

# **HURRICANE PENGUINS SWIM CLUB**



## **HANDBOOK**

Revised: June 2025

Welcome swim team families!

We are very excited you have chosen to join the Hurricane Penguins Swim Club! This handbook contains important information for both parents and swimmers of the Hurricane Penguins Swim Club. We hope you will find this information helpful to you during the season; Our team is a non-profit, parent-run organization governed by United States Swimming, Inc., and Michigan Swimming. We are led by a volunteer Board of Directors, and we operate according to the Bylaws published on our website. Our coaches are employees of the team, and are certified according to the requirements of USA Swimming.

The mission of the Hurricane Penguins Swim Club is motivating swimmers to develop a lifelong love of the sport of swimming. We encourage young athletes to pursue and attain personal goals while learning the sport of competitive swimming. It is our coaches' mission to provide quality stroke instruction along with teaching sportsmanship, teamwork, a strong work ethic, and the love of competition. In this we hope each child will grow in his or her own personal achievements.

Remember, age-group swimming is about developing young swimmers and keeping them motivated to continue pursuing the sport of swimming. We hope you will help us encourage your swimmer to feel good about their personal accomplishments.

Thank you, and "Go Penguins"!



## 2025-2026 Hurricane Penguins Coaching Staff

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# Registration Information

## Explanation of Seasons

- ❖ Short Course Season runs September through March. “Short Course” definition: swimmers compete in a 25-yard pool.
- ❖ Long Course Season runs April through August. “Long Course” definition: swimmers compete in either a 25- or 50-meter pool.

Registration for the Hurricane Penguins is completed online through the team website:

<https://www.penguinssc.com>

- ❖ Registration fees and dues are subject to change, especially as pool rental rates and availability fluctuate. Please refer to our website for pricing information.
- ❖ Swimmers’ monthly dues vary based on which swimming group level they are assigned to; please refer to the website for the fee schedule and payment terms.
- ❖ Monthly dues will be automatically charged on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

Swimming groups are determined by the Head Coach. Coaches work to make the best possible selection for a child when determining which swim group they belong in.

Moving a swimmer to a higher level is 100% the Head Coach’s decision based on his/her assessment of a swimmer’s ability, behavior in practice, etc. If there is a question about what group a swimmer is placed in, please reach out to the Head Coach during a non-practice time.

# Ending Membership with HVP

## Refund Policy

We welcome new swimmers to come “try out” our Club, but we recognize that competitive swimming is not for everyone:

Week 1: Full refund (registration fee and first month’s dues) if the Notice to Cancel is received within 7 days of initial registration (or the first day of practice, if the swimmer registered before practice started).

Week 2: Only the 1<sup>st</sup> month’s dues are refunded. USA Swimming dues cannot be refunded after online registration has been approved, and most of the remaining registration fee will have been committed to purchasing team swim caps and team T-shirts for each swimmer.

Week 4 or after: No refunds. Cancellation notice is required 30 days prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the last month that the athlete intends to be a member of the team (membership cancellations become effective on the last day of the month following receipt of a Notice to Cancel; there are no prorated refunds for mid-month cancellations). Unearned volunteer points will be added to the swimmer’s account and included in the final billing.

## Process for Ending Membership

All memberships expire at the end of the swimming season. Short course ends in March (last billing is April 1<sup>st</sup>) and Long Course ends in August (last billing is August 1<sup>st</sup>).

To end your membership in the middle of the regular season, please complete the End Membership form on the team website.

\*\*\* Please note that a swimmer who resigns from the Penguins will not be released to join another USA Swimming club until all outstanding debts are paid.

\*\*\* Please also note that although a swimmer may resign their membership in the Club, their account will remain active. This is important for families with multiple swimmers in which one sibling cancels while the others remain.

# **Team Travel and Behavioral Conduct Policies**

## **Section 1 - Overnight team travel policies**

- ❖ A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian within the first week of joining the Club.
- ❖ During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained according to USA Swimming and US SafeSport policies.
- ❖ 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 in writing.
- ❖ 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, chaperone 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, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by the athlete's parents.
- ❖ To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes or coaches in female athletes' rooms, and vice versa.
- ❖ Team should carry a notarized, signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete.
- ❖ 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 or chaperone.

