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FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA
STORM SWIM TEAM
2023-2024 HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- CODE OF CONDUCT 1
- CELL PHONE USAGE POLICY 2
- DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY 2
- ANTI-BULLYING POLICY 2
- ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY 4
- SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY 5
- ATHLETE PROTECTION TRAINING 6
- MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY (MAAPP): 6
- YOUTH SUPERVISION POLICY 7
- LOCKER ROOM POLICY 8
- REFUND POLICY 8
- ATTENDANCE POLICY 8
- ROSTER POLICY 9
- PHOTOGRAPHIC AND AUDIO/VISUAL RELEASE 10
- GSCY VOLUNTEER POINTS SYSTEM 10
- GSCY TIMING ASSIGNMENTS AT INVITATIONAL MEETS 10
- GSCY SWIM TEAM 2023-2024 HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT 11
- APPENDIX A:
GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT 13

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

The Greater Somerset County YMCA STORM Swim Team nurtures swimmers to grow as individuals, empowers them to achieve their personal goals as young athletes, and helps ignite their overall potential in a supportive, safe, yet demanding environment. Our nationally-ranked team has a rich legacy of success regionally and nationally, having achieved Olympic Trials and Junior National Teams. **GSCY STORM Swimming is a Silver Medal program recognized by USA Swimming as one of the top-200 teams in the nation.**

Every day, our coaches, parents/guardians, and volunteers dedicate their time, expertise, and shared passion for the water to help develop enthusiastic, dedicated swimmers who are capable of responding to the demands of a highly competitive program. The **eleven-time NJYMCA State Champion swim team** has 400+ swimmers who practice and compete at our aquatics facilities at Bridgewater YMCA, Hillsborough YMCA, Somerset Hills YMCA, and Somerville YMCA.

A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Competitive swimming at the Y helps kids develop their endurance, skill, physical ability and mental stamina through a supportive and wholesome social outlet that encourages excellence, teamwork, and camaraderie.



CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

To provide for the best possible individual, team and program which promotes the sport of swimming, helps to develop the athletic ability and character of the individual swimmers and helps maintain the Greater Somerset County YMCA Swim Team (herein referred to as "Swim Team") reputation and standing as a "world class" swim team.

OVERVIEW

All members and extensions of the team, including coaches, officials, volunteers, parents/guardians and athletes, are expected to protect and help improve the excellent reputation that the Swim Team has earned throughout the state and country. In addition to GSCY's general member Code of Conduct (see Appendix A), members of the Swim Team and their parents/guardians, or any other individuals representing the program must at all times follow appropriate Swim Team Code of Conduct policies during the effective dates noted above including the following:

1. I will behave in such a way that my actions reflect positively on myself and the Swim Team at all team practices, meets, team trips, team or individual group outings and any team function.
2. I will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, fellow competitors, parents/guardians and the general public in attendance at practices, meets or team functions.
3. I will, at all times, follow the directions of the coaching staff during practice, meets, and other team activities.
4. I will not steal or borrow without permission any article that does not belong to me, such as clothing, jewelry, electronics, money or any other items regardless of value.
5. I will respect the property of Greater Somerset County YMCA and any other facility the team may visit or use. I will not tamper with or cause damage to any such facility, including locker rooms.
6. I will promote positive team spirit and morale, which includes being humble in victory and courageous in defeat. I will deal justly, kindly and impartially with all fellow team members.
7. I will not interfere with the productivity of another swimmers practice, meet or preparation for a practice or meet at any time. I understand this includes teammates and/or opposing swimmers.

8. I will obey all applicable pool safety rules.
9. I will refrain from verbal or physical abuse/assault or inappropriate touching behavior towards other teammates, coaches, officials, or fellow competitors.
10. I will never endanger the safety of myself, another participant, coach or administrator.
11. I will never leave the supervision of the coaching staff without their direct approval.
12. I will make every effort to come to practice, meet, and/or team meetings/events on time or notify my practice group coach if I will be late.
13. I will make every effort to wear designated team suit, cap, and other clothing as prescribed by the coaches.
14. I will set a good example of behavior and work ethic for my younger teammates.
15. I will avoid use of any substances acknowledged on USA Swimming's banned substance list [usada.org/wp-content/uploads/wada-2016-prohibited-list-en.pdf](https://www.usada.org/wp-content/uploads/wada-2016-prohibited-list-en.pdf)
16. I will maintain compliance with Swim Team policies, including (see specifics included):
 - a) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy
 - b) Anti-Bullying Policy
 - c) Electronic Communication Policy
 - d) Social Media Policy

PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR AT TEAM EVENTS

1. Use of alcoholic beverages.
2. Use of illegal drugs or improper use of prescription medications.
3. Smoking or other use of nicotine/tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and other vaporizer products.
4. Destruction of property.
5. Inappropriate or unruly behavior, including failure to adhere to team standards and/or Code of Conduct.
6. Disrespect toward a teammates' feelings and personal space. Swimmers who exhibit sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise inappropriate behavior will be faced with consequences including possible probation, suspension, and/or expulsion from the team.

A "team event" is defined as any occasion where an athlete/non-athlete is representing the Greater Somerset County YMCA Swim Team in an official nature.

PROCEDURE FOR INFRACTION DISCIPLINE

When applicable, the athlete will be dismissed from the practice or event immediately and a note will be sent to the parent/guardian. A meeting with the parent/guardian(s), head coach and a member of the YMCA senior staff will be required before the athlete can return to the team. Depending on the severity of the infraction, YMCA senior management may be involved. During this meeting, the final disciplinary action will be determined, agreed to and documented.

If an infraction occurs, the following actions may be taken:

FIRST INFRACTION

- Probationary period of 1-2 months if non-compliant with a Code of Conduct General Policy
- Probationary period of 6-12 months if non-compliant with a Code of Conduct Prohibited Behavior
- Possible suspension of team activities for up to 2 months. Parents/guardians will still be responsible to fulfill their work commitment at the conclusion of the suspension period.

SECOND INFRACTION OF SAME NATURE

- Suspension from team activities for up to 3 months, if infraction occurs during probationary period
- Suspension from team activities for 1 month, if infraction occurs after probationary period

THIRD INFRACTION OF ANY TYPE

- Excused from Swim Team with no refund of team or meet fees

CELL PHONE USAGE POLICY

Swimmers are not allowed to be on their phones or any device at any time during practice without prior permission from a coach. Devices found to be in use during this time will be required to be placed by the swimmer in the team's designated "photel" for the remainder of practice and be returned at the end of it. See the Swim Team ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY for information on how to contact the coaches/team in an emergency situation.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION POLICY

Our Swim Team is committed to a culture of inclusion and opportunity. We strive to create equity by providing resources specific to the needs of our members.

This is consistent with USA Swimming's Code of Conduct Article 304.3.2 that states discrimination against any member or participant on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, genetics, mental or physical disability, or any status protected by federal, state, or local law, where applicable is prohibited.

As a team, we celebrate our diversity and we recognize that DEI initiatives should be interwoven throughout the fabric of our team identity. Athletes and coaches who participate in our program can expect to participate in annual DEI trainings, and have an opportunity to participate in our DEI Committee consisting of coaches, current athletes and alumni.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our Swim Team and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Swim Team is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members.

If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents/guardians 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 parent/guardian.

OBJECTIVES OF GSCY SWIM TEAM'S BULLYING POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

1. To make it clear that the Swim Team will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents/guardians and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make all parents/guardians, swimmers and coaching staff aware of the Swim Team's policy and protocols regarding incidents of bullying.
4. To explain how incidents of bullying should be reported to the Swim Team.
5. To spread the word that the Swim Team takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents/guardians can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Consistent with the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, our Swim Team 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:

1. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
2. Placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
3. Creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
4. Infringing on the rights of the other member at any Swim Team activity; or
5. Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any Swim Team activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member Club or Local Swimming Committee (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/guardians
- Talk to a swim team coach or parents/guardians volunteer
- Write a letter or email to a swim team coach or parents/guardian volunteer
- 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 Swim Team 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:

1. Intervene immediately. It is okay 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

If bullying is occurring on the Swim Team 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.
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

1. 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/guardians, 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 swim team and parents/guardians. 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.
2. 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 bullied. For example:
- Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone who 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.
- d) 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 Swim Team, or for others in your community.
 - Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- e) 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.
- f) 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.
3. 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 parents/guardians, coach, or a parents/guardian volunteer
- c) 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."
- d) Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e) 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.

