



**Team Handbook**  
**(September 2025)**

# **Table of Contents**

<b>Annual Packet</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>Key Contacts</b>	<b>page 4</b>
<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>History</b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>How We Operate</b>	<b>page 7</b>
<b><u>2025-2026 Fees</u></b>	<b>page 8-11</b>
<b><u>Group Descriptions and Requirements</u></b>	<b>page 12-15</b>
<b><u>Parent Participation/Volunteer Program</u></b>	<b>page 16</b>
<b>Swim Meet Officials</b>	<b>page 17</b>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<b>page 18</b>
<b><u>Policies</u></b>	
<b>Practice Pick-up Policy</b>	<b>page 18</b>
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	<b>page 19</b>
<b>Communication and Conflict Resolution Policy</b>	<b>page 20</b>
<b>Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy</b>	<b>page 22-24</b>
<b><u>Helpful Information</u></b>	
<b>Aquahawk Parents' Role in Conduct</b>	<b>page 24</b>
<b>Time Standards</b>	<b>page 26</b>
<b>Eat Smart</b>	<b>page 26</b>
<b>Safe Sport</b>	<b>page 27</b>

# **Annual Packet**

Each swimmer and parent/guardian is required to fill out an annual information packet which is emailed to the members or is available on the website. The packet consists of the Handbook(this document), Media Release Forms, Health History Form and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP). The packets are due within two weeks of your first practice and/or date being released by the Board of Directors. If the packet is not turned in by the deadline, it is still assumed that the members understand all policies/procedures and will be responsible for monthly fees and fundraising at the Swim-a-thon and billed accordingly.

## **Health Documentation Requirements**

Each swimmer is required to have medical information listed on the Aquahawks account and updated as needed. This includes allergies, injuries, medications that are possibly administered during Aquahawks events/activities, etc. At the start of each short course season, usually in September, swimmers are required to submit an annual health release form. If this form is not returned by a specified date, the swimmer cannot participate in practice or other Aquahawks events until completed, but monthly dues will still apply. If a swimmer is entered into a swim meet and cannot participate because the health form has not been returned, the family will be required to pay the fees for that meet. This Medical Information form is located on the Aquahawks website.

## **Video/Photo Release**

Parents/Guardians will be asked to sign a waiver regarding the use of images of their swimmer, captured during practice or USA Swimming events through video, photo, and digital camera, to be used solely for Lawrence Aquahawks Swimming promotional material and publications, and waive any rights of compensation or ownership thereto. If a parent/guardian wishes to change the waiver release, it can be found on the website and sent to membership. Let the coach know as well.

# KEY CONTACTS

Title	Name	Email	Phone
<b>Head Coach</b>	John-Martin Schmidt	<a href="mailto:coachjohn@aquahawks.org">coachjohn@aquahawks.org</a>	785-249-5248
Head Age Group Coach	Abby Vorthmann	<a href="mailto:coachabby@aquahawks.org">coachabby@aquahawks.org</a>	608-205-7188
Assistant Coach	Meredith Graves	<a href="mailto:merbear520@gmail.com">merbear520@gmail.com</a>	
Assistant Coach	Kiefer Stellwagon	<a href="mailto:kstellwagon727@gmail.com">kstellwagon727@gmail.com</a>	
<b>Board of Directors</b>			
President	Susan Cross	<a href="mailto:president@aquahawks.org">president@aquahawks.org</a>	617-733-4754
Vice President	Vic Braden	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@aquahawks.org">vicepresident@aquahawks.org</a>	
Treasurer	Kim Cooper	<a href="mailto:treasurer@aquahawks.org">treasurer@aquahawks.org</a>	
Secretary	Crystal Thomason	<a href="mailto:secretary@aquahawks.org">secretary@aquahawks.org</a>	
Compliance	Kat Sweeney	<a href="mailto:compliance@aquahawks.org">compliance@aquahawks.org</a>	
Event Planner			
Marketing	James Duhigg	<a href="mailto:communications@aquahawks.org">communications@aquahawks.org</a>	
Membership		<a href="mailto:membership@aquahawks.org">membership@aquahawks.org</a>	
Members At Large			

# **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Lawrence Aquahawks Swim Team. With your membership, you have joined a great tradition that goes back to 1968. We are genuinely excited to have you as a part of this great organization! This handbook outlines our club's basic philosophies, group structures, and goals.

