



Elite Team Handbook

Welcome to MDC! We are looking forward to another amazing year in dance and we are so glad that you have chosen to be a part of it. In the following pages you will find an outline of our Rules, Parent/Dancer Code of Conduct and Policies for the 2022-2023 season. The goal of MDC Elite is to train athletes to be their best self through competition dance & performance. Each and every dancer is important to us and our program. MDC Elite provides a renowned coaching staff, promoting safety and proper instruction. You should expect to achieve great things as a team member! After you have read your entire packet, please complete the Commitment Contract (due immediately). We are so excited that you have joined our MDC family! Get ready for an amazing experience!

Casting: By showing up to the audition and filling out the Elite Audition Form you are committing to be a part of the MDC Elite team and the routines that the MDC Elite staff have cast you in and understand the requirements that come with that commitment. Being a part of this team is much like being on a sports team where the “coach” will assign each athlete to a position where staff feels they are strongest and will benefit them as an individual and the team as a whole. All casting decisions are at the discretion of Rhiannon Pelletier and are final. Please use your best judgement when filling out the audition form so your student can be cast in a way that best benefits your family. Casting decisions are never taken lightly. Please ask staff for assistance if you have any questions when filling out the Elite audition form. You will be contacted within 4 weeks of the audition date with your dancer’s final casting.

Attendance/Commitment: As a member of MDC Elite, we expect a level of commitment not only for yourself, but for your fellow teammates/dance family. The Elite team is a year round commitment. Beginning with auditions and camp in the summer, and ending with competitions and recital in the spring. It is expected that Elite students will make class attendance a priority over all other commitments. From September through recital, students are allowed a total of **4 absences and 4 make-up classes (8 absences total) per dance style** for illness, travel, etc. If you are repeatedly late or leave early, it will count as an absence. Please plan your absences wisely when scheduling appointments, rides, etc. and always email or call MDC if you are going to miss a class. If students are too ill to participate in class (or contagious), they should remain at home and rest. If a dancer has a fever/temperature, they **SHOULD NOT COME INTO THE BUILDING**. If they are injured, they should come to class and observe. This will keep them apprised of the class progress. **Students are required to submit personal commitments to Miss Rhiannon for the entire year by September 1st** (graduation dates, proms, religious events, weddings, musicals, family trips). Please try to be sure your outside commitments do not conflict with your dance schedule. *Extra-curricular activities and other sports are next to impossible to participate in if you are on MDC Elite.* Elite team rehearsals will be mostly held on Fridays and Saturdays for pieces that don’t have a weekly time slot Monday-Thursday. Rehearsal dates and times will be released a minimum of 2 weeks prior but we strive to release them a full month ahead of time. ****Dancers are only allowed 1 absence from rehearsals prior to the first competition and cannot miss the first rehearsal for a piece.** All MDC Elite participants are required to attend 3 weeks of summer dance intensive either at MDC or at a program that is approved by Miss Rhiannon. Summer interim classes and master classes may also be required. Elite team members must get permission from Miss Rhiannon before attending other local master classes/camps/programs.

*****No absences are allowed 2 weeks prior to competition or performance.**

Technique Classes: The purpose of the Elite team is to develop strong, versatile, and educated dancers. For that reason we require that all Elite dancers train in the styles of ballet, jazz and acrobatics at a minimum. All students level C and up are required to take a minimum of 2 ballet classes, 1 jazz class and the appropriate acro class assigned to their level. If you are on the ballet team you must take ALL ballet classes assigned to your level. Missed classes can be made up in a lower level at Miss Rhiannon's discretion. All other levels are required to take one ballet technique class, one jazz class, and one acro class per week. All students must be enrolled and active in the discipline they are competing in. (i.e. jazz team must attend a jazz class etc. with the exception of musical theater which is not a required class)

Classroom Etiquette: If students are more than 10 minutes late for a class they may be asked to sit and observe. Latecomers can be a distraction to the other dancers and a proper warm-up is important to prevent injury. No gum, candy, food, or beverages other than water are allowed in the classroom. Please bring a closed water bottle to class. Dancers should use the restrooms **before class**. There will be limited permission to leave the studio to use the restroom for older students. There will be no hanging, playing, sitting, or climbing on barres. Students will not sit on the floor or lean on the barres during class. Students are expected to listen closely when an instructor is correcting another student so that they may also learn from the correction. Talking is not permitted during class time; please raise your hand to be called on. The only jewelry permitted in the classroom is small earrings. **No cell phones allowed inside the studios.**

Dress Code: Please see the MDC Student Handbook. *Students that are not dressed to code and/or do not have the proper footwear will not be able to participate in class and it will be considered an absence. *Dress code extends beyond the classroom environment. Students who leave the studio to go to the store must have street clothes on over their dance attire. Leotards are not acceptable attire when leaving MDC to go out in public. *Any non-traditional hair colors (blue, pink, green etc) need to be approved by Miss Rhiannon or will have to be removed prior to competition.*

Injuries/Illnesses: If a student sustains an injury or illness that requires long term recovery they must be back to class within 2 weeks of the competition/performance. If a student is unable to commit fully to class within 2 weeks they will be removed from the dance until they are able to return and perform safely at full capacity.

