

North Lexington YMCA Tigershark Swim Team



Parent, Athlete, and Coaches Handbook

Revised 6/2025

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1. Overview

1.1. Organization

The North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team is a year-round competitive age group program registered through the Central Kentucky YMCA and USA Swimming. The Tigersharks offer competitive swimming year-round from novice to elite levels.

1.2. Coaching Philosophy

Our coaching staff does our very best to work with every swimmer to meet their individual needs and help them succeed in this sport. We welcome all types - from those just learning that want something fun to do to those that are looking to be hyper competitive.

1.3. Mission Statement

The North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks works to put Christian principles into practice and builds healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. Our trained coaches work to improve swimmers' skill level, endurance and to promote a healthy lifestyle. Our program embraces the YMCA core values of Respect, Responsibility, Caring and Honesty and promotes progression at an individual level.

2. Commitment and Code of Conduct

2.1. Commitment

The success of the swim team is dependent on a team effort from the coaching staff, parents, and swimmers. All swim team parents and swimmers must satisfy the specific requirements monetarily, volunteer assignments, and proper training when necessary.

2.2. Codes of Conduct

- a) Parent Code of Conduct – Appendix A
- b) Athlete Code of Conduct – Appendix B
- c) Coaches Code of Conduct – Appendix C

3. Swim Team Structure

3.1. Age Groups

Swimmers compete against other swimmers in their same age group. Typical age groups at competitions will include 6 and under (typically freestyle and backstroke only), 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15 and above. Swimmer age for a swim

meet is determined by your swimmers age on the day of the meet, or first day of the meet for multi-day events.

3.2. Practice Groups (winter, short course season)

- Practice Group 1
 - This is our entry level group. The sole purpose of this group is to teach the four competitive strokes and introduce swimmers to competitive swimming. Practices primarily consist of 25's and 50's to build their endurance in all 4 competitive strokes. Swimmers must turn 5 before 12/1 to be eligible to compete.
- Practice Group 2
 - From Group 1, athletes move into this group. Athletes in this group should already have a basic concept of all 4 competitive strokes. Practices will focus on developing technique and increasing endurance to sets consisting of 75's and 100's. This group meets 3 hours per week
- Practice Group 3
 - From Group 2, athletes move into this group. Athletes in this group are usually at 8-10 years old and have a good technical foundation in all 4 competitive strokes, legal in their strokes at meets with few dq's. This group is exposed to training for the first time while trying to prepare for the 200 Freestyle and 200 Individual Medley races. This group meets 3 hours per week
- Practice Group 4
 - Minimum age for entry into this group is typically 9-12 years old. This group meets 3 hours per week and will be introduced to the multi-phase training cycle that encompasses the entire short course season. This group is still developing their strong technical base but they are ready to start focusing more on training and less on correcting technique. Sets get longer and more difficult.
- Practice Group 5
 - Minimum age for entry into this group is 11 years old. This group meets 4 hours per week and will be introduced to more difficult multi-phase training cycle. Christmas Training, Test Sets, Dryland and Taper are all introduced. This group is preparing to move up to the top group and have their goals set toward attaining Zones and USA State cuts.
- Practice Group 6
 - Minimum age for entry into this group is preferably 13 or older. Athletes entering this group must display a strong desire to perform at the highest level they are capable of (already have Zones and State A's for their most recent age group with goals for Nationals). This group is not solely age based and takes into account the willingness to show up to practice and put in the work to achieve goals. Training is geared towards individual talents, although a strong aerobic

endurance factor is present. This group meets 7 hours per week. Morning practices are optional (not coach led) and can be setup with groups of swimmers, dryland is highly recommended.

