



Chugiak Aquatics Club Zero-Tolerance Sexual Abuse Policy

Our Commitment to Safety & Zero-Tolerance for Sexual Abuse

Chugiak Aquatics Club (CAC) does not permit or allow sexual abuse or molestation to occur in its workplace or at any activity/event sponsored by or related to it. To make this “zero-tolerance” policy clear to all employees, volunteers, and board members, we have adopted mandatory procedures that employees, volunteers, board members, individuals and victims/survivors must follow when they learn of or witness sexual abuse or molestation. Those reasonably suspected or believed to have committed sexual abuse or misconduct will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including termination of employment or membership, as well as criminally prosecuted. No employee, volunteer, board member or other person, regardless of his or her title or position has the authority to commit or allow sexual abuse or misconduct. Sexual abuse includes sexual assault, exploitation, molestation or injury. It does not include sexual harassment, which is another form of behavior which is prohibited by CAC.

Definitions of Abuse and Grooming & Appropriate Conduct

In accordance with USA Swimming, CAC defines sexual abuse as any inappropriate sexual conduct or advance, or other inappropriate oral, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed towards an athlete by (i) a coach member or other non-athlete member, or (ii) any other adult participating in any capacity whatsoever in the activities of USA Swimming (whether such adult is a member or not).

It's not always easy to spot sexual abuse because perpetrators often take steps to hide their actions. Signs that lead up to abuse are often called red flag behaviors. These red flags make you question the interactions that you see between an adult and a child. They can also be called grooming behaviors. Grooming is when a perpetrator sets the stage for eventually abusing. Grooming includes building trust with the child, alienating, and even creating fear and dependency. If you notice something that isn't right or someone is making you uncomfortable—even if you can't put your finger on why—it's important to report.

Grooming behaviors to watch out for:

- Does not respect boundaries or listen when someone tells them “no”
- Engages in touching that a child or child's parents/guardians have indicated is unwanted
- Tries to be a child's friend rather than filling an adult role in the child's life
- Does not seem to have age-appropriate relationships
- Talks with children about their personal problems or relationships
- Spends time alone with children outside of their role in the child's life or makes up excuses to be alone with the child
- Expresses unusual interest in child's sexual development, such as commenting on sexual characteristics or sexualizing normal behaviors
- Gives a child gifts without occasion or reason
- Spends a lot of time with one child in particular

Reporting Procedure

CAC is committed to following the state and federal legal requirements for reporting allegations or incidents of sexual abuse or misconduct to appropriate law enforcement and child or adult

protective services organizations. It is the policy of CAC to report ALL suspicions or allegations of abuse, and not to attempt to investigate or assess the validity or credibility of an allegation of sexual or physical abuse as a condition before reporting the allegation to proper law enforcement authorities or protective services organizations.

Pursuant to federal law, all adults authorized to interact with minor or amateur athletes who learn of facts that give reason to suspect that a child has suffered an incident of child abuse, including sexual abuse, must make a report of the suspected abuse to law enforcement and/or your state's designated agency within 24 hours.

It is every CAC member's responsibility to promptly report ANY incident regarding sexual misconduct by a member to USA Swimming. Reporting must occur when an individual has firsthand knowledge of misconduct or where specific and credible information has been received from a victim or knowledgeable third party. Various state laws may also require reporting to law enforcement or to a designated child protection agency.

For more information on how to file a report, see WHERE TO REPORT & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE on page 4 of this document.

Enforcement of Policies & Protocol for Response to Victims

CAC will take all allegations of sexual abuse or misconduct seriously and will promptly, thoroughly, and equitably investigate whether misconduct has taken place. CAC may utilize an outside third party to conduct an investigation of misconduct. Our organization will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory/protective services agencies.

To the fullest extent possible, but consistent with our legal obligation to report suspected abuse to appropriate authorities, we will endeavor to keep the identities of the alleged victims/survivors and investigation subject confidential. If the investigation substantiates the allegation, our policy provides for disciplinary penalties, including but not limited to termination of the actor's relationship with our organization.

No member shall retaliate against any individual who has made a good faith report. Anyone who improperly retaliates against someone who has made a good faith allegation of sexual abuse, or intentionally provides false information to that effect, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. False reporting of sexual misconduct made in bad faith is prohibited, and neither civil nor criminal statutes of limitation apply to reports of cases of sexual abuse.

CAC will provide resources to victims/survivors, including SwimAssist through USA Swimming. SwimAssist is set up to accommodate the many ways a survivor may need to heal. There are three levels of SwimAssist:

1. Initial Counseling
2. Ongoing Counseling
3. Alternative Assistance

USA Swimming will work with the survivor, their selected treatment provider, and the SwimAssist Panel to remove barriers to healing and help complete the necessary paperwork that each level of assistance might require.

