



# Parent/Skater Handbook

**\*\*\*The 2017-2018 Parent/Skater Handbook is available on-line. Please read and review BEFORE signing and returning the forms, including the Medical Release form, found at the end of this handbook. We must have these forms on file for skater participation.**

[www.virginiaicetheatre.org](http://www.virginiaicetheatre.org)

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# Contents

## Parent/Skater Handbook

<b>FORWARD</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Who We Are</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Our Accomplishments</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Theater on Ice</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Team Placement</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Skater Requirements</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Practice Expectations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Fees</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Team Apparel</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2017-2018 Tentative Season</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Parent Participation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Team Managers</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Costume Committee</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Props Committee</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Fundraising Committee</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Publicity Committee</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Hospitality/Events Committee</b>	<b>9</b>

## Required Forms and Waivers

<b>Skater Code of Conduct</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Parent Code of Conduct</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2017-2018 Hold-Harmless Agreement</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2017-2018 Border Crossing Agreement</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2017-2018 Publicity Release</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Health and Medical Questionnaire</b>	<b>15</b>

## **FORWARD**

**CONGRATULATIONS** on your decision to participate in one of the newest and fastest-growing competitive forms of figure skating and making it happen with Virginia Ice Theatre or VITOF! This booklet is designed as a guide for both parents and skaters to give specific details concerning all aspects of the Theatre on Ice program. For any further information, please email us at [vaicetheatre@gmail.com](mailto:vaicetheatre@gmail.com) and be sure to check the website for updates throughout the year at [www.virginiaicetheatre.org](http://www.virginiaicetheatre.org).

## **Who We Are**

Representing the Skating Club of Northern Virginia, VITOF was founded in 2011 by Olga Garrity and Terry Barr and is a 501 (c)(3) Corporation. Olga's and Terry's vision was to create an all-inclusive program where skaters of all levels had an opportunity to express themselves in a comfortable environment through dance and theatre on the ice.

## **Our Accomplishments**

VITOF started with just 18 skaters who competed on a single novice team, placing 4<sup>th</sup> at Nationals in Ohio. Within 3 years VITOF doubled in size resulting in two additional teams with skaters ranging in age from 6 to adult. With continued growth in 2017 the Novice team was selected to represent the United States at Nations' Cup competing against other countries such as France, Russia, and Australia. That same year three VITOF teams competed at U.S. Nationals - the Intermediate team brought home gold medals and the Preliminary team brought home silver. The continued growth and success of VITOF is attributed to the hard work, dedication, expertise, and leadership of our skaters, parents, and coaches.

## **Theater on Ice**

Theatre on Ice (TOI) is a form of competitive figure skating that is popular in Europe, where it is known as Ballet on Ice. It combines the grace of figure skating with the excitement of theater and dance. TOI teams consist of 8 to 24 skaters where the emphasis is on skating together as a group. Solo skating is generally discouraged, but is permitted in limited amounts if it enhances the overall telling of the program's story.

TOI is associated with the United States Figure Skating Association (USFSA). TOI consists of two programs: The Free Skate and the Choreographic Exercise (CE), which is similar to a short program in singles and pairs skating. These two events are judged separately, with scores combined at competitions. Programs are judged by trained USFSA judges and are evaluated on technical merit and presentation with emphasis on originality, costuming, artistry, and musicality. There are several TOI teams and competitions around the country, and USFSA is making an effort to standardize and promote this discipline.

Skaters, both competitive and noncompetitive, can learn and grow on a theatre team. Being part of a TOI team teaches us to respect one another's strengths and to help each other in areas of weakness. It allows skaters to work together fostering an environment of teamwork, camaraderie, dedication, and fun.

## Team Placement

Tryouts are held to first determine if the skater has the ability to pass Pre-Preliminary moves by December of that same year and to determine an appropriate placement for each participating skater. Every year VITOF has teams competing at various skill and age levels, depending on interest and on eligibility rules set forth by USFSA.