3.3. USA Swimming

USA Swimming comes with additional financial commitments and travel. Therefore, participation in USA Swimming is optional and not required. However, if your swimmer is looking to make swimming their sport and be extra competitive, then USA Swimming may be something you want to consider. This is an optional team for your swimmer to participate in. It requires paying an additional fee to the YMCA to cover additional coaches' salaries at longer meets and the travel expenses for the coaches as well as a fee paid to USA Swimming for annual membership. Meet fees for USA events are paid for by the family and charged to the account on file with the YMCA. There are additional, full weekend meets on the schedule that are only available for USA swimmers. Of the additional meets offered, you choose which to attend and what your swimmer swims unless otherwise directed by the coaching staff. USA Swimming may extend the season by 2-3 weeks depending on time standards achieved by your swimmer.

4. Practice

4.1. Schedule

Practice schedules are available on the tem website (<https://www.teamunify.com/nlytigersharks>) and distributed to all team members during registration. Some updates and revisions may be necessary and will be communicated via SportsEngine, especially during holidays. Every effort will be made to notify families of changes in the practice schedule. Please be attentive to all notices and announcements through TeamUnify/Sports Engine.

4.2. Needed Equipment

It is recommended that swimmers come to practice with their suit, towels, water bottle, and practice equipment. Practice equipment varies by group, some communal equipment is available poolside or families can choose to purchase their own.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
Goggles	x	x	x	x	x	x
Swim Cap	x	x	x	x	x	x
Kick Board	x	x	x	x	x	x
Fins		x	x	x	x	x
Pull Buoy			x	x	x	x
Paddles					x	x

Equipment Bag					X	X
Resistance Band					X	X
Snorkel						X

4.3. Punctuality

It is very important for all swimmers to be on time for practice. It is recommended that swimmers in groups 4 and above arrive to practice 15-30 minutes early to stretch prior to the start of practice. Swimmers should be picked up promptly after practice (no later than 5 minutes after the conclusion of the practice). Coaches are responsible for swimmers during specified practice times only.

4.4. Practice Attendance

Swimmers should attend practice in their assigned groups **only**. Swimmers should attend practice on a regular basis, practice attendance is directly related to performance at swim meets. Daily attendance records will be taken during the season, this is simply a way to monitor group attendance and capacity. If a swimmer encounters an issue where they will not be able to attend their scheduled practice for a prolonged time, the swimmer should contact the head coach.

4.5. Make Up Practices

We understand that life happens and there are other activities that swimmers are also involved in, however, our current swim groups are filled to capacity and we cannot allow swimmers to make up practices by joining other groups. There will be practice sets posted online that can be used by swimmers to go on their own time and complete the set if they want to make up for a missed practice.

4.6. Parents at Practice

Practice is time for swimmers and coaches to concentrate on improving the swimmer's technique, increasing speed and endurance, developing a strong coach-swimmer relationship, and fostering cooperation and unity within the group. It is important that parents allow this development to occur without interruption. Therefore, we ask that parents not be present on deck or talk to their children during practice. It is distracting for swimmers and coaches alike. We respect parent's interest in their children's activities and invite them to observe practice from outside the pool area in the lobby. Parents are always welcome to ask questions of coaches BEFORE or AFTER practice.

4.7. End of Practices for Season

Practices end for the season on the first day of the highest-level championship for which your swimmer qualifies.

4.8 Dryland

Dryland is additional practice and training time for swimmers in groups 5 and 6 that takes place out of the pool in order to increase strength and flexibility. Dryland practices are optional but highly recommended for swimmers who want to push themselves and perform to their highest level. Dryland is ran by parent volunteers, if you would like to help coordinate dryland activities please reach out to any member of the board.

5. Apparel

5.1. Team Suits

Swimmers must purchase a team suit or solid black suit to wear for competitions. Team suits can be purchased through the Tigersharks team store at www.swimville.com. Tech suits may be worn at some meets, please check with the coaches if there are any questions about wearing tech suits at an event.

5.2. Swim Caps

All NLY Tigershark swimmers will be provided a latex swim cap, silicone caps will be provided to swimmers with a documented latex allergy. Silicone caps will be available for sale during the season. Team caps should be worn at swim meets when participating in events. No swim caps representing other teams may be worn during a meet that your swimmer is participating in for the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team.