*Source: USA Swimming

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Electronic communications include but are not limited to: email, SMS/text messaging, IM/instant messenger, social media, video chat/livestreaming, website/blog content and more. As a member of the Swim Team, we expect all who participate in electronic communications to understand and adhere to these guidelines, including but not limited to the following:

OVERVIEW

Any of the below electronic communication methods should be utilized in the below manner

between the hours of 8:00am–8:00pm, unless emergency circumstances exist or during travel/team competition.

- **Email:** The preferred form of electronic communication of the Swim Team. Minor athletes must CC their parent/guardian while emailing a coach, and all athletes/parents/guardians may only email the coach's Greater Somerset County YMCA email address. Parents/guardians and coaches may correspond via email outside of 8:00am–8:00pm hours if necessary.
- **SMS/Text Messaging:** Texting should only be used in emergency/time sensitive situations. Text correspondence (including parent/guardian-to coach) should occur only within the hours of 8:00am–8:00pm, unless emergency circumstances exist or during travel/team competition. Minor athletes may only text a coach in a group text that must include the athlete's parent/guardian.
- **Group Chats:** Practice groups and travel teams may establish a group chat that will include no fewer than TWO Swim Team coaches and will only be used to distribute relevant and pertinent information. Messages in group chats should only occur within the hours of 8:00am–8:00pm, unless emergency circumstances exist or during travel/team competition.

CONTENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

All communications between a coach or other adult and a minor athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Electronic communications 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; and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

PHOTOS & VIDEOS

No photos or videos may be taken during practices, meets, or any other team-related activity without coaches' approval.

T.A.P. REQUIREMENT

Whether one is an athlete, coach, or parent/guardian, all communications must meet the triple standard of being: Transparent, Accessible and Professional (T.A.P.):

- **Transparent:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be clear

and direct, and 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 Swim Team's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent/guardian 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 Swim Team. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

REQUESTS TO DISCONTINUE

Legal parents/guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by Greater Somerset County YMCA, swim team coaches/staff, or anyone else subject to this policy.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social media platforms include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, WhatsApp, and many more. As a member of the Swim Team, we expect all who participate in social media to understand and adhere to these guidelines, including but not limited to the following:

OVERVIEW

- Minor athletes may only like/follow official Greater Somerset County YMCA social media accounts and not a coach's or staff member's personal social media account 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.
- Coaches are not permitted to like/follow/friend unrelated minor athletes on any social media platform. A coach should not accept any "friend" request from an unrelated minor athlete.
- Coaches and unrelated minor athletes are not permitted to private, instant, or direct message each other through social media or messaging platforms.

CONTENT & SHARING

- No photos or videos may be taken during practices without coaches' approval.
- You are personally responsible for content (e.g., posts, pictures, videos, comments, shares, etc) published on blogs and other forms of user-

generated media (e.g. YouTube). Make sure this content reflects you and the Y in a positive light and upholds the core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

- Identify yourself when possible and, if relevant, your relationship to Greater Somerset County YMCA and/or the Swim Team if your content mentions the Y, its programs and services, or the Swim Team. Make it clear to the readers that the views expressed are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of Greater Somerset County YMCA.
- Respect content, fair use, and financial disclosure laws.
- Although some sites may offer privacy settings, please be aware that the internet is a public domain. Everything written or displayed on the Web can be traced back to its author. Be respectful of other's privacy.
- Do not disclose any confidential or private information about Greater Somerset County YMCA or its employees, members or guests.
- Do not use the YMCA logo, or Swim Team graphic, or any other images affiliated with Greater Somerset County YMCA or YMCA of the USA.
- Respect your audience. Do not use derogatory or obscene language, personal insults, or any language or behavior that would otherwise violate the Y's member Code of Conduct (Appendix A).
- Use good judgment. There are always consequences to the content you post. Proofread everything you post and if it seems questionable or makes you feel uncomfortable, reread this policy or discuss it with your coach.

ATHLETE PROTECTION TRAINING

Athlete Protection Training (APT) Requirement for Adult (18+) Athletes: all SWIM TEAM athletes who will be 18 or older by the conclusion of the LC season must complete USA Swimming's APT training. The APT can be accessed by following this link: www.usaswimming.org/apt

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY (MAAPP):

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

- All USA Swimming non-athlete members and adult athlete members;
- Participating non-members (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);
- LSC and GSCY Swim Team adult staff and board members; and
- Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes.

