

Travel Policy & Guidelines

Team travel is an important component to our mission and a necessity to maximize our team and individual goals. The staff sets the best possible travel schedule with the following considerations:

1. Appropriate level of competition to continue to challenge our swimmers with the idea of “peak performance” being a primary consideration
2. Amount of missed school
3. Cost of travel
4. Ability to staff travel meet and keep program covered at home

The logistics of setting up and organizing these trips are very difficult and time consuming. We must make commitments to hotels, car rental agencies and airlines well in advance of our trip if we are to secure safe, efficient and economical travel. This is not an easy task and we are 100% subject to the regulations and policies of the businesses we are contracting with in terms of number of rooms, number of seats, etc. We face serious restrictions and penalties if we change arrangements “at the last minute”. Changes such as these require us to change the entire trip dynamics (room lists, hotel rooms needed, number of rental cars, number of coaches attending and ultimately our trip budget). In many cases, these last-minute changes cause an increase in the cost of others attending the trip, and is responsible for significant and unnecessary financial loss to the team due to penalties levied by hotels and rental vans.

Based on the above, we are instituting the following travel trip policies:

A. If you choose to travel with the team exclusively you will abide by all team travel rules and submit payment for travel costs prior to departure. You will be able to designate this on each travel trip info form.

B. If you travel on your own you are still subject to “team travel costs”. Staff travel costs are spread throughout all participants, and it is not fair that those traveling on their own and receiving the benefit of having staff at the meet, do not share in this expense. This expense will vary based on

how many swimmers attend the meet and how many coaches and chaperones are necessary. The following are the team expenses that are factored in when determining travel costs.

- Staff flight costs
- Staff per-diem costs
- Staff accommodations

Those who commit to attending team travel meets, and who subsequently “cancel” after trip arrangements have been finalized, will be billed penalties levied against the team and/or any additional costs incurred by having to adjust our arrangements.

All trip payment schedules must be strictly adhered to, as we are contractually bound by hotels and rental car companies relative to their payment requirements of us. Payments can be made by, credit card or check.

C. Exceptions will be made for those who are unable to travel due to illness. We will make every attempt to get as much of your trip payment back as possible. This is always contingent on the contracting agency’s refund policies.

D. Parents are always welcome to attend these travel meets and stay at the “team” hotel. However, one of our goals is to teach kids how to be independent and responsible when travelling and to take care of business without mom and dad doing everything for them. If your children make a USA National team trip you will have limited interaction with your kids and they will be expected to take care of business on their own. The kids must have experiences where they can be tested in these areas, and find their own way to success. Those parents staying at the team hotel often volunteer to help (meal prep) and this is greatly appreciated, but we must always, as an organization, be cognizant of our supervision requirements and liabilities. The staff is fully insured, trained and certified by USA Swimming to perform these duties. Volunteer parents do not have this

liability coverage and training, so any supervision role you play must be limited. The following example may help clarify this issue:

Dad attends the meet and stays at the team hotel. He wishes to say goodnight to his 13-year-old daughter so he proceeds to go to her room to say goodnight. He walks into the room while his 13-year-old daughter's roommate is changing to get ready for bed. This is a major violation of our travel policies yet a very innocent mistake. Therefore we must delineate between "team travel" and "individual travel". The more appropriate action above would have been to call the coaches and let them know you wish to see your daughter. The staff would have called the room to ensure that all swimmers were dressed appropriately prior to dad going to the room. Dad would then ask his daughter to come out in the hallway and not enter the room. The swimmer's responsibility would have been to check who is at the door via the door peep hole, prior to opening the door.

Our goal is to provide a safe and secure environment for kids traveling with the team and be aware of their many needs. Parents can often be very helpful in accomplishing this goal, provided their help is a coordinated effort and approved by the staff in charge.

Travel Meet Guidelines – Parent Participation

We encourage and support the attendance of our parents on team travel trips. To optimize supervision, safety and a competitive environment, we ask that parents follow the guidelines listed below:

- Parents are welcome to stay at the same hotel as swimmers as long as they do not interfere with our trip itinerary or schedules.
- Parents are responsible for their own travel arrangements and costs.
- Parents wishing to spend time (meals, etc.) with their children may do so if they inform the coaches in advance and do not interfere with our group goals & schedules.
- Parents are not allowed to participate in the supervision of swimmers unless they are USA swimming members and have an approved USA Swimming background check. Parents are NOT allowed to enter the rooms of swimmers. If wishing to visit a son or daughter, you must

inform coaches first and do so outside of the team room. This is to protect the privacy of your child's roommate and adhere to USA Swimming "best practices travel guidelines".

Travel Trip Notes & Procedures

Approximately 6-8 weeks prior to any scheduled travel competition, we will distribute a preliminary trip outline & cost. All trips are cost out, to cover all trip expenses (see travel support below). You will need to indicate your travel intentions by the deadline listed on trip information. Please review the following notes related to travel.

Hotel Arrangements

We prefer to stay in hotels as opposed to motels for security and comfort reasons. We will always work to have refrigerators in all rooms. Generally speaking, we will room 2 to a room and all athletes will have their own beds. There may be deviations from this based on the "type" of travel trip and ages of athletes.

Flights

Presently all individuals are required to purchase your own flights for group travel meets. You will need to refer to the trip information to find details on flight arrangements, and are always welcome to purchase on a different flight with similar departure and arrival time to help with cost and/or miles.