5.3. Team Shirts

All NLY Tigershark Swimmers will be provided with a team T-shirt. NLY team apparel will be available for order through our local vendor, varsity print shop at various times throughout the year. Dates of team store openings to purchase team gear will be communicated via SportsEngine and posted on our social media pages.

5.4. Apparel at Swim Meets

First impressions are important to a swimmer's personal image and the image of the NLY Tigersharks. During competitions swimmers will wear NLY Tigershark approved attire and may NOT wear any apparel that represents any other teams. Swimmers should wear their NLY Tigershark team swim cap when participating in events. Please reach out to the coaches if there is an issue with your swimmer wearing a cap during the meets.

6. Swim Meets

Swim meets are an opportunity for your swimmers to put what they have been working on in practice into action! There will be multiple swim meets throughout the year for your swimmer to participate in. To compete at the YMCA State Event, swimmers must have competed in 2 YMCA swim meets and have a legal time for any event they plan on swimming. Each swim meet is structured differently depending on who is hosting the meet.

6.1. Seasons

- Winter (Short Course) – Runs from September through March/April depending on the highest level of championship your swimmer qualifies to swim.
- Summer (Long Course) – Runs from May through July depending on the highest level of championship your swimmer qualifies to swim.

6.2. Commitment/Registration

All swim meets have sign up deadlines. It is imperative to check schedules, websites, and email to make sure you are signing up for the correct meet on time. Commitments are made via the “On Deck” app for each swim meet. Communication will be sent out when registration for meets is available/close to deadlines. You will need to mark your swimmer as attending by the deadline in the communication in order for your swimmer to be included in the events. If you mark your swimmer as attending and they are no longer able to attend the meet, please reach out to the coaches as soon as possible so they can scratch them from events and reorganize any relay teams that may be affected.

6.3. Meet Entries

Once a swimmer is committed for a swim meet and entries have been made the swim meet fees (if applicable) are non-refundable, even if your swimmer does not swim or misses an event. Swimmers will not be entered in meets if financial or volunteer obligations are not current.

Entries will vary depending on the individual meet. Some meets may have swimmers select the events they want to swim, while others will have the coaches select the events so that swimmers can demonstrate what they have learned and the improvements they have made.

6.4. Hotel Arrangements

The team will try to secure a team hotel block for some meets that require travel. Procedures for reserving a room will be communicated via email. If you are wanting to reserve a room in the block, it is your family’s responsibility to secure the room with a personal credit card once you have

been notified. In blocks reserved by the team, families are limited to booking one room. It is impossible for our team to secure enough hotel rooms at a single hotel or even multiple hotels for an event. This is a courtesy offered by the team, not all meets that require travel will have room blocks reserved, families may have to book rooms individually.

6.5. Travel

An adult family member must accompany each swimmer unless prior arrangement is made with another family. Coaches do not chaperone swimmers during travel.

7. Financial Obligations

7.1. North Lexington YMCA/Central Kentucky YMCA Membership

All swimmers must be members, in good standing of the North Lexington YMCA/Central Kentucky YMCA.

7.2. Swim Team Fees

a) Winter (Short Course) - Winter registration fees can be paid in full at the time of registration or a payment plan can be set up in accordance with the policy of the North Lexington YMCA. All winter session fees must be paid in full by December 1st. Fees vary based on which practice group your child is signed up for, as different groups have different practice requirements and amounts of time in the water.

b) Summer (Long Course) - Summer registration fees can be paid in full at the time of registration or setup on a payment plan in accordance with the policy of the North Lexington YMCA.

7.3. Swim Meet Fees

Some swim meets require fees for the swimmers to participate as well as fees for entries into events. It will be noted in the information sent out about each meet if fees will apply. Meet fees will be charged by the North Lexington YMCA to the account on file each month, date will be communicated. Meet fees must be paid on time and swimmer families must have an account in good standing in order to participate in team activities.

