is unsatisfactory

will not be tolerated. The studio reserves the right to change and/or update colors and styles of make-up at any time. Parents will be required and responsible to help your child with their hair and makeup prior to each event.

- All teachers reserve the right to do a "group alteration" to any costume. Group alterations will be done by our studio staff members and/or parents. Group alterations consist of reconstructing a costume, adding rhinestones, creating a different style fit for the costume etc. All individual sizing alterations are the responsibility of the parent and must be professionally altered. It is mandatory for all alterations to be 100% completed prior to the first performance.
- Level placement, music selection, choreography, costuming and spacing of all group routines are at the choreographer's discretion and are not up for discussion. These decisions are made from many years of teaching experience. All staff members are passionate about our competition program. We take pride in every student and every dance routine. All decisions are made in the best interests of the dancers. Inappropriate and demeaning parent and/or student comments will not be tolerated.
- All dancers are required to attend their group photo session with our recital photographer.
- All Competition dancers are required to enroll in at least one ballet class and Dance Team from September through June. Enrolling in a jazz class is highly recommended, but not required. **Only 3 unexcused absences are allowed in regular classes.**

## **B: Attendance Policy**

Proper attendance is an essential component of the dancer's education and progress. All classes are dedicated to technique and/or choreography. A dancer who misses class and/or rehearsal may hold back the progress of the entire team. When a dancer is absent from a choreography class, they are expected to learn the choreography prior to returning to the next class. **All dancers are allowed no more than 3 absences in each class from October through April.** Although dancers are allowed 3 absences, we encourage perfect attendance. Dancers should only be absent if it is absolutely necessary. Attendance will be monitored closely in all classes. There are no "make up" classes for any absence. However, should a dancer be absent, we encourage him/her to attend an additional technique class for the purpose of keeping up with the technique. Attending an additional class does not delete nor give credit for an absence.

- With the growing trend in social media, we ask that all dancers and parents refrain from negative Facebook or other social network postings regarding the studio, its staff members, and its students.
- You are part of a team and are expected to support, help, and work together with all of your peers. Each class may vary in age, level, and abilities. Poor attitudes, poor conduct, or any unnecessary drama toward other students or instructors will not be tolerated within our Competition Team or anywhere in the studio. These behaviors will result in warnings that could result in termination.
- Dress Codes MUST be followed by Dance Competition members. NO EXCUSES. You are a role model and it's your job to represent your studio and set good examples for others. It is disrespectful to come to dance class in anything other than dance attire. Students not following dress codes will not be allowed to dance. They will be asked to sit out or sent home. This will be marked as an absence which may result in termination.
- All pictures and videography of students in classes, at competition, at performances, or at any studio related event may be used for marketing purposes.

## **C: Financial Obligations**

**Payment Plan:** In order to participate on the Competition Team, we will need to hold a valid **credit card** on file (not a debit card) for automatic withdrawal if payments are not paid in full on or before the due date. You will be expected to provide this information when signing your Competition Team contract. If payments are made on or before the due date by cash or check, your account will not be charged. **Competition Entry Fees will be announced once the competitions we are attending have been finalized.** If you are participating in more than one number, costumes must be purchased. Or in some cases (not often) rented. We try our best to keep these costs down and to reuse old costumes whenever possible.

**Solos:** If individuals would like the opportunity to compete as a solo they may submit a request form throughout the dance season and audition for one for the following year. This audition will include preparing 1 minute of your own choreography, as well as auditioning with an instructor's choreography and composing an essay as to why you would like a solo and why a competition solo would be a good fit for you. We allow a limited number of solos to compete each year. Your audition will be scored on a point system. If you should be given a solo for next season the **rehearsal/choreographer fee is \$270 per dancer. Generally, this will cover 4 choreography sessions and the dancer will be responsible for practicing their routine on her own every day. Solos will be rehearsed one time during group rehearsals. All other practice time will be the dancer's responsibility. In addition, they will need to purchase a solo costume which may sometimes run higher than group costumes and each competition's fees vary between \$120 and \$150 per person, per competition.** Solos are not for everyone. If anyone is interested they should be carefully considered and discussed with parents and teachers. Dancers are not allowed to choose their instructor, music, or genre of dance.

- All Competition and Dance Team Members are entitled to enroll in unlimited classes for the monthly tuition price of **\$175.00.**

This includes Competition class tuition. **Competition Choreography/Rehearsal** fees are **\$130 per group routine** for the season and **\$65-\$75 per costume**. This costume price is an estimated cost. If costumes are less than that a credit will be applied to your recital costume balance if costumes are more you will receive notification. We do our best to try to keep competition costume prices down by purchasing clearance costumes. Solos are an additional **\$270 per person**; Duets are an additional **\$180 per person** and Trios are an additional **\$145 per person**. **These fees are to be paid in full at the beginning of the season.** Payment plans are available if necessary but are encouraged to pay in full at the competition meeting on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. Competition entry fees, travel expenses, shoes, accessories, and make up will be your responsibility. Competition entry fees **will be due 12 weeks prior to competitions** and range from \$65-\$150 per dance and are non-refundable.

