



<b>Overview</b>	This procedure provides a clear expectation on how grievances will be handled within our club.
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## General Information

Athlete safety is paramount to SEMS, Minnesota Swimming, and USA Swimming. If you experience or witness actions or events that concern you or make you feel uncomfortable, it is important to talk to someone about it. The SEMS Grievance Procedure provides swimmers, parents, coaches, club leaders, and employees a system to address and report grievances in a productive, systematic way. Following these Procedures provides the appropriate parties a means to properly investigate, intervene, and take disciplinary action when needed.

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## Where to Report

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

- U.S. Center for SafeSport: 833-5US-SAFE (833-587-8233) 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](mailto:safesport@usaswimming.org) or <https://fs22.formsite.com/usaswimming/form10/index.html>

For issues dealing with known or suspected child abuse:

- Washington County, MN: If a child is in immediate danger, or to request an immediate welfare check, call 9-1-1 or your local police department. To report suspected abuse or neglect of a child, call 651-430-6457. Calls during the evening, weekend, or holidays to report suspected abuse or neglect a child should be made to the Washington County Crisis Response Unit at 651-275-7400.



**For issues dealing with peer-to-peer bullying, coach-athlete bullying, parent issues, violations of the SEMS Code of Conduct, and/or violations of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy, SEMS will handle at the club level as outlined below:**

### **WHOM TO NOTIFY OF A GRIEVANCE** (Chain of Command)

#### ***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 SEMS Code of Conduct, the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the coach of the swimmer responsible for the violation. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. Coaches will ensure the Head Coach is notified of the complaint and will participate in assessing the behavior.

#### ***Regarding the Conduct of a Junior Coach, Assistant Coach, 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 SEMS Board President is notified of the complaint and will participate in assessing the behavior.

#### ***Regarding Conduct of Head Coach – Notify SEMS 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 Board of Directors 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 of Directors, with notification made in writing to the President. This complaint will be subject to review and discussion by the full Board of Directors.

#### ***Regarding Board of Director Member Conduct – Notify the SEMS Board President***

- Should a parent or swimmer feel a Board of Director's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Board President of this violation in person or in writing. If the Board President is the Board Director whose conduct is in question, the 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 Board of Directors.



**Regarding Parent, Volunteer, Other Staff, or Swim Official Conduct** – Notify the Head Coach or Board President

- Should a parent or swimmer feel another SEMS 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 Board of Directors.

**Note:** With the exception of issues that 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.

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### **HOW GRIEVANCES WILL BE HANDLED**

*The Head Coach and Board of Directors have the authority to impose penalties for infractions of the SEMS 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 head coach and/or SEMS Board of Directors and may include, but are not 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.*

*If applicable, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, USA Swimming and local law 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, the Athlete Protection Policy, or local laws. **The person recognizing that violation must notify the U.S. Center for SafeSport, USA Swimming, and local law enforcement.***

1. **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 SEMS grievance procedure form.
2. **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.
3. **Consequences** will be implemented and disciplinary action will be taken, if appropriate. These consequences and disciplinary actions will be decided using the following general guidelines:



- a. Nature of the misconduct
- b. Severity of the misconduct
- c. Prior disciplinary actions
- d. Adverse effect of the misconduct

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## Appeals Procedure

Any initial conduct review and disciplinary action will be the responsibility of the initial person(s) responsible for officially receiving the said grievance (see “Whom to Notify” above). A decision and/or disciplinary action will be issued as soon as reasonably possible.

If a parent/swimmer who registers the complaint with an Assistant or Age Group Coach feels the disciplinary action is insufficient or unsatisfactorily resolves the issue, or if the responsible coach fails to address the parent/swimmer’s concerns in a timely manner, the parent/swimmer may appeal the decision to the Head Coach, in writing, within 7 days of the initial complaint. A decision and/or disciplinary action will be issued by the Head Coach as soon as reasonably possible.

If the parent/swimmer who registers the complaint appeals the Responsible Coach’s conduct review and/or disciplinary action to the Head Coach and feels the Head Coach’s decision/disciplinary action is insufficient or unsatisfactorily resolves the issue, or if the Head Coach fails to address the parent/swimmer’s concerns in a timely manner, the parent/swimmer may request that the Board of Directors review all disciplinary actions and any appeals to the Head Coach up to that point.

The decision of the Board of Directors regarding any complaint and any resulting disciplinary action is final.

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### Disclaimer

*SEMS reserves the right to add, modify, or terminate its policies, practices, and procedures at any time.*

**Any exceptions to this policy must have the approval of the Board of Directors.**