



ZEUS Swim Team | 2024-25 Handbook

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ZEUS SWIM TEAM'S PHILOSOPHY:

The ZEUS Swim Team is a proud member of USA Swimming, welcoming athletes aged 6 through high school.

The ZEUS Approach

At ZEUS, success is about the **process** as much as the outcome. Swimmers are encouraged to embrace the journey, recognizing that working toward goals is as meaningful as achieving them. Each athlete is supported by a strong community of teammates, coaches, families, and fans, embodying the belief that no individual is greater than the team.

Core Values

ZEUS swimmers stand out through their dedication to:

- **Self-Discipline:** Cultivating focus and accountability.
- **Goal Setting:** Striving for personal and team achievements.
- **Team Camaraderie:** Building supportive relationships.
- **Personal Accomplishment:** Gaining life skills such as time management, a strong work ethic, academic success, and healthy living.

Philosophy of Competition

Excellence is at the heart of ZEUS, from our youngest swimmers to our top competitors. We compete in a multi-level USA Swimming program designed to provide both challenges and opportunities for swimmers of all abilities. On ZEUS:

- Improvement is the primary goal—competing with oneself takes precedence over winning medals.
- Sportsmanship is as valued as performance. Respect, encouragement, and maturity are celebrated.
- Swimmers set realistic goals, linking practice efforts to meet results.
- Versatility is emphasized by encouraging swimmers to compete in all strokes and distances, fostering well-rounded athletes.

A well-rounded ZEUS swimmer becomes an explorer in all aspects of life, ready to take on challenges with resilience, confidence, and a team-first mindset.

MISSION & VISION

Mission Statement

The ZEUS Swim Team develops a diverse community of young athletes dedicated to personal growth, teamwork, and excellence. Through competitive swimming, we empower swimmers to set and achieve goals, embrace a healthy lifestyle, and build lifelong skills in a safe and supportive, family-centered environment.

Vision

To inspire the next generation of swimmers to embrace challenges, achieve competitive excellence, and lead with teamwork and resilience—both in the pool and in life—while building a legacy of champions and role models who shape the future of youth swimming.

ZEUS SWIM TEAM'S ANTI BULLYING POLICY

Bullying Defined: Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time. A child who is being bullied has a hard time defending themselves. Bullying can take many forms, such as pushing or punching (physical bullying); teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying); intimidation using gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying); and sending insulting messages via email or social media (cyber-bullying).

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this second shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

How Zeus Handles Bullying: Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at ZEUS and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

Reporting: Zeus is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it by telling a parent, coach, board member or athlete/mentor. The Head Coach will be made aware of all bullying reports.

Reporting Procedure: An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Coach, Club Owner, or other designated individual;

- Write a letter or email to a Coach, Club Owner, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible. Investigations and Follow-up Actions: All reports of bullying will be investigated. If bullying is occurring or it is reported to be occurring, we address the bullying by FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, we get the facts.
 - a. Keep all the involved children separate.
 - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
 - c. Listen without blaming.
 - d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what Happened.
 - e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber-bullying. Collect all available information.

DETERMINING IF IT IS BULLYING

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
 - a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
 - b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
 - What is the history between the kids involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
 - c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
 - d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

3. Support the kids who are being bullied
 - a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
 - b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:

- i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to round should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
- ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
- c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

4. Address bullying behavior

- a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she is bullied.
For example: i. Some children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved. ii. Other kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
- d. Involve the kid who is bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
 - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who is bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good Teammate.

5. Support bystanders who witness bullying.

Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
- b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
- c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the reaction on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
- d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the reaction they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

Consequences: If a bullying complaint is founded against any member of ZEUS, the following steps will be taken by the Club:

- First Offense : The offender will receive a verbal warning. Their parent/guardian(s) will be notified and reminded of the Club's anti-bullying policy.
- Second Offense : The offender will have their pool privileges revoked for one week. Their parent/guardian(s) will be notified and reminded of the Club's anti bullying policy.
- Third Offense : Ownership and Head Coach will meet to determine the consequences. A decision by Ownership is final.
 - * Any member suspended from the pool will all be responsible for their contractual financial obligations to ZEUS (NAC/Connecticut Aquatics) during the suspension period.

Resources:

www.stopbullying.gov

www.usaswimming.org/protect

ZEUS SWIM TEAM VOLUNTEER POLICY

As a parent/guardian of a child participating in swim meets, you are required to provide assistance to the team. Throughout the year you will be assigned certain tasks on a rotating basis along with parents of swimmers who also participate in meets.

Families with an active USA Official are exempt from timing assignments!

When our team is entered into a meet, the team hosting the meet will notify us of the number of timers we are required to provide. Based upon the required number of timers, we assign families to time at a meet. For longer meets, we generally assign 2 people to split each timing assignment.

Timing assignments are assigned to the families of swimmers who are entered into a swim meet and are done so on a rotating basis. If your swimmer is not entered into a swim meet, you will not be assigned to time.