- Regular class tuition and costumes are completely separate from competition. All general rules apply to regular classes. Costume deposits (\$50 per class) are due by the end of November and costume balances are due by the end of February.
- Anyone holding an overdue balance will be ineligible for any discounts.
- The child of anyone holding an overdue balance at the time of the competition or recital will not be allowed to perform. Unless a payment plan has been previously arranged.

#### **\*\*\* Competition Fees are non-refundable\*\*\***

***Choreographers are paid, and costumes are ordered at the start of the season, therefore, cannot be refunded. Competition Entry Fees may be refundable due to a medical condition or death of a family member only if an understudy is available to take that dancer's place.***

#### **D: Competitor's Obligations**

All competitors will be required to rehearse during their scheduled time slot as well as practicing throughout the week on their own time. Dancers should have a copy of all the competition music. If a student is selected for a second competitive number there will be extra practice involved. When competition team members sign up, it is with the understanding that being a member of the competitive team comes before all other activities in which they may be involved. We suggest that dance be their only activity as competition can be time-consuming especially as competition dates get closer. Committing to outside activities has a strong effect on the student as well as the other team members when a student is absent. Remember the team is judged as a TEAM when competing, and one student with bad attendance hurts the entire team. Occasionally there are required school events that may interfere with rehearsals, if this is the case, bring a copy of the school calendar and other arrangements will be made. Of course, classes may be missed due to illness, injuries etc. If any student or parent feels they cannot see this commitment through, we suggest they bow out of competition before the season begins.

#### **E: Competition Code of Conduct**

All Competition Team students and parents are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectable manner at all times. Gossiping by a student or a parent about other students, parents, staff members or other studios is not tolerated. Disrespecting a faculty member or another student or being discourteous to a fellow student is grounds for disciplinary action that may result in probation, suspension or being asked to leave the studio permanently. In the event that you are asked not to return to the studio there will be no reimbursement for any classes, collected fees for the revue, collected choreography fees or any other fees collected by the studio. In the event that a student is excessively talking during class, being disrespectful, or is just not focusing, they may be dismissed from class. If this behavior continues their position on the team will be re-evaluated and may result in termination. All Competition Students and their parents will be expected to both read and sign the Competition Guidelines.

#### **F: Competition Guidelines**

1. Everyone is expected to work as a team player and help in the growth of their fellow students.
2. Gossiping will not be tolerated amongst the students and parents, or about other students or parents within **Gotta Dance**.
3. Gossiping will not be tolerated amongst the students or parents about other dance studios.
4. Gossiping will not be tolerated amongst the students or parents about other competitors during competition as well as conventions.
5. While representing **Gotta Dance**, students and parents are expected to display good sportsmanship conduct to everyone they are in contact with.
6. During competition, whether we win or lose, we are expected to have a winning attitude.
7. It is mandatory for all students to come to all rehearsals, unless approved 48 hours prior to the choreographer with the permission from the choreographer.
8. All competition dues must be paid on time; otherwise, we will not attend the competition.
9. It is mandatory for all competitors to wear a **Gotta Dance** warm up suit or cover-up for all competitions and conventions.
10. All students are to respect the teachers and to do what is asked of them.
11. All students and parents must abide by the Code of Conduct.

# **Gotta Dance Competitor's Contract 2025/2026**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ **D.O.B.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone: (emergency)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student email (if want to be on email list):** \_\_\_\_\_

**I, (student)** \_\_\_\_\_ and

**I, (parent)** \_\_\_\_\_ have  
read, understand, and agree to comply with the 2025/2026 Competition Team

**Rules and Policies including:**

**A: Mandatory Components** - *Student initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Parent initial:* \_\_\_\_\_

**B: Attendance Policies** - *Student initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Parent initial:* \_\_\_\_\_

**C: Financial Obligations** - *Student initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Parent initial:* \_\_\_\_\_

**D: Competitor's Obligations** - *Student initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Parent initial:* \_\_\_\_\_

**E: Competition Team Code of Conduct** - *Student initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Parent initial:* \_\_\_\_\_

**F: Competition Guidelines** - *Student initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Parent initial:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Dancer will participate in** \_\_\_\_\_ **competition routines.**

**Signature: (student)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature: (parent)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_