



SOUTH FLORIDA WINTER GUARD ASSOCIATION

Policies and Procedures Manual

2024 Season

Article 1: Board of Directors and Officers

- A. The Board of Directors will be elected annually. Duties of individual Board members will be determined by the Executive Board following the election.

Article 2: Circuit and Contest Staff

- A. Circuit and contest staff shall be created as needed by the Executive Board.

Article 3: Committees

A. Classification

- a. The Classification Committee consists of the SFWGA Judge Administrator plus an additional four SFWGA Member Instructors (appointed by the SFWGA Judge Administrator).
- b. The Classification Committee is responsible for all reviews related to SFWGA classification..
- c. Each review will be done by three randomly selected members with no affiliations related to the team being reviewed. A simple majority will determine classification.
- d. Any unit up for review must submit a recent video to the SFWGA Judge Administrator to be shared with other members of the Committee. An in person review is also possible in certain situations.
- e. Units may be flagged for review by a majority opinion of the adjudication panel at any SFWGA event. Committee members may also identify a unit for review.
- f. Units are limited to two reviews per season but may be reviewed at any time during the season.
- g. The Classification Committee is charged with ensuring proper classification for all members of the SFWGA.
- h. All decisions of the Classification Committee are final.

B. Scholarship

- a. The Scholarship Committee consists of a chairperson and a minimum of 3 members. Committee members shall be members of the SFWGA Executive or Advisory Board
- b. The Scholarship Committee is responsible for posting all available scholarship information for each given year on SFWGA web site
- c. The Scholarship Committee acts as liaison with outside scholarship donors
- d. The Scholarship Committee is responsible for selecting the SFWGA scholarship winner(s)
- e. Scholarship recipients will be announced during Retreat at Championships
- f. The Scholarship Committee Chairperson is responsible for coordinating the scholarship award ceremony at Championships

- C. Ad-hoc committees may be created as needed.

Article 4: Membership

A. Member Units

- a. The annual Membership fee is due on December 15th, or other date as communicated to the Membership. No member unit may perform at any SFWGA contest without payment of the membership fee.
 - i. A member may pay the annual membership fee of \$650 in full on or before December 15th, or other date as communicated to the Membership.
 - ii. Extended Pay Option: A member may pay the annual membership fee in three installments of \$225.00 each, due on December 1st, January 1st, and February 1st. If each installment is received by the due date, the membership will be considered active with all rights and privileges. NOTE: Units paying the membership fee in installments will pay a total of \$675.00.
- b. Completed Membership forms with all required signatures are due on December 1st. A late fee of \$50 may be assessed for any forms, Membership dues, or Registration Fee payments turned in after the due date.
- c. Should a unit present a check or other instrument that is subsequently dishonored by the issuing bank, that unit will be required to replace that payment and pay for all future fees by school check, money order, or booster association check. The unit will also be required to pay a returned check fee and any additional late fees that may apply to the delay in final payment.
- d. Independent Units must present their Insurance Certificate as part of their Membership paperwork. The Certificate must name the South Florida Winter Guard Association as Additional Insured.
- e. Membership infractions will be investigated by the Board and may result in financial and/or competitive penalties, leading up to and including suspension of membership.

B. Non-Member Units

- a. All area Color Guard ensembles are encouraged to join and hold membership in the SFWGA.
- b. The Entrance Fee for competitive or exhibition performance of a non-member unit is \$200.00 per regular season contest, and \$250 for Championships. Non-Members wishing to enter the Championship Finals contest must meet the same season performance requirements as member units.
- c. Non member and exhibition units receive 5 entry wristbands for each contest entered.

C. Solo and Ensemble Competitions

- a. The SFWGA may offer solo and ensemble competitions at some contests.
- b. Solo and Ensemble competitions are open only to performers in SFWGA member units.
- c. A separate fee schedule may be established for Solo and Ensemble participants as part of an SFWGA sanctioned contest.