## **Section 2 - Codes of Conduct**

- ❖ All team members, team staff and parents of minors are apprised in writing of this Code of Conduct and the attached USA Swimming Codes of Conduct. A signature on the "Welcome and Commitment Letter" at the end of this Handbook

constitutes unconditional agreement to comply with the stipulations of both documents.

- ❖ Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.
- ❖ No “deck” changes are permitted. Athletes are expected to use available changing facilities.
- ❖ 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 HurricanePenguins Swim Club. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the club.
- ❖ Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:
  - ◆ Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete’s expense
  - ◆ Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition
  - ◆ Disqualification from future team travel meets
  - ◆ Financial penalties
  - ◆ Dismissal from the team
  - ◆ Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming Board of Review
- ❖ All team members are responsible for obtaining and following the Trip Itinerary. Being late to the meet or other team events may exclude the athletes’ participation in the meet or events.



Note: the Codes of Conduct below were created by USA Swimming, Inc., and have been adopted by the Hurricane Penguins to further clarify our club's expectations for behavior:

### **1. Team Code of Conduct: Coach**

The purpose of this code of conduct for coaches is to establish common expectations for all members of the coaching staff of the club. It is to be used as a guide to promote a positive team environment and good sportsmanship.

- ☐ At all times, adhere to USA Swimming's rules and code of conduct.
- ☐ Set a good example of respect and sportsmanship for participants and fans to follow.
- ☐ Act and dress with professionalism and dignity in a manner suitable to his/her profession.
- ☐ Respect officials and their judgment and abide by the rules of the event.
- ☐ Treat opposing coaches, participants, and spectators with respect.
- ☐ Instruct participants in sportsmanship and demand that they display good sportsmanship.
- ☐ Coach in a positive manner and do not use derogatory comments or abusive language.
- ☐ Win with humility and lose with dignity.
- ☐ Treat every athlete fairly, justly, impartially, intelligently, and with sensitivity.
- ☐ Always place the well-being, health, and safety of swimmers above all other considerations, including developing performance.
- ☐ Continue to seek and maintain their own professional development in all areas in relation to coaching and teaching children.
- ☐ Always maintain a professional separation between coach and athlete.

Any complaints of a coach violating this code of conduct should be brought to the attention of the club's Board of Directors.

## **2. Team Code of Conduct: Athletes**

The purpose of a code of conduct for athletes is to establish a consistent expectation for athletes' behavior.

By signing the "Welcome and Commitment Letter", I agree to the following statements, and understand that if I violate this code of conduct, I will be subject to disciplinary action determined by my coaches and the swim club's Board of Directors:

- ☐ I will respect and show courtesy to my teammates and coaches at all times.
- ☐ I will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all practices and meets.
- ☐ I will set a good example of behavior and work ethic for my younger teammates.
- ☐ I will be respectful of my teammates' feelings and personal space. Swimmers who exhibit sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise inappropriate behavior will be faced with consequences.
- ☐ I will attend all team meetings and training sessions, unless I am excused by my coach.
- ☐ I will show respect for all facilities and other property (including locker rooms) used during practices, competitions, and team activities.
- ☐ I will refrain from foul language, violence, behavior deemed dishonest, offensive, or illegal.
- ☐ If I disagree with an official's call, I will talk with my coach and not approach the official directly.
- ☐ I will obey all of USA Swimming's rules and codes of conduct.

### **3. Team Code of Conduct: Parents and Guardians**

The purpose of a code of conduct is to establish consistent expectations for behavior by parents/ guardians. Signing the “Welcome and Commitment Letter” at the end of this Handbook constitutes my agreement to abide by the statements below:

- ☐ As a parent/guardian, I understand the important growth and developmental support that my child’s participation fosters.
- ☐ I also understand that it is essential to provide the coaching staff with respect and the authority to coach the team.
- ☐ I will set the right example for our children by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect and common courtesy at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and all facilities.
- ☐ I will get involved by volunteering, observing practices, cheering at meets, and talking with my child and their coach about their progress.
- ☐ I will refrain from coaching my child from the stands during practices or meets.
- ☐ I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, volunteers, and/or any participating swimmer will not be tolerated.
- ☐ I will respect the integrity of the officials.
- ☐ I will direct my concerns first to the Head Coach; then, if not satisfied, to the President of the Club’s Board of Directors.