Meals

The situation for meals will depend on the meet, group size, timelines, and logistics. Refer to trip information for details on the meal arrangement. If athletes will be responsible for their own meals, we use the following as a cost guide for meals;

Breakfast usually provided at hotel or breakfast foods in rooms

Lunch Usually between prelims and finals, approx. \$10.00

Dinner Approx. \$15-20

Travel Meet Rules

THE FOLLOWING RULES ARE TO INFORM THE SWIMMER, CHAPERONES, AND PARENTS OF THE GENERAL GUIDELINES REGARDING EXPECTED BEHAVIOR WHILE ATTENDING TRAVEL MEETS. ANYONE WHO CONDUCTS HIMSELF/HERSELF IN A MANNER NOT COVERED BY THE RULES BUT IS CONSIDERED BY THE COACH TO BE BEHAVING INAPPROPRIATELY OR NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF HIM/HERSELF OR THE TEAM WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION. THIS MAY INCLUDE BEING SENT HOME AT HIS OR HER EXPENSE AND/OR BEING RESTRICTED FROM ATTENDING FUTURE TRAVEL MEETS WITH THE TEAM OR IN EXTREME CASES BE REMOVED FROM THE TEAM. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SWIMMER TO CONSULT WITH THE COACH ON MATTERS THAT ARE NOT COVERED IN THE RULES BUT WHICH MIGHT BE CONSTRUED “NEGATIVELY” BY THE COACH.

1. In general, each swimmer who is deemed by the coaching staff as eligible to attend a travel meet should be considerate of his/her teammates; must realize the reputation of *Ford Aquatics*, as well as the individual will be dependent upon his/her behavior; understand that the trip is designed for improvement and experience in his/her competitive swimming.
2. A specific schedule will be distributed to all swimmers and chaperons with information concerning warm-ups, curfews and other pertinent information. If you have any questions, see the coach immediately. Circumstances beyond our control may require schedule changes – be prepared for such changes!
3. Punctuality is essential! We will usually have meals as a team, go to warm-ups as a group, etc. Each swimmer should bring an alarm clock on these trips. Do not inconvenience the rest of the group by being

late. Our vans leave on time! Vans driven by coaches will only seat as many passengers as there are seatbelts available. If you miss the van, call a cab to get to the pool.

4. First impressions such as politeness and neat appearance are very important to the swimmer's personal image, as well as that of the team, *Arizona Swimming* and the sport. When Ford Aquatics attends special functions or travel as a team, swimmers must be clean, neatly dressed and groomed. Check with your coach if you are not sure what to wear. Politeness and good behavior are required at all times, especially in hotels, airports and restaurants.
5. Please ensure swimmers' have a means of paying for lunches and snacks at the grocery store. Parents of younger swimmers may arrange for one of the coaches to carry and disperse the child's money if they wish.
6. After prelims, swimmers should eat lunch and return to their rooms to rest.
7. All swimmers, whether they swim in finals or not, will return to finals each evening. At the discretion of the coach, this rule may be waived for unusual circumstances.
8. Male and female swimmers are not allowed in the same room at any time. At the curfew, all swimmers must be in and remain in their assigned rooms. Lights out will be no later than 30 minutes after the curfew, unless otherwise set by staff. If males and females are found together in the same room, they will be sent home as soon as possible and further disciplinary action will be taken.
9. No drinking of alcoholic beverages, smoking or consumption of marijuana or other drugs will be tolerated. Any *Ford* athlete who violates this rule will be immediately sent home and further disciplinary action will be taken. Further, any *Ford* athlete found in the presence of others (regardless of team affiliation) participating in the above activities will be subject to the same punishment.
10. Lounge/bar areas are OFF LIMITS to swimmers.
11. It is a team goal that we travel as a team. We prefer not to make special arrangements, which inhibit this goal. The team has worked very hard to secure the best possible travel arrangements for the group.

12. Baggage is usually restricted to one travel bag and one carry-on swim bag. Pack your swim suit, goggles, towel and other swim items in the swim bag and bring it with you on the plane.
13. Payment for all trips must occur on a timely basis. Make sure that you are aware of all trip expenses.
14. Being included on a team travel trip is a privilege and not a right. Athletes earn the right to be included in a team travel trip by maintaining good work ethics (listening and following the directions of the coaching staff, meet or exceed minimum attendance goals set for the swimmer's group). For team trips which will require swimmers to miss one or more school days, swimmer's current GPA should be a 2.5 or higher.
15. Make sure you inform teachers well in advance of missed dates and schedule any necessary make-up work in advance.
16. Bring books and study materials with you. You are expected to do school work on travel trips if necessary to maintain your grades.
17. All Ford athletes must follow the Team Uniform policy for all meets. This includes team suit, cap, jacket, and any meet specific uniform plan.

Restaurant Behavior

FORD swimmers are expected to:

1. Use responsible table manners at all times
2. Be polite to the waiter/waitress
3. Do not leave with any "souvenirs" unless you pay for them
4. A 10% to 15% tip must added to the bill (unless it is already included)
5. If you feel that service was unsatisfactory, consult your coach
6. Do not leave a mess at your table

Airport / Hotel Behavior

FORD swimmers are expected to:

- Exhibit good manners and behavior – loud and boisterous behavior will not be tolerated in rooms, hallways, or public areas.
- All long-distance calls must be collect or on credit cards.
- All room charges not included in the travel arrangements (local calls, room service, etc.) must be paid for the evening prior to check-out.
- Any damage or thievery will be at the expense of the individual swimmer and further disciplinary action will be taken!
- Coaches will have a meeting at hotel to go over hotel and safety procedures.
- Doors and windows should remain locked at all times.
- Swimmers should use peephole prior to answering door and be dressed appropriately when opening the door.