



Athlete Protection Training Requirement for Adult Athletes

Starting June 23, 2019, adult athletes will be required to complete the USA Swimming Athlete Protection Training. This resource is intended to provide information regarding this membership requirement.

USA Swimming requires all adult members to complete Athlete Protection training. Previously, this requirement did not extend to adult athlete members. This training and education requirement is not a part of the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)

As a membership requirement, adult athletes who are currently 18 and older must complete this training. Adult athletes will be given a 30-day grace period in which to complete the training. Those athlete members who are 17, about to turn 18, must complete this training by their 18th birthday. Successful completion the training, on an annual basis, is now a membership requirement of adult athletes, and failure to complete it will result in an athlete's inability to swim in a meet or at practice. This is the same membership requirement for all non-athlete members.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is an adult athlete?

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

Q: Can an athlete take the training before they turn 18?

A: Yes. Subject to parental consent, an athlete can access and complete the training prior to turning 18.

Q: How is the training accessed?

A: An adult athlete will access the same training that non-athlete members must take at www.usaswimming.org/apt. The athlete member will enter his or her name and date of birth to initiate the process and log into the LEARN platform. Once in the LEARN system the athlete will access the Athlete Protection Training.

Q: Which courses are required to complete Athlete Protection Training?

A: Adult athlete must take THREE Courses: Sexual Misconduct Awareness Education, Mandatory Reporting and Emotional and Physical Misconduct. Upon completion of each course, the athlete will receive a completion certificate. After receiving the certificate, the athlete must complete the survey in order to fully complete the course.

Q: Will the free athlete training count towards the requirement?

A: No. The course labeled "Free Safe Sport Training for Minor Athletes" does not satisfy the requirement. Adult athletes must complete the "Athlete Protection Training".

Q: Can athletes take the training in a large group with one login to the training?

A: No. Each adult athlete must login to LEARN with their own name and date of birth, otherwise there will not be a way to track that they have completed the training. **Suggestion:** Take a training practice time and have all the athletes that must complete the training in one place, with their own electronic device. Have them log in on their own but complete the training in a group setting. This way the club can account for them taking it.

Q: How will an adult athlete be able to show that they completed the training?



A: Once the adult athlete completes the training, the athlete's member record in SWIMS will populate an updated training expiration date. The athlete's Deck Pass account will also reflect whether the adult athlete has completed the training.

Q: How will an LSC or meet official know whether an adult athlete has completed the training?

A: The meet recon report will reflect whether an adult athlete has completed the training.

Q: Is there a grace period in order to complete the training?

A: Yes. There is a 30-day grace period given to the adult athletes to complete this initial training requirement.

Q: Do masters swimmers have to complete the training?

A: This APT training requirement is a USA Swimming adult athlete membership requirement. If a U.S. Master's Swimming member is also a USA Swimming athlete member, is only required to complete the training as a requirement of continued athlete membership in USA Swimming.

Q: What happens if an adult athlete competes in a meet without completing the training?

A: If an adult athlete member competes when their membership requirement was not satisfactorily fulfilled, swim time would not be valid. This will affect an adult athlete's' ability to achieve qualifying times.

UPDATED QUESTIONS (June 13, 2019)

Q: How will a club know whether or not adult athlete members have completed the training?

A: A club will be able to view whether or not an athlete member has completed the training by viewing the roster in the Club Portal. Clubs will also be able to run a Membership Status report and a custom member report as well.

Q: How will a Meet Director know that an athlete is ineligible to swim?

A: When a Meet Director runs a recon report, any athlete that has not completed the training will show as ineligible. This will be similar to those non-athlete members who will show up for not having up to date credentials.

Q: Does an adult athlete registering for Single Meet Open Water membership required to complete the training before being able to compete?

A: No. Adult athletes registering for Single Meet Open Water membership will not have regular, frequent and/or direct contact with minor athletes and therefore is not required to complete APT as a requirement of membership.

Q: Is it expected that those adult athletes with developmental delays or disabilities complete the training?

A: No. Adult athletes with cognitive delays are not required to complete the Athlete Protection Training. The U.S. Center for SafeSport has given the USA Swimming the authority to decide how to apply the education and training requirement to these athlete members. Currently, USA Swimming is working on the best solution to be finalized and communicated by July 23, 2019 (implementation date of June 23 plus the 30-day grace period).