Performances:

There will be three competitions and one showcase performance throughout the 2022/23 academic calendar year that will be mandatory. When attending a competition, dancers should leave the entire weekend open. The specific competition times are not posted until a week before the competition. Most competitions begin at 8 am and we ask our dancers to stay and support teammates whenever possible. Dancers are expected to attend the awards ceremony that is held at the end of the day. Attending Nationals competitions is at the discretion of MDC. Please schedule a time to talk with Miss Rhiannon if you are interested in Nationals. We will hold an Elite Showcase in late Jan/Feb so dancers can perform their pieces on stage prior to competition as well as give families and friends a chance to see their work. Throughout the season there will be optional competition opportunities that the team is not attending as a whole but that individual dancers could attend. MDC will assign a team representative to be in charge for these non-team events. No optional competitions will be allowed the weekend prior to a team competition or performance.

Financial Policies

Setting Fees: The cost of setting each group piece will be determined by the number of dancers in each routine. 4-7 dancers \$90 each -- 8-10 dancers \$80 each -- 11 or more dancers \$70 each. These fees cover the costs of choreography, setting, and some cleaning up until January 1st. Setting Fees are due upon submission of the Commitment Contract. If you withdraw from any piece after submitting the Commitment Contract, you will still be charged the Setting Fees.

Cleaning Fees: In place of the \$10 rehearsal fees that were applied in previous seasons, this season we will be implementing a “cleaning fee” for every student that will cover all rehearsals from January 1st through the end of the competition season. These fees are based on the number of pieces a student is in. 1-3 pieces \$75, 4-7 pieces \$100, 8-10 pieces \$125, 11+ \$150. This fee is due January 9th, 2023.

Solos/Duets/Trios: For dancers interested in learning and performing a competition solo there is a choreography fee of \$125. Choreography for a duet or trio is \$150 which is divided amongst the participants and is paid directly to the instructor. Cleaning fees will be paid directly to the teacher as outlined below under “Private Instruction”. No choreography will be taught until the payment has been received. To be cast in a solo/duet/trio, the dancer must also be participating in a group piece of the same or similar style as determined by the director.

Competition Fees: Entry fees for competitions average between \$55-\$75 for group dances, \$60-\$80 per dancer for duets/trios and \$115-\$135 for solos. Competition fees will be posted in the fall and are due **60 days prior to the competition date.** If competition fees are not paid on time, your entry may not be sent and teachers will be notified to determine if the piece needs to be re-worked. If there is availability at the venue, any late entry will be charged a \$10 late fee to register per entry. *****These fees are subject to change. Competitions do raise their prices slightly every year.***** *All comp fees are non-refundable. In the event of a medical emergency we will notify the comp ASAP and work with them on refund or credit depending on their policy. Your account with MDC must be current in order to participate in competitions. The Studio includes a small admin fee to each entry that is registered. This covers the administrative costs for MDC staff to register the dancers for the event along with any faculty costs for attending the event which are intended to cover the teachers’ reimbursement for hotel, travel, and other related expenses. This fee is subject to vary depending on venue location and how many dancers are attending etc.

Costumes: All students are required to purchase costumes, tights, and required shoes for each piece directly through Maine Dance Center. Costume costs can be anywhere from \$70-\$120 (plus tax). Solo/Duet/Trio costumes can be \$95+. A \$50 non-refundable deposit is due by September 15th for each costume that the studio will be purchasing. The remaining balance will be due in full on October 15th. Any costume payments not received by then will incur a \$15 late charge per costume per month. Due to the size of the program we are unable to carry balances on our account and thus, the late fee will be enforced. MDC will not order a costume if the deposit has not been paid. ***Costumes not paid in full by January 1st will be returned to the manufacturer and the students account will be charged for shipping and restocking fees as applicable.**

*Costumes for extras will be determined with the teacher, parent, student and staff. Shoe requirements will be announced for each piece as they are decided upon. **Do NOT** assume shoe requirements will be the same as past years comp pieces.

Prop Fee: Dances using props will be subject to a prop fee. The studio will bill each dancer as needed to cover the cost of these additional items.

Due to the large number of competitive pieces, we are not able to perform these in the end of year recital. Any graduating senior will be allowed to perform in one special number that is decided upon with Miss Rhiannon.