7.4. USA Swimming Fees

USA Swimming comes with additional fees. Information about USA swimming will be distributed at the beginning of the season. USA Swimming has different levels of membership and is priced accordingly. If you are interested in USA Swimming please reach out to the coaches and let them know.

8. Fundraising

8.1. Requirements

Each swimmer is responsible for fundraising \$50.00 for the swim team. This is separate from a family sponsorship of \$100 which is a donation to the team, if your family secures a business sponsorship of \$250 or more the \$50 fundraising requirement will be waived, please contact Nathan Cockerell, Treasurer for the parent board if you have any questions regarding sponsorships.

8.2. Fundraising Buyout

If preferred by the family, a check for \$50.00 made payable to the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks can be submitted for payment in full for EACH SWIMMER to the president or treasurer of the parent board.

8.3. Failure to Pay

If fundraising payment is not complete by February 1st the YMCA will charge the account on file for the remaining balance, if the account on file is unable to process the payment the account holder will be notified and swimmers will not be able to participate in team activities, including Last Chance Meet and YMCA State until the balance is paid in full.

9. Volunteering/Meet Work

9.1. Requirements

- a) Home Meets – if you swimmer is participating in a home meet it is required that your family volunteer during the meet, volunteer sign ups will be sent out prior to the meet, if you do not sign up in the allotted time frame, you will be assigned to a volunteer position.
- b) Away Meets – Families are required to volunteer at no less than two (2) away meets that their swimmer is participating in during the season. Sign ups will be sent out prior to the meet, if volunteer assignments are not filled in the allotted time frame, assignments will be made based whether your away meet volunteer requirements have been met.
- c) YMCA State Meet - YMCA State does not count towards an “away” meet requirement for volunteering. If your swimmer is attending YMCA state you may be assigned a volunteer position.
- d) Swimmers who are participating in championship level meets (YMCA Zones, USA State A's, YMCA Nationals, etc....) may be asked to volunteer/perform meet work for those events in addition to the minimum requirements.

c) If your swimmer is only on the team for practice and will not swim in ANY meets, you are not required to volunteer. You are only expected to volunteer at meets in which your child is participating. Please reach out to the volunteer coordinators and let them know your child will not be participating in any meets.

9.2. Volunteer Buyout

The swim team relies on parent and family volunteers to ensure everything runs smoothly. Our goal is to have every family volunteering to avoid fees, however, if you know you will not be able to volunteer, the option to “buy out” is available. The cost to “buyout” is \$300 per family per season.

9.3. Failure to Volunteer

Volunteering is required as outlined above, failure to volunteer at meets your child is participating in, will result in an automatic participation in the volunteer “buyout”. If you have circumstances you wish to discuss please reach out to the volunteer coordinators.

9.4. Special Circumstances

Please reach out to the volunteer coordinators regarding any special circumstances to make arrangements.

9.5. USA Swimming

Due to the size of our USA Swimming team we may be required to provide volunteers at USA Swimming events, these events are in addition to the requirements above, as USA Swimming is an extension of the team and requires additional volunteer time. Volunteer sign up for these events will be sent out prior to the meets.

9.6. Volunteer Positions at Swim Meets (List is not comprehensive and additional positions may be added at the discretion of the meet coordinator, head coach, and/or volunteer coordinator).

- Officials - Responsible for verifying that all strokes, turns, and starts are legal during meets. Responsible for ensuring that all rules are enforced and applied appropriately. **Requires certification and must be dressed in uniform during meets.**
- Scorekeepers - Enters results from each event into a computer program. **This job is for administrative officials only and requires training.**
- Bull Pen - Notifies/Gathers swimmers to move to Clerk of Course for each event.
- Clerk of Course - Organizes swimmers from all teams in chairs according to event, heat, and lane assignments. Then walks swimmers to the pool deck.