Selecting a therapist or counseling provider is a very personal process and a decision that a survivor should have complete power to make. The survivor and their family will select a provider who they feel is best. USA Swimming can assist in identifying local resources for a survivor but will not have any input or final say in what treatment provider a survivor chooses.

Fees for services will be paid by USA Swimming directly to the provider.

Required Training/Screening Process

All CAC staff and volunteers are required to take USA Swimming Safe Sport trainings on how to recognize and prevent abuse from happening. All CAC staff are required to clear a background check.

Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

All CAC policies are MANDATORY for CAC staff. All CAC parents and volunteers are required to sign a statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement indicating that they have reviewed CAC policies, understand the material, and agree to comply with the policy requirements.

WHERE TO REPORT & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

For issues dealing with sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and/or sexually explicit or inappropriate communication through social media:

- U.S. Center for SafeSport: 720-524-5640 or <https://safesport.i-sight.com/portal>
- For issues dealing with physical abuse, emotional abuse, criminal charges and the use, sale or distribution of illegal drugs:
- USA Swimming Safe Sport: safesport@usaswimming.org or <https://fs22.formsite.com/usaswimming/form10/index.html>
- For issues dealing with known or suspected child abuse:
- Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Children's Services: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Pages/childrenjustice/mandatoryreporting.aspx> or call 1-800-478-4444
- For issues dealing with peer-to-peer bullying, coach-athlete bullying, parent issues, violations of the Chugiak Aquatics Club Code of Conduct and violations of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy.
- These issues are handled at the club level following the procedures outlined below:

WHOM TO NOTIFY OF A GRIEVANCE

Regarding the Conduct of a Swimmer - Contact the swimmer's coach.

Should a parent or swimmer feel another swimmer's conduct is inappropriate or violates the Chugiak Aquatics Club Code of Conduct, the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the coach of the swimmer responsible for the violation (Responsible Coach). This complaint should be made in person or in writing. Coaches will ensure the Chugiak Aquatics Club Booster Board is notified of the complaint and will participate in assessing behavior.

Regarding the Conduct of an Assistant or Age Group Coach - Contact the Head Coach
Should a parent or swimmer feel an Assistant or Age Group Coach's conduct is inappropriate or in violation of any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Head Coach of this violation. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. The Head Coach will ensure that the Chugiak Aquatics Club Booster Board is notified of the complaint and will participate in assessing behavior.

Regarding Conduct of Head Coach – Notify the Chugiak Aquatics Club Booster Board President

Should a parent or swimmer feel the Head Coach's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the President of the Booster Board of this violation. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. If the President is not immediately available, this complaint may be presented to any member of the Board, with notification made in writing to the President. This complaint will be subject to review and discussion by the full Booster Board.

Regarding Booster Board Member Conduct - Notify the Board President or Head Coach
Should a parent or swimmer feel a Board Member's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Board President or Head Coach of this violation in person or in writing. If the Board President is the Member whose conduct is in question, the Head Coach and Board Vice President should be notified in writing or in person instead of the Board President. This complaint will be reviewed and discussed by the full Booster Board.

Regarding Parent or Swim Official Conduct - Notify the Head Coach and Board President. Should a parent or swimmer feel another Chugiak Aquatics Club parent's or an official's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Head Coach and Board President of this violation in person or in writing. This complaint will be reviewed and discussed by the full Booster Board.

Note: With the exception of issues which immediately affect the health and safety of swimmers, all matters should be discussed before or after a coaching session, as coaches should not be expected to deal with issues during water time.

HOW GRIEVANCES WILL BE HANDLED

The Booster Board has the authority to impose penalties for infractions of the Chugiak Aquatics Club Athlete, Parent and Coach Codes of Conduct or any behavior(s) they deem not conducive to the best interests of the Club or other swimmers. Consequences are at the sole discretion of the coaches and/or Chugiak Aquatics Club Booster Board and may include, but aren't limited to, verbal warnings, dismissal from practice, contacting parents, temporary suspension from club activities and expulsion. Involved parties will be informed of the processes and range of potential consequences. The U.S. Center for SafeSport, USA Swimming and local law enforcement (if applicable) will be contacted within 24 hours if a coach, parent, or swimmer violates the SafeSport Code for the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Movements, the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, Athlete Protection Policy, or local laws.

Gathering Information: The appropriate individuals will contact the person who filed the grievance, and the person against whom the grievance is being filed, to ask questions about what happened. In addition, other witnesses may be contacted for more information. All information will be recorded on the Chugiak Aquatics Club grievance procedure form.

Assessing Behavior: The behavior of the person(s) against which the grievance was brought, will be assessed using club policies and facility rules, USA Swimming Code of Conduct, USA Swimming Safe Sport policies, as well as applicable local and state laws. Consequences will be given and disciplinary action will be taken, if appropriate. These consequences and disciplinary actions will be decided using the following general guidelines:

- Nature of the misconduct
- Severity of the misconduct
- Prior disciplinary actions
- Adverse effect of the misconduct
- Application of the Code of Conduct