**The coaches will place skaters on a team based upon the skater's skill and the needs of each team, as well as based on Theatrical Skating Guidelines as set annually in the Fall by USFSA. Placement is not negotiable. *It's important to remember that VITOF may have multiple teams, but we are one company!***

## Skater Requirements

All VITOF skaters must be members of USFSA and the Skating Club of Northern Virginia (SCNV). USFSA membership is obtained through your SCNV membership. Per SCNV rules, at least one parent must also join SCNV/USFSA for any skater under the age of 18. For more information on SCNV follow the link below:

- SCNV membership: <http://www.scnv.org/membership.html>

All skaters are required to continue their skating education outside of VITOF via private lessons (and any appropriate group lessons, if available). While VITOF coaches are skilled instructors on the various levels, TOI does not allow time for basic skills instruction - there is simply no substitution for private instruction. We suggest that you be aggressive in securing a private lesson coach as soon as possible. Private lessons are a **must** for serious competitive figure skaters. Individual instruction from a qualified specialist can make all the difference in a skater's progress, making for even a more enjoyable experience in TOI.

## Practice Expectations

Practice times will be finalized as the season progresses. Tentatively for the 2017-2018 skating season, practices may be as follows (details on actual practice dates/times will be released during the Season and will also vary based on team placements):

- Monday nights from 8:45-9:45pm at Fairfax Ice Arena, 3779 Pickett Road, Fairfax, VA 22031
- Sunday afternoons at Prince William Ice Center, located at 5180 Dale Blvd., Woodbridge, VA 22193.
- Some Saturday or Sunday afternoon or evening off-ice sessions at the Kings Park Community Center, 8940 Burke Lake Rd. Burke, VA 22015.

**Attendance is MANDATORY at all practices (both on and off ice) and competitions.** We **must** be able to count on 100% attendance as each skater is important to the success of our many activities. To assist in creating a schedule for the year, VITOF will distribute two conflict calendars. The first must be returned no later than October 1, with all known conflicts through the end of June. These should include any family, job, or school commitments. Skaters will be selected based on their availability for the season. A second conflict calendar will be distributed in January to capture any additional conflicts that were not known at the beginning of the year.

**Skaters may not miss more than 3 practices/competition outside those notated on the conflict calendar- this includes being sick. The coaching staff will address excessive absences with the skater and parent. Absences may result in the skater being asked to step down from his/her team or be placed as an alternate.**

- **If you are sick**, please call or text Olga Garrity at 540-220-7244 or Terry Barr at 703-832-5489 as soon as possible. Skaters should make every attempt to come to practice and at minimum watch in an effort to learn new choreography or any other changes made.

It is imperative that skaters be **organized, prepared, and ON TIME** for every practice especially when multiple teams are on the ice at once. When an individual is not able to skate during a practice it hurts the GROUP as well as the individual. It is important that the skaters have all the appropriate equipment and dress attire for **EVERY** practice. Additionally, the creative process in which we are involved cannot take place unless there is a quiet, attentive atmosphere **on and off the ice**. *Skaters who do not live up to the high rehearsal expectations of VITOF will be counseled, and if necessary, asked to leave rehearsal, which will be counted as an absence.*

*Parents: Please be respectful of the coaches' time and be sure to pick-up your skater promptly after practice.*

## **Fees**

Skaters are required to register via the VITOF website [virginiaicetheatre.org](http://virginiaicetheatre.org). An initial non-refundable audition fee of \$100 is due to VITOF in September at the time of auditions. Monthly fees for the 2017-2018 Season will be set at between \$175 and \$200 a month and will depend on the number of skaters signed up for the season as well as on in-season fundraising efforts. Families with two or more skaters participating in the program will receive a reduced rate determined by the VITOF Board.

Individual monthly payments will be due no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Paying multiple months at a time is strongly encouraged however payments received in calendar year 2017 may not extend past December

(e.g. you can pay as many as 4 months of dues at once in 2017 (Sept-Dec); and as many as 6 months at once in 2018 (Jan-June)).

In an effort to go paperless and keep track of payments we are asking that payments be made through a link on the VITOF website via PayPal with either direct bank transfer (preferred) or a credit card. Credit card payments will be assessed an additional convenience fee, per PayPal's requirements. Checks and cash will be accepted but we strongly encourage the use of PayPal. If you wish to make a payment with a check or cash please hand it to the treasurer or leave your payment in an envelope marked "Treasurer" in the Virginia Ice Theatre box located in the Fairfax Ice Arena box office.