- Timers - Uses a stopwatch to time swimmers during the race and records time for computer entry.
- Backup Timers - Start a stopwatch for each race and provide a stopwatch to Lane Timer if the start was missed for any reason.
- Concessions - Set up and sell food items and heat sheets.
- Clean Up - Stays after the meet to help with cleanup.
- Set Up - Comes the evening before the meet to help get things set up
- Meet Announcer - Two people in the gym announcing the events.
- Meet Coordinator - Typically the President of the Parent Board. This person ensures that everything is in place for the home meets.
- Swimmer Check-in - Has a master list of swimmers entered for the meet, and is responsible for checking swimmers in as they arrive.
- Volunteer Check-in - as a master list of volunteers, and is responsible for checking them in. Also responsible for letting the meet coordinator know of any vacancies/unfilled positions.
- Candy Passer - Hands out candy to the winner of each heat as they exit the pool.
- Ribbon Writer/Sorter - Once results are available, will place stickers on ribbons and sort ribbons by team.
- Hospitality - Manages food and drink supply for coaches and officials in the hospitality room.
- Runner - Collects time sheets from timers and disqualifying slips from officials, and brings these to the scorer's table for computer entry.
- Lane Manager - Organizes swimmers in order behind starting blocks.

9.7. Volunteer Opportunities Outside of Swim Meets

- T-Shirt and Swim Cap Handout - Each swimmer gets a t-shirt and a swim cap; this position is handing out these shirts during practices and ensuring that each swimmer is given a shirt and a cap.
- Miami Parade Coordinator - the Miami meet has a different theme each year and for the 10 and under age group they hold a parade. The meet coordinator would come up with an idea for the parade, and get the kids together to decorate posters for the parade.
- Swimathon Coordinator - Swimathon is our biggest fundraiser, and we want to make it an event. We need two people who would be willing to get together and come up with ways to make swimathon more fun. I.E decorating the pool deck, coming up with a theme, getting parents involved.
- Selling Banquet Tickets - At the end of the season, (January or February), we will need people to sell banquet tickets during group practices.
- Selling Team Dinner Tickets - Selling tickets for team dinners that are planned for our away meets (Miami, YMCA State, etc...)
- Dining for Donations Coordinator - set up restaurant nights with local business to help raise funds for the team, ideally there would be one restaurant night per month during the season.

- Travel Accommodations Coordinator - for away meets, both YMCA and USA, set up hotel blocks and communicate to the team
- USA Safe Sport Certified On-Deck Parents - for our USA swimming families - must be certified to be on deck during meets, if you get certified, you will be expected to be on deck, assisting the coaches and getting the swimmers ready during the meet
- Monthly Newsletter - create a newsletter monthly with information about the team, congratulations to swimmers, information from coaches, and a calendar of events.

10. Concessions at Meets

For each home meet, a concessions sign-up will be sent out for families to volunteer to bring concessions to be sold at the meet. Concessions will be donated to the swim team and then sold to raise money for the team. If your child is swimming, you are required to donate an item towards concessions. If you would rather, you can also opt to pay \$10 as your concessions donation for a meet, please contact the Treasurer or Volunteer Coordinator. Concessions Buyout will need to be received the Wednesday prior to the swim meet so that purchases can be made for concession sales.

11. YMCA Policy

11.1. YMCA

All swimmers must be members, in good standing of the North Lexington YMCA/Central Kentucky YMCA. Swimmers and families agree to abide by all YMCA policies.

11.2. Inclement Weather

The indoor pools, waterparks and pool decks at all YMCA of Central Kentucky locations will close if there is lightning within 10 miles or if there is thunder, these events will constitute immediate closure for no less than 30 minutes from the last lightning strike or sound of thunder.

Indoor pools will close immediately when a tornado warning has been issued in the area. All members and staff will receive instruction for the safest location inside the facility while the area is under a tornado warning. Once the warning has been lifted, all swimming pools will reopen.