Article 5: Performer Eligibility

- A. No color guard performer shall compete in more than one color guard at the same contest (WGI Eligibility 1.3)
- B. Scholastic Color Guard Units
 - a. It is the intent of the SFWGA that performers who attend a middle or high school that supports a Color Guard unit participate with their school unit.
 - b. Elementary, Middle and High School students are eligible to participate in Scholastic units subject to the following conditions, in descending order of priority:
 - c. If the school at which the student is enrolled sponsors an SFWGA member unit in the current season, then the student is only eligible to perform with that school unit.
 - d. If the school the student attends does not field an SFWGA Color Guard unit, then the student is eligible to perform with any scholastic unit in their County/District. (The student may also elect to participate with an Independent Unit).
 - e. Once the student begins participation with any Scholastic Unit, the student may not change to any other Scholastic or Independent unit unless one of the following occurs:
 - i. The student completes the educational curriculum for their grade level and is promoted to a new school.
 - ii. The high school student graduates, or ends enrollment at the high school.
 - iii. The student changes schools at which s/he is enrolled, or moves into a different school zone.
 - iv. The school at which the student is currently enrolled begins fielding an SFWGA member unit, and the student wishes to perform with their school's unit.
 - v. The school at which the student is currently enrolled discontinues fielding an SFWGA member unit.
 - vi. If a high school student participated in an Independent unit the preceding season because the high school did not field an SFWGA member unit, and the school has subsequently joined the SFWGA with a participating unit, the student will be considered eligible to continue to compete with the same independent unit until high school graduation.
 - vii. If an elementary or middle school student participated in an Independent unit the preceding season because their school did not field an SFWGA member unit, and the school has subsequently joined the SFWGA with a participating unit, the student will be considered eligible to continue to compete with the same independent unit until completion of the 5th Grade for elementary students, or the 8th Grade for middle school students.
 - f. Performers must be age 22 or younger as of March 31st of the competitive season.
 - g. Units may compete with a minimum of 5 performers. There is no maximum limit on the number of performers a unit may field, however, the unit Director must ensure that all aspects of the show may be performed within the designated performance area, and executed without any safety risk to performers, spectators, or contest staff.

- h. NOTE: SFWGA Scholastic performer eligibility of students not enrolled at the performing school and the maximum number of performers DOES NOT ALIGN with WGI requirements. If a scholastic ensemble will participate in WGI Regionals or Nationals, the Director must ensure compliance with WGI eligibility rules at WGI contests.

C. Independent Color Guard Units

- a. Performers must not attend any elementary school, high school or middle school that is fielding an SFWGA member unit in the current season.
- b. In Open, National A, Class A, and Regional A classifications, Performers must be age 22 or younger as of March 31st of the competitive season. There is no age limit in World classification.
- c. Units may compete with a minimum of 5 performers. There is no maximum limit on the number of performers a unit may field, however, the unit Director must ensure that all aspects of the show may be performed within the designated performance area, and executed without any safety risk to performers, spectators, or contest staff
- d. NOTE: SFWGA maximum number of performers DOES NOT ALIGN with WGI requirements. If an Independent ensemble will participate in WGI Regionals or Nationals, the Director must ensure compliance with WGI rules at WGI contests.
- e. The SFWGA will not arbitrate contractual or payment issues between units and performers.

D. Dual-Enrolled Students

- a. A student who is simultaneously enrolled in a high school and a college or university, and both the high school and college/university sponsor SFWGA member units, is considered eligible to perform with either unit.
- b. Proof of enrollment, including the current semester's class schedule or fee payment receipt is required.
- c. The student may not change units after the competitive season begins.
- d. A member unit is considered to be sponsored by a college or university if one of the following is true:
 - i. The college or university provides financing or equipment to the unit.
 - ii. Performers receive a grade or semester credit for participating in the unit.
 - iii. The unit requires all of the performers to be enrolled at the college or university as a condition of participation.
- e. NOTE: SFWGA conditions of a college or university ensemble do not align with WGI rules for use of a university or college name in the ensemble name. If a college or university ensemble will participate in WGI Regionals or Nationals, the Director must ensure use of the college or university name is compliant with WGI rules at WGI contests.

