



CENTRAL IOWA AQUATICS
HANDBOOK FOR PARENT/GUARDIANS AND
SWIMMERS

(November 2019)

No Policy Handbook

#WeAreCIA

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Central Iowa Aquatics (CIA) Introduction

Welcome to Central Iowa Aquatics

We are a year-round swim team designed to improve the level of competitive swimming in the central Iowa area. Families and swimmers are from the greater Des Moines area and surrounding communities. CIA is committed to helping athletes of all ages and abilities reach their competitive swimming potential. Our athletes are part of a professionally coached team that promotes achievement, physical fitness, social development, and having fun. The success of CIA at the local, state and national level reflects the dedication of our swimmers, commitment of our coaching staff, and involvement of our parent/guardians and volunteers.

Organization

Central Iowa Aquatics was founded in 1995 by a group of parent/guardian volunteers interested in improving competitive swimming in the Des Moines metro area. We are a private, not-for-profit (501.3c) organization. The club is a member of Iowa Swimming Inc (ISI) which in turn is a member of USA Swimming (USA-S). A Board of Directors governs CIA. Board positions include President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Registrar, Secretary, Safety, Fundraising, Program/Social, Web Support, and Meet Director. All board members are volunteers and serve two-year terms, beginning April 1. Elections are held annually with approximately half the board up for election in any given year. The monthly board meetings are posted on the team website and open to all members of CIA.

USA-Swimming

USA Swimming (USA-S) is the national governing body for the Olympic sport of swimming and a member of the United States Olympic Committee. USA-S was created in 1978 when the passage of the Amateur Sports Act specified that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. Within the United States, USA-S is broken down in 59 Local Swimming Committees (LSC) that manage USA-S activities within their boundaries. Each LSC has specific geographic boundaries that often fall within state lines. USA Swimming headquarters are located at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, CO.

Mission Statement

The objective of CIA is to provide an opportunity for young people to participate in a wholesome, lifelong, recreational, and competitive sport. It is the goal of CIA to provide a high quality comprehensive instructional training program, which will allow swimmers to achieve their potential in swimming. CIA will provide an atmosphere which fosters respect for teammates, coaches, and competitors and which promotes the ideals of sportsmanship and our core values; team loyalty, integrity, competition, and hard work.

Vision

To achieve consistent dominance in Iowa Swimming with a culture of loyalty, respect, integrity, and fun. CIA will be recognized by the community as a good citizen, and THE PLACE for competitive swimming. CIA will be viewed as a club which consistently produces athletes who continue swimming in college. CIA will continue to develop a culture that results in durable team pride, based on our core values.

Introduction to Swimming

Swim Seasons

Swimming is unlike many other sports in that it has two seasons, the summer or long course season, and the winter or short course season. During the spring and summer months swimmers may swim outside in a 50-meter pool called a long course pool. The 50-meter distance is referred to as the Long Course Meter (LCM) distance. This is the distance swimmers in the Olympics swim. During the winter months swimmers compete indoors in a 25-yard pool called a short course pool. The 25-yard distance is referred to as the Short Course Yards (SCY) distance. This is the distance high school and colleges compete. State, zone and national meets allow swimmers to qualify to compete using either short course or long course times. The long course time standards are several seconds higher than short course standards because of the difference in the length. CIA divides the swimming year into two seasons:

- Short Course Yards (SCY); September with State Championship meet in mid/late February
- Long Course Meters (LCM); April with State Championship meet in late July

Swimming 101

The four competitive swimming strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. The combination of all four strokes is called the individual medley.

In freestyle events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most commonly used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the surface of the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick.

Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.

The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously.

Some consider the butterfly to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.

The individual medley, commonly referred to as the IM, features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

Competition 101

The highest form of competition in swimming is international competition, such as the Olympics. USA Swimming is the organization which sponsors national competition in the United States. There are other groups that sponsor swimming such as community education, YMCA's and school districts. However, USA Swimming is the only organization, structured into clubs, which sponsors swimmers from beginning levels to international competition. CIA is a club member of USA Swimming and pays annual dues to

both USA Swimming and the Iowa affiliate, Iowa Swimming Inc (ISI). Many older CIA swimmers compete in high school during the high school season, but return to CIA for the rest of the school year to train and compete year-round. Additionally, some CIA swimmers on college teams come back during summer season and during long breaks. Since swimming is a year-round sport organized into a club, it demands a full-time coaching.

