



# Firestone Akron Swim Team Policy & Procedures

**2025 - 2026**

[Section 1](#)

[Board of Directors](#)

[Officers](#)

[Coaching Staff](#)

[Section 2](#)

[Mission Statement](#)

[Section 3](#)

[Organization Status](#)

[Mailing Address](#)

[Affiliation](#)

[Section 4](#)

[Registration](#)

[Summer Registration](#)

[Registration Windows](#)

[Section 5](#)

[Payment and Discount Policies](#)

[Section 6](#)

[Dues](#)

[Section 7](#)

[Practice Groups](#)

[Section 8](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Section 9](#)

[Locations and Residency Requirements](#)

[Section 10](#)

[Swim Meets](#)

[Section 11](#)

[Volunteer Policy](#)

[Honor Code](#)

## Section 1

### Board of Directors, Officers, and Coaching Staff

<https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/ohfa/page/team-information/about-us>

## Section 2

### Mission Statement

Firestone Akron Swim Team (FAST) engages in a multi-level competition program with United States Swimming that, like our training program, attempts to provide challenging, yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities.

The following policies outline our philosophy:

*Emphasis on competition with oneself.* Winning ribbons, medals or trophies is not our main goal. The swimmer's improvement is our primary objective. If the swimmer has swum poorly in comparison to his/her own past performances, he/she is encouraged to do better, even if he/she finished first.

*Emphasis on sportsmanship.* Sportsmanlike behavior is of equal importance to improved performance. The FAST coaches teach swimmers how to behave like a champion when the swimmers have both "good" and "bad" swims. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors praised and rewarded by the FAST coaches.

*Emphasis on constructive criticism.* A swimmer is praised for improving his/her stroke or time. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's responsibility to provide love and encouragement that bolster the swimmer's confidence along the way.

*Emphasis on goals.* Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging goals for meets and to relate those goals to practice and training efforts.

*Emphasis on varied competition.* Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances and strokes. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his/her potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Oftentimes, a swimmer's "best stroke" changes as he/she matures.

## Section 3

### Organization Status

Firestone Akron Swim Team (FAST) is a non-profit athletic club.

### Mailing Address

Firestone Akron Swim Team  
470 Castle Blvd.  
Akron, OH 44313

### Affiliation

- FAST is currently recognized as a Level 3 club in the USA Swimming club recognition program. FAST is acknowledged as a Silver Club of Excellence -- this prestigious distinction as a top 100 program in the country recognizes our children's achievements in the pool and illustrates the strength of our coaching staff.
- FAST is a member of Ohio Swimming (OSI)
- We have been awarded the Club Community Service Award for our efforts to give back to our community multiple years in a row.
- FAST Volunteers, Coaches and Athletes hold key positions on multiple committees.

## Section 4

### Registration

Our Registration Process is handled entirely online. This process must be performed by a Parent or Guardian. Please follow all instructions during the registration process, and answer questions and update swimmer information accurately. You will find the current registration on the right button in the middle of our home page. If a swimmer withdraws from FAST, future FAST registrations within 6 months of the withdrawal date will be subject to board approval.

### Registration Windows

#### **Fall/Winter (Short Course)**

Registration: Opens August

Duration: The Fall/Winter Season (SC) starts practicing in September and lasts until mid-April. The Championship season begins in the middle of February.

#### **Spring/Summer Season (Long Course)**

Registration Period: Opens April

Duration: The Spring/Summer Season (LC) is from April until July (Zone Qualifiers in August). Some swimmers may train long course.

## Section 5

### Payment and Discount Policies

Our web-based software offers us streamlined billing and payments.