## **Mission Statement**

Lawrence Aquahawks Swimming, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a program of swimming instruction for competition for the youth of Lawrence, Douglas County, and surrounding communities. The Aquahawks promote the sport of swimming by providing professional teaching, technique training, and competitive opportunities through which swimmers at all levels can reach their full potential, both in and out of the water, following USA Swimming & Safe Sport Guidelines.

## **History**

Initially, Lawrence had four small private club swim teams, each with its own coach. The teams scheduled dual meets throughout the summer, and the season concluded with the Douglas County Age Group Swimming and Diving Championships, held at Holiday Park Pool. In the summer of 1968, the parents and swimmers of these teams combined to form the Lawrence Swim Club, the original name of the Aquahawks.

One of the new club's first tasks was to become actively involved in the campaign to support a bond issue for a new municipal pool. The bond issue's passage provided a facility where the entire team could train together. When the new municipal pool opened for the 1969 season, it was quickly hailed as the premier facility in the Missouri Valley LSC.

Bill Barnes was the first coach for the new Lawrence Swim Club and was assisted by Bob Hines and Bob Russell, two University of Kansas swimmers. Bill's son, Brent, is credited with inventing the club mascot, the Aquahawks, while Bill's wife, Jo Barnes, was the first to put green and yellow trunks on

the waterborne Jayhawks. By 1973, the team was well established, with approximately 100 registered swimmers.

In 1977, Gary Kempf took over as head coach of the program. Under Gary's leadership, the team expanded beyond a summer program by swimming at the University of Kansas pool during semester breaks and in the late spring.

By the late 1970s, Lawrence's lack of an indoor pool seriously constrained the club's ability to improve and expand its programs. Once again, the Aquahawks families played an important role in promoting the construction of an indoor facility. Finally, in 1980, the Carl Knox Natatorium was opened at Lawrence High School under the combined direction of USD 497 and the City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department. With the addition of an indoor practice facility, the Aquahawks became a year-round program.

The Aquahawks board of directors hired Dorothy Kempf in 1988 as the club's first full-time head coach. The club continued to expand in size under Dorothy's leadership, but the lack of pool space at the high school pool became a serious constraint. In 1991, Haskell Indian Nations University permitted the club to use the HINU pool on a limited basis.

In 1992, Bryan Beatty was hired as head coach. With his guidance and added pool space, the team grew from 100 to 160 members.

Several significant events occurred in 1998 for the Aquahawks. In October 1998, Brian Barnes was hired as the Aquahawks' new head coach after a nationwide search by the Board of Directors. Primarily for financial reasons, the Aquahawks dropped the diving portion of the program and became a swimming-only program. Also, in 1998, the Aquahawks became active and vocal supporters of a plan that resulted in the City Commission approving a new Indoor Aquatic Center to be built at Free State High School. The Indoor Aquatic Center opened in June 2001 and includes a 50-meter pool and a family/recreation pool. The Lawrence Indoor Aquatic Center is the primary location for Aquahawks team practices.

# How We Operate

The Lawrence Aquahawks are a coach-facilitated, board-supported, parent-volunteer organization that cooperatively works together to create the optimal environment for every athlete, from novice to national competitor. The Aquahawks are open to all youth who have completed basic swimming instruction. The parents of swimmers operate the club and annually elect the parents of swimmers to a Board of Directors (BOD) to manage club operations. Operating the club activities include working at meets, serving on committees, assisting in fundraising, and assuring that the club maintains a healthy program. The BOD, which holds monthly meetings, is responsible for hiring the head coach, providing oversight of the club's operations, and coordinating fundraising and volunteer activities.

The Aquahawks program is affiliated with USA Swimming, an organization that governs amateur swimming nationwide. In addition, the club is an active member of the Missouri Valley Swimming. Each swimmer must join USA Swimming to be eligible for Aquahawks membership. Registering with USA Swimming also allows you to track your swimmers' times and participation at meets. To register, go to [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org), click on the Login tab, and register.

