

# Coeur d'Alene Area Swim Team

## Electronic Communications Policy

### Purpose

The Coeur d'Alene Area Swim Team (the "Club" or "CAST") recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world and are committed to the safety of the swimmers. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

### General Content

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding athlete protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- Drug or alcohol use, including vaping
- Sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language, sexual activity
- The adult's personal life, social activities, or relationship or family issues
- Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible, and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member, or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: "Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?" or "Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board or other athletes?"

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is **T**ransparent, **A**ccessible, and **P**rofessional.

- **Transparent:** all electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communications should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo, and expectations.
- **Accessible:** all electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club's records. Another coach or parent must be included in the communication with a minor athlete so that there is no question regarding accessibility.
- **Professional:** all electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communications meets all three of the **TAP** criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

## **Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram and Other Similar Sites and Applications**

Coaches may have personal social media pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join or follow their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” requests from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through social media platforms.

The club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can access for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

## **Texting**

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours of 7 am until 9 pm. Texting shall only be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

## **Email**

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, coach, or a board member must also be copied.

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

The parent or guardian of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.