#### For Fall/Winter (SC) and Spring/Summer (LC) registration.

1. All account and registration information can be found at [www.FirestoneAkronSwimTeam.org](http://www.FirestoneAkronSwimTeam.org). Once registered, log into your account to find all family account and payment information.
2. Team Dues and USA Swimming Registration
  - a. When you register your child (or children) for the team you will be required to pay all registration fees for each child, by credit card.
  - b. The USA Swimming registration link will be sent to all families when available. All swimmers must register with USA Swimming.
  - c. Each swimmer will pay a one-time \$20 FAST Team Fee for a team shirt, latex team caps, and any miscellaneous items provided to the whole team
  - d. Each swimmer will be charged \$5 with their championship meet entry for their championship meet team t-shirt
  - e. A \$2.00 FAST Team fee will be applied to each meet entry per swimmer
3. Everyone will be set up on the Dues payment plan.
  - a. Monthly Dues will be billed the first of each month of the season.
4. Credit card charges
  - a. The software system automatically charges your credit card the 1st of every month throughout the year.
  - b. Dues are charged per #3 above. Your account may have additional charges applied, such as meet fees, apparel, etc.
  - c. If you are delinquent at the end of the season, your child will not be able to enter any Championship meets or register for subsequent sessions until your account is brought current.
5. Discounts
  - a. Discounts are only eligible during the first month of Fall Registration (SC) and Spring/Summer (LC) registration. There are no discounts for USA Swimming Fees.
  - b. A **Multi-Children Discount** of \$25 off the first month of each season in which the swimmers are registered will be applied once per season (in September and in April) within TeamUnify.
6. Suspending/Canceling Accounts
  - a. All notification on billing changes for the upcoming month must be submitted to Coach Erin by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month. Otherwise, you will be charged in full for the next month.

- b. If your swimmer is involved in another activity, but you wish to hold their spot, we do require 50% of their group fee each month, up to 2 months to hold their spot. After 2 months, should someone be on the waitlist, we will look at allowing them to fill that group spot.

## Section 6

### Team Dues

**USA Swimming** registration is required and is to be completed separately by the parent or guardian- currently \$82 for the Premium Membership

## Section 7

### Practice Groups

*This policy was developed with the thought of balancing our team with age and ability taken into consideration. These are guidelines. The HEAD COACH has final decision in determining the placement of your child. If there are any related questions, please contact your coach.*

**Groups are structured in the following way:**

- Times considered are official USA swimming times (*recreational meets times are not official times*)
- Swimmers will only be moved up to the next group at the beginning of a session or when space is available and time is appropriate.

**Senior:** This group consists of high school or college swimmers and 8th graders by coach invitation only. This group practices approximately 18 hours each week during the indoor season depending on the registration group. To be in this group a swimmer must:

- Be in high school or beginning high school in the fall
- Commit to participate in team hosted swim meet in November

**Gold:** This group consists mostly of swimmers between the age of 11 and 14. Swimmers in this group must be in eighth grade or younger. This group practices approximately 10-12 hours per week during the indoor season. Gold swimmers focus on building endurance and speed while maintaining a focus on stroke technique. Swimmers in the Gold group are focusing on achieving Age Group Champs cut times. Racing and dryland training will also be developed. Swimmers are expected to know how to read the pace clock and calculate practice sendoffs. Gold group swimmers have made a commitment to swimming, and FAST, and have clearly established goals. Swimmers are expected to help those younger or less experienced understand the FAST team culture. Swimmers are expected to compete in all 4 strokes and IM in all distances on a regular basis

- Be age 13 or 14 and in middle school
- AND by the judgment of the head age group coach, and be ready to move up based on practices/training experience

**Green:** This group consists mostly of swimmers between the ages of 9 and 14. This group practices approximately 6-8 hours per week during the indoor season. Green swimmers continue to focus on stroke technique while working to build endurance. Swimmers in the Green Group are transitioning into more advanced learning while focusing on achieving Age group Champs times. Racing and dryland training will also be developed as well. Understanding how to read the pace clock and calculate practice sendoffs is a must for swimmers in this group. Swimmers are expected to be competing in all 4 strokes, IM, and longer distance freestyle. To be in this group a swimmer must:

- Be age 11 to 14 and in middle school
- AND by the judgment of the head age group coach, and be ready to move up based on practices/training experience

**Learner 2:** Learner group athletes are focused on learning the aspects of training for competitive development. Practices are geared towards increasing skill, endurance, and learning practice skills such as reading a pace clock. Swimmers in this group are expected to be competing in all 4 strokes. This group practices approximately 4-5 hours per week. To be in this group a swimmer must:

- Proficiently swim all four strokes
- Be able to complete basic send off's without help
- Have a legal time in both butterfly and breaststroke
- AND by the judgment of the head age group coach, and be ready to move up based on practices/training experience

