

**FM Gator**

**Swim Team**

**Parent Packet**

## **Registrations**

Since the FM Gators are both a USA Swimming Team and a YMCA program, there are 3 separate places where families need to register and pay.

- 1) The fees through the YMCA website, or at the front desk pay for coach salaries and marketing.
  - a. This registration needs to be done every season. If you choose to register for a part of the season, and want to continue, you will need to do another registration to do so.
- 2) The fees through our team's website, [www.fmgators.com](http://www.fmgators.com) pay for each swimmer's Gator fee that covers our big home meet during the season, as well as helps us pay for pool rentals, timing equipment, etc.
  - a. This registration needs to be done every season. The fees will differ depending on the season.
  - b. This registration also is where the team communication through emails, text, and messages will occur. This is the number one way that we communicate with families.
- 3) USA Swimming is now a separate registration for your swimmer's USA Swimming Fee. Each family needs to do this individually for each athlete that you have. There will be a new link for registration every fall.
  - Failure to complete all three of these registrations in a timely manner can result in your child not being able to swim and parents not having all of the information available to them through email and other communications.

## **Sports Engine app**

Through Team Unify, our team website host, we have the Sports Engine app available through The Google Play Store and the Apple App Store. Almost everything that you can do on our website. i.e. declaring your intention for meets, picking events, signing up for volunteer jobs etc. can be done through this app. The login information for this app is the same email, and password that you set up through our team website.

## **Practices**

### **What to bring to Swim Practice**

- 1) Swimsuit: Swimmers are encouraged to wear training suits in practice. Training suits for girls are one-piece suits, for boys they are briefs, jammers, or square leg jammers.
- 2) Goggles, should have 2 pairs in their bag at all times in case one breaks
- 3) Swim Cap: anyone with long hair needs to wear a swim cap. This will not only affect times in practice and in meets. It will help keep hair alive, and not green from the chlorine. It also helps keep the pool water in better shape.
- 4) Towel
- 5) Water bottle

\* You can find our practice schedules on our website, under 'calendars' and 'Practice Calendar', any changes to this practice schedule will be shared in our Gator Bites Newsletter, as well as emailed out.

### **Practice Groups**

- 1) We currently have 5 different practice groups, Developmental; Age Group 1, Age Group 2, Senior 1, & Senior 2. There are a lot of things that the coaching staff takes into consideration when moving a kid into a different practice group, however, there are certain time standards that need to be met, and they are as follows.
  - a. Developmental to Age Group 1: Faster than 2:00 in the 100 IM legally
  - b. Age Group 1 to Age Group 2: Faster than a 3:20 in the 200 IM legally
  - c. Age Group 2 to Senior 1: Faster than a 2:55 in the 200 IM legally
  - d. Senior 1 to Senior 2: Faster than a 2:20 in the 200 IM legally or a sectionals or nationals time.
- These times are in Short Course Yards standard. There are converted times for Long Course Meters for the summer.

### **Before Swim Practice**

- 1) Arrive for practice about 10 – 15 minutes early.
- 2) Be ready to enter the water on time: suit, cap, goggles on.

### **When to Talk With a Coach**

- 1) During office hours, or set up a time to meet, or after practice.
- 2) Practice time is not the time to discuss a swimmer, this is practice time and all coaches' attention should be on the practice that is going on.