Q: Is the Athlete Protection Training be available in other languages?

A: Yes. Currently, the training is offered in English, Spanish and French.

Q: Is the training available for the hearing and vision impaired?



A: The training is currently available in closed caption for the hearing impaired. It is not currently available in a form available for vision impaired. **Suggestion:** A solution to this would be for the athlete to complete the training alongside an aid or someone else to help relay the information.



The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) applies to Applicable Adults. This resource is intended to provide information regarding implementing the Applicable Adults definition in the policy.

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. Collectively “Applicable Adult(s)”

Frequently Asked Questions

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: 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.

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.

UPDATED QUESTIONS (June 13, 2019)

Q: Does MAAPP apply when I am engaged in non-USA Swimming activities (e.g., NCAA recruiting, coaching a scholastic team)?

A: No. MAAPP only applies to Applicable Adults engaged in USA Swimming activities.

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

A: MAAPP applies to Applicable Adults and their interactions with minor athlete solely in conjunction with USA Swimming activities. While we encourage our members to take the necessary steps to protect minor athletes from abuse in sport regardless of the organizational affiliation, the expectations set forth in MAAPP will only be enforced and audited with respect to USA Swimming activities.

Q: Do all Applicable Adults have to become USA Swimming members and complete APT and a background check, specifically those participating non-members?

A: No. MAAPP applies to Applicable Adults. The APT requirement of membership applies to USA Swimming members. Participating non-members, by definition, are not USA Swimming members and do not have complete the requirements of membership. The requirements to become a member can be found in Article 305.5 of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.



Q: Is a U.S. Masters Swimming (“USMS”) member an Applicable Adult?

A: An individual is an Applicable Adult if he or she meets any of the four descriptions of an Applicable Adult, so a USMS member may be “Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete.” However, we would not consider a USMS member who only has contact with a minor athlete by virtue of being at the same competition to meet this standard and be considered an Applicable Adult. By comparison, a USMS member who regularly trains with minor athletes at practice would be more likely to meet this standard.

Q: What does “authority over” mean when referencing Applicable Adults in MAAPP?

A: An individual has authority over a minor athlete when a power imbalance exists between the adult and the minor athlete or when the adult has perceived power over a minor athlete. A coach always has this perceived power over or power imbalance between him or herself and the minor athlete. A volunteer or participating non-member, depending on their role, might have that perceived power only while fulfilling their volunteer roles.

Q: Do volunteers at meets have to fulfill the General Acknowledgement section of MAAPP?

A: No. The General Acknowledgement section applies to athletes, parents, coaches and non-athlete members of a member club. It is not a requirement that meet volunteers, such as timers, read and acknowledge MAAPP before they can volunteer at a meet. However, MAAPP does apply to meet volunteers who are authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes. One way to ensure that these volunteers are aware of the MAAPP requirements is to include the expectations in meet briefings or meet information, or verbally highlighting the expectations for volunteers.

Q: Does MAAPP apply to meet volunteers at all times?

A: Meet volunteers must follow MAAPP during the time that they trigger Applicable Adult status. For example, if a meet volunteer is authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes during one morning session at the meet but does not volunteer at any other point in the meet, that individual is an Applicable Adult during the one morning session.

Q: Are LSCs required to put information about MAAPP in their meet information?

A: No. There is no requirement to provide information about MAAPP in meet information. This language is provided by USA Swimming as a helpful suggestion to give notice to those involved with the meet on the application of MAAPP to involvement in the meet. Including this language in meet information creates consistent messaging of the importance of MAAPP and reinforces the rules to Applicable Adults.

Q: Are all adults that use a shared facility (which is also used by a member club for purposes of practice or competition) considered Applicable Adults?

A: No. An individual is an Applicable Adult if he or she meets any of the four descriptions of an Applicable Adult, so an adult member of the general public may be “Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete.” However, we would not consider an adult member of the general public who only has contact with a minor athlete by virtue of being at the same shared facility to meet this standard and be considered an Applicable Adult.



The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) has five parts. This resource is intended to provide information regarding implementing the Locker Rooms and Changing Areas section of the policy.

Locker Rooms and Changing Areas

Locker rooms and changing areas are private and enclosed spaces in which abuse can occur. To prevent abuse of minor athletes in these private areas, this section of the MAAPP is intended to keep Applicable Adults from being present in a locker room or changing area at the same time as minor athletes.