**Learner 1:** Learner group athletes are focused on learning the aspects of training for competitive development. Practices are geared towards increasing skill, endurance, and learning practice skills such as reading a pace clock. Swimmers in this group are expected to be competing in all 4 strokes. This group practices approximately 4-5 hours per week. To be in this group a swimmer must:

- Proficiently swim all four strokes
- Be able to dive off the blocks
- Have a legal time in either butterfly or breaststroke
- AND by the judgment of the head age group coach, and be ready to move up based on practices/training experience

**Explorer:** This group is an introductory competitive program for novice swimmers interested in swimming year round. Emphasis is placed on teaching the fundamentals of competitive swimming. Explorers are encouraged to explore the competitive strokes while building endurance and learning new skills. Swimmers must be able to complete both a 25 freestyle and backstroke. Practices will be geared towards skills development while exploring what it means to be competitive. They explore the competitive strokes while building endurance and learning new skills. Practices will be geared towards skill development while exploring what it means to be competitive. Swimmers in this group should be swimming all 4 competitive strokes at various distances. This group practices approximately 3-4 hours per week. To be in this group a swimmer must:

- Be able to swim freestyle while breathing to the side
- Be able to swim backstroke

## Section 8

### Calendar

- The Meets Tab on the team site will show key events such as Meets/Registration deadlines. Email announcements are also distributed for each event.
- Practice schedules are listed as a drop-down menu option under Practices .
  - During the High School season, **home meets for the High School team** take precedence at all pools. It is important that all parents make note of all the High School home meets and the adjusted practice schedules for those days.
  - Schedule changes for **snow days and no-school days** will be emailed



## Section 9

### Locations and Residency Requirements

#### **Firestone High School**

470 Castle Blvd., Akron OH, 44313

#### **The University of Akron - Ocasek Natatorium (long course)**

382 Carroll St., Akron OH, 44325

Swimmers from any city are welcome to swim with FAST.

## Section 10

### Swim Meets

- Meet Schedule
  - Our Head Coaches select the meet schedule
  - Selected meets allow a balanced schedule & a balance of events for all age groups.
  - Schedules are posted at the start of the Short Course season and at the start of the Long Course season. The team commits to have coaches present at all team scheduled meets.
  - Swimmers are encouraged to participate in as many meets as they feel comfortable.
- FAST hosts various meets throughout the season
- Types of Meets
  - Breakout (Development) meets are for swimmers looking for an entry level of competition. Breakout meets have a Slower than cut time. If your swimmer has posted a time faster than the cut then they are not permitted to enter that event.
  - Open meets are those that do not have a NAG cut time.
  - Invite meets are for swimmers with a Faster than cut time. The meet information will specify the cut time for each event.
  - Block Party meets are smaller meets held between two or three teams.
- Meet Announcements
  - As a meet approaches our meet entry coordinator will send out a notification to all. Our meet coordinator must set a team deadline that is earlier than the meet registration deadline. This is necessary to produce a completed and verified team entry in a timely fashion. Many meets will close out very quickly. We must be ready to submit our entry at the specified time.
  - All of our Meet Entries are processed through the team site. Specific registration

instructions and deadlines will be included in the meet announcement. You must follow them to properly register in a timely fashion.

- Meet dues will be applied towards your account when signing up for each meet and will be drafted the 1st day of the following month.
- Prelims/Finals
  - Meets that host a Prelims and separate Finals are considered an important meet. We pride ourselves in our dedication to compete and represent our club and communities.
  - If you attend a meet, expect to make Finals and to show up for Finals.
  - **FAST's Policy on Scratching for Finals is that if you will be unable to swim at Finals you MUST explain this to your coach PRIOR to the meet.**
  - It is the swimmer's responsibility (not the coach's responsibility) to scratch within 30 minutes after the finals lineup is announced at the meet, even if the coaches know in advance that the swimmer cannot make finals. If the swimmer fails to scratch and does not show up for finals then the swimmer will be withdrawn from the rest of the meet and the team could be fined for each occurrence. The team will pass this fine onto you.
  - An exception to our scratch policy would be if there is a family or medical emergency. If this is the case, it must be reported to the coach immediately since it has to be coordinated with the meet officials.