## **Swim Meet 101**

### **Signing up for Swim Meets**

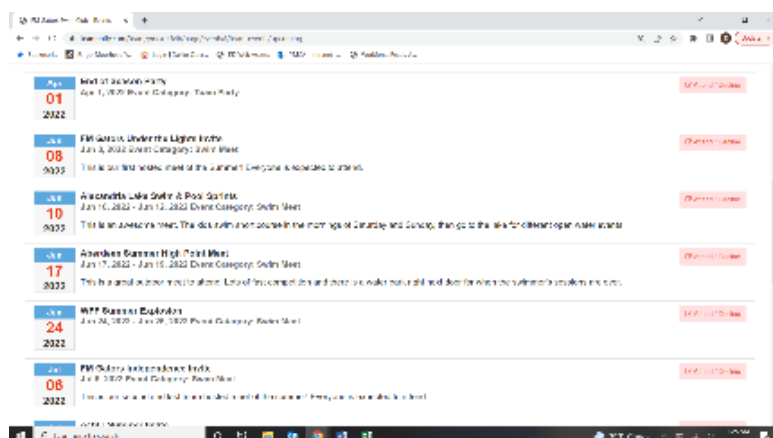
- 1) Swim meets are not required, but are highly encouraged! They are a fun way to demonstrate the skills and strengths developed in practice, and they are a wonderful team activity. For some home meets it will be expected that all team members attend.
- 2) Parents will be responsible for signing up for swim meets. Email notifications will go out to parents when there is a meet to sign up for. Please make sure you check the email address that you used in your Active account for the meet invites. Events may be chosen by the swimmer or by the coach. If you have a couple of specific events that your swimmer would like to swim, pick those and the coach can pick the rest. The Head Coach will review all event choices and make changes if they feel it is better for the team and/or athlete.
- 3) Relays require four swimmers. In the Medley Relay, each swimmer swims a specific stroke in this order: back, breast, fly, free. In the Free Relay, all four swimmers swim Freestyle. Make sure to check to Meet Entry report on [www.fmgators.com](http://www.fmgators.com) to see if your child is in a relay. All relays are subject to change and the coaches will communicate any changes to those swimmers.
- 4) Coaches will send out an email and post on the website the Entry Report for the meet a few days before the meet. Please check your email/website to see if any changes need to be made. There is usually only 1 day to make these changes, so promptness is key if there are any.
- 5) If you sign up for a meet, make every effort to be there! Coaches do not like no-shows; your teammates do not like no-shows. Swimmers will probably be assigned to a relay team; if they do not show up, they hurt the other three kids on the relay if that relay needs to be scratched.

How to register for meets and events.

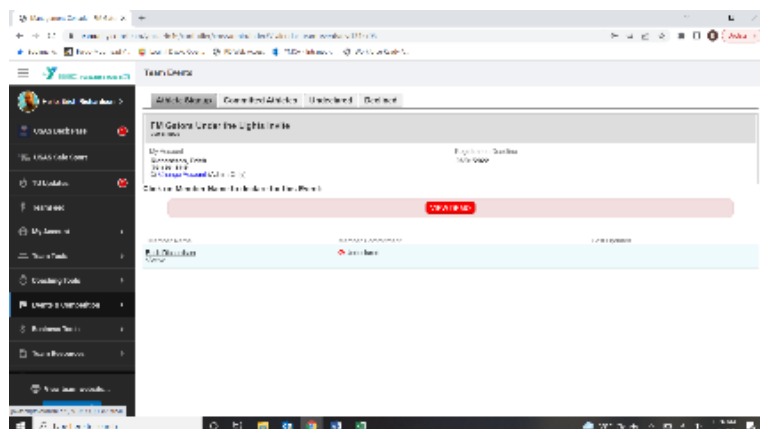
Click on 'Events';



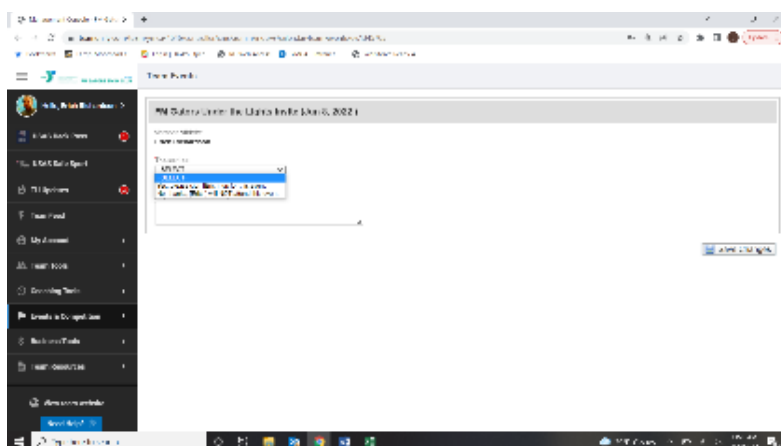
Click on 'Attend/Decline';