While not affiliated with the City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department, the Aquahawks work closely with the City and USD 497 to use the city and school facilities. This close cooperation makes the Aquahawks program possible.

# 2025-2026 Fees

The Lawrence Aquahawks have several fees that help maintain the quality of the program as well as provide for competition opportunities.

## Swimmer Group Monthly Fees

Mini Hawks	\$70
Bronze	\$105
Silver	\$125
Gold	\$145
Platinum	\$165
High School Prep	\$100
Senior	\$185
College Team	\$80

Fees are charged monthly throughout the year, including when we are on Aquabreak for two weeks. Aquabreak typically occurs at the conclusion of each season (March and August).

If your swimmer wants to leave the team or suspend your account for other reasons during the swim season, you must inform the Head Coach, President and Treasurer (see page 11 for more information).

Monthly fees are nonrefundable.

Any swimmer who swims a practice outside of the initial tryout period or swims a meet under Lawrence Aquahawks affiliation shall be responsible for membership dues and applicable team fees for that month. Swimmers are also responsible for their meet fees and coach travel fees.

We encourage members to pay their fees directly via credit card or ACH bank transfer. **It's free and convenient!** You can sign up for this service through your account on the team's website. If you have questions about how to set this up, please get in touch with our Treasurer at [treasurer@Aquahawks.org](mailto:treasurer@Aquahawks.org)

Please note that in our bylaws, "Members who do not meet their financial responsibilities or who do not make necessary arrangements with the treasurer will be considered not in good standing."

## **Families with Multiple Swimmers**

The Aquahawks offers a discount for families with multiple swimmers. The swimmer in the highest group will pay 100%, and the next swimmer will receive a 10% discount on the monthly dues. Each subsequent swimmer will receive a 15% discount off monthly dues. The discounts do not apply to other fees or requirements unless stated in this handbook.

## **Annual USA Swimming Fees**

The Lawrence Aquahawks Swim Team is a member of USA Swimming.

**ALL FAMILIES ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER THEIR SWIMMERS WITH USA SWIMMING.**

## **Quarterly-Annual Dues**

The Lawrence Aquahawks Swim Team has **\$37.50** per swimmer family quarter-annual dues (billed in August, November, February, and May). Swimmers are required to pay their dues if they swam during that applicable quarter.

## **Electronic Payment Fees**

We encourage members to pay their dues using our auto-pay service offered through the team's website. This can be done via credit card or ACH bank transfer. Accounts are billed on the 1st of the month.

## **Late Fee/ Past Due Balance**

All balances are DUE IN FULL by the **20th of each month**; otherwise, there will be a \$20 late fee. There are no refunds. If an account is greater than 30

days overdue, your swimmer will be allowed to enter swim meets only with the board of directors approval. Any member with a balance over \$300 will not be able to swim at meets. Any swimmer on a payment plan and in good standing can still sign up for meets, but has to continue to make payments, plus pay for the meet fee, before they can participate in the meet.

## **Swim Meet Fees**

Swimmers will be charged a meet fee, and in some cases a separate fee per event. The Head Coach is responsible for relaying meet fees and other associated costs to the parents before the swim meet. You can find details on meet fees with each meet's event details on our website. There is always a document from the meet admin.

If your swimmer is entered in a meet but cannot participate for whatever reason, meet fees will still be billed to your account.

Please always accept or decline meet invitations.

## **Coach & Team Travel Fees**

The coach travel fees help the Lawrence Aquahawks offset the costs of sending coaches to meets. These fees will be published before each meet to let members know the cost before attending away meets. Travel fees include round trip mileage, hotel and meals divided by the number of swimmers attending the meet, in addition to the swim meet fees.

The Aquahawks pride themselves on a low swimmer-to-coach ratio in practice, and that principle is true for swim meets as well. It is important to have your swimmer's coach at meets to give them the best possible feedback, and the Aquahawks want to do everything possible to ensure that happens.

## Equipment rental program

Applicable families can rent practice gear from the Aquahawks. The rental program is a significant advantage because when an item gets damaged or outgrown, the family can exchange it for a new one at no additional cost. For active swimmers, this program can save parents lots of money, especially when buying fins. The rental program is \$5/month and is added to your monthly bill. Please contact your coach for more information.