## Swim Meet Types and Registration Process

❖ Dual Meets (2 teams, all events take place in one session), typically on a weeknight.

All Penguin swimmers are expected to participate in at least our “home” meets.

- To sign up to swim in a dual swim meet, swimmers or parents/ guardians log into the Penguins website: <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mihvp/page/home>, click on the “Events” heading.
  - Select “Yes, I can attend” or “No, unable to attend”. Coaches will choose the events for the swimmers.
  - Swimmers will find out what events they are in either at practice the day before the meet or at the meet.
- ❖ USA Swimming Meets-Invitational Meets (many teams, usually 2-day events with 4-5 sessions over a weekend, broken up by age groups)

Home dual meet attendance and at least one session of home invitationals is mandatory for all swimmers. It is expected swimmers will attend at least 1 meet per month. The Board and Coaching Staff believe the swimmers need to experience as many meets as possible each season to maximize their growth and development in the sport.

- To sign up to swim in a USA swim meet- swimmers or parents/guardians go to the Penguins website <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mihvp/page/home> and login, click on Events heading.
- Select “Yes, I can attend” or “No, unable to attend”.
- Parents can then choose which events or sessions to enter their swimmer in; just check the box next to events or sessions they would like to participate in (be sure to check the meet packet for days and times).

Parents can also leave the selection up to the coaches. If this is the case leave the dates you are willing to attend and a coach will enter the events they feel the swimmer should swim.

- Click 'Submit'
- A Coach will approve the events for your swimmer. Once a coach has approved the events, the team pays the hosting team for the events. If you choose not to swim the meet, your account will still be charged as there are no refunds from other teams.

Note: If you sign up for a meet and are unable to participate, please call or text coach Janette Heaton at (248)790-5607 at least 48 hours before the first session of that meet. Generally meet entry refunds for "Away" meets are not possible, but can sometimes be arranged.

# **“Everything You Wanted to Know About Swim Meets”**

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as possible. If you have any questions, please ask your coach.

## **Before the Meet Starts**

- ❖ Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information on the team website.
- ❖ Find the check-in place - this includes our own team hosted meets! This is usually located just outside the locker room entrance. Parents are not allowed on deck so this may be a responsibility of your swimmer if check-in is located on deck. Make sure your swimmer checks in with his or her coach too!
- ❖ Check for special posted instructions in the check-in area. Swimmers will usually need to highlight their name on the meet schedule for each event they are planning to swim to confirm they are in attendance and planning to swim those events that day. If this is not done, the swimmer will not be allowed to swim that event; the meet administrators "seed" the swimmers into heats using these "check-in" sheets. Heat and lane assignments will be posted, so be sure your swimmer knows where to look!
- ❖ Once "checked in", write or have the swimmers write each event number and lane assignment on his or her hand in ink (e.g., "Sharpie"). This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen or watch for.
- ❖ Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles on and reports to the pool for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.

- ❖ Once on deck the swimmer needs to look around and find their coach. Coaches will be wearing team shirts. Swimmers will sit together and get ready for warm-up.
- ❖ After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until their first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom, if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.
- ❖ The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
- ❖ According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to a coach. He or she in turn, will pursue with the proper decision makers.
- ❖ Psych Sheets and Heat Sheets: a "psych sheet" or "heat sheet" packet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and their previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A Heat sheet may be available close to the start of the meet that lists the actual heat and lane a swimmer will be competing in.

## **Meet Starts**

- ❖ It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers they are swimming (again, why they should have the numbers on their hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.
- ❖ Most meets are computerized. There are generally two ways a swimmer gets to their lane:

- A swimmer usually reports directly to their lane for competition a number of heats before they actually swim. Check with your swimmer's coach for specific instructions.
  - In some novice meets, a swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the Marshalling Area. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggles.
  - The marshals will typically line up all the swimmers and take them down to the pool in correct order.
  - You can expect at least 4-8 heats for each event at a typical meet.
- ❖ The swimmer swims their race.
- ❖ After each swim:
- Swimmers are to ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) for their time.
  - Depending on the coaches' instructions, the swimmer may be asked to do some recovery swimming if a "warm down" pool or lanes are available.
  - The swimmer should then go immediately to their coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer. Some coaches may wish to talk with the swimmer before their recovery swim.
- ❖ Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
- Positive comments or praise
  - Suggestions for improvement
- ❖ Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:
- Tell your swimmer how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You need to tell your swimmer how proud you are and what a great job they did.
  - Take them back to the team area and relax.
  - This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or



something light to eat.