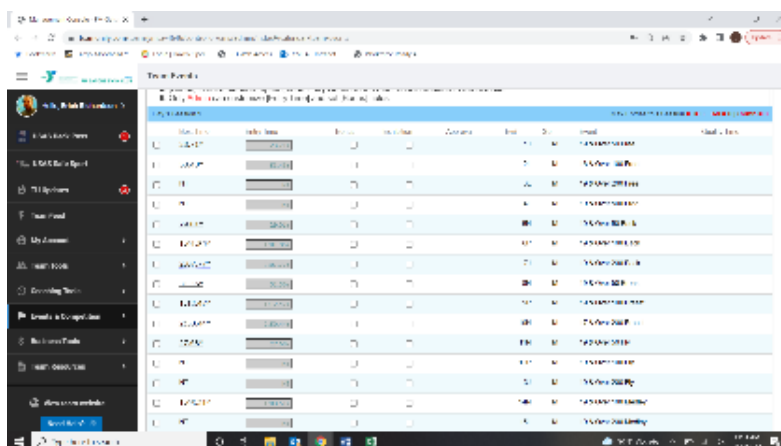
Click on 'athlete's name';



Click on declaration drop down and choose whether your swimmer is attending or declining.



Scroll down to see event options for your swimmer.



- **If you would like to attend a meet that the team is not attending**, make sure to let the head coach know as soon as possible, and they will be able to get the meet information and event file for that meet.

### **Swim Meet Supply list**

- 1) Swim suit – team suit is preferred, for boys the tighter the better, for girls if they can pull their shoulder straps to their ears, it is too big
- 2) Swim cap, Gator caps will be provided to the swimmers, either at practice or at the meet if they need one.
- 3) Goggles (x2), having 2 pairs of goggles is a lifesaver if they break or get lost during the meet.
- 4) Towel
- 5) Warm clothes – the pool area can be chilly for the kids when they are wet and it is important to keep the swimmer's muscles warm during competition
- 6) Sharpie/pen to write your child's events on their arm. Please do not supply your swimmer with a set of Sharpie's. Also, a highlighter to mark your program where your child is swimming
- 7) Water bottle – hydration is very important when competing
- 8) Healthy Snacks – the concession stands typically do not have the best food for competing athletes. Make sure to have food pack that will help your swimmer perform at their best.

In the summer:

- 1) Sunscreen & bug spray – Bug bites and sunburn are 2 things that are fairly preventable, but will take a lot of the fun out of a meet if they happen.
- 2) Lawn chairs – especially at Island Park, there are no real seats, just big concrete bleachers that get uncomfortable very quickly
- 3) Camera – so you can remember all the great swims your child has. (USA Swimming does not allow cameras behind the blocks)

\*Cash for concessions, usually there is no ATM or credit card machine available



### **Before the Swim Meet**

- 1) Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. Warm-ups are mandatory for all swimmers.
- 2) Swimmers should get suits on and ready immediately upon arrival at the meet. Warm-ups are important for optimal physical performance, injury prevention, and getting last minute advice from coaches. If a swimmer is not at warmups within 30 minutes of the meet start time, they will be removed from all relays that day.
- 3) Younger swimmers are allowed to go up to their parents to get their events written on their arm/leg. Besides this time, swimmers should stay on deck, with the team, barring individual exceptions.
- 4) There will be meet programs available for purchase for parents. Keep in mind that sometimes there are changes and the coaches will have the most updated program if there is one. Make sure to mark your swimmer's event, heat and lane #'s on their hand, arm, or leg. See more information in 'Reading a Meet Program'.

### **Reading a Meet Program**

- 1) Also called a 'heat sheet' is available for sale in the concession area of the pool or close to the entrance to the stands. On the heat sheet, swimmers are entered in their events according to their times, with the slower kids in the first heats and the fastest kids in the final heat of each event. It lists all the swimmers in each event in order of 'seed time'. When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in that event is listed. At the first meet, a lot of kids' times will be posted as NT for "no time." A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.
- 2) Most events have multiple heats. The faster swimmers will be toward the middle of the pool in each heat. Generally, girls' event numbers are odd numbered and boy's events are even numbered.
- 3) Each relay is given a letter for example, the expected fastest relay is the A relay. Subsequent relays are B, C, and so on. In addition to the relay, your swimmer will

also be given a leg assignment (the order). For the Medley relay, this leg will determine which stroke they will perform.