## Leaving the team temporarily or permanently

We understand that swimmers and parents have all kinds of reasons for leaving the team temporarily or permanently.

A temporary leave will **suspend** the swimmer's account and no practices can occur during that time. This would be used in cases of injury or other activities precluding participation in swimming for a month or more. A planned temporary leave must be given by the effective bill date of 20th of the month before absence occurs.

To **cancel** your team membership and leave the team, the account holder must email the head coach, treasurer, and president, giving their intention to leave. This intention must be given by the effective bill date of 20th of the month before leaving the team. All bills must be paid prior to leaving the team or upon receipt of final charges (usually meet fees).

There is a \$50 account reactivation fee when coming back from a suspended account.

# **Group Descriptions and Requirements**

The Lawrence Aquahawks offer professional technique instruction and training. The program is divided into smaller practice groups based on the requirements and expectations listed below for each group. These requirements are flexible and may be altered after the conclusion of the season if the coaching staff sees fit. They are a guide that coaches use to decide which group best fits a swimmer's needs at any given time.

The progression of each swimmer is based on meeting the expectations, time standards, and age. Group advancement is determined by the coaching staff. Swimmers will have the opportunity to advance 3x per year: August, Christmas Break, and the conclusion of the Short Course Season. Please remember that the coaches have your child's best interests at heart. Our program is designed for long-term success and development, not short-term.

The coaching staff for the Lawrence Aquahawks has and will always have a large amount of flexibility when it comes to working with swimmers who are committed and willing to work with the coaching staff to come up with creative solutions to accommodate scheduling conflicts. It is ultimately up to the swimmers and parents of swimmers to communicate with the coaching staff to address possible scheduling conflicts. **The Head Coach decides to rubber-stamp the feasibility of making exceptions for swimmers/athletes and his/her needs without compromising the group's needs and the Lawrence Aquahawks' overall goals.**

## **Guidelines for the skills checklist and questions with movement:**

- As swimmers move through the skills AT THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL PACE, our coaching staff will recommend to the Head Coach when the swimmer should move up into the next highest-level group.
- Any disagreement between a swimmer/parent and the coaching staff regarding a swimmer's completion of these checklist guidelines should be resolved through a discussion between the parent, the swimmer, and the Head Coach.
- If there is still further disagreement, the parent or swimmer may request a discussion with the Head Coach and a member of the BOD.

# **The Lawrence Aquahawks Swim Groups**

Each swimmer is placed into one of the following groups based on their ability. These groups are designed to progress your swimmer properly. We use the guidelines below to teach and progress your swimmer. We will only advance groups when the swimmer is ready.

We do not have a hard practice requirement. We encourage families to try and attend as many practices as they can. We recommend at least three practices per week to see significant progress for our Mini Hawks, Bronze, and Silver groups. We recommend at least four practices per week for Gold and Senior 2. We highly encourage swimmers in Platinum, Senior 1, and High School Prep to attend every practice.

ALL swimmers are encouraged to attend swim meets, especially those hosted by the Aquahawks. Any swimmer who achieves a championship time standard (district, championship, or higher) will attend the championship meet.

## **Mini Hawks**

This is our learn-to-swim group. Swimmers will focus on learning all four strokes and essential skills regarding turns and starts. Coaches will be in the water with the swimmers to provide direct instruction. To be eligible for this group, swimmers must be able to swim 5 yards on their front or back solo. Requirements to move up include 50 freestyle and backstroke, legal dolphin and breaststroke kicks, intro to racing starts, and flip turns.

## **Bronze**

Bronze is our beginning swim team group. Swimmers will continue to focus on learning the four strokes and begin building up endurance. Swimmers will need to advance from mini hawks or be placed in bronze via evaluation. Bronze swimmers will be working on the following skills: swimming up to a 200-yard freestyle, 100-yard backstroke, 50-yard legal fly and breaststroke, racing starts, flip turns, and underwater skills.

## **Silver**

Silver is the next level up. Swimmers in silver will have completed all of the skills listed under the bronze group or will be placed in silver via evaluation. Silver swimmers will be working on all of the previously learned skills, but adding endurance. They will be able to complete workouts while maintaining the correct technique. Swimmers will work on the following: 500 freestyle, breathing patterns for freestyle, backstroke endurance, fly and breaststroke technique, 100-200 yards of each stroke, IM techniques and endurance, starts, intervals, and turns.