Prior to MAAPP, a team locker room policy has been a strongly recommended best practice. This section of MAAPP is very closely aligned with USA Swimming rules, Model Policy on Locker Rooms and published Best Practice Guidelines. Now, rather than recommended practices, this is a USA Swimming requirement.

Please note that Adult Athletes are Applicable Adults. It is important for adult athletes to carefully read and understand their responsibilities under this section. Please read every point carefully to avoid confusion.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What does the word “expose” mean in Section III?

A: Expose means a purposeful showing of private parts or being bare skinned for an abnormal amount of time while changing. Adult athletes should be thoughtful to turn their bodies away and shield their private parts from minor athletes while changing.

Q: Does this policy only apply to locker rooms at competitions?

A: No. MAAPP applies to any and all locker rooms or changing areas used by Applicable Adults and minor athletes in connection to USA Swimming activities such as practice, competition, camps, etc.

Q: Does this policy mean that athletes over the age of 18 cannot share a locker room or changing area with teammates under the age of 18?

A: No. Unrelated Applicable Adults must not be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area except for athletes on the same team and athletes attending the same competition.

Q: Can U.S. Masters Swimming (“USMS”) members use a locker room at the same time as minor athletes?

A: An unrelated Applicable Adult must not be **alone** with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area. If a USMS swimmer meets the definition of an Applicable Adult, then the Applicable Adult must not be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area. MAAPP would not prohibit an Applicable Adult, or Applicable Adult(s) from sharing a locker room or changing area with minor athletes so long as the Applicable Adult is not alone in the locker room or changing area with a minor athlete.

Q: Can an athlete deck change?

A: **NO.** Deck changing is prohibited under USA Swimming rules and by MAAPP.

UPDATED QUESTIONS (June 13, 2019)

Q: If the club or LSC is using a public facility, how can the club or LSC ensure compliance with this section of MAAPP?

A: MAAPP only applies to Applicable Adults and does not extend to the general public. Only Applicable Adults are required to adhere to MAAPP.

Q: If two teams use the same practice facility, can the adult athletes from one team share a locker room or changing area with minor athletes from another team?

A: Yes. Athletes from two teams sharing a practice facility would be treated similarly to athletes on the same team.





The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) has five parts. This resource is intended to provide information regarding implementing the Massages, Rubdowns and Athletic Training Modalities section of the policy.

Massages, Rubdowns and Athletic Training Modalities

Massages, rubdowns and athletic training modalities can present a risk for Applicable Adults to abuse minor athletes. As a result, all massages, rubdowns and athletic training modalities performed on a minor athlete must be conducted in an observable, interruptible environment by a non-coach licensed professional.

This section of MAAPP is very closely aligned with USA Swimming rules requiring massages and rubdowns be performed by a non-coach licensed professional. Now, this requirement extends to other forms of treatment.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is an athletic training modality?

A: Examples of an athletic training modality includes stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.

Q: Can a coach assist an athlete stretching a leg or working out a shoulder knot?

A: No. Under no circumstance is a coach permitted to perform a rubdown or massage even if the coach is a licensed massage therapist or athletic trainer.

Q: Is it permissible for a coach to use an applicator to help apply relief creams or work out a muscle?

A: No. The use of instrument assisted modalities by a coach is not allowed.

Q: Does a legal guardian have to give permission for a massage therapist to work on their minor athlete?

A: Yes. The legal guardian must provide advance, written consent to the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to the club.

UPDATED QUESTION (June 13, 2019)

Q: Can a coach provide hands-on stroke technique guidance?

A: Yes. In doing so a coach should adhere to the following best practices:

1. First, ask for the athlete's permission. For example, "Is it okay if I show you where to hold your elbow?"
2. Verbally explain what you are going to do and explain why. For example, "I'm going to hold your elbow into this position because this angle allows you to get better leverage in the water."
3. Educate team parents that they may at some point see you performing hands-on stroke technique guidance. Describe what this means, that you will always first ask for the athlete's permission and will also verbally explain to the athlete what will be demonstrated. Allow the parents to opt-out of hands-on stroke technique guidance at any time.
4. All hands-on stroke technique guidance must be performed within an observable and interruptible distance from another adult.