- The swimmer now waits until their next event is called and starts the procedure again.
- ❖ When a swimmer has completed all of their events they get to go home. Make sure, however, that your swimmer has checked with the coach before leaving to ensure they are not included on a relay (relay entries are usually determined at the start of each session). It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and they are not there.
- ❖ Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility. Awards are often gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The team will file awards in the swimmers folder typically the following week. Swimmers folders are typically located on pool deck.

### **What Happens If Your Child has a Disappointing Swim?**

- ❖ If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling badly, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "Hey that is not like you. I know you are disappointed, but it's not the end of the world!" Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did.
- ❖ Don't talk about the negative things and don't keep talking about the race. Drop it and get your child to focus on the next race or something enjoyable coming up after the meet! Limit the "post mortems!" If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," there is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. You should move the swimmer on to something good. "All right, you have had a bad race. How do you think you can do better next time?" Immediately start talking about the positive things.

## What to Take To the Meet

- ❖ Most important: swim suit, team cap and goggles (two pairs of goggles and 2 caps are recommended – goggle straps break and caps will rip...you just never know when!)
- ❖ Towels - realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two.
- ❖ Something to sit on. Often times the swimmers' area may be located in a gym or cafeteria. Example: old blanket or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
- ❖ Sweat suits: bring one. Each swimmer may want to bring two because they can get wet and soggy.
- ❖ Team T-shirts: Two or three. Same reason as above.
- ❖ Games: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.
- ❖ Food: Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have concession areas the larger meets, but the lines are long and most of the time they only sell junk food. Suggested items for swimmers to bring:
  - Drinks: Water, Gatorade, chocolate milk for recovery after ALL events are complete.
  - Snacks: Granola bars, Fun fruits, yogurt, cereal, sandwiches, cold pasta, bagels.
- ❖ Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other parent for help or information!
- ❖ These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! They get to visit with their friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. They also get to "race" and see how much they have improved from all the hard work they put in at practice.

## **Special Note to Parents**

The pool area is usually very warm - dress appropriately (many parents bring flip-flops and wear layers to the winter meets). Purchase a Penguin Parent polo or t-shirt before-hand. It's a great idea to sit with other parents on the team. You can help other parents and cheer for all the Penguin swimmers. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly! Bring something to do, a good book, your laptop or knitting. Better yet, become an official and get involved! You get to be close to the action and take the focus off of your own child! To become an official visit [www.uss-michigan.org](http://www.uss-michigan.org).

## **Carpool Waiver - Hurricane Penguin Swim Club**

### *Carpool Release and Waiver of Liability Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement*

The undersigned hereby certifies that I am the legal parent/guardian of the minor participant in Hurricane Penguins swim club named below. I agree to:

1. Instruct the minor participant that he or she must adhere to the HVP Rules of Conduct (as published, but not limited to its Member Handbook, Membership Agreement, and Code of Conduct) at all times when participating in any HVP activity.
2. Hereby release, waive and discharge the HVP, including its officers, agents, employees, managers, parent organizations, affiliates and personnel from any claim, liability, or demand of any kind on account of any personal injury, whether caused by the negligence of releases or otherwise, resulting from or in any way associated with the Participant or undersigned's use of the HVP facilities, amenities, services, or participation in any of the activities whether on the premises or not including travel to and from practice locations.

Season (Short/Long Course) and Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant's Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (*please print*): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Name (*please print*): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone (*cell phone preferred*): \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies/ other health conditions, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

# **Bullying Policy**

## **Action Plan of the Hurricane Penguins to Address Bullying**

### **PURPOSE**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Hurricane Penguins (the “Club”) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club 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 tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

### **Objectives of the Club’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:**

- ❖ To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
- ❖ To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
- ❖ To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
- ❖ To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
- ❖ To spread the word that Hurricane Penguins takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

## **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

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:

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

## **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 Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;

- ❖ Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, 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 attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

## **HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING**

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

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

\*If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach: ***FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED***

### ❖ **We Gather the Facts-**

- ◆ Keep all the involved children separate.
- ◆ Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- ◆ Listen without blaming.
- ◆ Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- ◆ 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.