[USA Swimming Rules Overview](#)

All competitive swimming events are held under USA Swimming sanctions and are conducted in accordance with rules that are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer. Here is a link to the [USA Swimming Rules and Regulations](#).

[Course Distances and Age Groups](#)

Competition pools may be short course (25 yards or 25 meters), or long course (50 meters). The international standard (as used in the Olympics) is 50 meters. World records are accomplished in 25- and 50-meter pools. USA Swimming maintains records for 25-yard, 25-meter and 50-meter pools.

Participants compete in different age groups and meets depending on their achievement level and how old they are on the first day of the meet. Traditionally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Many local meets feature 8 and under, single age groups, or senior events.

[Officials and Timers](#)

Officials are required at all competitions to observe the swimmers complying with the rules of each event and stroke. Timers are also required in order to ensure accurate times are recorded. Without officials and timers, the meets cannot happen which is why parent/guardian volunteers are essential.

CIA Team Information

[Membership](#)

The single most important requirement for being a member of CIA is the desire to become a part of a competitive swim team. The club does not limit participation to swimmers of a certain ability level. Rather, CIA encourages swimmers of all ages, ability levels and experience to join the team, with the understanding that members always strive to improve. Membership requires the following:

- Ability to swim one length (25 yards) of the pool with a freestyle or crawl stroke.
- Complete the CIA registration form which includes our Athlete and Parent/guardian Code of Conduct and other CIA and USA Swimming policies.
- Obtain a USA-Swimming membership which must be renewed annually. If you are transferring from another USA-S club, you will be attached to CIA. However, transferring swimmers will be Unattached-CIA at swim meets for a period of time. USA registered swimmers not attached to CIA with the exception of transferring swimmers or guest swimmers, may not practice with the team.
- Payment of all fees, including any past dues. CIA policy is that all dues are payable at registration or the first practice of each month a swimmer attend. If a bill is 60 or more days delinquent swimmers will not be allowed to swim until their bill is paid. Fees for new swimmers are not discounted.
- Swimmers without a current USA-Swimming registration are prohibited from entering the water for insurance purposes.

Athlete Code of Conduct

The purpose of this code is to promote the best possible individual, team, and program which supports the development of first-class citizens. All athletes are expected to abide by this code. Registering with CIA assumes an agreement to comply with our Athlete Code of Conduct below;

1. Good sportsmanship will be displayed at practice and in meets, as well as at all times when representing CIA. This includes supporting CIA's core values; team loyalty, integrity, competition, and hard work as well as behaving with respect, grace, and dignity in both victory and defeat.
2. Respect team members, competitors, coaches, officials, administrators, parent/guardians, public property, club property, and personal property.
3. Comply with instruction and directions from the coaches and officials; only coaches' coach.
4. Never interfere with the progress or performance goals of a swimmer during practice or otherwise.
5. Athletes shall contribute to the setup and tear-down of all practices which includes active participation daily.
6. All members of the team will protect and improve the club's excellent reputation within the swimming community.
7. Any activity which jeopardizes CIA's insurance coverage, terms of pool use, or membership in USA Swimming and/or Iowa Swimming Inc. is strictly prohibited.
8. Athletes will wear CIA swim caps when competing for CIA. Suits, caps and other clothing with other team name/logo may not be worn when representing CIA in competition or at awards ceremonies.
9. During competitions, any questions or concerns regarding decisions made by meet officials or our coaches must be directed to the CIA head coach.
10. Inappropriate or destructive behavior will not be tolerated including, but not limited to, using abusive language, profane language, language of a sexual nature, inappropriate gestures, harassment, bullying, lying, stealing, or vandalism.
11. Illegal possession, transportation, and/or use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or weapons is strictly prohibited.
12. Bring problems, concerns, or constructive criticism to the head coach, board president or another board member.
13. All swimmers must abide by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the applicable portions of the following USA Swimming/CIA Policies below;
 - Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAP)
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Travel/Chaperone Policy
 - Electronic Communication/Photo Policy

Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

As the parent/guardian of a swimmer and member of Central Iowa Aquatics, it's expected all parent/guardians abide by our code of conduct. Registering with CIA assumes an agreement to comply with our Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct below;

1. Practice teamwork with all parent/guardians, swimmers, and coaches by supporting CIA's core values of team loyalty, integrity, competition, and hard work.
2. Practice restraint by not coaching or instructing the team or any swimmer at practice or meets, and by not interfering with coaches on the pool deck.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting myself in a manner that earns the respect of my athlete, other swimmers, other parent/guardians, volunteers, officials, and coaches at meets and practices.
4. Understand that non-constructive criticism, name calling, use of abusive language, gossip, and/or gestures directed toward the coaches, officials, other parent/guardians, and/or any participating swimmers will not be permitted or tolerated.

5. Enjoy involvement with CIA by supporting the swimmers, coaches, and parent/guardians with positive communications and actions.
6. Assimilate into the Central Iowa Aquatics culture and actively participate in a volunteer role supporting the team and our athletes.
7. During competitions, any questions or concerns regarding decisions made by meet officials or our coaches must be directed to the CIA head coach.
8. Bring any problems, concerns, or constructive criticism to the board president.
9. All parent/guardians must also abide by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the applicable portions of the following USA Swimming/CIA Policies below;
 - Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAP)
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Travel/Chaperone Policy
 - Electronic Communication/Photo Policy

Sanctions: Should I conduct myself in such a way that brings discredit or discord to Central Iowa Aquatics, Iowa Swimming Inc, and/or USA Swimming, I voluntarily subject myself to disciplinary action. As a private swim team, Central Iowa Aquatics maintains the right to terminate any membership with or without cause in the interest of our vision, mission, and objectives.

[CIA Swim Group Overview](#)

Central Iowa Aquatics offers training and practice groups for swimmers of all ages and ability. CIA's goal is to offer age specific training for all of our athletes geared towards challenging and developing each individual to the best of their abilities. For questions about which training group is correct for your swimmer(s), please call us at 515-369-8060 to sign up for a trial, or email swimwithcia@gmail.com for more information. Generally, swimmers will fall into one of the groups below;

Intro Group

The intro group is for swimmers just out of swim lessons who know both Freestyle and Backstroke. This group is all about keeping it fun!

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Ability to do backstroke and freestyle.
- **About the group:**
 - Butterfly and breaststroke will be taught in this group. Technique in all four strokes starts and turns. Dry-land introduction. Learn basic stroke drills.
 - 3x :45-minute practices per week, may include dryland
 - Major Goals: Preparation for entry in the Blue groups. Basic use of pace clock: 5-sec. intervals, etc. Ability to complete knowledge of all four competitive strokes. Develop legal turns in all strokes. Attend meets.
- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkels and fins required

Blue 3 Group

This group is the first step in the Blue progression. It is for swimmers who know all four strokes but are new to competitive swimming. We ask swimmers in this group to attend local meets. This group is also all about keeping it fun!

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Ability to swim all 4 competitive strokes

- **About the group:**
 - Emphasis on stroke & skill development, along with instruction of competitive swimming rules. Kicking, breathing patterns and starts introduced.
 - 5x 1-hour workouts per week, may include dryland
 - Major Goals: Legal 100 IM. Basic use of pace clock: 5-sec. intervals, etc. Develop legal turns in all strokes
 - Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the Coaching staff and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team.
- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkels, buoy and fins required

Blue 2 Group

The second phase of the Blue progression builds on the first phase. Blue 2 swimmers may already have competitive swimming experience. The emphasis for the group is stroke development and refining of skills in a positive and fun environment. Training principles are introduced and regular participation in USA Swimming meets is encouraged.