Article 6: Publicity Consent

- A. By submitting a Membership Application, and by accepting and holding membership in the SFWGA, each unit agrees to participate in publicity and fund-raising activities sanctioned or sponsored by the SFWGA or its assignees. Such activities may include, but are not limited to, the publishing of photographs, videos, staff and performance information, schedules, scores and rankings, and other information that the General Membership, the public, or benefactors may have interest in. Distribution of such material may include internet, airwave, video tape/DVD, printed media, and publications of private or general circulation.

- B. By accepting and holding membership in the SFWGA, each Member unit asserts that they have obtained, and will provide upon request, written parent/guardian publicity consent unless the SFWGA is specifically notified to the contrary and provided with the name(s) of each student denying consent.

Article 7: Competitive Classification

- A. When applying or renewing membership, units will declare their competitive classification in one of the following classes:
 - 1) Scholastic Regional AA**

The performers in this class are the youngest and/or being introduced to color guard. All SRAA units will include vocabularies that are designed at an introductory level with fundamentals as their primary goal. This area is where the true beginner will be nurtured and developed with the very beginning skills and qualities as their standard. Winter Guard International (WGI) Regional Class A judging criteria will be used.
 - 2) Scholastic Regional A**

Guards in this class will have limited experience and will be nurtured and developed with the beginning skills and qualities as their standard. The prime purpose is to develop individual training that will assure each student's technical growth. It is also to focus on logic in programs that will allow the performers to reach high achievement. Winter Guard International (WGI) Regional Class A judging criteria will be used.
 - 3) Scholastic AAA**

Guards in this class have a mix of students with and without prior winter guard experience and in some cases be a feeder program for an Open or World Class guard. This class will reflect that mix where the beginner will be nurtured and developed and some members will show strong beginning skills. With beginning skills and qualities as their standard again the prime purpose is to develop individual training that will assure each student's technical growth. Winter Guard International (WGI) Class A judging criteria will be used with Regional A timing.
 - 4) Scholastic AA**

Guards in this class have students and instructors with prior winter guard experience. This class reflects an application of beginning skills. Staff and performers will be encouraged to demonstrate logical yet imaginative programs with **achievable** standards for performers. Guards in this class should display all of the beginning fundamentals and some of the intermediate qualities of performance and design. Winter Guard International (WGI) Class A judging criteria will be used.
 - 5) Scholastic A**

Guards in this class have members with strong experience and reflects the highest level of achievement for the Scholastic A class units in SFWGA and nationally. Both staff and performers have talent that goes beyond

the basics and some intermediate design. Guards in this class should display all of the fundamentals, many of the intermediate, and some advanced qualities of performance and design. Both students and staff demonstrate the talent to grow beyond the class and may explore a higher level of design and performance technique. Students shall be challenged to perform at a high level. Winter Guard International (WGI) Class A judging criteria will be used.

6) Scholastic Open Class

7) Scholastic World

8) Independent A

9) Independent Open

10) Independent World

B. Units can be promoted either between seasons or during a season for the following reasons.

1) A unit promoted by WGI

2) Classification Committee promotion to the next higher class for the remainder of that season.

3) Unit request to move to a lower class with approval of the Classification Committee.

4) Unit request to move to a higher class with approval of the Classification Committee.

C. Promotion

1) Units in SRAA, SRA, SAA, & SA classes will be reviewed for proper classification by the classification committee at each contest.

2) A simple majority vote by the committee is required to promote a unit to the next high class.

3) Units promoted will be notified via e-mail and will be moved to the higher class at their next contest appearance.

D. Promotion Appeal

1) Only the Unit Director may appeal a reclassification decision.

2) Units that are promoted between seasons may submit an appeal of their reclassification in email to the Chair of the Classification Committee no later than four weeks prior to Premier.