## Section 11

### Volunteer Policy

We (the FAST Board) are all volunteers. The officers of this team put in hundreds of hours each year to run this team. We feel passionate about this team and the young swimmers on the team. We volunteer to help make this all happen and we hope that you look for opportunities to volunteer as well. These opportunities will connect you with other fellow swimming families. You will gain a better understanding of the sport, and your efforts will play a huge part in our ability to foster the growth of our sport.

Job sign-ups for FAST hosted meets will be communicated to parents via email link to SignUp Genius.

#### **Minimum Volunteer Expectations**

Each family is asked to volunteer 3 to 4 shifts per fall/winter season (Short Course season) and 3 to 4 shifts per spring/summer (Long Course season) at FAST hosted meets

- This requirement is the same regardless of the number of family members on the team.
- Most volunteer positions may be filled by any family member. The Meet Director or coach will sign volunteer sheets for older swimmers needing volunteer hours for community service.
- Dates for the larger FAST hosted meets are communicated at the beginning of the season and often include multiple days. If you know that you are unable to make any of the dates,

please contact the volunteer coordinator ASAP so that other arrangements for volunteer shifts can be made.

#### Opt-Out / Penalty

- At the time of team registration, you may opt out of volunteering by paying \$400
- If you do not opt out of volunteering at the time of registration, and have not volunteered at least 4 times during the season, your account will be charged \$500 on March 1. Once the \$500 charge is assessed, it will not be refunded.

#### Hosted Meets

- FAST must provide volunteers to some of the larger hosted meets. If your swimmer is participating in such a meet, please consider volunteering. This volunteering is in addition to the FAST-hosted meets.

## Honor Code

#### Behavior at practice and at meets:

1. FAST team members should be respectful of their peers, coaches, the team and their parents. Failure to act in a respectful manner will result in any or all of these disciplinary actions:
  - verbal warning
  - sitting out the remainder of practice
  - meeting with coach, swimmer, parent and board member
  - suspension from practice and meets for up to 2 weeks
  - expulsion from the team
2. FAST athletes will compete in many swim meets. Parents and swimmers are expected to behave in an exemplary manner. The reputation of FAST, as well as the other athletes with you, is dependent on your behavior. When we compete, we are ambassadors for our team and our sport.

#### FAST Parental Expectations

##### Practice Etiquette:

1. Observers should sit in the bleachers and should not disrupt swimmers or coaches.
  - Please stay away from the pool.
  - No miming or signaling to your child during practice.
  - If parents become a distraction they will be removed from the practice.
  - The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. This will just confuse your child. Your job is to provide love, support and positive encouragement.
2. Coaches are available to discuss your concerns but not DURING practice.
  - Please contact your child's coach via email to set up a one on one meeting to discuss your concerns.

- If, after discussion with your child's coach, you feel the problem has not been resolved, please contact the head coach via email to set up a one on one meeting to discuss your concerns.
- If the problem still persists, the head coach will set up a meeting with you, the head coach, and a board member.

### 3. Arriving Late/Leaving Early:

- If a swimmer arrives more than 10 minutes late, the coach needs a note with the reason they are late to let them swim. No notification, no practice.
  - Frequent tardiness disrupts practice.
  - The warm-up which begins practice is an especially important part of practice.
  - If you know in advance that your child will be late, let the coach know via email.
- If a swimmer needs to leave early, the coach needs a note with the reason they are leaving early.
  - For your child's safety, the coach needs to know that your swimmer has your permission to leave early.
  - If you know in advance that your child will be leaving early, let the coach know via email.
  - Except for an emergency, coaches and swimmers should not be interrupted during practice.

### 4. Missing Practice:

If a swimmer must miss practice, please email your child's coach with the date they will be missing and the reason they were absent.

### Positive Example:

- 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 understand that criticizing, name-calling, degrading personal comments, negative idle gossip, and use of abusive language directed at coaches, officials, swimmers, and families is not permitted.

By acknowledging this agreement my child/children and I understand our responsibility to follow the rules and requirements of FAST. I acknowledge that not all of the policies and procedures may be outlined in this document and all final decisions are made at the discretion of the coaches/board. I acknowledge that I have read the honor code and discussed it with my child/children and that we agree to follow it to the best of our ability.