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Swimmers age 10 & under, age 11-12 if new to the sport
- **About the group:**
 - Kicking sets (including dolphin kicking) will receive greater emphasis. Breathing skills / technique in all strokes are stressed (bilateral breathing, etc.). Starts and turns will be part of the weekly plan.
 - 5x 1.5-hour workouts per week, may include dryland.
 - Major Goals: Basic use of the pace clock, leaving at intervals, when to start your next swim, etc. Improving turns will be stressed: use of the dolphin kick, underwater pull in breaststroke, backstroke dolphin, etc. Develop good IM swimming. Swimmers will be taught their best times and to swim for personal improvement (PR).
 - Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the Coaching staff and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team.
- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkels, fins and buoy required

Blue 1 Group

This group is the last group in the Blue pathway with a continued focus on stroke development and refining technique with positive and supportive coaching. In this group training principles and aerobic conditioning continue to advance and regular participation in USA Swimming meets is highly encouraged.

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Swimmers age 9 to 12
 - Competence in all 4 strokes
- **About the group:**
 - Attendance and improved performance during conditioning sets are stressed. Stroke technique and racing skills are prioritized. Underwater dolphin kick & bi-lateral breathing are continued to be emphasized.
 - Major Goals: Knowledge of personal best times and improvement of those times throughout the year; develop technique and endurance base. Major meets include the Silver State and ISI Age Group State
 - Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the Coaching staff and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team.

- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkel, buoy and fins required

White 2 Group

The White 2 Group continues to focus on stroke development and refining skills. Aerobic conditioning begins to advance all the while in a fun and challenging environment. Regular participation in USA Swimming meets is highly encouraged.

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Swimmers age 8-11,
 - Must have ability to complete 10x100 SCY Free/1:45 with flip turns, 8x100 SCY IM/ 2:00 with legal appropriate turns, 8 x 100 kick flutter or dolphin on 2:10
- **About the group:**
 - Swimmers should be ready for stroke, start and turn refinement. There is a continued focus on breath control and use of the dolphin kick while training and racing.
 - Basic stroke and kicking drills are reinforced, and conditioning becomes a more important factor in workouts.
 - Develop ability to swim “sets”. Basic use of pace clock: send-offs, 5-sec intervals, etc.
 - Workouts: 6 x 1.75 hours/week offered SCY
 - White 2 swimmers participate in basic dryland exercises.
 - Major Goals: Knowledge of personal best times and improvement of those times throughout the year. Major meets include the Silver State and ISI Age Group State. White 2 group participants are expected to train regularly to make transition into the White 1 group possible.
 - Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the Coaching staff and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team.
- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkels, fins and buoy required

White 1 Group

The White 1 Group will build upon their skills and training from the previous group with a continued concentration on stroke technique and additional focus on endurance, this group also emphasizes a fun and challenging environment. Regular participation in USA Swimming meets and age group state meets is highly encouraged.

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Swimmers age 10-13, already have ISI State cuts and within reach of Zone qualifying standards
 - Can swim 10 x 100 Free @ 1:30 SCY, 10 x 100 IM @ 1:40 SCY and 10 x 100 kick flutter or dolphin on 2:00.
 - Swimmers must be in good health and have the training base necessary for the group.
- **About the group:**
 - This is the top of our Age Group program; expectations are high for the White 1 swimmer. Swimmers are offered 6 practice per week, with a minimum of 4 attended per week.
 - Individual and group goals will be established with a plan towards ownership of those goals and accountability as a group. Leadership will also be introduced.
 - Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the Coaching staff and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team. State participation is mandatory
 - Major Goals: ISI State Champs, Zone Championships, Sectionals if qualified. Develop workout and stroke improvement goals. This group has a special dedication to the sport of swimming. Hard work and fun are emphasized.

- Workouts: 5,000 to 6,000 yards per workout, 6 workouts per week, up to 12+ hrs pool time plus dryland.
- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkels, Buoy, Fins, paddles if age 12 and above and drag suits or sponges are required.

Senior 2 Group

The Senior 2 Group is designed for swimmers preparing for state and local meets. Swimmers must be in at least 7th grade to participate.