GENERAL REQUIREMENT

USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents/guardians, coaches and other nonathletic members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by GSCY Swim Team.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

Observable and Interruptible

One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see below) or under emergency circumstances.

Meetings

- Meetings between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances. In the event of an emergency, a parent/guardian/coach/staff leader can also be called on to stay on the line via speaker to eliminate a 1:1 interaction.
- If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
- Meetings must not be conducted in an Applicable Adult or athlete's hotel room or other overnight lodging location during team travel.

Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers

If a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider meets with a minor athlete in conjunction with participation, including at practice or competition sites, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:

- The door remains unlocked;
- Another adult is present at the facility;
- The other adult is advised that a closed door meeting is occurring; and
- Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider, with a copy provided to the Greater Somerset County YMCA

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Content

All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.

Open and Transparent

Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult must copy the minor athlete's legal guardian on any electronic communication response to the minor athlete. When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult must copy another adult.

Requests to Discontinue

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by Greater Somerset County YMCA, LSC or by an Applicable Adult subject to this Policy. The organization must abide by any such request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.

Hours

Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 8:00am-8:00pm, unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.

Prohibited Electronic Communication

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may "friend" Greater Somerset County YMCA and/or LSC's official page. Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

MASSAGES AND RUBDOWNS/ATHLETE TRAINING MODALITIES

Definition

In this section, the term "Massage" refers to any massage, rubdown, athletic training modality including physical modalities (e.g., stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g., stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.).

General Requirement

Any Massage performed on an athlete must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and must be performed by a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. However, even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach must not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.

Additional Minor Athlete Requirements

- Written consent by a legal guardian must be obtained in advance by the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to Greater Somerset County YMCA.
- Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the Massage.
- Any Massage of a minor athlete must be one with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and the person performing the Massage in the room.

*Source: USA Swimming 10

YOUTH SUPERVISION POLICY

Greater Somerset County YMCA places a high priority on the safety of members and program participants. For the purposes of this policy "YOUTH" is defined as children ages 10 and younger:

- While present in all Greater Somerset County YMCA facilities and program sites, all children ages 10 and younger must either be attending a YMCA program or accompanied by a parent/guardian at least 18 years of age.
- All children ages 17 and younger must have current emergency contact telephone number(s) and name(s) on file with the Welcome Center.
- Parents/guardians of children ages 10 and younger are responsible for delivery to the instructor (at the start) and pick up from the room (immediately at the end) of their child's class/program.

LOCKER ROOM POLICY

In an effort to ensure a comfortable and safe facility/locker room environment for the athletes, please remember the following:

- You are representing Greater Somerset County YMCA at all times while in practice or at a meet
- Greater Somerset County YMCA athletes share the facility/locker room with all members of the Y
- Facility/locker room rules and regulations are posted and are expected to be followed at all times
- Neither the YMCA nor the coaching staff is responsible for an athlete's personal belongings. All athletes are expected to secure their belongings in the lockers provided.

In the event that a Greater Somerset County YMCA Swim Team athlete has been identified as failing to obey facility/locker room rules and regulations and/or is behaving in a manner that does not reflect positively on the team, the following actions will be taken:

- The athlete and/or training group will be warned that their behavior is unacceptable
- Failure to correct the behavior will result in the suspension of facility/locker room use
- Length of suspension will be determined by Greater Somerset County YMCA staff
- Parent/guardian volunteers may be asked to monitor the facility/locker room to ensure that the issues have been resolved
- If the facility/locker room issues are unable to be resolved, permanent suspension may result

As a Greater Somerset County YMCA Swim Team athlete or parent/guardian, you are required to **immediately report** to the coaching staff any rule violations and/or inappropriate behavior by an athlete

or YMCA member. The coaching staff will then work with the parent/guardian, athlete and YMCA staff to resolve the problem.