In addition to monthly dues VITOF may require two competition fees of \$150 each. This will help cover the ever increasing participation costs of major competitions like Nationals. There may be additional unforeseen and unbudgeted costs which arise during the season, which will be addressed by the VITOF Board and membership as necessary.

Skater's fees cover the bulk of expenses associated with running a TOI team (ice rental, coaching time, competition fees, costumes, props, etc). Please note that there are additional expenses separate from the monthly fees, which will include, but are not limited to:

- Short program costuming (purchase will be arranged through VITOF to ensure team uniformity), and includes:
  - Black long sleeved leotard;
  - Black Pants; and
  - Black Boot Covers.
- Team Apparel (*see Team Apparel section below*);
- Travel and lodging expenses for competitions (lodging primarily for Nationals);
- Team pins (pins are routinely traded between teams at Nationals);
- Food costs (primarily for Nationals);
- Admission fees for parents to competitions (typically only applies to Nationals); and
- Skaters individual private/group lesson, membership, and testing fees

### **Team Apparel**

All skaters are required to own a VITOF team jacket, a team warm-up tank/shirt, a gold cast T-shirt, and a purple VITOF shirt for the season. There will be at least one opportunity to purchase each during the year. The jackets should be brought to every practice both on and off ice and are to be worn at all competitions along with either black leggings for girls and black pants for boys. Jackets are not in any way to be decorated or defaced. In addition, each team member will be required to purchase a team-level themed t-shirt primarily to wear at Nationals and other competitions.

Parents and other family members will have opportunities to purchase similar apparel at their own discretion.

## 2017-2018 Tentative Season

VITOF will compete in two to three local USFSA competitions/ or ISI competitions (typically in Virginia or Maryland) between April and June 2018 and Nationals in June 2018. Not all competitions/exhibitions have been determined but those listed below are certain:

- SCNV Cardinal Classic Competition -- April 7th and 8th, Prince William Ice Center, Dale City, Virginia.
- Fairfax Ice Arena, first weekend May, Fairfax Ice Arena
- Virginia Theatre on Ice Festival, Prince William Ice Center ( Dates TBD)
- Richmond Critique, Richmond, VA (Dates TBD)
- National Theatre on Ice Competition , Geneva, Illinois - June 25, 2018 -June 30, 2018

**For the most up to date list of events please continue to check the calendar on our website.**

*Notes on the National Theatre on Ice Competition:* Actual competition events will start as early as Wednesday of the week of Nationals. VITOF already has a block of rooms reserved at a team hotel, where all team members will stay together. We will send information about how to reserve your room. We do expect all families to be fully engaged and participate throughout the competition. You are of course welcome to stay in the area beyond the competition to enjoy.

## Board of Directors

VITOF has a very active, supportive Board of Directors. Without the hard work and dedication of these members, the TOI teams could not be as successful and productive as they are. VITOF is governed by a set of bylaws, which can be viewed on our website. General meetings of the Board of Directors are held throughout the year; however numerous committees do much of the organization's planning. **As a 501(c)(3) Corporation we are especially seeking volunteers for fundraising.**

### Board of Directors:

<b>President</b>	Michael Molloy	<a href="mailto:molloyemail@gmail.com">molloyemail@gmail.com</a>
<b>Vice President &amp; Director of Team Management</b>	Carol Glover	<a href="mailto:carolaglover@yahoo.com">carolaglover@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Treasurer &amp; Director of Operations</b>	Timothy Adams	<a href="mailto:tryan.adams@gmail.com">tryan.adams@gmail.com</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Laura O'Brien	<a href="mailto:laura@laura-obrien.com">laura@laura-obrien.com</a>
<b>Ex Officio Member</b>	Olga Garrity	<a href="mailto:vaicetheatre@gmail.com">vaicetheatre@gmail.com</a>
<b>Member</b>	Jeanette Dellavedova	<a href="mailto:jeanette_dellavedova@live.com">jeanette_dellavedova@live.com</a>
<b>Member</b>	Kelly Poort	<a href="mailto:Poort-sperry@starpower.net">Poort-sperry@starpower.net</a>

## Parent Participation

Beyond the Board, VITOF is an entirely volunteer managed organization and needs the involvement of all families. While our Coaches handle the artistic side of the world, we rely on volunteers to manage and run VITOF. There are numerous areas in which interested parents can be involved in supporting the activities of VITOF **and all families are expected to volunteer as an active member of the VITOF Board or its Committees.** Opportunities for participation include:

### **Team Managers**

Each team has a designated manager who acts as the liaison between the parents and the coaches. They will be your first line of communication for issues, questions and concerns regarding your skater's team (e.g. practice or competition schedules, costumes, hair, makeup, etc.).