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - Swimmers must have the ability to train in all four competitive strokes.
 - The Senior 2 group swimmers must display a positive and respectful attitude, be accountable, and be committed to the process. They must be a true teammate and care about not only their own individual success, but their teammates' as well. The group dynamic and team culture are dependent on the expectation that each swimmer brings something important for the betterment of the group and the team.
- **About the group:**
 - Swimmers are offered 7 workouts per week and the opportunity to pursue and achieve goals on the local levels. The student-athlete in this group can balance commitments in other sports or activities. The attendance policy is consistent with what's needed to achieve their full potential. Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the Coaching staff and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team.
 - Additional activities include drylands, swimmer/coach conferences, meetings, team activities, etc. Appreciate the value of long-term commitment, setting/achieving goals and support in making choices consistent with stated goals.
 - Major Goals: High School State, Silver State, and ISI State meets
 - Workouts: 5,000-7,000 SCM/workout, up to 12+ hrs pool time/week plus dryland. The summer schedule offers additional opportunities and water time.
- **Equipment:**
 - Snorkels, paddles and fins required.

Senior 1 Group

The Senior 1 Group is designed for swimmers committed to train for Sectional and National competition. Swimmers must be in at least 7th grade to participate.

- **Eligibility requirements:**
 - The swimmer must have the ability to swim 15x100 SCY Free/1:15, 15x100 SCY IM/1:25, and 10x100 SCY Kick/1:50.
 - Swimmers must have Senior Sectional Qualifying time. Entry into the group will be based on coaches' discretion.
 - Swimmers must be in good health, injury free and can train in all four competitive strokes. The SR 1 group swimmers must have the training base for entry into the group and by previously demonstrating consistent high attendance over the previous seasons.
 - Swimmers must display a positive and respectful attitude, be accountable, and be committed to the process. They must be a true teammate and care about not only their own individual success, but their teammates' as well. The group dynamic and team culture are dependent on the expectation that each swimmer brings something important for the betterment of the group and the team.
- **About the group:**
 - Swimmers are offered 8 workouts per week and the opportunity to pursue and achieve goals on the national levels. The student-athlete in this group needs to recognize that training at this level does not allow for full-time involvement in other sports or activities. The attendance policy is consistent with what's needed to achieve their full potential. Swimmers are expected to maintain

- o a high attendance of a minimum of 90%. Swimmers must adhere to the designated meets prescribed by the coaching staff, and follow the plan targeting success for the swimmer and the team.
- o Additional activities include drylands, swimmer/coach conferences, meetings, team activities, etc. Enjoy the process! Appreciate the value of long-term commitment, setting/achieving goals and support in making choices consistent with stated goals.
- o Major goals: Senior Sectionals, Futures Championships, Junior Nationals Championships, Senior National Championships, and Olympic Trials.
- o Workouts: 5000-7000 SCY/workout, up to 14+ plus hrs pool time/week plus dryland. The summer schedule offers additional opportunities and water time.
- **Equipment:**
 - o Snorkels, paddles and fins required.

Swim Meet Participation

Philosophy of Competition

CIA works to develop well-rounded swimmers who can swim a variety of strokes, distances, and events. The coaching staff puts an emphasis on optimal performances during swim meets where it counts the most. Swimmers can expect to taper for those meets. Overall CIA emphasizes;

- **Sportsmanlike behavior** - We expect swimmers to behave like champions whether they swim well or poorly. Coaches expect swimmers to show respect for officials and other competitors, encourage teammates, and display mature attitudes.
- **Personal improvement over the season** - Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not the main goal.
- **Swimmer feedback** - The coach's job is to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. The parent/guardian's responsibility is to provide the love and encouragement that bolsters their athlete's confidence.

Swim Meet Schedule

The current CIA meet schedule is posted on the website. Our team hosts at least two meets every year and also attends many others, both in Iowa and out-of-state. During meets, we encourage our athletes to focus on improving their times, achieving goals, and developing a championship attitude. All the meets we host/attend are sanctioned by USA Swimming, which ensures that consistent standards for meet conduct, officiating and safety are observed. Most meets take place on weekends and typically last 1-3 days. Meets are usually divided into two sessions per day, with specific age groups participating in each session.

