

Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP) Frequently Asked Questions
Compiled by Eastern and Central Zone LSC Safe Sport chairs
May 2019

Q: Is there a template signature statement for all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs to be utilized by our club to ensure the language we use is appropriate? **A: Not yet.**

In the coming weeks, USA Swimming will be posting sample parent written consent documents on www.usaswimming.org/maapp for the areas in which such are permitted in MAAPP:

- Written permission for an unrelated adult athlete to share hotel, sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with a minor athlete;
- Written permission for an unrelated applicable adult to provide local transportation to a minor athlete;
- Written permission for an unrelated applicable adult to travel to competition alone with a minor athlete;
- Written permission for a mental health care professional or health care provider to have one-on-one interaction with a minor athlete; and
- Written permission for a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional or health care provider to treat a minor athlete.

This is the verbiage that we are to use as an overlay or insert into current club policies. It can't be edited or changed. Apart from these allowances for written legal guardian permission, there are no waivers of the policy allowed.

Q: What is an "Applicable Adult"? Is an 18 year-old athlete an "Applicable Adult"?

A: Applicable Adults

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

Q. Are there any defining criteria for board members to become non athlete members?

A: Anyone who has direct and frequent contact with athlete, must be a USA Swimming member and complete the background check and APT. This comes from the rulebook Article 305.5. Teams could make all of their board members be USA Swimming members if they wanted.

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Q. What if BOD Members are not non-athlete members?

A: Now that they could be applicable adults we should be able to consistently articulate this to all of our clubs.

Q. Do all Masters swimmers (all are members of USMS) need to take APT or just Masters swimmers who are USS members as well as USMS?

A: Just Masters swimmers who are also USA Swimming members need to take the APT.

Q: When am I an Applicable Adult?

A: Once you trigger any of the four descriptions of an Applicable Adult you are an Applicable Adult.

Q: How long do I retain Applicable Adult status?

A: An individual is an Applicable Adult for as long as one of the four descriptions applies to that individual.

Q: What if I am a USA Swimming coach member and also an NCAA coach, when am I an Applicable Adult?

A: A USA Swimming non-athlete member is an Applicable Adult. A USA Swimming non-athlete member retains Applicable Adult status for as long as the individual is a USA Swimming non-athlete member. The USA Swimming non-athlete member and the associated Applicable Adult statuses do not “turn off” when acting as an NCAA coach.

Q: How is “adult athlete” defined?

A: An adult athlete is an athlete member age 18 and over.

Q: Are chaperones Applicable Adults?

A: Yes. Chaperones are adults authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete and therefore trigger Applicable Adult status.

Q: Are junior coaches Applicable Adults?

A: Yes. Junior coaches under the age of 18 are Applicable Adults because they are USA Swimming non-athlete members. Junior coaches are perceived to be in a position of power or authority over minor athletes. As a result, junior coaches must be educated on the importance of boundaries between adults and youth are important. This knowledge base will be important for junior coaches who become adult coaches.

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Q: Are parent meet volunteers Applicable Adults?

A: Yes. A parent meet volunteer is an Applicable Adult if the parent triggers any of the four descriptions of an Applicable Adult. For example, if the volunteer is authorized to have regular contact or authority over minor athletes during the meet, that volunteer is an Applicable Adult.

Q: Please clarify the limitations as to the following with regards to interactions of their peers.

Specifically, and 18-year-old athlete and a 16-year-old team mate: There are NO USA SWIMMING LIMITATIONS placed on the relationship of peers outside of club team supervised events. MAAPP applies to the athletes only during a club team supervised event like practice or meets. Outside of club or team supervised time, the USA Swimming MAAPP policy does not apply and those student athletes can maintain their normal peer relationship with each other.

- Carpooling. They can still carpool.
- Texting and other social media They can still communicate and have social media connections.
- Locker room and the various stages of undress Adult athletes can still use the locker room, along with other applicable adults, they just can't expose themselves. "Expose" would mean flaunting yourself around etc.

Q. Additionally, what are these 18+ athletes required to complete under the rules of Safe Sport, or other? For instance, are they required to complete On- line course work? USA-S background checks? Other? 18+ athletes are required to complete the same Athlete Protection Training that we as non-athlete members are required to take. They do not have to complete a background check.

- Also, are these athletes required to pay the full cost of these education requirements and the full USA background check, or may they provide State Police and Child Protective Services background checks (PA), which are offered at no cost to the individual or club. Answer: They do not have to complete a background check. Athlete Protection Training is free to all members.