- 4) Find your kid in the meet program and help them write this info on their arm, leg, or hand. For example : for Event #2, Heat #4, Lane # 7 would be the first line of writing on their arm, leg, or hand.

E	H	L	
2	4	7	50 back
5	2	5	100 FR
10	3	3	100 I M

- 5) Please tell your swimmer that this information is from the program and might change. The Coaching Staff will let them know of any changes.
- 6) If you have questions, ask an experienced parent, they have done this countless times.
- 7) Meet Mobile app – is available for Apple and Android users, you can look at results and many times the program is available as well.

### **During the Swim Meet**

- 1) Every meet starts with a welcome announcement and the singing/playing of the National Anthem.
- 2) There will be a series of quick whistles from the Starter to signal to swimmers to 'get ready'. There will then be a long whistle to indicate to the swimmers to get up on the blocks. At this point it is very important that spectators and fellow swimmers remain quiet so swimmer can hear the Starter.
- 3) The Starter will alert the swimmers to "Take your marks", and then will signal the start of the race with a loud beep from the starter box.
- 4) You can expect multiple heats of each event.
- 5) Cheer like crazy! The swimmers can hear you, even though their heads are under water.
- 6) If your swimmer's time does not show up on the scoreboard, they can always ask the timers of their lane for their time. This does not mean that your swimmer

was disqualified, typically, this is from a 'soft touch' finish, which just means that the swimmer didn't hit the touchpad hard enough.

- 7) Support the home team by visiting the concession stands! This is how swim teams are able to continue to host meets, by the support of the visiting teams. This is for Parents; Swimmers should have healthy snacks packed for the meets.
- 8) Meet sessions typically last between 3.5-4 hours. Most families stay at the meet for the entire meet. Do not leave the meet unless you are sure all races (including relays!) have been completed for your swimmer.
- 9) **According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on the pool deck unless they are serving in an official capacity.** Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of the meet, should be referred to a coach. He or she, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
- 10) Race results will typically be posted for the swimmers to view, or on the '**meet mobile**' app. Labels are either placed on ribbons or available to the swimmers to pick up as soon as the computer team enters and prints the results.
- 11) If your swimmer has placed in an event, you pick up ribbons/labels. If you do not pick up your ribbons, sometimes there will be leftover ribbons sent home with the coach and distributed to the swimmers at practice the following week.
- 12) Cheer on your fellow teammates!
- 13) Pool area gets very warm – dress appropriately
- 14) There are no camera flashes allowed at the start of races, this is because there is a light on the starter box so that deaf swimmers know when to start the race and camera flashes would impede this process

### **What will get a Swimmer Disqualified?**

The Start judge and the stroke and turn judges will be along the pool sides and at the ends of the pool. The most common reasons for disqualifications are:

- 1) One handed touch in butterfly or breaststroke turns and finishes
- 2) A false start, which means that the swimmer either went early, or flinched on the blocks

- 3) Early start on a relay
- 4) Pulling on the lane rope
- 5) Pushing off the bottom (in freestyle only, a swimmer may touch the bottom and rest, however, cannot push off the bottom to start again)
- 6) Not staying on your back during backstroke
- 7) Using scissor or dolphin kick during breaststroke events
- 8) Using flutter kick or breaststroke kick in butterfly events
- 9) Pulling more than once underwater after a start or turn during breaststroke events.
- 10) Not finishing the race
- 11) Uneven arms on butterfly
- 12) Pulling hands down past hips in breaststroke events
- 13) Turning around to look for the wall during backstroke events
- 14) Not touching the wall on a turn
  - \*if your swimmer gets DQ'd, they will more than likely find out at the meet; if that is not the case, the coaches will have a DQ summary at practice for the next couple weeks to make sure that they focus on those things.