Information About Meets

Some meets are open to all swimmers while others require specific time standards to enter. The state swim meet would be an example of a meet that requires a specific time to participate. Swimmers work during each season to achieve the time standards for our state meets. There are also national level meets with specific time standards for entry. Examples of those types of meets are; Central Zones, Futures, Speedo Sectionals, Junior Nationals and Nationals. Swimmers who qualify for these meets are highly encouraged to attend.

The coaching staff encourages swimmers to attend one to two meets monthly. They can recommend meets that will provide a positive yet challenging experience for individual athletes. Although parent/guardians/swimmers may select events to enter, they can also discuss this with any of the coaches. Team members are strongly encouraged to participate in all home meets.

To help swimmers become their best, CIA encourages families to participate in the most competitive level of swimming available. Travel meets provide swimmers with experience competing against swimmers from other LSCs, typically at a higher quality of individual and team competition. Other benefits include:

- Gaining experience in prelims/finals competition
- Team bonding
- Learning responsibility and independence

[Signing up for Meets](#)

Once available, meet invitations are posted on the CIA and ISI websites. A meet invitation explains the rules of a meet (including entry limits) and events offered, so should be reviewed carefully before selecting events. Meet entry occurs through the CIA website. Before entering a meet, please log onto the CIA website and view the tutorial on meet entry, as this answers most questions (Video Tutorials > Parent/guardian Webinars > Parent/guardians Meet Entry). To enter a meet, log in then click on "Events", which will bring up currently available meets.

Meet entry fees are automatically calculated and then appear on your next electronic invoice. The meet entry fee includes a per-event charge, ISI Splash fee, and CIA processing fee. The CIA processing fee covers relay fees and meet-associated coaching costs. Some meets also charge a facility fee. If you enter after the meet deadline, late entry fees apply and are usually double the listed "per event" rate.

[Relays](#)

Relays are an important part of competitive swimming. Relays can be a source of great team work, or frustration because four swimmers must work together. Coaches determine the composition of the relays based on who has signed up for a particular meet. Relays are not listed on the preview info but on the meet info. If your athlete is on a CIA relay please make sure they attend the meet. Three other swimmers are relying on your athlete. Coaches determine the relays based on "best times" and performance at practice. Please respect the coaches' decisions.

[Progression of Meets](#)

Generally, swimmers train all season to compete at the end-of-season meets. Swim practices are geared so swimmer's peak performance is at the last meets of the season. It's important that swimmers attend final meets to see their improvement from the beginning of the season. For example, if a swimmer achieves two or more state cut times over the course of the season, they should recognize the accomplishment by attending the state meet. Practices are more difficult at the beginning and middle of the season to build up endurance and speed. Towards the end of the season, swimmers begin to taper down the workload and refine racing skills. This process helps swimmers reserve energy for maximum performance at final meets. Swimmers should be conscious of eating healthy foods and getting plenty of sleep during the season and particularly during the taper period.

[Meet Suggestions](#)

- Put swimmers to bed at a reasonable hour the night before the meet. Competition is emotionally and physically draining for swimmers.
- Bring money for food or pack a small cooler with healthy treats.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of warm-ups.

- Only swimmers are allowed on the pool deck so we recommend finding a place in the stands with other CIA parent/guardians.
- Encourage your athlete after they swim and leave suggestions and advice to the coaches.
- Be courteous of other people at the meet. Meets are often crowded so you might want to consider giving your place to another parent/guardian after your athlete competes.

Disqualification

Most parent/guardians have watched their athlete be disqualified during a swim event. Swimmers can be discouraged and embarrassed when they are disqualified. A few tears are normal, but swimmers and parent/guardians shouldn't allow the incident to ruin the whole meet. Being disqualified can be a valuable lesson and it happens to the best of swimmers.

Uniforms and Team Apparel

The team uniform is optional at any swim meet but the CIA team swim cap is mandatory. Caps with the CIA logo help the coach identify the swimmers so they can follow their progress in the water. To reduce wear and fading of the team/meet suit, it is recommended that swimmers only use them for swim meets. Generally, tech suits should only be worn for taper meets (state level meets or higher).