### **Costume Committee**

VITOF volunteers design and construct all of the costumes used by skaters in competitions. While sewing ability is helpful, there are many costuming jobs that just require time and willing hands. In addition to costume design and construction, help is always needed at competitions for both hair and makeup design and application.

### **Props Committee**

Similar to costumes, VITOF designs and constructs both hand held and scenery props for use at competitions. Wood, fabric, paint, PVC pipe may all be involved. In addition, parent volunteers are required to transport, construct and disassemble props at practices and competitions as well as help to get props on and off the ice during practices and team performances.

**A note on Costume and Props Committee Participation:** Please keep in mind that at its heart VITOF is an artistic endeavor, and volunteer participation is entirely predicated on doing what is best for our skaters and our teams. As such, costume and prop design is necessarily "fluid." There will be many reasons why something may or may not work, and change is the only constant on these committees. Please don't take design choices personally; costumes and props have to work together as a unit, and sometimes what was great in vision may not work in reality, and we have to be prepared to adjust accordingly.

### **Fundraising Committee**

VITOF is a **501(c)(3) corporation** opening up opportunities for fundraising (via both events and possible corporate donations). These opportunities help offset the cost to you as a parent or the skater. Donated funds are maintained by the VITOF Board of Directors and are entirely allocated to the operation of the organization. Both parents and skaters will be expected to participate in fundraising activities and events. If you would like to volunteer for fundraising please email Tim Adams at [tryan.adams@gmail.com](mailto:tryan.adams@gmail.com)

## **Publicity Committee**

Publicity works with various media, including the VITOF website and social media outlets, to publicize VITOF events and activities in order to increase the team's name recognition. This will also include working with the Fundraising Committee to publicize activities that raise funds for VITOF.

## **Hospitality/Events Committee**

The Hospitality and Events Committee is responsible, at a minimum, for –

- The overall care and wellbeing of skaters;
- Creating and distributing a “Buddy” program;
- Planning and coordinating a Holiday event;
- Planning and coordinating other social events for the entire VITOF team like an off-ice potluck dinner and end of year celebration.



**REQUIRED FORMS  
AND  
WAIVERS**

2017-2018 Season

*Please return these forms at the first practice*

## Skater Code of Conduct

All skaters of VITOF must follow and uphold the tenets in this Skater Code of Conduct regarding behavior **on and off the ice, including via social media**. All club members are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship and be courteous and gracious toward their teammates, skaters from other teams, coaches, parents of skaters, U.S. Figure Skating officials and guests.

VITOF is committed to promoting a positive and friendly environment for everyone. Remember the “Golden Rule” -- treat other people like you want to be treated -- with respect.

**By signing below I hereby agree that I will:**

1. Recognize that my participation in all activities hosted, supported, sponsored or engaged in by VITOF is an honor and privilege that carries certain responsibilities;
2. Fully abide by the rules and guidelines set forth by VITOF and U.S. Figure Skating or its properly designated agents;
3. Exhibit the highest standards of fairness, ethical behavior and genuine good sportsmanship in all of my relations with others;
4. Not damage public or private property. I understand that I may be held financially responsible for damage deemed to be wantonly or willfully executed on my part, and that I may be subject to disciplinary action by VITOF and U.S. Figure Skating;
5. Not use or possess illegal drugs, and I will not engage in criminal activity. I understand that, if I am found to use or possess illegal drugs, or if I am found to engage in any criminal activity during any activity hosted, supported, sponsored or engaged in by VITOF or U.S. Figure Skating, I may be subject to criminal penalties;
6. Conduct myself in a manner not detrimental to the welfare of figure skating. I understand that my actions reflect on VITOF and U.S. Figure Skating and the sport of figure skating both positively and negatively. I understand that if my acts, statements, or conduct are considered detrimental to VITOF or the welfare of figure skating, I may be subject to consequences; and
7. Respect the decisions of officials, their authority and decisions during competitions and practices.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [member’s name printed], have read the Code of Conduct, and agree to uphold all guidelines and tenets of this document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Skater’s signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent’s or Legal Guardian’s signature if under 18 years of age*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Parent Code of Conduct