If your swimmer is listed on a meet entry, you may be required to time.

Timing assignments will be emailed to the team and/or posted on the team website prior to a meet (usually on Wed or Thur for a weekend Meet). If you are assigned to time, and you realize that you are unable to fulfill your timing assignment, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. All phone numbers and e-mail addresses can be found on the team roster which is available on the web site under PARENTS > TEAM ROSTER (after logging into TeamUnify).

Timing assignments should be taken seriously. All parents are expected to fulfill their share of meet-related jobs such as timing.

The Zeus Swim Team has instituted a policy that will fine any family that does not fulfill their assigned USA meet timing requirement or find a replacement timer as follows:

- \$25.00 for the 1st missed USA meet timing assignment;
- \$50.00 for the 2nd missed USA meet timing assignment;
- \$75.00 for the 3rd missed USA meet timing assignment; and
- \$100.00 for the 4th missed USA meet timing assignment

Any/all fines will be added to your swimmer's account. If a swimmer's account is not paid in full, the swimmer will not be allowed to register for the next swim season.

If you have any questions about our timing assignment policy, please feel free to contact Coach Dennis with questions.

USA Swim Officials

Connecticut Swimming and USA Swimming require trained and certified officials to run and oversee all USA Swimming sanctioned meets. Officiating is one of the most important jobs at swim meet competitions. To become an official you must attend a 2.5-hour clinic then complete your training by working several sessions with certified officials on deck. Officials must meet annual certification requirements.

For more information about becoming a USA Swim Official for our team, please contact **Bill Natlo** @ bill@velo-ct.com.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to help out.

ZEUS SWIM TEAM'S ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

Purpose: ZEUS recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. Our club recognizes the risk associated with these methods when adults and minors use them to communicate. In order to protect the athletes, staff, and club, ZEUS has adopted the following procedures.

General

1. All communications between a coach and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protecon.
2. Communication should be transparent, accessible, and professional. All communications should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club's records.
3. Whenever possible the coach should copy another coach or a parent in the communication so there is no question of accessibility.
4. The use of all electronic devices are prohibited at all swim meets for swimmers who are 12 years old and under unless expressly permitted by the coach.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

1. A coach and an athlete under 18 years of age may not be friends or follow one another on Facebook, Instagram, or similar social media. Coaches should set their accounts to 'private' so athletes may not access their information.
2. Instant messaging between coaches and athletes via Facebook or any other method is prohibited.
3. An athlete may follow the coach on Twitter but coaches may not follow athletes. Direct messages and retweets are prohibited between the two.

Texting – And texting between coaches and athletes should be solely for the purpose of communicating information directly relating to team activities.

Email – Athletes and coaches can use email but it is best practice to copy another coach or parent when using this method of communication.

Request to Discontinue all Electronic Communication – The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child will not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

ZEUS SWIM TEAM'S TEAM TRAVEL POLICY

Scope and Definition:

Team Travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by the Zeus Swim Team (Norwalk Aquatic Club), Connecticut Swimming (Zeus's Local Swim Committee (LSC)) and/or USA Swimming, and where a parent and/or legal guardian of each swimmer is not attending. The Team Travel Policy applies to travel associated with "chaperoned" meets or activities where most or all athletes are under the supervision of responsible adults (21 or over) who are not their parent or legal guardian. The Team Travel Policy applies to all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the Zeus Swim Team to swim meets or activities as described above. This policy applies to swimmers: 1) who are 13 years old and above; and 2) swimmers age 12 and under who have been approved and invited by the Head Coach to attend the team activity and travel with the team.

Purpose:

Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a high risk of athlete to athlete misconduct. During travel, athletes are often away from their families and support networks, and the setting – new changing areas, locker rooms, workout facilities, automobiles and hotel rooms – are less structured and less familiar.

USA Swimming Requirements:

- a. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D in the USA Swimming Rule Book)
- b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming administered criminal background check. (305.5.B)
- c. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (305.5.A)
- d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

General Requirements:

- a. A copy of the Zeus Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian.
- b. The Head Coach shall designate the number of male and female chaperones needed for each trip, and who those chaperones will be.
- c. The directions and decisions of coaches/chaperones are final. Specific guidelines may be established by coaches/chaperones on topics, including but not limited to: safety, electronic devices, social media, dress codes, etc.
- d. Curfews shall be established by the coaches/chaperones or LSC staff each

- day of the trip. At the discretion of coaches/chaperones, there may be an "in your own room" curfew and a "lights out" curfew.
- e. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, twodeep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.
 - f. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.
 - g. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by the athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
 - h. Athletes must stay in their assigned hotel room.
 - i. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue.
 - j. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).
 - k. Team or LSC officials should obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form for each athlete.
 - l. Team or LSC officials should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete.
 - m. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.
 - n. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach and/or chaperone.
 - o. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theaters, etc. swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & Under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone.
 - p. The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of Travel Policy or Zeus Code of Conduct violations to the appropriate club or LSC leadership and the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.