### **Frequently asked questions about swim meets**

- 1) In what age group will my child swim?
  - a. The age of your child on the first day of the meet is the age that they will compete in.
- 2) What distances will my child have to swim?
  - a. The distance your child will swim varies by your child's age: 8 & unders are able to swim 25s, and 50s of a stroke, and a 100 for the IM. For everyone over 9 years old, they cannot swim 25s anymore, they are able to swim 50s, 100s, & 200s of all strokes, they will also be able to swim 500, 1000 & 1650 yards of freestyle
- 3) How long does a meet last?
  - a. Meet sessions usually last 3.5-4 hours. The State Meet and large Invitationals are usually multiple days with multiple sessions.
- 4) Where do I find out what my child is swimming in the meet?

- a. Meet programs with event information are for sale at concessions at all meets.
  - b. Often the program is available on the Meet Mobile app, at a minimum, results will be listed.
- 5) How do I get involved? Am I required to volunteer?
- a. Participation in swim team is a family activity and requires a volunteer commitment from parents. Our home meets cannot function smoothly without our wonderful volunteers. We ask one member of each family to volunteer at each of our home swim meets. Please sign up online at [www.fmgators.com](http://www.fmgators.com), there will be a job signup button under each home meet about 2 weeks before the meet itself. There will also be emails sent out when the volunteers are needed. This also helps to fulfill the Family Work Commitments outlined on pages 15-16.
- 6) If I am volunteering, do I have to work after my swimmer is finished with his/her events?
- a. Yes, unless you can find someone to replace you, or your job is fully complete. Usually our volunteer shifts are the different sessions of the meet and you can sign up for sessions that your child is swimming in.
- 7) Why are there black lines on the bottom of the pool?
- a. To help swimmers gauge their alignment in their lane. Crosses on the end walls help swimmers gauge when to begin their turns.
- 8) Why are there flags over each end of the race pool?
- a. The flags help swimmers gauge how close they are to the wall on backstroke events.
  - b. It is very important for the swimmers to know their stroke count from the flags to the wall for backstroke; this will help eliminate a reason to be DQ'd.
- 9) What if someone in my family is not feeling well, and we need to leave the meet early?
- a. Check in with our coaches and make sure your swimmer is not assigned to a relay. Hopefully, in serious situations, coaches can find a replacement. If leaving a meet early unexpectedly before your swimmer completes their events, CHECK IN WITH YOUR COACHES.
- 10) Who should I talk to if I have questions about swimming?

- a. You can talk to any of the coaches or any of the Board of Directors. Contact information is available online, [www.fmgators.com](http://www.fmgators.com). Under the 'Coaches' Tab. As well as on page 25.
- b. We also have two Facebook pages, "FM Gators Swim Team" and the "Gator Parent Exchange". The first is open to anyone, the second one; you need to request an acceptance to the group, which we provide after ensuring your family's registration. This is for the safety of our athletes as we post various pictures of the kids at meets, etc. to this page.

### **Swimmer Code**

- 1) Always show respect to all your coaches, teammates, other family members and the other teams and facilities we visit. Always demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- 2) Always behave in a safe manner; do not push anyone into the pool and stay off the lane ropes.
- 3) Arrive on time and always make your best effort at practice and meets.
- 4) Always warmup before each meet.
- 5) Encourage all teammates to do their best, whether they are in the first or final heat.
- 6) Swim your assigned events at all meets. Inform your coach if you must miss any event.

### **Parent Code**

- 1) I will enjoy myself! This is intended to be as fun and exciting for me as it is for my child!
- 2) I will assist my athlete in getting to practices, warmups, and meets on time.
- 3) I will be responsible for my athlete and a model of good sportsmanship at all times. If an issue arises during a meet, I will direct my question or comment to the coaching staff who will help resolve the issue if action is needed.
- 4) I will support my athlete! I will cheer for my child and team during the race. I will trust the coaches to assist my swimmer getting behind the blocks before a race.
- 5) I will respect our coaching staff. If I need to communicate with any of the coaches, I will do so when they are not actively coaching at practice or at meets. I will not expect coaches to make assignment changes during a meet. I realize changes will only be made when the coaches deem it necessary.