REFUND POLICY

When you register for the Swim Team, this reserves a space for your child on the team and we staff according to the registrations. If you decide that you would like to leave the team before the season is over, we do require written notification. Future team fee drafts will be cancelled. No refunds or credits will be given following the final payment. Meet/Competition registration and similar fees incurred that are nonrefundable to the Swim Team will be forfeit.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Swim Team encourages well-rounded student athletes and as many multi-sport athletes as the athlete's schedule allows. We also encourage accountability within our program, through the use of the below minimum attendance requirements by the end of the season

- 85 % minimum attendance for National Team
- 80% minimum attendance requirement for Senior athletes
- 75% minimum attendance required for Junior athletes
- 70% minimum attendance requirement for Lightning athletes
- No minimum attendance requirement for Thunder and Wave athletes
- Athletes who fall below 60% will be required to tryout if they are interested in participating in the next season
- Athletes at practice who enter the water after the group has completed warm-up will receive 1/2 credit for attendance that day
- Athletes at practice who exit the pool early before the group has completed the main set will receive 1/2 credit for attendance that day
- Athletes may attend another group's practice with prior approval from both lead coaches. Make-up practices will be given full credit for attendance
- In the event a coach misses taking attendance on a particular day, all athletes in that group will be marked present in the database
- Attendance percentages are a baseline MINIMUM which take into account our

multisport athletes, sickness/injury, as well as school/family/social/other conflicts

- Taking into account these are minimum percentages, Junior/Senior athletes 95% or higher to maximize their ability to achieve their individual end of season goals

*Excused absences granted for: practice time that conflicts with end-of-school schedule (must provide official school district schedule to lead coach), quarantine for COVID-19 precautions (must provide doctor's note to lead coach), death in family, or coach-mandated days off

ROSTER POLICY

Competitive Swim Team members in all Junior and Senior practice groups who do not reach BOTH of the following benchmarks must attend the following season's tryouts.

Attendance and performance benchmarks will be used for participation and placement for the following season.

POLICY 1 – ATTENDANCE BASED

- National Team- minimum of 85% attendance
- Senior Groups- minimum of 80% attendance
- Junior Groups- minimum of 75% attendance
- Lightning Groups- minimum of 70% attendance
- Athlete's who fall below 60% attendance will be required to tryout if they are interested in participating in the next short course season

Conditions

- Excused absences will be granted due to a death in the family or coach-mandated days off
- Athletes at practice who enter the water after the group has completed warm-up will receive 1/2 credit for attendance that day
- Athletes at practice who exit the pool early before the group has completed the main set will receive 1/2 credit for attendance that day
- Athletes may attend another group's practice with prior approval from both lead coaches. Make-up practices will be given full credit for attendance
- In the event a coach misses taking attendance on a particular day, all athletes in that group will be marked present in the database
- Attendance percentages are a baseline MINIMUM which take into account our multi-

sport athletes, sickness/injury, as well as school/family/social/other conflicts

- Taking into account these are minimum percentages, Junior/Senior athletes 95% or higher to maximize their ability to achieve their individual end of season goals

POLICY 2 – PERFORMANCE BASED

- Senior Group – End each season with minimum of three NJYMCA Silver qualifying times
- Junior Group – End each season with minimum of two NJYMCA Silver qualifying times
- Lightning Group – End each season with a minimum of one NJYMCA qualifying time.

Conditions

- Athletes who age up will be evaluated based on the YMCA age group they competed in Example- a Junior group 14-year old who turns 15 for the following Short Course season will adhere to the Junior group policy, requiring 2 NJYMCA Silver qualifying time to maintain roster spot
- Silver qualifying times may be achieved at any point in the competitive season, including at Championships

LONG COURSE PARTICIPATION

Conditions

- Athletes who do not wish to participate in the Long Course season must attend the subsequent Short Course season's tryouts if they are interested in participating in the next Short Course Season.

Missed Benchmark

Please note that swimmers who do not meet these benchmarks are not necessarily excused from the competitive Swim Team. The coaching staff will re-evaluate the athletes who do not meet these minimum benchmarks at Short Course tryouts on a case-by-case basis. The evaluation of each of these athletes will include his/her work-ethic, dedication level, and overall commitment to the team. Multiple violations of the attendance portion of the roster policy will lead to a significantly higher likelihood of removal from the competitive Swim Team.

Waves swimmers who participate in the Spring portion of Long Course are not required to try out for the following Short Course season. All pre-team participants are required to try out for the following season.