## **Gold**

Gold is the more advanced age group. Swimmers will have completed all of the silver skills or will be placed in gold. Swimmers are expected to be able to maintain their perfect technique throughout the entire practice. Gold will be starting to get into written workouts and will be expected to follow them all the way through. The overall goal of gold is to finalize the technique, work on all four strokes, and begin to build the endurance needed for future swimming.

## **Platinum**

This group is our highest age group level. Swimmers in this group are too advanced for the gold technique curriculum and will be focused on swim meet performance. Swimmers in platinum will be working toward achieving district or championship-level time standards. Platinum swimmers will still work on technique but mainly focus on achieving higher time standards. The head coach will promote swimmers into this group once they have completed the gold curriculum.

## **Senior**

The senior group is specifically designed for our high school students. Senior swimmers focus on improving their technique and endurance while reaching for the next level of swimming, whether that be high school state, championships, sectionals, nationals, etc. The senior

group is where swimmers start to specialize in their best events, strokes, and distances, while maintaining a high level of all around fitness. Swimmers are expected to attend a simple majority of the practices offered in any given week, as well as the majority of swim meets. Senior swimmers are the acting leaders of the team and will be held to a higher standard in order to set the example for our younger swimmers.

## **High School Prep**

High School Prep is an extension of our senior group. This group will have the same practices, goals, and opportunities as the senior group, with the exception of attendance. High School Prep swimmers are allowed to come to a maximum of 3 practices/week. They are still expected to attend all 3 practices per week as well as the majority of swim meets. High School Prep is perfect for the swimmers who love to swim but are committed to other activities.

## **College Program**

This program is for our college-aged swimmers to continue swimming without having to worry about financial constraints. Swimmers in this group are expected to have a high school diploma as well as individually fund their own swimming while being enrolled full-time in a post-secondary program. Swimmers who wish to join this group need to set up a meeting with the coaching staff to discuss the specifics of this group.

# **Parent Participation/Volunteer Programs**

The parents of Aquahawks are the backbone of this non-profit organization. We need a robust group of parent volunteers to help when we host meets and other organizational activities and administrative tasks. Without hosting swim meets – and the work that is involved – your monthly dues would be significantly higher, and programs and opportunities for our swimmers would be limited.

We have several ways to volunteer: become a board member; sign up to help with various meet duties for swim meets that we host; become an official(AKA Stroke & Turn Judge); participate in the eat-n-earn; offer to help at fun events for the club; or offer your services. Since we are a non-profit, business owners can donate their services or sponsor us. While we do not require swim meet service hours this year, we wish for your support and we agree with the volunteer objectives that most successful swim clubs have instituted.

1. **To Benefit Swimmers:** Competition allows swimmers to have opportunities to race and test the skills they work so hard to achieve. Sponsoring our meets gives the added benefit of a familiar environment without the added time and expense of traveling.
2. **To Allow the Team to Prosper:** The dollars raised from the meets we host far exceed any other fundraising. This enables the team to keep dues at a reasonable cost while providing the staff, facilities, and equipment required to maintain a premier swim team.
3. **To Get More Families Involved:** Our meets require an average of 45 workers per session. The volunteer program involves all families, so we can continue to host well-run, well-attended, and successful meets. It is also an excellent place for new families to get to know other parents. "Families that play together stay together!!"
4. **To Promote and Actively Support Competitive Swimming in our Community**

# Swim Meet Official program

In appreciation for becoming an official to our co/hosted swim meets in the Missouri Valley, Lawrence Aquahawks will provide the following upon completion of Officials training and shadowing session or in conjunction with Swim Meet officials still being certified and active

1. First year of being an Official is a **\$100 clothing allowance** to be used at the officials' discretion for dress code pants, shirts, shoes, skirts, and shorts. Each year thereafter, there is a maximum of \$25. If you would like your shirt embroidered with Aquahawks logo, that can be done.