Q. What are the locker room expectations with regards to an unrelated "Applicable Adults" in locker rooms at places such as YMCA's, where adult YMCA members (not necessarily team members) share locker room facilities; as it is common for adult members to walk throughout locker rooms in various stages of undress, and as the MAAPP indicates that "applicable Adults" must not expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to a minor athlete under any circumstance? Would these non- team adults be excluded from this requirement?

A: Yes. MAAPP only applies to those who are applicable adults. Outside adults who are not covered under the description of Applicable Adults are not subject to the policy.

Q: Are we required to submit an action plan to our LSC regarding our implementation of MAAPP?

A: No.

Q: We currently follow USA Swimming's Safe Sport Program. Is there additional policies we need to implement from USA Swimming in addition to MAAPP?

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A: No. MAAPP is meant to be an overlay to your existing policies.

Required Policies include: Team Travel, Electronic Communication, Anti-Bullying Plan, and Locker Room Use/Monitoring. Strongly Recommend: Photography

Q: Are there additional resources that you can direct us to that will enable our club to successfully implement MAAPP?

A: Yes. We will be sending out tools on a weekly basis as they become available, or you can also check www.usaswimming.org/maapp

Q: Applicable Adults: if a parent works as a volunteer at a non-USA swimming meet are they one?(like another swim league)

A: No.

Q: *Since most clubs require home meet volunteering, ALL parents on a team would be Applicable Adults?*

A: *No. Volunteering for a meet position does not require that person to be a non-athlete member for your club. Only those positions that require non-athlete member registration with USA swimming (or Athlete members 18 and older that are registered with usa swimming) would apply. That said, there will be verbal review of expectations that will eventually need to be reviewed with meet volunteers during their shift.*

Q: Sunscreen application: parents can't apply it to other kids at a meet OR at any time outside of swimming if said child is on the swim team?

A: No. Parents can apply sunscreen to athletes when there is consent. They must first ask permission to apply it and then state to the athlete where they will touch before they start.

Q: Scenario: my daughter has a spa sleepover party with swim friends: myself or my 18 year old swimmer can't massage another child or apply a facial?

A: No. This is not a club organized event. MAAPP does not apply.

Q: Will all practice carpool drivers/parents now need a permission slip through our club to carpool other kids without a second adult in the vehicle?

A: No. The rule applies to 1:1 contact. One adult with two or more minors in the car does not apply. Similarly, two adults to one minor in the car does not apply. It also does not apply to those emergent spontaneous situations or in a moment when it's necessary for an adult to take only one minor home and it's not their own child.

Q: The swimmer gets dropped off/picked up at the curb for practices: as a club are we expected to police who that driver is?

A: No. Clubs are not expected to monitor or enforce this. Every applicable adult is expected to follow the rules however the clubs are expected to communicate with and educate all applicable adults on the expectations within the MAAPP policy.

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Q: Does this trickle- down effect only apply to USA Sports that feed the Olympics? Meaning if one were involved in a sport under AAU or another governing body, will these new policies be affecting them too.

A: No. Right now, it is only U.S. Center for Safe Sport NGB's (National Governing Bodies).

Q: Must all senior athletes take APT?

A: All 18 and over swimmers must take the APT training.

Q: I understand that any electronic communication between a minor athlete and a coach (email - text - phone call) must include the parent or legal guardian of that athlete. The question I have is, does it have to be the parent / guardian of the minor athlete, or is including another coach sufficient? For example, I as a coach want to send a group text about practice to my Senior swimmers (25 of them). Do I also have to include 25 parents as well?

A: USA Swimming says any one-on-one communication must copy a legal guardian. If it is a group then you only have to copy another adult.

Q: May an 18 or 19 year old athlete communicate with their teammate who is under the age of 18 without including a parent or guardian on the text / email / phone call?

A: As MAAPP reads, it is complicated for an athlete who is 18 and still has friends on the team, or is a junior coach. If the adult athlete has "authority over" the minor athletes then they need to follow the expectations. If they do not have "authority over" then this portion of the policy would not apply. They are not trying to keep friends from being friends or stop them from dating.

Q: What happens when my brand new junior coach texts a minor athlete about a carpool issue?

A: For some clarity, MAAPP violations by athletes over 18 involving minor athletes over the age of 14 may be treated as learning opportunities, rather than punitively. This addresses an appropriate age gap and it helps create and foster an environment of expectations for when an athlete might move on and become a coach or involved in the sport in another way as an adult. If the adult athlete has "authority over" the minor athletes then they need to follow the expectations. If they do not have "authority over" then this portion of the policy would not apply. We are not trying to keep friends from being friends or stop them from dating. If the junior coach has "authority over", which they do, then they need to follow the rules.