PHOTOGRAPHIC AND AUDIO/ VISUAL RELEASE

I, being 18 years of age or older and if not my parent/guardian has also signed below, hereby give permission and consent to YMCA & Affiliates to make incidental and occasional photographic, audio and video recordings in connection with participation in YMCA activities or programs and to utilize the same in any manner, and without any compensation to, and/or claim by me, my family or guests.

GSCY VOLUNTEER POINTS SYSTEM

The GSCY swim team will host invitational meets. Parent/guardian volunteers are needed to effectively staff GSCY hosted invitational meets. Our hosted meets require over 100 volunteers per meet (not including officials).

At the beginning of each season (SC and LC), the GSCY leadership team will set a minimum number of points to be earned by each family. The number of points earned by each family will be tracked and credited appropriately by leveraging a volunteer point tracking system.

Once a family earns their minimum amount of points, it should not be viewed as a reason to no longer volunteer for GSCY hosted meets. Meeting the minimum point requirement does not exempt a family from having to volunteer at swim meets or swim team functions in which their child/children is/are participating. All families whose children are swimming during GSCY hosted meets are expected to work upon request, regardless of point status.

Failure to earn your required points and/or satisfy any fines will result in your swimmer(s) not being able to participate in their championship meet (Silvers, States, JOs, Nationals, etc.). Any outstanding fines will also preclude registration in the upcoming swim season.

HOW THE POINTS WORK

- Each family is required to earn a minimum number of volunteer points. The required number of volunteer points will be emailed to the team after registration.
- Each volunteer job will have a point value. Point values may vary depending on the type of job. Job descriptions and point values of each are posted on the website.
- Volunteer points can ONLY be earned at GSCY hosted invitational meets.
- If we do not have enough volunteers to run the meet and your child/children is swimming, GSCY

volunteer coordinator will assign open jobs to those families that did not sign up when the volunteer portal opened.

PENALTIES

- If a volunteer signs up (or is assigned) and is a NO SHOW, the penalty will be a fine of \$100 for the first offense, \$150 for the second and \$200 for the third. The fine will be charged to the credit card on file after notification. If you can't fulfill your commitment, you will need to find a replacement.
- If families do not satisfy their volunteer point requirement by the end of the season, there will be a \$75 penalty per unworked volunteer point.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. Once volunteer assignments have been finalized and you are unable to volunteer your time, you must find your own replacement and inform the volunteer coordinator via email
2. There may not be volunteer positions available in the sessions your child is swimming. You may have to work a session that your child (children) is (are) not swimming. You are encourage to sign up as soon as the volunteer portal opens.

GSCY TIMING ASSIGNMENTS AT INVITATIONAL MEETS

GSCY is required to fulfill timing assignments at Invitational (non-GSCY hosted) meets. Timing is assigned equitably across the team by the GSCY staff Timing Assignment Coordinator. Timing assignments are sent 72-24 hours prior to the start of the meet. Finals timing assignments may be given the day of the meet. Once a family is assigned to time, they are responsible for fulfilling the role, finding a replacement, or being charged a no-show fine. **Volunteer points are not earned for timing or other volunteering roles at invitational meets.**

HOW TIMING ASSIGNMENTS WORK:

- If your child is attending an invitational meet, you could be assigned to time.
- If you know your child is attending an invitational meet and you will not be available to time, you may email gscytiming@gmail.com PRIOR to assignments being emailed. You will then be assigned to time later in the season.
- Unfulfilled timing assignments are fined \$100 for the first offense, \$150 for the second, and \$200 for the third. The fine will be charged to the credit card on file after notification.
- Anyone with a child in finals is expected to time upon request.

GSCY SWIM TEAM 2023–2024 HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We are pleased you've decided to join the Greater Somerset County YMCA Swim Team. This handbook outlines important information for swimmers and parents/guardians effective September 2023. To complete the registration process, please acknowledge and sign below:

- I acknowledge that the Swim Team coaching staff strongly recommends each athlete has an annual physical and to communicate any and all medical and behavioral conditions/issues (including pre-existing) in their health records immediately to the lead coach and head coach in written format, including email. An annual physical is required for all National Level swimmers as per YMCA Nationals Policy.
- I acknowledge that in the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached in an emergency, permission is granted to the Swim Team Coach and the physician selected to take whatever action is deemed medically necessary in the child's best interest.
- I acknowledge that the swimmer is not currently be representing any other YMCA or USA swimming team.
- I acknowledge and will adhere to USA Swimming's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy as outlined in this handbook
- I understand that changes or updates to the GSCY Swim Team Handbook will be distributed via email and/or posted on the Swim Team website at teamunify.com/njgscy

Initial as required for each item:

I acknowledge that the primary email address in the Team Unify system (teamunify.com/njgscy) will be used for communications. It is parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that contact information is correct and up to date at all times.