MAAPP and Non-USA Swimming Activities

On April 29, 2019, USA Swimming released its Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP) addressing one-on-one interactions, social media and electronic communications, travel, locker rooms and changing areas, and massages, rubdowns and athletic training modalities. All USA Swimming member clubs are required to implement MAAPP in full by June 23, 2019.

The U.S. Center for SafeSport (“the Center”) created MAAPP as the baseline for acceptable safety standards that limit one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. MAAPP is designed to facilitate healthy boundaries between adults and minor athletes in order to protect minor athletes from abuse in sport.

USA Swimming initially understood that MAAPP applied to all Applicable Adults and their interactions with minor athletes, whether or not the interaction stems from USA Swimming activities. However, based on feedback received from our coach members who serve in dual roles (including, for example, as high school and collegiate coaches), USA Swimming sought additional clarification on this point from the Center. The Center subsequently determined that MAAPP applies to Applicable Adults and their interactions with minor athletes solely in conjunction with USA Swimming activities.

While we encourage our members to take the necessary steps to protect minor athletes from abuse in sport regardless of the organizational affiliation, the expectations set forth in MAAPP will only be enforced and audited with respect to USA Swimming activities.



The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) has five parts. This resource is intended to provide information regarding implementing the One-on-One Interactions section of the policy.

One-on-One Interactions

One-on-One Interactions present a risk for an Applicable Adult to abuse a minor athlete or initiate grooming behaviors to do so. This portion of the policy sets the expectation that if a one-on-one interaction occurs, it is done in a way that is observable and interruptible by another adult.

Meetings: In swimming, meetings between adults and minors are common. MAAPP requires that another adult be present AND that the meeting be in a location that is easily observed and interruptible. USA Swimming has recommended a similar concept, two-deep leadership, as a best practice for years. Now, two-deep leadership is not recommended, it is required.

Private Instruction: Legal guardians often hire coaches to give private lessons to their minor athlete. A private lesson is a one-on-one interaction between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete but it is not a one-on-one interaction occurring in the course of team practices or USA Swimming events and activities. USA Swimming recommends that individual training sessions be observable and interruptible by another adult and that the minor athlete's legal guardian be allowed to observe the session. This is the only piece of the One-on-One Interactions section that is recommended and not required.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What does observable and interruptible mean?

A: Observable and interruptible means that the interaction takes place in such a way that another adult can see all the interactions that are happening AND another adult can interrupt the interaction if he or she observes a questionable behavior in the moment that it is occurring. That interruption could include a physical interruption and/or a vocal interruption.

Q: What does "except under emergency circumstances" mean?

A: An example of an emergency circumstance could include an individual experiencing a medical emergency leaving an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete without another adult in an observable and interruptible distance.

Q: Can a lifeguard serve as the second person within an observable and interruptible distance?

A: Yes, if the lifeguard is an adult and can completely observe the interaction and interrupt in the moment. However, remember that a lifeguard's responsibility is to those in the pool and accordingly likely will not be able to observe or interrupt a one-on-one interaction.

Q: Is a telephone call considered to be a one-on-one interaction?

A: Yes. Therefore, a telephone call between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete must be observable and interruptible by another adult. A duration of a telephone call made during an emergency circumstance must be consistent with the type of emergency.



The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) has five parts. This resource is intended to provide information regarding implementing the Social Media and Electronic Communications section of the policy.

Social Media and Electronic Communications

Private electronic communications between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete present an opportunity for the Applicable Adult to initiate grooming behaviors that may lead to abuse. Just as one-on-one interactions between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete must be observable and interruptible, any communications between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete should be open, transparent. Additionally, electronic communications between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete must involve the minor's legal guardian and take place during reasonable hours.

Before MAAPP, USA Swimming rules required every team establish a social media/electronic communication policy. This section of MAAPP replaces that requirement. Members will note that this section of the MAAPP is similar to the USA Swimming's previous Model Policy on Electronic Communication and published Best Practice Guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can our team still use our Electronic Communication Policy instead of this one?

A: No, you cannot use the Electronic Communication Policy that you have had to this point. Every team is required to adopt this policy, including the Social Media and Electronic Communications section, in full.

Q: Are minor athletes still allowed to follow their favorite celebrity swimmer on a fan page?

A: Yes, under the policy, a minor athlete can follow or friend a celebrity swimmers fan page.

Q: What do I do about my pre-existing social media connections with minor athletes?