Private Instruction: Private instruction and/or small group instruction is available at the cost of \$60 per hour, \$45 per ¾ hour and \$30 for ½ hour. This fee can be split between 2 or 3 students for small group instruction. There is no choreography fee for private technique lessons. A 24-hour notice is required to cancel a private class. If no notice is given, the student will be charged for the time reserved. If a student arrives at an appointment late, the teacher will conduct the lesson within the appointed time and receive full payment. ****Private instruction payments must be paid in full by the end of the scheduled rehearsal.** Any payments not made on time will accrue a late fee of \$15 to be paid directly to the instructor. This is their livelihood, this is their professional atmosphere, and they count on that income to live their lives.

Fundraising: Some fundraising opportunities may arise through the school year. Any funds acquired will be applied to the participating student's accounts. All ideas must be run by Rhiannon and the MDC Elite Boosters. Because each family has various levels of need, being involved with fundraising is not mandatory.

Conventions: If the Elite team attends a competition that is also running a convention, every participating team member is required to attend at least one convention in the season. Team members wishing to attend a convention outside of team commitments is encouraged as well.

**Tuition payments for regular weekly classes must be current prior to applying any payments toward private lesson fees, costumes, or competition fees. Any payments received are applied to past due amounts first.

*****All fees are subject to late fees. ***If your student drops a piece after rehearsals have begun, a re-choreography fee will be incurred. This fee will be dependent on how long it will take the choreographer to reset the number. The further into the season you drop, the higher the fee will be. (\$50-\$150 per piece) Drop fees apply if dropped after the parent has signed the commitment form.***

Code of Conduct

The possession or use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol either on or off Maine Dance Center premises will not be tolerated. If it is determined that a student has violated this policy, they will be removed from the dance team for the remainder of the season without refund. Any civil action that the Director feels is detrimental to the studio, team and community may also mean denial or removal from the Elite team and Maine Dance Center school. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate discussion or posts on social media about the studio or other students, inappropriate representation of the studio, bullying, etc.

MDC maintains a "complaint free" facility. It is our intention to create a low-stress and productive environment for all athletes and patrons. The waiting area is NOT the place to voice team concerns. We want to create the best experience possible for everyone, therefore, if you have a problem please contact our staff to solve it. We are here to help you!

No parent or team member is to challenge the expertise of our coaching staff. Negative behavior will not be tolerated. No inappropriate pictures or language is to be used on the internet. No profanity or abusive language.

Team members and parents are never to post any negative comments on any website or chat room or social media of any kind.

Anyone threatening to quit or pull their child from a routine/or the team will be dismissed from the program immediately without refund.

Communication: We will get performance dates to you as soon as they are finalized. Dancers and parents will need to check their emails on a regular basis for updates and changes. **All publicity and offsite performance communications will be conducted by MDC staff. Please do not contact any newspapers, sponsors, or hosts of performance events. Please do not approach or speak with the judges when attending competitions.** Please do not contact MDC faculty directly or through Facebook or other social networks unless the conversation is initiated by the faculty member. All correspondence should be mailed to mainedancecenter@gmail.com. Please do not post questions on our Facebook page. Please email them directly to MDC.

Choreography: All choreography is the property of MDC. Dancers may not perform/practice routines outside of MDC without permission from the director. Parents and dancers should never publicly post videos of Elite rehearsals or performances without prior approval by the director.

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Commitment Contract

Release Form

I recognize that this dance program may involve strenuous physical activity including, but not limited to, muscle strength and cardiovascular conditioning. I hereby affirm that I am in good physical condition and do not suffer from any known disability or condition which would prevent or limit my participation in this dance program. I acknowledge that my enrollment and subsequent participation is purely voluntary and in no way mandated by Maine Dance Center staff, Rhiannon Pelletier-Guerrette - Director, or Maine Dance Center.

I fully understand that I may injure myself as a result of my enrollment and subsequent participation in this program, and I release Maine Dance Center and/or staff from any liability now or in the future for conditions that I may obtain. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, muscle strains, muscle pulls, muscle tears, broken bones, shin splints, injuries to knees, injuries to back, injuries to foot, or any other illness or soreness that I may incur.

I have read and agree to the policies outlined above. It is agreed that the studio will make every effort to address any concerns that may arise and if the concerns are not resolved, the studio reserves the right to withdraw the student from a performance number and/or the school.

I understand and agree to comply with all pages of the MDC Elite handbook.

_____ (parent initials) _____ (dancer initials)

I have read and fully understand my financial commitment to Maine Dance Center outlined in this packet. I understand that my commitment is for the 2021 season. I understand that there are no refunds and I will forfeit any monies paid if I choose to leave a team or if I am asked to leave the program. I understand that if I choose to leave a team or if I am asked to leave the program, I am still required to pay all fees, including tuition, costumes, competition fees, etc. I understand that by leaving the program I will forfeit any physical items. I understand that I am entering into this program of my own free will.

By signing this form, I agree to pay Maine Dance Center the designated fees associated with being a member of the competition team.

Dancer Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Dancer Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Parent/Guardian Name _____

Please return this page to MDC. Keep the handbook for your record.