❖ **Make a Determination if it is 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.

- ◆ Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- ◆ 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?
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

## ***SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED***

### **Support the child/children that were bullied**

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ 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:



Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine 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.

- 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.
- ◆ Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

### **Address bullying behavior**

- ◆ Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- ◆ Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- ◆ Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
  - Sometimes 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.
  - Other times 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.
- ◆ Involve the kid who 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:
  - Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
  - Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others

in your community.

- Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- ◆ Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
  - Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
  - Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
- ◆ Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who 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.

#### ❖ **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.

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



# **Electronic Communication Policy**

## **PURPOSE**

The Hurricane Penguins Swim Club (the “Club”) recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

## **GENERAL CONTENT**

All communications between a coach or other adult 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 Protection.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?”

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is Transparent, Accessible and Professional:

\*Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

\*Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. Whenever possible,

include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

\*Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

***If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.***

#### **FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES**

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept a “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

#### **TWITTER**

Coaches are not permitted to follow athletes on Twitter. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

#### **TEXTING**

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 10pm. Parents or guardians must be included on all coach to swimmer texts. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

#### **EMAIL**

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 10pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.

#### **REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing to the Board President that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

## How to Stay Informed

- ❖ Follow the team calendar at:  
<https://www.teamunify.com/team/mihvp/page/home> (Practice locations can change due to high school events, pool shutdowns etc. Please refer to the calendar, and don't assume a practice is always at a certain location.)
- ❖ Sign up for SMS messaging. To receive text messages. HVPenguins.com
  - ◆ Sign into the HVP website
  - ◆ Click on My Account on the Left hand side of the web page
  - ◆ Click on My Account in the drop down menu
  - ◆ Scroll to the field for SMS
  - ◆ Enter your cell #
  - ◆ Select your mobile carrier
  - ◆ Click SAVE
- ❖ Other information on the team website:
  - ◆ Meet sign up information
  - ◆ Swim Suit ordering information
  - ◆ News
  - ◆ Calendars
- ❖ Check the Michigan Local Swimming Committee website
  - ◆ [www.miswim.org](http://www.miswim.org)
- ❖ Check the USA Swimming website
  - ◆ [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)
- ❖ On Deck Parent
  - ◆ Download wherever you get apps for your electronic devices (i.e. Apple Store etc.)

❖ Please ask all questions before or after practice. Do not address questions to coaches during practice, coaches are focused on coaching. Email is also available through the Penguins Website.

❖ Address questions about procedures, swim meets, volunteer opportunities etc. to parent boosters. Email is available through the Penguins website.

## Parent “Fair Share” Commitment Requirements

Since the Hurricane Penguins Swim Club is a parent-run, non-profit organization, we can only function if we have adequate parent volunteers to support our activities. To ensure the team will run smoothly, all families are required to participate in the “Fair Share” Program. These requirements represent the MINIMUM volunteering expectations for each family, and everyone is encouraged to get as involved with the team as they can.

- ❖ Each family will be responsible for fulfilling 24 Fair Share points in a Short Course season, and 12 points in a Long Course season - regardless of how many swimmers are in the family, or level of those swimmers.
  - Exception: Families that are single parent homes will be expected to fulfill ½ of the required “Fair Share” commitment for that session. Families in this situation must notify the Volunteering Coordinator in writing at the start of each session to ensure accurate recordkeeping.
- ❖ All unearned Fair Share points will automatically be applied to the last account billing for that session at the rate of \$25 per unearned volunteer hour.
  - Note: it is not possible to “carry over” extra volunteering points from one session to the next as a way to receive credit against future commitments.
- ❖ The Fair Share Program is administered by the HVP Board
  - Please do not see coaches about points, jobs etc. They are not always aware of what opportunities are available.
- ❖ Board and Committee Chair positions fulfill the full Fair Share requirement for that session; co-chairs of a Committee will each get credit for half of their “Fair Share” points for that session.
- ❖ If any volunteering opportunities remain unfilled 24 points before an event is scheduled to occur, the Volunteering Coordinator is empowered to recruit and reward families that have completed their Fair Share requirement for that session to fill those volunteering needs. The families who go “above and beyond” to support



the team on short notice in these cases will receive a \$15/ hour credit towards their final monthly bill of that season for each hour worked.

