



C A R O L I N A

Electronic Communication Policy

Revised July 2023

SwimMAC Carolina encourages the use of electronic communication and social media that is appropriate, productive, transparent and enriching. Effective communication concerning practice or competition schedules, travel, and administrative issues among staff, coaches, volunteers, swimmers and their families is critical. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media, and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for improprieties and misunderstandings. It is SwimMAC Carolina's intention to minimize those issues with the following rules and guidelines that are consistent with the USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy. Employees will be held accountable for content created through or on electronic mediums. For purposes of these guidelines, a minor athlete is an athlete under the age of 18 and any reference to an athlete's parent shall mean the athlete's parents or legal guardians, as applicable.

The parents of a minor athlete may request in writing that SwimMAC and its employees refrain from electronically contacting the athlete or including the athlete in social media posts. SwimMAC and its employees will immediately comply with such a request and direct all future electronic communication to the parents.

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. Outside of competition travel or emergency circumstances, electronic communications to a minor athlete may only be sent between 5:00 am and 9:00 pm. As with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- Drugs or alcohol use;
- Sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity;
- The adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; or

- Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures.

Email

Email from SwimMAC employees to athletes or their families should come from SwimMAC's email system (the return address will contain @swimmaccarolina.org) and conclude with your first and last name, the SwimMAC logo or the name SwimMAC Carolina, your role/title, and a phone number. Every email sent directly to an individual minor athlete must be copied to the minor athlete's parent, even if the minor athlete contacted the SwimMAC employee first with their parents excluded. SwimMAC employees must copy another member of the SwimMAC staff when emailing multiple minor athletes or the entire team. On weekdays, SwimMAC staff should respond to member emails as quickly as possible, preferably within 24-48 hours.

Text

SwimMAC staff members may use texts to communicate with athletes and their families. All text content sent by a SwimMAC employee must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about SwimMAC activities. Any message sent directly to a minor athlete must be copied to the minor athlete's parents. If a minor athlete initiates direct electronic communication, the SwimMAC employee must include the athlete's parents in the response, even if the minor athlete contacted the SwimMAC employee first with their parents excluded.

Electronic Imagery

Digital photos and/or videos of practice or competition, and other publicly obtainable images of the athlete – individually or in groups – may be taken. These photos and/or videos may be submitted to local, state or national publications, used in marketing or promotional videos, posted on SwimMAC Carolina's websites or social media accounts, or offered to the athletes' families. SwimMAC Carolina allows such practices as long as the athlete or athletes are in public view and the images are both appropriate and in the best interest of the athlete and SwimMAC Carolina.

Be mindful. Our athletes are in swimsuits. Check the background of your image and make sure you have not inadvertently captured something embarrassing or inappropriate. Do not take or post photos/videos of swimmers bent over in the start position unless you are positioned in front of them or to the side.

Social Media

SwimMAC Carolina's social media priorities are to:

1. Maintain and strengthen the SwimMAC brand of excellence.
2. Increase awareness of all that SwimMAC offers.
3. Grow an engaged and informed audience; cultivate a SwimMAC fan base.
4. Build comradery; use social media to make our large organization feel accessible and unite the many different parts.
5. Promote participation in SwimMAC events.

The line between professional and personal relationships is blurred within a social media context. Coaches must not have any connection to or communication with a minor athlete from either the minor athlete's or the coach's personal social media account. SwimMAC Carolina coaches are encouraged to interact with and contribute to SwimMAC's official organizational accounts (i.e. SwimMAC Carolina on Facebook, @swimmacc on Twitter, Swimmac_1977 on Instagram, etc.). Coaches may also create their own social media accounts specifically for, but limited to, SwimMAC content, and may connect with minor athlete's via these accounts. The SwimMAC account can be individual (i.e. Coach Fred) or a group-specific account (i.e. North Dolphin 2). All posts, messages, text, videos or images must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for motivational purposes. SwimMAC staff members should never direct-message athletes from any social media account through any social media platform.

Expectations

- Employees will be held responsible for the violation of USA Swimming's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy.
- Employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy rights or other rights of a third party, or the content of anything posted on any social media network. Repercussions will be determined by supervisors, up to and including potential termination.
- Remember that you are ultimately responsible for your online behavior. Be a positive role model.
- Be a brand advocate for SwimMAC and yourself.
- Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with SwimMAC's professional standards.
- Remain respectful at all times of SwimMAC, fellow employees, members, sponsors, and competitors.
- Do not engage in disagreements online.