- 6) I will arrive on time for my volunteer responsibilities. If I need a replacement, I will make arrangements in advance and notify, JoVal Wettlaufer, the volunteer director. I will stay at my job until the end of the meet/session, though I may take a break to watch my child compete.
- 7) The seating area can be tight, please allow space for people to sit by not taking up room with excess belongings.

### **Parent – Swimmer – Coach Relationship**

To have a successful program, there must be complete understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your child makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is amazing how much a swimmer can progress in one year; however, there will be some ups and downs. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section carefully as you join the team.

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided, and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a person loses some of their ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning their children. The coaching staff's experience has found that the proper guidelines will help you keep your child's development in the proper perspective.

- 1) Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of presenting skills. The slower learner obviously takes more time to learn, and this requires more patience on the parts of the parents and coaches, who both must remember that the child's ultimate swimming potential may be as great or greater than that of the faster learner.
- 2) When an athlete first comes out for the team and starts practicing, it is possible for them to worsen rather than improve. This is likely due to the emphasis placed on the stroke technique in these groups. It takes a great deal of the swimmer's attention to master these skills. These new sets of habits are the basis for later improvement. As training proceeds to the senior levels, additional stress is placed upon the muscles. The muscles will at first break down under the demand of additional work, and this can explain an initial lack of improvement. As the need for improvement is realized, the muscles will gradually strengthen and the athlete's performance will improve.

- 3) Plateaus can occur at one time or another in any swimmer's career. Plateaus can occur both in competition and in training. A plateau signifies the swimmer has mastered lower-ordered skills, but they are not sufficiently automatic to leave the attention free to attack newer, higher-ordered skills. It is important to explain to the athlete that plateaus occur in all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes are those who work through this momentary delay in improvement and go on to achieve greater performance, approaching their personal potential.
- 4) 10-and-unders are the most inconsistent swimmers, and this can be frustrating for the coach, parent, and swimmer alike. We must be patient and permit these children to learn to love the sport.
- 5) Parents must realize that slow development of the competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps more desirable than precocious or forced early development. It is important that everyone learns to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important for children to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional distress. The small disappointments they must learn to handle as youths prepare them for the larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.
- 6) It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, encouragement, and recognition necessary to help young athletes feel good about themselves.
- 7) Parents' attitudes often dictate those of their children. A child might not be consciously aware of what is taking place while subconsciously absorbing powerful messages about his or her parents' desires. For example, be enthusiastic about taking your child to practices and meets, fundraising projects, meetings, and so on – don't look on these functions as chores.
- 8) If parents can offer insight on their child that will enable the child's coach to work more effectively with the child, please be sure to contact the coach.
- 9) If you have any questions about your child's training or about team policies, contact the Head Coach directly outside of practice time. Criticizing the coach in front of the



swimmers undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer-coach support necessary for maximum success.

- 10) No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to the child, the team, or competitive swimming. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of the coach, and be handled by the coach.
- 11) Be sure that your child swims because he or she wants to. People tend to resist anything they 'have to do.' Self-motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.
- 12) The etymology of the word "competition" goes back to two Latin words, "com" and "petere," which mean "together to strive." Avoid playing your child off against their nearest competitors, thereby creating vendettas within the team and swimming community. Close competition provides two great services for the athletes: it brings out the best in them, and it shows where improvement is needed.
- 13) The communication between coach and swimmer is very important. A two-way relationship must exist daily at all practices. It is imperative that the coach has the swimmer's full attention at these times. It is for this reason that we ask parents to watch practice only from "off the deck" and not to participate in the coaching in any manner. This is in accordance with USA Swimming's Safe Sport Policy.
- 14) In general, it is best for parents to refrain from making stroke corrections or trying to coach their swimmer. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim, it causes considerable and sometimes insurmountable confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to and respect when it comes to swimming. If you differ with something, please confer with the coach. Our coaches would enjoy the opportunity to further discuss the program with you.