Reimbursement requests should be forwarded to [treasurer@aquahawks.org](mailto:treasurer@aquahawks.org)

2. **Mileage reimbursement** for a Lawrence Aquahawks-hosted or co-hosted meet. \$15 per day when an official has worked at least two (2) sessions of a specific co/hosted meet. Reimbursement requests should include the dates of service and be forwarded to [treasurer@aquahawks.org](mailto:treasurer@aquahawks.org).

3. **Meet reimbursement** for up to one (1) swimmer(max \$75) when an official has officiated at least two (2) sessions at a Lawrence Aquahawks-hosted or co-hosted meet. There is a maximum of \$200/year. Reimbursement requests should be forwarded to [treasurer@aquahawks.org](mailto:treasurer@aquahawks.org).

3. **Reimbursement for background check.** Provide a copy of the receipt or certification of completion to [treasurer@aquahawks.org](mailto:treasurer@aquahawks.org).

4. **Reimbursement for registering as a non-athlete/official member of USA Swimming.** Provide a copy of the receipt to [treasurer@aquahawks.org](mailto:treasurer@aquahawks.org).

# Fundraising

## USA SWIM-A-THON

As a non-profit, fundraising is critical to sustain this organization. This is our biggest fundraiser, which helps with important but less visible areas of running a swim team. We also participate in smaller fundraising events throughout the year to help engage families.

The USA Swimming's Swim-A-Thon is a fun annual event, typically held in the fall. **USA Swimming, our national organization, requires each swimmer to participate, whether or not they swim laps at the swim-a-thon.** Five percent of all funds raised are remitted to USA Swimming to support our national organization. The rest goes to the Aquahawks Booster Club, who supports us with above and beyond needs. **If a family has two or more swimmers, they will only be required to raise the amount equal to the highest level amongst their swimmers at the time of the Swim-a-Thon.** The Aquahawks require a specific amount for our club **per swimmer family** by the group as follows:

- Mini-Hawks - \$50
- Bronze - \$100
- High School Flex - \$100
- Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Senior - \$200

There are two options - either pay the amount in full as a donation or collect donations. All are tax deductible. **Any amounts required for fundraising not met will be billed to your account, unless you donate the difference.** In addition, a payment plan is available for those who cannot contribute to the fundraising all at once.

## POLICIES

### Practice Pick-up Policy

Swimmers should be picked up promptly after all practices. If you are running late, please inform the coach by phone or text message. Coach's phone numbers are listed on page 3. Another option is to contact another

parent in your swimmer's group so they can relay the information or supervise your child until you arrive. Please have that parent tell the coach of the arrangement, if you cannot reach the coach. Our coaches often have other obligations following practice, and if a parent is late picking up their swimmer, our coaches must stay with that swimmer. You can find the contact information for each coach on the website.

## Code of Conduct

From our bylaws, the conduct and behavior of individual swimmers are the responsibility of their parents or guardians. The coach (on deck) or the parent or guardian shall handle behavior deemed disruptive or unsafe.

I. The following provisions pertain to practices, local swim meets, meetings, and other social activities where swimmers represent the Lawrence Aquahawks. The team's Code of Conduct is in accordance with USA Swimming & Safe Sport. Additional information can be found under the Safe Sport Tab on the team's website.

A. Swimmers and family members shall exhibit good sportsmanship in and out of the pool.

B. Swimmers and family members shall follow the rules during practices, meets, and team events.

C. While attending meets, swimmers shall abide by the curfews and instructions from coaches, officials, and chaperones.

D. Swimmers and family members shall show respect for all property.

E. Swimmers and family members shall behave responsibly and are prohibited from possessing or using alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, or banned substances.

F. Swimmers and family members shall not use cell phones or cameras in the locker room or behind the starting blocks.

G. Swimmers and family members shall abide by the USA Swimming **bullying policy** as written below:

**"Bullying" is prohibited.** For these purposes, the term "bullying" shall mean, regardless of when or where it may occur, the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members ("Members") of an 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: (i) causing physical or emotional harm to the other Member or damage to the other Member's property; (ii) placing the other Member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creating a hostile environment for the other Member at any USA Swimming activity; (iv) infringing on the rights of the other Member at any USA Swimming activity; or (v) materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC)."

II. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct will result in any or all of the following disciplinary actions.

