

Stingray Swim Team Handbook

Overview

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Team Contacts & Leadership

Head Coach: Josh Gregory | coachjosh@aksst.com

Team Website: www.stingrayswim.org

Practice Locations: UAF Patty Pool

Welcome

Welcome to the Stingray Swim Team! We're glad you're here. Our mission is to help young swimmers grow in skill, confidence, and character through a healthy, supportive team environment.

Parents are key partners in this process — your involvement and communication help make the experience positive and sustainable for everyone.

About Our Program

The Stingray Swim Team provides both competitive and non-competitive opportunities for youth swimmers. Swimmers are placed into training groups based on age, ability, and readiness, allowing them to progress at a pace that is healthy, developmentally appropriate, and confidence-building.

- We focus on:
 - Fundamental stroke development
 - Safe and age-appropriate training progression
 - Teamwork and personal accountability
 - Long-term athletic development

Competitive swimmers may participate in USA Swimming–sanctioned meets, while non-competitive swimmers learn skills and gain comfort in a positive team setting.

Communication & Technology

The team uses online tools to keep families informed and simplify sign-ups, billing, and scheduling. Parents should check team communications regularly to stay up to date.

- We communicate through:
 - Team website and event calendar
 - Email updates and reminders
 - Text/push notifications for time-sensitive changes
 - Facebook and social media

Coaches are happy to talk with parents — but to maintain a focused and safe practice environment, please connect before or after practice, not during deck time.

Practice & Training

Swimmers are encouraged to attend practice as consistently as possible in order to build skills, confidence, and fitness over time. Consistency matters far more than perfection — regular participation helps swimmers connect with teammates, understand training goals, and progress appropriately.

- To set swimmers up for success, we ask that they:
 - Arrive on deck ready to swim at the posted start time

- Bring required equipment (suit, cap, goggles, water bottle, etc.)
- Follow coach direction and support a positive team environment
- Practice safe behavior in and around the pool

We strive to create an atmosphere where effort is celebrated, improvement is noticed, and athletes feel safe to learn, make mistakes, and grow.

Dues & Fees

The Stingray Swim Team is a nonprofit organization. Monthly dues support coaching, pool rental, insurance, equipment, and administrative costs. All swimmers must also maintain an active USA Swimming membership.

- Families can expect three general types of costs:
 1. Monthly dues – varies by training group
 2. USA Swimming annual registration – required for all athletes
 3. Meet entry fees – charged only for swimmers registered in a meet

To help keep dues affordable, each family is also responsible for participating in team fundraising and completing 15 volunteer hours per season at hosted meets, team events, and/or committee participation.

Swim Meets

Swim meets are where swimmers get to apply what they've been practicing, cheer on teammates, and celebrate progress. Meets are designed to be friendly, supportive, and developmental — especially at the age-group level.

- Signing Up
 - Meets are listed on the team website with deadlines
 - Parents sign swimmers up online
 - If you're unsure which events to pick, you may leave selections blank and the coach will choose
- What to Expect
 - Arrive about one hour before the meet begins for warm-up
 - Check in with the coach when you arrive
 - Coaches will talk briefly with swimmers before and after each race
 - Improvement is measured by effort and learning, not just times or ribbons

- What to Bring
Most swimmers pack:
 - 2 suits
 - 2 pairs of goggles
 - 2 towels
 - Team cap
 - Water bottle + healthy snacks
 - Warm clothing between events

Parents may also want a pen/highlighter for the heat sheet and concession money if available.

Meets are a community experience — families cheer together, kids build friendships, and everyone celebrates progress at all levels.

Volunteering

The Stingray Swim Team relies on family involvement to maintain a positive team experience and keep dues affordable. Volunteering builds community, models sportsmanship for swimmers, and ensures that hosted meets run smoothly.

Each family with a Bronze or above swimmer is asked to contribute 15 volunteer hours per season through meet support, team events and/or committee participation.

- There are many ways to help, including:
 - Timing during meets (no experience needed)
 - Hospitality or concessions
 - Setup/cleanup
 - Meet administration
 - Serving on committees or the board

New families are paired with experienced volunteers so no one feels unprepared — if you're willing to help, we'll help you learn.

Code of Conduct

The Stingray Swim Team is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and positive environment for all athletes. Conduct expectations apply at practices, meets, team events, and whenever representing the team.

- **Swimmer Expectations**

- Show respect to teammates, coaches, officials, and facility staff
- Listen to and follow coach instruction
- Demonstrate safe and responsible behavior on deck, in locker rooms, and in the water
- Encourage others and practice good sportsmanship
- Take care of team and facility equipment

- **Parent Expectations**

- Support coaches' decisions and allow them to coach from the deck
- Model sportsmanship and positive communication
- Use appropriate language and behavior at all times
- Help create a respectful meet and practice environment
- Follow team policies and volunteer requirements

- **Behavior Concerns & Consequences**

When behavior does not meet expectations, coaches will first work to correct it through conversation and guidance. Continued or serious misconduct may result in:

- Removal from part or all of a practice
- A meeting with a parent and coach
- Suspension from practice or meets
- Referral to the board for further action

Bullying, harassment, or unsafe behavior is addressed promptly and may result in suspension or dismissal depending on severity.

Conflict Resolution

We encourage open, respectful communication and aim to resolve questions or concerns at the lowest level possible and as quickly as possible. Most issues are solved with a brief conversation when brought forward early.

- If a concern arises, parents should follow this progression:
 1. Speak with the swimmer's coach (before or after practice)
 2. If needed, follow up with the Head Coach
 3. If the issue is not resolved, contact the Board President
 4. For formal matters, the Board of Directors will review at a board meeting

This process helps ensure fairness, clarity, and healthy communication for everyone involved.

Glossary (Quick Reference)

This quick glossary includes the most common terms new swim families will hear at practice and meets. A full glossary may be viewed at the link or QR code below.

- **IM (Individual Medley)** – One race with all four strokes in the order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.
Heat – One group of swimmers racing the same event at the same time.
Seed Time – A swimmer's entry time used to place them in the correct heat.
DQ (Disqualification) – A rule violation during a race. Times do not count, but it's a learning opportunity.
Start/Blocks – The platform swimmers stand on to begin most races.
Lane Assignments – The lane number where a swimmer will compete in a specific event.
Warm-Up – Easy swimming before a meet or race to prepare the body and prevent injury.
Cool-Down – Light swimming after a race to help recovery.
Relay – A team event with four swimmers, each completing part of the race.
Heat Sheet – A listing of events, swimmers, heat numbers, and lanes used to follow the meet.
Qual Time/Time Standard/Cut – Minimum times needed to be eligible for some swim meets.

[FULL GLOSSARY LINK](#)