**Remember: The attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. In swimming, as in life, nobody can "win" or succeed all the time – there will always be some disappointment. Every young**

swimmer can gain from their experience whether or not they ever win a single race. The important thing is to keep on striving to do better next time. The secret is not necessarily to produce great swimmers, but rather to produce great young people who swim.

**Please note:** All swimmers must follow all pool rules and policies. The lifeguard will enforce these rules and any infractions that occur will result in timeouts or removal from practice. We typically follow the “3 strikes and you are out” policy.

### **FAMILY WORK COMMITMENT**

Purpose: Our swim club hosts swim meets throughout each season as the primary method of raising funds for the team. In order to host outstanding swim meets we require all of our families to help. Requirements: Below is a summary of the requirements for each family. Each family is solely responsible for ensuring their requirements are met. Also, if a family has more than one swimmer, that family’s requirement is based on the highest level swimmer.

Short Course 2025-2026

Senior: 5 events

Age Groups: 4 events

Developmental: 3 events

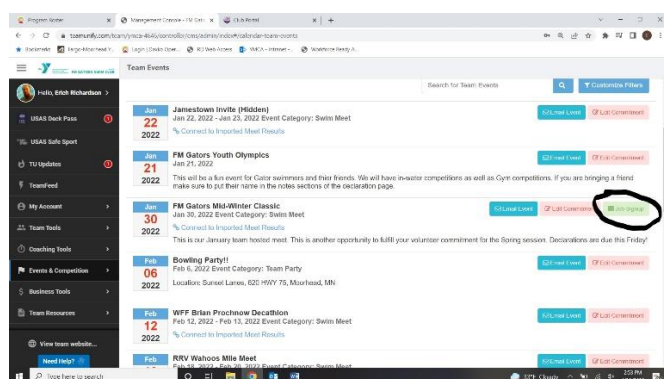
\*An “event” is defined as one of the listed shifts at our home meets, or officiating at one of our away meets. If a board member or a committee member, an “event” also includes attendance at a board meeting.

**\*\*\$100 per event will be charged for all uncompleted events. This will be charged to accounts at the end of each of the three seasons. Families who do not swim a full season will have their event requirements pro-rated. A typical work shift at one of our swim meets lasts between 3-5 hours. Questions about events worked or about where you stand with events worked can be addressed with the Volunteer Coordinator.**

**\*\*\*In addition to working at our hosted meets and attending meetings as described above, there may be other occasional opportunities to fulfill work requirement events (e.g., Triathlon, special clinics, State swim meets, etc).**

## **Events**

**\* An event is a shift at a meet, these shifts vary in length of time, and it depends on what job you sign up for, for that meet. You sign up for jobs, at the same place that you sign up for your swimmer's events. You just click on the 'Job Sign-up' button. An email will go out from our volunteer coordinator when the job sign-up opens.**



We have many jobs available, and they range from needing no training to quite a bit of training. Some of the jobs available are:

Timers, Runners, Head Timer, Deck Marshall, Concessions worker, Program Sales, Computer operator, Announcer, Awards organizer,

If there is training required, talk to our volunteer coordinator to see when we can make that happen.

## **Glossary**

**Age Group** – Division of swimming according to age. The Age Group divisions based on birthdates are: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18.

**Alternate** – In a prelims/finals meet, after the finalists are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalists are designated as alternates. The faster of the 2 being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates are called to take their place, often on a moment's notice.

**Anchor** – The final swimmer in a relay

**Backstroke** – One of the four competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swim as the first stroke in the medley relay and second stroke in the I.M.

**Blocks** – The platforms from which the kids enter the pool behind each lane. Use of the blocks is optional. Younger swimmers may also start from the pool edge or in the water. Backstroke races and medley relays start with swimmers in the water. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and heights and can be permanent or removable.

**Breaststroke** – one of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swum as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M.

**Butterfly** – one of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed Fly) is swum as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M.

**Cap** – The latex or silicone covering worn on the head of swimmers

**Clerk of Course** – an area set aside at a meet where individual events for swimmers age 10 & under are organized. Swimmers need to report to the “Clerk” 4 events before the one they are swimming. Most meets announce or post the event numbers that need to currently report.