Q: May a junior coach use the same locker room as minor athletes?

A: MAAPP does not preclude a junior coach from using the locker room, they just need to follow the same expectations as a coach would if they are in that authoritative role.

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Q: Some of our families regularly use local massage therapists to assist in their athletes training. This is in no way facilitated by our team, nor is it done on any specific direction of any of our coaches. One parent was concerned that they would have to give us waivers of consent for each massage even though it was a private family decision. My reading of the policy leads me to believe that an outside masseur, unaffiliated with our team, would not count as an Applicable Adult.

A: This interpretation is correct.

Q: Another question arose regarding male coaches and training. Is it permissible for a male coach to swim (in a suit and with an exposed chest), hop out of the pool, throw on shorts and a tee shirt and proceed to coach? This is not common practice on our team, but clarification would be appreciated as it seems that such an occurrence may violate the Undress section (III) of Locker Rooms and Changing Areas even if his 'exposure' was during the normal execution of our sport.

A: yes, a coach, male or female, could be in a suit doing in water technique training, support and coaching. The exposed chest etc. falls into locker rooms specifically.

Q: We understand that minor athletes may friend our team's social media (facebook) page. Does this require that we then not post to our social media page after 8pm? I'm thinking particularly of finals sessions, when we often have news of great swims to share.

A: No, this does not mean that you can't post on the team's public social media page after 8:00pm. This rule applies to electronic communication.

Q: I run a committee with athlete members, and we generally meet online via Zoom or Google Hangout. How does MAAPP impact our meeting time options?

A: In person and group meetings will not be affected. The athlete communication rule is for electronic communication to be sent only between the hours of 8am-8pm. Exceptions can be made to that rule as well for or during travel meets.

Q: While USA's policy says that the MAAPP applies to all "applicable adults" and goes on to define those, it is not clear what portions of the policy apply to timers, meet marshals, other volunteers on deck

A: The entire policy applies to all applicable adults

Q: Do all the timers / marshals / meet staff need to take APT training?

A: No

Q: Locker Room situations:

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A: The exposure of breasts, buttocks, etc: this refers to the acts of flaunting or exposing unnecessarily. If you are modestly changing in the locker room, you are fine. If you are flaunting yourself unclothed, that is the exposure addressed in the MAAPP policy.

Q. Regarding car-pooling scenario clarification:

A: the MAAPP policy applies to applicable adults and it is about limiting consistent 1:1 ratio between an adult and a minor- It is not about limiting situations to only relatives, or making situations difficult. The rules are very reasonable. 1 applicable adult to multiple athletes is fine. Similarly, 2 or more adults to 1 minor is also fine. The policy is also about the repetitive 1:1 ratio and is not applicable for the one off situation, the emergent situations, the "life happens" situations that will occur. There is no pattern with those situations.

Q: Texting scenario clarification:

A: Having multiple minors on a text with an adult athlete is fine- similarly having multiple adult athletes on a text with 1 minor is also fine. 1:1 text between an adult athlete and a minor is also fine outside of club associated pieces as life activities and peer activities can continue to that degree and this policy is not meant to disrupt the regular peer communication. Right now, this time is more educational to train on the expectation, and to implement best practices when communicating- many communicate in group chats and that is not an issue at all.

Q: How will the Athlete Training Work:

A: At this time, Adult Athletes will be trained, and to understand the policy and expectations as it applies to them as an adult member of USA Swimming., while we as an LSC and CLUB continue to provide the training, education and steer the change of habits that we need to establish. There is not going to be punitive retaliation for some of the situations outlined below. So keeping it in perspective, with the right thing to do with minimizing the recurring pattern of a 1:1 ratio situation of an adult to a minor on an ongoing repetitive basis is what is being managed by the MAAPP policy.

Q: Will 18+ athletes, now required to complete the same no cost Athlete Protection Training that coaches, etc. are required to take, have a window of time to complete such training? Or does the door shut on them on their 18th birthday, affecting their permission to compete?

A: After June 23rd, athletes who are 17 and about to turn 18 will have a 30 day grace period after their 18th birthday to complete the training. After that grace period they will not be allowed to swim. Athletes who are 18 now (May 23rd) or will turn 18 in the next month must complete the training by the MAAPP implementation date, June 23rd, 2019.

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