If public schools are released early due to weather, all programs and classes from that designated time forward will be canceled.

If inclement weather approaches and FCPS school is not in session, such as weekends or holidays, the branch will consider road conditions, the forecast, what government and other agencies/businesses are doing and what the city or town is asking the residents to do.

If a swim practice is canceled due to weather every effort will be made to inform you. Communication will be through NLY Tigersharks Teamunify account.

12. Coaching Staff

- Admin Head Coach – Matt Vogelpohl
- Lead Assistant Coach – R.J. Hijalda
- Assistant Coach - TBD
- Assistant Coach - Molly
- Assistant Coach - Trinity

13. NLY Tigersharks Parent Board Officers

- President - Kristi Broady
- Vice President - Ashley Conning
- Treasurer - Nathan Cockerell
- Fundraising - Kate Cotter
- Volunteer Coordinator(s) - Seth Miller and Kristine Urchel
- Secretary - Rebecca Singer
- Communications Coordinator - Whitney Cockerell
- Event Coordinator - Angie Elser

Appendix A – Code of Conduct



YMCA of Central KY SWIMMER/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

As a member of the YMCA of Central KY Swim Team, I am part of a swimming organization that believes in teamwork, integrity, respect and good sportsmanship above all else. By reading and signing this Code of Conduct, I agree to follow the rules and guidelines for behavior and sportsmanship while I am a member of this team and a representative of this organization.

I agree that I will:

- Show respect and common courtesies at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials and parents as well as for all facilities and other property used during practices, competitions and team activities.
- Demonstrate and promote good sportsmanship, positive team spirit, and the YMCA mission during all practices, competitions, and team activities.
- Refrain from foul language, violence, and behaviors deemed dishonest, discourteous, disrespectful, or offensive to others.
- Respect and obey all coaches' and officials' instructions, and do so in a prompt, attentive manner. **Any complaints/concerns will be dealt with coaches privately, not on deck or at meets.**

I understand that violating the guidelines above will result in the following:

1. A verbal warning.
2. A written warning and parent contact.
3. Parental accompaniment at one or more practices.
4. Suspension from the swim team.

If I continue to have disciplinary problems, I realize the following will occur:

1. A meeting of myself, my parents, my coaches and the Executive Director to discuss the issue.
2. Potential team expulsion.

I, _____ (swimmer's name), and _____ (guardian name) have read and understand the YMCA of Central KY Swimmer Code of Conduct and have reviewed it with a parent or guardian before I signed this document.

Swimmer Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

The North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Photo/Media Release Form

I hereby grant the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team permission to use my likeness in a photograph, video, or other digital media (“photo”) in any and all of its publications, including web-based publications, without payment or other consideration.

I understand and agree that all photos will become the property of the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team and will not be returned.

I hereby irrevocably authorize the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team to edit, alter, copy, exhibit, publish, or distribute these photos for any lawful purpose. In addition, I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of the photo.

I hereby hold harmless, release, and forever discharge the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of this authorization.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PHOTO RELEASE. I AFFIRM THAT I AM AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE, OR, IF I AM UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE, I HAVE OBTAINED THE REQUIRED CONSENT OF MY PARENTS/GUARDIANS AS EVIDENCED BY THEIR SIGNATURES BELOW.

Signature of Swimmer

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team Parent/Athlete/Coaches Handbook Acknowledgement Form 2025-2026 Season

The North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Parent/Athlete/Coaches handbook contains the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team rules, codes, and policies. The material has been prepared for the use of North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim Team and their parents/guardians.

I have read and understand the information in this handbook.

- I understand and agree that I am to review this handbook in detail and to consult with my coach if I have any questions concerning its contents.
- I understand that as a parent/athlete/coach I am required to review and follow the information set forth in this handbook and rules disseminated by the North Lexington YMCA Tigersharks Swim team and other governing bodies specific to the sport I participate in and I agree to do so.

Signature of Swimmer

Date