- ❖ Volunteering opportunities are posted on the team website, and volunteer points that have been worked are tracked online by the Volunteering Coordinator.
  - Volunteering opportunities go quickly early in the season - make sure you check the website regularly!
- ❖ Members who sign up to volunteer will be tracked. Members who sign up and do not fulfill their responsibilities (ex. by not showing up to volunteer) will not be credited points towards their account.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of the families who have siblings, grandparents etc. volunteer on their behalf to make the Volunteering Coordinator aware of the family connection so that the appropriate points can be accounted for. Please do not assume that a connection will be made!
- ❖ During volunteer opportunities where there is no designated check-in (for example, meet awards preparations, etc. done at the volunteer's home), members will need to email the volunteer coordinator to confirm the task was completed and to receive credit for the points worked.
- ❖ Each member is responsible for either managing the job on their own or contacting the Volunteer Coordinator *prior* to working the job for direction and information.
- ❖ Each member is responsible for the tools necessary to complete the opportunity when it is not in relation to a meet.
  - The Chairperson responsible for these events will coordinate with each of the volunteers; for example, when hosting a team breakfast, volunteers will need to supply the bowls, cooking utensils, griddles etc. Purchasing any items needed will be the responsibility of the Chairperson or their designee.
- ❖ Members who are unable to fulfill their job duties that they have signed up for are expected to find their own replacement and notify the Volunteering Coordinator as to who the replacement will be.

- ❖ During meets, families will need to check-in at the designated volunteer check-in table to obtain credit for the volunteer session. If individuals do not check-in with the volunteer check-in person, time worked will not be credited.
- ❖ Volunteers must work their entire scheduled session to receive credit points. Please do not ask to leave a meet after your child's race.
- ❖ If a member chooses to suspend their account for any reason - including other sports (including, but not limited to, Boys- or Girls High School or Middle School swim seasons, etc.) - the family is still responsible for the unearned points.
- ❖ HVP cannot accommodate families by creating *extra* opportunities for families who have not fulfilled their necessary points to earn credit towards monthly dues payments, or to "catch up" on missed opportunities. Members are asked to plan accordingly.

#### **Examples of Swim Meet Volunteer Positions:**

- ❖ **Announcer** –Announces event number, heat number and the names of swimmers in each lane during the race and reads the results after they have been printed. Starts the meet with the announcements of teams, coaches, officials and the national anthem.
- ❖ **Head Timer**-Head Timer is a backup for the lane timers. The Head timer also directs timers to the lanes and instructs timers on how to use the stop watches and back up buttons.
- ❖ **Lane Timers**-Lane timers are back-up timers for the Electronic Timing System.
  - Timers need to make sure the correct swimmer is in their lane for each race using a card or lane-timer sheet that is provided.
  - Timers will use a stopwatch and/ or the backup button. Timers need to record the finish by stopwatch and depressing the backup button at the end of each race.
- ❖ **Runners**-Runners collect the back-up times from the timers, and the order of finish from the Finish Judge and take them to the office. Runners should keep the

lane cards in lane order and keep each heat separate.

- ❖ **Finish Judges**-Finish judges record the order of finish of each race and any disqualifications.
- ❖ **Marshals** -Marshals help the coaches get the swimmers into the correct lanes for their races. This may include handing out lane cards to the swimmers, and getting the swimmers behind their proper lane. Sometimes the Marshals marshal both teams' swimmers by seating the swimmers in chairs and parading the swimmers behind the lanes at the appropriate time.
- ❖ **Concessions**- Concessions volunteers will need to collect healthy food items to sell at the meet and prepare the items to be sold. Concession volunteers will sell the food at the meet and clean up afterward. Concession volunteers may need to store unused items at their home.
- ❖ **Awards**-Awards person needs to inventory awards and let the coach know when to order more ribbons. Awards volunteers are needed at the meet to put award labels on the ribbons and sort the ribbons into the swimmers folders.
- ❖ **Admissions**-Collect admissions and sell programs or heat sheets at the swim meet.