VITOF has adopted the US Figure Skating Code of Conduct as it applies and is committed to creating a safe and positive environment for skater's physical, emotional, and social development and ensuring that it promotes an environment free of misconduct.

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these "six pillars of character" (Arizona Sports Summit Accord).

### **By signing below I hereby agree that I will:**

1. Encourage good sportsmanship by my actions, demonstrating positive support for all skaters, coaches, and officials at every practice, and competition;
2. Place the emotional and physical well-being of my child and others ahead of my desire to win;
3. Encourage my child to skate in a safe and healthy environment by maintaining a respectful and courteous attitude to others;
4. Promptly inform my child's coach of any physical/mental disability or challenge affecting my child that may affect the safety of my child or others;
5. Teach my child that doing his/her best is more important than winning;
6. Do my best not to ridicule, bully, blame, or yell at my child or other skaters, coaches, officials or volunteers in response to a poor performance or for any other reason;
7. Do my best to make skating fun at all times and will remember that my child participates in sports for his/her own enjoyment and satisfaction;
8. Teach my child to treat other skaters, coaches, fans, volunteers, officials, and rink staff with respect, regardless of race, creed, color, sexual orientation or ability. I will also take action and report any acts of bullying, harassment or abuse to the appropriate authorities;
9. Applaud any effort in both victory and defeat emphasizing positive accomplishments and learning from mistakes;
10. Teach my child to resolve conflicts calmly and peacefully without resorting to hostility or violence;
11. Be a positive role model for my child and others;
12. Demand a figure skating environment for my child that is free of drug or alcohol abuse and agree that I will not use or provide to a third-party any illegal drug prohibited by applicable federal, state, or municipal law;

13. Not assist or condone any athlete's use of a banned substance as described by the International Olympic Committee, International Skating Union, United States Olympic Committee, or U.S. Figure Skating, or, in case of athletes, to use such drugs or refuse to submit to properly conducted drug tests administered by one of these organizations;
14. Respect my child's coach and refrain from "side line" coaching my child or other skaters during competitions and practices because it may conflict with the coach's plan or strategies;
15. Respect the decisions of officials, their authority and decisions during competitions and practices and teach my child to do the same;
16. Show appreciation and recognize the importance of volunteers and officials. I will fulfill my responsibility to help VITOF with special projects, competitions, and fundraising to the best of my ability; and
17. Support and respect all skaters and their right to participate.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [parent's name printed], have read both the Skater's Code of Conduct and Parent Code of Conduct, and agree to uphold all guidelines and tenets of this document and confirm that I have educated my child on what is expected of him/her.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 2017-18 Hold-Harmless Agreement

I hereby certify that I am the parent and/or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the VITOF team, and that he/she is, to the best of my knowledge, physically fit and able to participate in team practices, competitions, and events that will involve both on and off ice activities. I hereby acknowledge that Virginia Ice Theatre of Fairfax and the Skating Club of Northern Virginia are volunteer organizations designed to foster friendship and promote athletic training and competition. I agree to hold safe and harmless Virginia Ice Theatre of Fairfax, the Skating Club of Northern Virginia, the board members and officers, the coaches, the officials, the owners(s) of any facility used by the team, and VITOF's sponsoring agencies from any claims or legal actions as a result of any injuries sustained or the cost of any resultant hospitalization or medical treatment.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2017-18 Border Crossing Agreement

During the VITOF season, I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent / Guardian) give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to cross any borders which their skating team needs to cross during their travels.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2017-18 Publicity Release

I understand that my child's name and picture may appear in the local media as part of the effort to promote VITOF and related functions. I hereby grant my permission to use photographs of \_\_\_\_\_ in conjunction with such efforts this year and in the future.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please note: If you have any concerns in this regard, please contact the Team Manager)