Parent/guardian initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Attendance Policy

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Cell Phone Usage Policy

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Anti-Bullying Policy

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Electronic Communications Policy

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Social Media policy

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Youth Supervision Policy

Parent/guardian initials

I acknowledge and agree to participate in trainings and initiatives launched as part of the team's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

Athlete initials

I, being an athlete 18 years of age or older and if not my Parent/Guardian has also initialed below, hereby give permission and consent to YMCA & Affiliates to make incidental and occasional photographic, audio and video recordings in connection with participation in YMCA activities or programs and to utilize the same in any manner, and without any compensation to, and/or claim by me, my family or guests.

Parent/guardian initial, athlete only if 18+

I acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Swim Team Code of Conduct in its entirety

Parent/guardian and athlete initials

I acknowledge the Volunteer Points requirement and associated penalties

Parent/guardian initials

I acknowledge the Timing Assignment policy and associated penalties

Parent/guardian initials

By signing this document, I acknowledge receipt and understanding of this document in its entirety. I acknowledge that I have read or will read this handbook, and I accept full responsibility for familiarizing myself with the entire contents of this handbook. If the participant is under 18 years old, I acknowledge that I have familiarized the participant with the contents of this handbook and take full responsibility for their understanding of the contents.

Season: Short Course Long Course

Athlete Name (Print)

Athlete Signature (REQUIRED regardless of age)

Date

Practice Group

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA

Association Office, 140 Mount Airy Road, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 | 908 630 3535

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Greater Somerset County YMCA is a leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community by connecting all people to their potential, purpose and each other. The Y empowers everyone – no matter who they are or where they're from – by ensuring access to resources, relationships and opportunities for all to learn, grow and thrive. For information about Greater Somerset County YMCA and financial assistance, visit us at [www.gscymca.org](#).

APPENDIX A: GREATER SOMERSET COUNTY YMCA MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

Member Code of Conduct and other applicable GSCY member policies and procedures available at: gscymca.org/membership/policies-procedures/

CODE OF CONDUCT

Somerset County YMCA, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that embraces the core values of caring, honest, respect and responsibility. By joining the YMCA, you as a member are agreeing to subscribe to these operating values. If at any time your behavior does not support these values, the YMCA has the right to revoke your membership status.

Members are expected to comply with all YMCA policies as stated on our website.

Membership card/fob must be presented for admission – no privileges can be obtained without it.

The YMCA promotes a safe, welcoming environment for all members and guests, therefore you shall:

- Act appropriately at all times in a mature and responsible manner
- Respect the rights and dignity of others
- Refrain from language or any action that can hurt or frighten another person or that falls below a generally accepted standard of conduct
- Be responsible for your personal comfort and safety and ask any person whose behavior threatens your comfort to refrain. If you feel uncomfortable in confronting the person directly, report the behavior to a staff person – director or manager on duty

Prohibited actions specifically include:

- Indecent attire
- Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes, the YMCA is a smoke-free environment
- Verbally abusive behavior, including profanity, angry language, name-calling or shouting
- Physical contact with another person – including pushing, shoving or roughhousing of any kind – that may pose a danger or threat of harm
- Any demonstration of sexual activity or sexual contact with another person
- Harassment or intimidation by words, gestures, body language or any menacing behavior
- Theft or behavior that results in destruction of property
- Carrying or concealing any weapons or devices or objects that can be used as weapons
- Using or possessing illegal chemicals or alcohol on YMCA property, in YMCA vehicles or YMCA-sponsored programs
- Using video/photography devices throughout the facility except on Parent/Guardian Observation days and at special events

Be mindful of personal hygiene – we reserve the right to ask a member to leave the facility if they exhibit an offensive odor.

Use of mobile devices in the Wellness Center shall be limited to audio or video playback or reading applications.

Members and guests shall identify themselves when asked.