- A. A swimmer may not be allowed to participate in practices, meets, social activities, or meetings.
- B. A swimmer may be sent home immediately from a meet or training trip at the swimmer's and their family's expense.
- C. A swimmer and their family will be responsible for any damage caused by the swimmer.
- D. A swimmer may be suspended from membership in USA Swimming.
- E. A swimmer may be suspended from Lawrence Aquahawks Swimming.

III. The Board of Directors is responsible for reviewing a written summary of alleged violations of the Code of Conduct, as well as any disciplinary actions that have been and may be taken.

## **Communication and Conflict Resolution Policy**

Communication between parents, coaches, and the swimmer is crucial to a successful swimming and team experience. We offer these guidelines and suggestions for optimal communication. **If you have any concerns or**

**questions, please do not hesitate to contact a coach or board member.**

The best way to communicate with your child's coach is to schedule a meeting or meet with them before or after practice. Coaches are asked to arrive 15 minutes early and leave 15 minutes after practices to make time for swimmer and parent questions. Unless a coach has a prior engagement, they usually have time to answer questions or provide information after practice.

Please feel free to email your child's coach with any questions about their participation in the program. If you have questions regarding billing, volunteering, fundraising, or general questions about meets, please email or contact a member of the Board. You should expect a reply within 48 hours of your inquiry.

Please remember that the coaches have your child's best interests at heart. The coach must also balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a practice group.

Communication is also the best way to reduce conflicts within any club. Aquahawks families should follow the procedures below regarding problems, questions, or complaints:

- If a parent has a concern about their swimmer, they should speak with the coach outside of practice time.
- If a parent and coach disagree, the parent should air their concern with the head coach.
- If still dissatisfied, the parent should air their concern with the Board of Directors president, who will make every effort to resolve the situation. At their discretion, the BOD president may suggest bringing the situation to the attention of the entire Board of Directors.
- If the issue has not been resolved to the member's satisfaction, any member can ask the President of the Board of Directors to place the issue on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting.

If a fellow team member approaches you with complaints about a coach's performance or policies, encourage the member to speak directly to the coach and follow the conflict resolution guidelines listed above.

## **Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy**

The Lawrence Aquahawks recognize the prevalence of electronic communication in today's world. Many of our swimmers use this as their primary method of communication. While the team acknowledges the value of electronic communication, the team also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use electronic communication with minors. The Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy is in accordance with USA Swimming's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP). The official MAAPP policy can be found on the Aquahawks' website.

### **General Content**

All communications between Applicable Adults and an athlete must be professional and communicate information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and MAAPP regarding Athlete Protection. For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication **should not contain** or relate to any of the following:

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

**Note:** Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationships, family issues, or personal problems must be transparent, accessible, and professional.

## **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 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.

**Hours:** Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. local time for the location of the Minor Athlete unless emergency circumstances exist or during competition travel.

## **Social Media Accounts**

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 allowed 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" Lawrence Aquahawks and LSC's official pages on social media platforms.

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant, or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

## **Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications**

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by Lawrence Aquahawks, LSC, or by an Applicable Adult subject to Safe Sport MAAP. The organization must abide by any request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.

# **HELPFUL INFORMATION**

## **Aquahawks Parents' Role in Conduct**

We take pride in developing world-class kids in an environment of excellence.

As a parent in the Aquahawks Swim Team, your primary responsibility is to encourage and support your child's sports participation. Parents are generally expected to show interest and provide support by ensuring their child's attendance at practices, attending and volunteering to help at swim meets, and participating in club activities. In accepting to be a part of the Aquahawks Swim Team, parents of swimmers participating in the program agree to adhere to the following code of conduct:

1) Be a Good Role Model- Parents serve as role models, and their children invariably emulate their attitudes and behavior. Be aware of this and strive to be positive role models. Most importantly, show respect and good sportsmanship at all times toward other swimmers, coaches, officials, and opponents. Remember that you are teaching your child at all times. "I will be a positive role model for my child and the team."