## Confirmation of Handbook

- ❖ A copy of the following letter must be signed electronically during the online registration process by both the swimmer and the swimmer's parent or guardian prior to joining the Penguins or renewing their membership for the upcoming season.
- ❖ Registration will not be possible without a signed "Welcome and Commitment Letter".
- ❖ Hurricane Penguins assume that you have electronically downloaded and read the Handbook as a condition of signing the "Welcome and Commitment Letter", and you agree to all of the documentation included within the Handbook.
- ❖ Questions can be answered at:
  - ◆ HVP new season and new family meetings
  - ◆ By other HVP parents (the stands during practice is a good time to find a long term HVP parent that may have the answer)
  - ◆ Through email to the HVP Board via the team email account found at <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mihvp/page/home> or directly to any Board member (emails are listed on the team website).



## Hurricane PENGUINS COMPETITIVE SWIM TEAM WELCOME AND COMMITMENT LETTER

Dear Swimmer and Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to the Hurricane Penguins Swim Club. HVP looks forward to this upcoming season as well as training for and achieving your swimmers goals. Now that you have chosen to join the Hurricane Penguins, the Club would like to ensure that your family has been provided with the team Handbook as well as acknowledge your commitment to play and participate with the club during the upcoming season. As such, we are asking that the following letter is read and signed as your understanding to the commitments to the team policies and procedures as they are defined in the team Handbook. This commitment letter must be signed during the registration process online (which will not have a physical signature, but will be documented digitally that the family agrees) and will be filed with all other swimmer documentation.

### **Swimmer and Parent Commitment Confirmation**

Recognizing that swimming can be a time consuming sport, I understand that there are commitments to the team with regards to practices as well as meet competitions. I understand that the team is asking for a commitment of 1 invitational a month in order to strengthen swimmers skills and help swimmers understand the competitive piece of swimming. Furthermore, I understand that invitational fees are not part of the monthly Hurricane Penguins dues and I will be billed at the end of each month for the amount of events my swimmer swims.

I also acknowledge that Hurricane Penguins is a volunteer-run organization. The club relies on the help of parent volunteers to serve in critical roles throughout the season. Any and all support is vital to the success of the team and the development of the swimmers on it. I understand that the Parent Fair Share Program includes an amount of points worked by my friends and family as laid out in the Hurricane Penguins Handbook found on HVPenguins.com. I also understand that the Parent Fair Share commitments are applied to each family not each individual swimmer. Furthermore, I acknowledge that all unearned points will automatically be billed and applied to my last ACH charge on April 1<sup>st</sup>. I also acknowledge that if I have unearned points and have left the team prior to the SCY season ending, the ACH charge will still be charged on April 1<sup>st</sup>. This will be at a rate of \$10.00 per every hour not worked. I recognize that should I choose to leave the team prior to all points being earned, my swimmer chooses to take time off for any reason including other sports etc. I will still be responsible for any unearned points. Furthermore, I recognize that when I commit and I do not fulfill my commitment for any reason, my account will not be credited the allotted points and a penalty equal to my unfulfilled commitment points will be added to my account.

I also acknowledge that Hurricane Penguins fosters an environment of inclusion and teamwork. I understand that I and my family represent the organization as a whole. I will support the members, swimmers and coaches and not speak poorly of the staff, members or organization while participating as a member of the team. If I am found not abiding by the team's Code of Conduct, speaking ill of the team, members or coaches, I understand it is grounds for removal from the team at the discretion of the Head Coach and Board Members.

### **Financial Obligation**

We recognize that swimmers dues can be paid annually (which includes a discount if paid this way), per session or monthly and that dues are based on the group level they are assigned to. We also recognize that swimmers meet fees are not part of the annual, session or monthly rate and will be added to the swimmers account monthly to be paid on the first day of the following month. Furthermore, we understand that should our family choose to leave the Hurricane Penguins, this information needs to be put in writing 30 days *prior* to the start of the next calendar month in which we choose to leave and given to the Board's Treasurer. If I do not, I will be billed for the following month.

**We hereby acknowledge that we understand and agree to the terms and obligations outlined in this letter and the information detailed further in the Hurricane Penguins Handbook.**

Parent/ Guardian signature and date X \_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete 1 signature and date X \_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete 2 signature and date X \_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete 3 signature and date X \_\_\_\_\_