3) Units that are promoted during the season may submit an appeal at any time after being promoted.

4) The Classification Committee will consider the appeal, and decide on the classification as soon as a fair and thorough review is completed. A simple majority is needed for the appeal to succeed. In the case of a tie, the appeal is denied.

- 5) The Classification Committee can but is not limited to considering, the experience of the staff, the age of performers, and percentage of seniors that graduated the previous season. The perceived inability to place in the top of the higher class is not grounds for appeal.

Article 8: Scoring

- A. All SFWGA competitive classifications follow the current WGI scoring dynamics.
- B. SFWGA classes perform on the following WGI score sheets

SFWGA Class	WGI Score Sheet
Scholastic Regional AA	Regional A
Scholastic Regional A	Regional A
Scholastic AAA	Regional A timing, A scoring criteria
Scholastic AA	A
Scholastic A	A
Independent A	A
Scholastic Open	Open
Independent Open	Open
Scholastic World	World
Independent World	World

Article 9: Contest Entry and Withdrawal

- A. All units are expected to give careful consideration to selecting the contests at which they will perform, and to declare those selections not later than 17 Days prior to the contest date.
- B. All units in good standing entered in a contest prior to the contest date will be assigned a random draw number. This draw will take place 17 days prior to each contest.
- C. A unit that fails to perform during a contest at which it was scheduled must pay a \$400 no-show fee.
- D. The maximum total of withdrawal fees that will be charged to a single school for withdrawal from a single contest will be \$400, regardless of the number of ensembles fielded by that school.
- E. Contest and lineup schedules close 7 days prior to the contest date.

- F. Notification of all entries and withdrawals must be made by the designated unit representative. All applicable fees must be mailed to the SFWGA Treasurer within 14 days of submitted entry or withdrawal.
- G. Performance times within classifications for each contest will be determined by descending draw number (largest number to smallest number) with the smallest draw number performing last in the classification.
- H. The order of appearance in Championships shall be the reverse order of finish in the contest prior to the Championship contest.
- I. Units that enter a contest less than 17 days prior to the contests will be assigned the next earliest performance time within the classification, according to their submission date.
- J. The performance time and competition/exhibition status of a Unit that enters a contest less than 7 days prior to the contest date will be set at the discretion of the Contest Director, and may not be within that unit's classification.
- K. A unit that withdraws from a contest less than 14 days prior to the contest date will be considered a no-show, and must pay the \$400 no-show fee.
- L. If extenuating circumstance beyond the unit's control forced the withdrawal, the unit may petition the Board to waive the fee. The petition will be discussed and decided at the next appropriate meeting of the Board.

Article 10: Pre-Season Critique

- A. The SFWGA may offer a pre-season Judges' Critique for nationally bound units.
- B. Directors and staff will have the opportunity to present their program to the judges, via recorded performance or verbal commentary. Units will be provided 15 minutes with the upstairs judges, and 15 minutes with the downstairs judges.

Article 11: Contest Critiques

- A. Critique will start no less than 30 minutes after the end of the last competitive performance.
- B. Units must sign up for Critique by the Wednesday preceding the contest date
- C. Any unit which signs up for critique, but fails to appear at the assigned time, will forfeit all Critique privileges for the remainder of the season.
- D. When a contest critique is offered, it will be offered to all competitive classifications.

E. Critique at Championships will be offered for nationally competing units only.

Article 12: Contest Rules

- A. The competitive season will begin no earlier than the week following Thanksgiving and extend no later than April 30.
- B. Timing and floor penalties will be deducted from scores beginning with the third contest of the season. Penalties for membership and eligibility infractions will be applied against score beginning with the first contest of the season.
- C. Special performance time requests must be placed in writing to the SFWGA President who will forward them to the Contest Director. Most scheduling conflicts are resolved by assignment of an earlier performance time.
- D. Competitive Classes within each activity will perform in the order listed below. Scholastic Units in a classification will perform before Independent Units in the same classification. Exhibition performances are placed at the discretion of the Contest Director. Not all classifications in a particular activity may be offered in a given season.
- E. Multiple Retreat and Awards Ceremonies may be scheduled as necessary to ensure compliance with occupancy safety requirements.
- F. Contest Retreat and Awards will be in accordance with the following: Score and placement for all classes will be announced at contest awards ceremonies.
- G. Passes and Contest Admission
 - a. In addition to payment of annual membership fees, ensembles may purchase Instructor badges and back-side seating wristbands for chaperons and crew:

Package	Fee	Instructor Badges	Back-side seating wrist bands	Total Free Admissions
BASIC	none	3	2	5
PLUS	+ \$100	4	4	8
PRIME	+ \$200	5	5	10

An “Instructor” is defined as one actively involved in teaching a performance aspect of the Color Guard activity, for whom viewing and critiquing a live performance is a necessary component of their role.

Instructor ID/Pass badges are not transferable. Falsification of Instructor ID/Pass information will result in permanent loss of all pass privileges.

b. Directors are responsible for declaring the proper number of marching members at check in. False declaration of marching members will result in a penalty of no less than 0.10 of a point up to disqualification. (WGI Rule 8.2)

G. Floors and Tarps

- a. The SFWGA can only guarantee competition space in the size of a standard 84'x50' high school basketball court. Some additional space may be available at the contest site depending on the building dimensions, but units must be prepared to perform within an 84'x50' performance area.
 - i. The Front boundary line is set 3 feet back from the bottom row of the fully extended front bleachers.
 - ii. The Rear boundary line is set 2 feet forward of the bottom row of the full extended rear bleachers.
 - iii. The front line is inviolate and cannot be crossed by the floor, props, instruments, or performers. Floors and tarps may not be placed within two feet from the bottom row of the rear bleachers.
- b. Larger floors must be folded to fit within the space limits.

H. Equipment

- a. SFWGA follows WGI policies regarding equipment. (WGI Adjudication Manual Rule 4.0)

I. Color Guard World Class Interval and Set-up

- a. For the safety of the audience and to ensure proper floor set-up, an additional 5 minutes will be added in the scheduled interval time for each World Class Color Guard performance. This is to allow spectators to enter and leave the contest area. Floor and prop set-up is not permitted, and prop/setup personnel may not enter the contest area during this time.
- b. At the conclusion of the additional 5 minute period, the gymnasium doors will be closed, and the performing unit may begin set-up and placement of their floor and props.
- c. Units may, if desired, play set-up music through the contest sound system during this time, which may continue into the show music. A staff member from the performing unit must be personally present at the sound table to provide instructions to the Technician.
- d. Once the floor and props are in place, the Contest Director will signal the Starter, and the performers may enter the floor. Official interval time will begin when the first performer steps across the time line.

- e. Unit introductory announcements will be made at 1:30 into interval time, or sooner if performers are in position.
- f. Performance time begins with the first performer movement following the salute.
- g. This policy was instated due to the large number of spectators for the World Class, and the limited amount of set-up space at local gymnasiums. Nationally bound units please note that this policy does not conform to WGI interval time and set up practices.

J. Contest Etiquette

- a. All contest participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.
 - b. The Contest Director, contest staff, tabulation table, and judges may not be approached by any individual while a performance is underway.
 - c. Issues that pertain to the immediate contest may be addressed with the contest staff or Chief Judge during breaks. Issues that are not related to the contest in progress will be deferred to a later date for discussion.
 - d. Any person exhibiting inappropriate behavior at a contest will be removed from contest area.
 - e. Contest sites are not rehearsal opportunities. Performing units may utilize time prior to their performance for warm-up, and are also provided scheduled body and equipment warm-up times, but may not use contest sites for rehearsals following their performance.
 - f. Outside food or beverages (other than water) may not be brought to a contest site by a performing unit. A unit that violates this contest policy will be fined \$150 which must be remitted before the unit's next performance. The SFWGA will forward the fine to the Host as compensation.
- K. The Host of each contest has the option of having one of their units perform an exhibition as the final performance of the evening. The Unit must inform the Contest Director in writing of their intent to perform this exhibition prior to the closing date of the contest schedule (14 days prior to the contest date).
- L. Any contest using an area for double movement/equipment time (no rotation, same location for movement and equipment) must have equal square footage to do so.
- M. Warm-ups at show sites are not meant to be rehearsal sites. Be respectful in planning your time. Show Host will be sure to note any areas that are off-limits. PA devices used to play a metronome should be done at a reasonable volume.

