



## **Grievance Procedure**

Violations of GSC's athlete, coach, and parent codes of conduct, as well as violations of other team policies should be reported in a productive, systematic way that allows the appropriate parties to investigate and intervene, and take disciplinary action when needed.

There are occasions when a problem arises (e.g., verbal or physical altercation) where immediate intervention is required. With the exception of such issues that immediately affect the health and safety of swimmers and that therefore need urgent attention during a team activity (practice, meet, etc.), all grievances should be reported per the procedure outlined below.

### **Types of Grievances**

Issues that should be reported generally fall into the following categories:

1. Swimmer conduct
2. Group coach conduct
3. Head coach conduct
4. Team parent conduct
5. Meet participant conduct (includes officials and athletes, coaches, and parents from other teams)

### **Grievance Chain-of-Command**

Depending on the nature of the issue, the following chain-of-command for grievances should be followed.

*Swimmer conduct:* Contact the swimmer's group coach  
Should a parent or swimmer feel another swimmer's conduct is inappropriate or violates GSC's Athlete Code of Conduct or any club policies (including MAAPP), the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with their own group coach or the group coach of the swimmer implicated in the violation. This complaint should be made in person before or after practice or in writing. Group coaches will ensure that the head coach and team administrator are notified of the complaint and will participate in

assessing behavior and determining the appropriate response plan. The head coach will determine whether the GSC Grievance Advisory Committee should be convened.

*Group coach conduct:* Contact the head coach

Should a parent or swimmer feel a group coach's conduct is inappropriate or violates GSC's Coach Code of Conduct or any club policies (including MAAPP), the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the head coach. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. The head coach will ensure that the team administrator and ownership are notified of the complaint and will assess the behavior and determine the appropriate response plan. The head coach will determine whether the GSC Grievance Advisory Committee should be convened.

*Head coach conduct:* Contact the GSC Grievance Advisory Committee (grievancecommittee@gatorswimclub.com)

Should a parent or swimmer feel the head coach's conduct is inappropriate or violates GSC's Coach Code of Conduct or any club policies (including MAAPP), the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the GSC Grievance Advisory Committee. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. The GSC Grievance Advisory Committee will assess the behavior and advise club ownership on the appropriate response plan.

*Team parent conduct:* Contact the head coach and/or team administrator

Should a parent or swimmer feel another parent's conduct is inappropriate or violates GSC's Parent Code of Conduct or any club policies (including MAAPP), the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the head coach if it is an immediate threat or the team administrator if there is no immediate risk to athlete health and safety. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. The head coach will ensure that the team administrator and ownership are notified of the complaint and will assess the behavior and determine the appropriate response plan. The head coach will determine whether the GSC Grievance Advisory Committee should be convened.

*Meet participant conduct:* Contact the head coach and/or team administrator

Should a parent or swimmer feel that the conduct of an official or athlete/coach/parent from another team at a meet (GSC-hosted or otherwise) is inappropriate or violates USA Swimming, Florida Swimming, or GSC policies (including MAAPP), the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the head coach if it is an immediate threat or the team administrator if there is no immediate risk to athlete health and safety. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. The head coach will ensure that the team administrator and ownership are notified of the complaint and will assess the behavior and determine the appropriate response plan. If necessary, a complaint about an official will be forwarded on to Florida Swimming.

### **Grievance Response Process**

Based on the chain-of-command, the appropriate individuals will follow the process below in addressing a submitted grievance.

1. Gather information: The appropriate individuals will reach out to the person who filed the grievance and the person against whom the grievance is being filed to ask questions about what happened. Other witnesses may be contacted for additional information. All information will be recorded and stored by the team on an incident report form.
2. Assess behavior: The behavior of the person against whom the grievance was filed will be compared against GSC codes of conduct, team policies, facility rules, USA Swimming Code of Conduct, USA Swimming Safe Sport policies, and applicable local and state laws. This assessment phase will consider the following:
  - Nature of the misconduct
  - Severity of the violation of the above codes, policies, rules, and/or laws
  - Adverse impacts of the misconduct (on individuals involved and the club)
  - Prior disciplinary actions taken against the person who is the subject of the grievance
3. Determine appropriate consequences and club next-steps.

### **Grievance Consequences and Club Next-Steps**

The head coach and club ownership have the authority to impose penalties for infractions of GSC's Athlete, Parent, and Coach Codes of Conduct or any behavior(s) they deem deleterious to the best interests of the club or other swimmers.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to the list below.

- For incidents requiring immediate intervention:
  - Verbal warnings and/or explanation of why the inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated
  - Dismissal from current practice and contacting of parents of all swimmers involved
  - Removal of parent or coach from practice if parent/coach is committing the proposed misconduct in question
- For incidents reported after their occurrence and subsequent to the grievance assessment process (which may occur as a follow-up to immediate interventions listed above):
  - Suspension from team activities
  - Expulsion from the club

*If a coach, parent, or swimmer violates the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy, or local laws, USA Swimming and local law enforcement will be contacted within 24 hours. Examples would be criminal activity (including the use, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs) or sexual misconduct.*

Club next-steps could include:

- Assessment of how similar incidents could be avoided in the future
- Modification of policies to explicitly address a given type of incident, if appropriate
- Meetings with athletes, parents, and/or coaches to reinforce applicable policies and codes of conduct

## **Reporting to the Center for SafeSport and/or USA Swimming**

Reports to USA Swimming and/or the Center for SafeSport should be made on concerns related to inappropriate behavior or activity including but not limited to the following:

- Criminal activity
- Use, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs
- Physical abuse
- Inappropriate touching
- Violations of USA Swimming's and GSC's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)

USA Swimming and the Center for SafeSport can be contacted directly with a SafeSport question or to report a concern:

USA Swimming

- Tel: 719-866-4578
- Web: [Deal with a Safe Sport Concern](#)

U.S. Center for Safe Sport

- Tel: 720-524-5640
- Web: [www.uscenterforsafesport.org](http://www.uscenterforsafesport.org) or [online reporting form](#)

SafeSport questions can also be sent to Florida Swimming's SafeSport coordinator (Cori Welbes, [coriwelbes@gmail.com](mailto:coriwelbes@gmail.com)).