Additional Safety, Behavioral and Financial Requirements:

- a. Be prompt and on time;
- b. The needs and wellbeing of the team come first;
- c. Respect the privacy of each other;
- d. Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in the hotel;
- e. Use appropriate behavior in public facilities;
- f. Athletes must wear seat belts and remain seated in travel vehicles;
- g. Athletes must respect travel vehicles;
- h. Athletes must participate in contracted group meals.
- i. No room service without permission;
- j. Athletes are responsible for all incidental hotel charges; and

k. Athletes are responsible for any damages or thievery at the hotel.

Exceptions:

Exceptions to this Policy may only be granted in writing by the Head Coach in consultation with Zeus ownership.

ZEUS SWIM TEAM'S CODE OF CONDUCT

A signature on this document constitutes unconditional agreement to comply with the stipulations of both the Zeus Swim Team's Team Travel Policy and the Zeus Swim Team's Code of Conduct.

- a. Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors, chaperones and the public at all times.
- b. Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- c. The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.
- d. The possession, use, or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden.
- e. No "deck changes" are permitted. Athletes are expected to use available change facilities.
- f. Team members are reminded that when competing in meets, traveling on trips, and attending other meet-related functions, they are representing both themselves and the Zeus Swim Team. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the Zeus Swim Team, Connecticut Swimming and/or USA Swimming.
- g. Swimmers are to refrain from inappropriate physical contact at team activities and events.
- h. Swimmers are to refrain from the use of inappropriate language. Failure to comply with the Zeus Code of Conduct as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense;
 - ii. Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition;
 - iii. Disqualification from future team travel meets;
 - iv. Financial penalties;
 - v. Dismissal from the team; and/or
 - vi. Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming National Board of Review.

Name of Athlete Signature Date

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian Signature Date

ZEUS SWIM TEAM'S REPORTING OF MISCONDUCT POLICY

Purpose:

Zeus Swim Team strives to provide and promote a safe environment for all athletes and their families, and encourages Safe Sport practices guided by USA Swimming, the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming in the United States. Safe Sport is USA Swimming's comprehensive abuse prevention program and provides tools for swim clubs to educate their members and intervene in risky situations. All Zeus Swim Team members are also members of USA Swimming, and as such, must abide by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct (see <https://www.usaswimming.org>). The Zeus Swim Team's Reporting of Misconduct Policy defines Sexual Misconduct and articulates the requirements for reporting, reporting tools and resources.

Sexual Misconduct Defined:

Sexual Misconduct is defined by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct Article 304.3.7 as follows:

- A. Any inappropriate sexual conduct or advance, or other inappropriate oral, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature at any time, past or present, directed towards an athlete or any person under the age of eighteen (18) 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 an adult is a member or not).
- B. Any act of sexual harassment, including without limitation unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate oral, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature in connection with or incidental to a USA Swimming-related activity by any person participating in the affairs or activities of USA Swimming (whether such person is a member or not) directed toward any member or other person participating in the affairs or activities of USA Swimming.
- C. A romantic or sexual relationship, even if it is a consensual relationship between adults, which began during the swimming relationship, between athletes and those individuals (i) having direct supervisory or evaluative control, or (ii) who are in a position of power and trust over the athlete. Except in circumstances where no imbalance of power exists, coaches have this direct supervisory or evaluative control and are in a position of power and trust over those athletes they coach. The prohibition on romantic or sexual relationships does not include those relationships where it can be demonstrated that there is no imbalance of power. For example, this prohibition does not apply to a relationship between two spouses or life partners which existed prior to the swimming relationship. For factors that may be relevant to determining whether an imbalance of power exists, consult the USOC's Safe Sport Policies at www.teamusa.org/Footer/Legal/GovernanceDocuments.
- D. Any peer-to-peer sexual abuse. For the purposes of the Code of Conduct, the term "peer-to-peer sexual abuse" shall mean any unwelcome physical conduct of a sexual nature directed towards a minor athlete by another minor athlete.

Zeus Team Reporting:

It is every member's responsibility to promptly report any incident regarding sexual misconduct to:

1. A trusted adult or parent
 2. Coach
 3. Board Member
- National Reporting:

It is every member's responsibility to promptly report any incident regarding sexual misconduct by a member as described in Article 304.3.7 to USA Swimming's Director of Safe Sport. 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.

Reporting Tools:

1. USA Swimming Safe Sport Reporting Form
<https://fs22.formsite.com/usaswimming/form10/index.html>
2. Email the Safe Sport Staff at USA Swimming's National Office
safesport@usaswimming.org

Investigations:

Investigations of complaints will be conducted per USA Swimming guidelines and will involve law enforcement as appropriate.

Resources:

<https://www.usaswimming.org/resources-home/resource-programsservices>
<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport/apt>