N. Timing and Penalties

- a. The Timing and Penalty Judge will assess penalties for all infractions that take place in the competition area.
 - b. The Contest Director will have authority over the application of all penalties.
 - c. The SFWGA Board of Directors retains authority over all matters of safety
- O. All SFWGA Member Units in good standing are eligible to apply to host a contest. The SFWGA Board will determine which applicants will be awarded contests based on the following criteria: 1) geographic location, 2) logistics of the contest venue, i.e., gym size, warm up facilities, entrance/exit doors, etc, and 3) previous demonstrated ability of the parent/booster organization to run a successful event.
- P. Contest hosts may not provide rooms for individual units (except the host team) @ contests.
- Q. Contest Hosts must follow SFWGA Board directives to discontinue admission ticket sales when the gymnasium reaches it maximum occupancy. Under no circumstance will the Host be permitted to seat spectators or performers inside the judges area, or in the bleacher aisles, as this poses a serious safety risk to those entering or leaving the bleachers.

Article 13: Championship Prelims and Finals

- A. The Association will reserve an amount in the budget each year to provide for an appropriate facility for Championship Finals.
- B. Member units must participate in a minimum number of contests during the season to be eligible to compete in Championships. The required contests will be determined annually by the Membership during the Summer Caucus.
- C. In the event it becomes necessary to withdraw from a contest, units may opt for a one-time buy-out during the season, by paying the established withdrawal fee, or no-show fee, and maintain eligibility for Championships.
- D. Performance order for Championship Prelims will be by random draw number.
- E. Placement (by score) in Championship Prelims will determine performance order for Championship Finals.

- F. Participation in Prelims is not required to participate in Finals, however, units that do not participate in Prelims will perform first in their class, by random draw number, ahead of all units that performed in Prelims. Minimum contest participation still applies as a prerequisite for Championships.

Article 14: Revisions and Amendments to Policy and Procedure

- A. Revisions and Amendments to Policy and Procedure may be proposed by any person having an interest or affiliation with the SFWGA.
- B. Written proposals that are submitted to the President between January 1st and August 1st will be discussed and voted on at the Summer Caucus.
- C. Written proposals that are submitted to the President after August 1st will be discussed and voted on by the Board of Directors at the next appropriate Board Meeting.
- D. Proposals to revise or amend Policies will be discussed at the Summer Caucus, during which a proposal may be amended or withdrawn. After discussion on the proposal has been completed, a vote will be taken. A proposal requires a simple majority (more than 1/2) of the eligible voters present at the meeting to pass.
- E. Each person present at the meeting is allocated one vote. A simple majority vote (more than half) of those in attendance at the meeting is required to pass the proposal at the Caucus.
- F. Revisions and amendments approved at the Caucus become effective immediately.
- G. After the Summer Caucus meeting has occurred, and prior to August 1st of the following year, the Board of Directors may propose, defeat, or enact revisions to Policy and Procedure that it deems are in the best interests of the organization.
 - a. The Board must notify the Membership of any changes to Policy and Procedure that it enacted under this provision within 30 days. Such notification may be in the form of a news item posted on the SFWGA website, email or paper mail to the registered Unit Representatives, or announcement at the next General Membership meeting.
 - b. The General Membership may repeal any change to Policy and Procedure enacted under this provision by majority vote of registered Unit representatives present at the next General Membership Meeting.