**Consolation Finals** – After the fastest 6 or 8 swimmers, the next 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Consolations are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat.

**Course** – Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition, i.e. Long Course = 50 meters, Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

**Deck** – The area around the pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches.

**DQ (Disqualification)** – Time and score do not count. The swimmer has been judged as not performing the stroke, turn, or finish correctly. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with an open hand above their head. Also known as DQ’d or “Deeked”

**Dive** – Entering the water head first. Diving is not allowed during warmups except at the designated time, in specific lanes that are monitored by the swimmer’s coach.

**Dryland** – The exercises and strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

**Dropped time** – When a swimmer goes faster than a previous performance they have “dropped time” or “cut time”

**Entry** – An individual, relay team, or club roster’s event list into a swim competition

**Event** –A race or stroke over a given distance that is timed.

**False Start** – When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn.

**False Start (relay)** – An illegal start done by any of the participating members of that relay. The swimmer on the blocks breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall

**Flip Turn** – Technique used by swimmers during specific strokes to reverse the direction in which they are swimming. Usually this is done when the swimmer reaches the end of the pool but still has a lap(s) to swim.

**Flyover Start** – Method of starting swimmers used to shorten time between races. When swimmers complete their race, they remain in the water and the swimmer in the next race takes their mark on the block and dive in over them. The swimmer who is finished then exits the water without interfering with the current race.

**Freestyle** – One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Freestyle is swum as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and in the I.M.

**Goggles** – Underwater eyewear worn by swimmers to keep their eyes from being irritated by the chlorine in the water.

**Heat** – The order in which the swimmer is placed in the Program. It tells the swimmers what events they are swimming and in what order.

**Individual Medley (I.M.)** – A swimming event using all four of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke.

**Lane** – The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim (i.e., Lane 1 or Lane 2). As the swimmers stand behind the blocks, lanes are numbered from right to left.

**Lane Ropes** – Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretching from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers

**Lap** – two lengths of the pool.

**Marshall** – Individual in charge of enforcing safety, supervision, and relations at a meet.

**Medley Relay** – Relay event with 4 swimmers where each swimmer does a different stroke in the following order: back, breast, fly, free

**Meet** – A series of events held on a particular date and time

**Race** – Any single swimming competitions (i.e., preliminary, final, timed final).

**Relay** – Four swimmers, each swimming one part of the race

**Seed Time** – A swimmer's best official time in an event used to place him/her in order for championship meets, etc.

**Stand up** – The command given by the Starter or Official to release the swimmers from their starting position.

**Start** – the beginning of a race. The dive used to begin the race.

**Starter** – The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

**Step Down** – The command given by the Starter or Official to have the swimmers move off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication everything is not right for the race to start.

**Stroke** – there are four competitive strokes: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.

**Stroke Judge** – The official positioned at the side of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the stroke judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified

**Taper** – the resting phase of a senior swimmer at the end of the season before the championship meet.

**Timer** – the volunteers standing behind the blocks, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.

**Turn Judge** – Stands at the end of the pool and judges swimmers for correct execution of turns. If the Turn Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified.

**Two-Hand Touch** – Simultaneous touch with both hands used at the end of a pool to change directions to swim more laps or finish a race. Required in breaststroke and butterfly.

**Warmup** - The practice and “loosening up” session a swimmer does before the meet or their event is swum.

**Yards** – The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the American system. A short course yard pool is 25 yards (75 feet) in length.



## USA Swimming Safe Sport

# ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM

USA Swimming is committed to providing a healthy and positive environment free from abuse for all its members. USA Swimming's Safe Sport program, a comprehensive abuse prevention program, consists of a multi-layered approach to keep kids safe, including: required policies and best practice guidelines; mandatory screening, including criminal background checks and employment screening; training and education; monitoring, supervision and mandatory reporting. These measures are informed by experts in the field of child safety and are among the strongest safeguards found in youth-serving organizations.

- Upon registration you have signed off that you have read and understand our team's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy. If you do have questions about this policy please contact one of the board members or go to the link below to find the USA Swimming webpage dedicated to the safety of our athletes.
- <https://www.usaswimming.org/safe-sport>