A: Applicable Adults are required to discontinue existing social media connections with minor athletes.

Q: When does a minor athlete's legal guardian need to be copied on an electronic communication to a minor athlete?

A: An Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes must not send a one-on-one communication to a minor athlete. A minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied on an electronic communication sent by an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes to the minor athlete.

Q: How should an Applicable Adult communicate with the team or a group of minor athletes?

A: If an Applicable Adult sends a message to a group of minor athletes or an entire team, another adult must be copied on the communication. It is not required that each minor athlete's legal guardian be copied on an electronic communication sent by an Applicable Adult to a group of minor athletes or an entire team.

Q: What would be an emergency circumstance?

A: An emergency circumstance should be an isolated incident that is an objectively reasonable emergency in order to justify an electronic communication sent outside of 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. An example would be to notify the team that early morning practice is cancelled at the last minute.

Q: Is a telephone call considered to be an electronic communication?

A: A telephone call is similar to a one-on-one interaction. Therefore, a telephone call between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete must be observable and interruptible by another adult. A duration of a telephone call made during an emergency circumstance must be consistent with the type of emergency.

Q: Can a team change the hours during which electronic communications can be sent to a time period other than 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.?

A: No.

Q: Can an LSC send communications to a committee including an athlete representative outside of 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.?

A: No. LSC staff and board members are Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes. Electronic communications sent to minor athletes must only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.



UPDATED QUESTIONS (June 13, 2019)

Q: Can an LSC or USA Swimming committee with minor athlete representatives conduct a telephone or videoconference meeting after 8:00p.m.?

A: Yes. If a committee is unable to hold their meeting before 8:00 p.m., then the committee can conduct the meeting after 8:00 p.m. Electronic distribution of meeting materials should not be sent between 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Q: If an athlete member turns 18 years old and becomes an Applicable Adult, can that athlete member still communicate with minor athlete friends and teammates through social media and electronic communication?

A: Yes. If that adult athlete does not have “authority over” (e.g., a power imbalance does not exist) the minor athletes, then this provision of the policy does not apply.



The USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) has five parts. This resource is intended to provide information regarding implementing the Travel: Local and Team section of the policy.

Travel: Local and Team

Local and team travel occur frequently in our sport and presents a series of unique risk factors. The goal of this policy is to minimize the opportunity for an Applicable Adult to abuse a minor athlete during local and team travel.

Before MAAPP, USA Swimming rules required every team establish a travel policy. This section of MAAPP replaces that requirement. Members will note that this section of the MAAPP is similar to USA Swimming's previous Model Policy on Team Travel and published Best Practice Guidelines.

A legal guardian must consent in writing, in advance, for every instance in which their minor athlete travels alone with an Applicable Adult. Please note, it is the responsibility of the team to maintain parent consent forms covered in this section.

Teams often try to save money during team travel. For example, it has become a common practice for teams to rent a house which may be more cost effective than paying for hotel rooms. That practice is no longer permissible.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can Applicable Adults ride alone in a vehicle with a minor athlete?

A: Applicable Adults must not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must always have at least two minor athletes or another adult in the vehicle, unless agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's legal guardian.

Q: How is "overnight lodging location" in Section II(b) defined?

A: Overnight lodging location refers to a non-traditional lodging situation that teams might use. This includes, but is not limited to, non-traditional arrangements such as VRBO rentals, Air BNBs, campers, trailers, etc. All the travel rules apply to these locations as well.

Q: Can an adult athlete share a hotel or sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete?

A: Yes, an adult athlete can share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with a minor athlete only if the minor athlete's legal guardian provides written permission in advance and for each instance for the minor to share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with said adult athlete. No other Applicable Adult can share a hotel or sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete.

UPDATED QUESTIONS (June 13, 2019)

Q: Can families traveling to a competition share an Air BNB or VRBO?

A: Yes. If the travel is not "organized or supervised by the team" then families can make their own arrangements for accommodations. Under no circumstance can a coach share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with an athlete.

Q: What is different between a VRBO or Air BNB and a hotel? Especially if everyone has their own rooms, and bathroom.

A: A temporary residence rental such as a VRBO or an AirBNB provides opportunity for more personal and casual encounters between Applicable Adults and minor athletes than a hotel. This sort of casual setting provides an environment where boundaries can be crossed.