2) Be Enthusiastic and Supportive - Positive reinforcement is the best way to help your child achieve goals and reduce the natural fear of failure. No one likes to make a mistake. If your child does make one, remember that this is a learning experience. You and your child should learn to treat success and failure as learning experiences and not life-changing situations. Encourage your child's efforts and point out the positive things. Your role is to provide love and support regardless of the outcome. "I will support my child, the team, the coaches, and other members. I will refrain from making negative comments. I further agree to address concerns through the proper channels."

3) Remember that Your Child is the Swimmer- Children need to establish their own goals and progress towards those goals on their own schedules. Be careful not to impose your standards and goals. Do not overburden your child by achieving the best times, making time standards, or winning. Keep

your swimmer's development in the proper perspective. "I understand that my child is the swimmer and this is his/their activity."

4) Let the Coaches Coach – Parents are expected to refrain from making stroke corrections, judging performance, or trying to coach their swimmer in any way. The coach has been hired to teach technique, design the training program, and evaluate your swimmer's performance. When parents interfere with opinions on how the swimmer should swim, it causes considerable confusion about who the swimmer should listen to and respect. If you have questions about the Aquahawks program and/or if you can offer insight on your child that will enable the coach to be more effective, please speak with the coach. "I realize the importance of one coaching voice; I will let the coach coach."

5) Be a Positive and Constructive Communicator- If questions, concerns, or problems arise, we readily encourage and want parents to contact our coaches. Parents often feel more comfortable discussing concerns or disagreements with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but this approach often creates new problems. If the coach cannot satisfactorily answer a question or resolve a concern, you should then take your concern directly to the Head Coach. Finally, if you are not satisfied after speaking with the Head Coach, you should talk to the president of the Board. By following this procedure, we ensure that the people best able to answer your questions or solve problems are the first individuals contacted. "I understand the chain of command for addressing issues, concerns, or complaints. I further agree to address concerns through the proper channels and not to discuss issues outside of these channels."

6) Swim Meet Protocol- Any questions parents may have concerning meet results, an officiating call, the conduct of a meet, and/or the meet facility should be referred to the coaching staff only. Our coaches, in turn, will pursue the question or matter through appropriate channels. Following USA Swimming rules, parents are expected to remain in the spectator area and off the immediate competitive deck unless they are working the meet in an official capacity. "I understand and agree to abide by the swim meet protocol and will not directly question officiating calls or other issues that arise at a competition."

7) Support the Team – Volunteering is essential to the Aquahawks program. The team depends on parent volunteers to successfully fulfill the goals and objectives of the club for many activities. These activities address the primary functions of hosting swim meets, fundraising, and administrative support. Membership requires that all families volunteer a minimum number of sessions at swim meets hosted by the Aquahawks, as well as other activities deemed necessary to support the team. “I will support the team as an active volunteer and promise to fulfill my volunteer commitment.”

## **Time Standards**

The Lawrence Aquahawks adhere to the Missouri Valley Swimming Time Standards to determine a swimmer’s eligibility for Level and Division Championship Meets. To view Missouri Valley Swimming, USA Swimming, and Central Zone time standards for long course and short course, please click on the MVS logo on the Lawrence Aquahawks website or use the link below:

<http://www.missourivalleyswimming.com/standards/index.asp>

If you register with USA Swimming, you can track your swimmers’ times and participation at meets too.

## **Eat Smart**

Please talk to your coaches about dietary habits. Swimmers burn more calories than the average child, and they must have the correct amount of food in their system to maintain a healthy weight. The coaching staff recommends having three full meals per day and two different snack periods. Swimmers will benefit from being fueled by foods high in carbohydrates, proteins, and healthy fats.

If there are questions or concerns about a swimmer's diet, the coaching staff reserves the right to discuss them with the swimmer's parents. Coaches are trained in nutrition, especially swimmers' nutrition. We HIGHLY recommend that parents talk to the coaches before doing their research and findings on swimmers’ nutrition.

# Safe Sport

The Lawrence Aquahawks are committed to USA Swimming's Safe Sport program. Please refer to the Safe Sports link on our website or on USA Swimming. All athletes age 18+ MUST complete and renew annually, the "Athlete Protection Training" through Safe Sport in order to swim and compete in meets. Coaches and parents on the Board of Directors are also required to take the appropriate version of "Athlete Protection Training" through Safe Sport and renew it annually as warranted by their involvement with the team.