CIA logo swim caps are available for purchase through the head coach. Team swimsuits, personalized CIA swim caps, warm-up suits, T-shirts, and other apparel are periodically available by special order.

Team Procedures at Swim Meets

General Swim Meet Procedures

Swim meets are run on a strict timeline for warm-ups and events. These procedures are to make sure our swimmers are set-up to do their best.

- **Before the Meet**
 - Please arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time and check in with a coach.
 - Once you arrive, look for familiar faces since the team usually sits together in one area.
 - Programs are usually for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. These include heat/lane assignments for each event as well as seed times. When team members swim an event for the first time, they are entered at "no-time" (NT).
 - Using a meet program, verify the events your athletes will be swimming.
 - Swimmers should collect their cap and goggles and report to the coach for warm-up instructions. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day - warming up the engine is required for optimal performance!
 - After warm-ups are over, swimmers need to prepare for the meet. This is a great time for them to use the bathroom and/or get a drink.
- **During the Meet**
 - Swimmers should talk with a coach before each race, to review technique, strategy, and race plans. Athletes should also visit with a coach immediately after each event, to review their swims. Coaches are usually located at one of the pool-side coaching tables.
 - Once an event number is called (generally over the loudspeaker), swimmers report behind the blocks to their assigned lane. Some meets will ask swimmers to report to the

- clerk of course rather than behind the blocks. The clerk of course then lines up all the swimmers and escorts them to the blocks.
- If you have questions about meet results, disqualifications, or meet conduct, please discuss them with one of our coaches. They will then investigate and clarify any issues.
 - **After the Meet**
 - Once swimmers have completed all their individual and relay events, they are free to leave after checking out with one of the coaches.

Away Meet Supervision

CIA member parent/guardians will be responsible for arranging and paying for all travel, accommodations, meals, and all related expenses for their swimmers for all non-chaperoned meets and will be responsible for the supervision of their swimmers at all such meets.

Alternate Supervision. Parent/guardians of a swimmer may make arrangements for the parent/guardian of another swimmer attending the away meet to supervise their swimmer. In such a situation, the parent/guardians of both families shall notify the head coach of the arrangements that have been made. Any such arrangement will be strictly between the families involved. The parent/guardian acting as supervisor of another family's swimmer will not be deemed to be a CIA chaperone.

Coaching Expenses. CIA will pay coaches meet fees and travel expenses for meets where 10 or more swimmers are in attendance. CIA will pay for an additional coach if 25 swimmers are in attendance and an additional coach for each increment of 25 additional swimmers. If fewer than 10 swimmers attend, the swimmers must pay for the coaches meet fees in addition to the coaches' transportation, hotel, and meals. The 25-swimmer minimum does not apply to National meets (Sectionals, Grand Prix series, Junior Nationals, Nationals and Olympic Trials). The head coach determines which coaches attend given meets. This policy can be changed with board approval if the head coach makes a request for a specific meet. Local meets have their own policy.

National Meet Expenses. For National meets, CIA will reimburse all coaching expenses if four or more swimmers attend. If three or fewer swimmers attend, and coaching expenses exceed \$400, each family will pay a \$100 "coaching expense" fee to the club. National meets include Sectionals, Grand Prix series, Junior Nationals, Nationals and Olympic Trials.

Team Travel/Chaperones

Team travel meets are away meets attended by swimmers, coaches and adult chaperones, traveling, dining, and lodging as a team, as distinguished from away meets where swimmers travel and stay with their families. Team travel meets will strive to bring one chaperone for every eight swimmers on the trip. Chaperones, under the direction of the head coach, will be responsible for the care of all athletes on the trip including meals, curfews, transportation and any other issues that may arise. Coaches will be responsible for all meet related aspects of the trip including meet administration and coaching. They may also be used for transportation needs.

CIA Team Travel Code of Conduct

The head coach or designated head coach will have full authority over all trip participants. This individual will also handle any decisions required during the trip, as well as ensuring that the travel policy is enforced at all times during the trip.

In addition to the Swimmer Code of Conduct, the following Traveling Code of Conduct applies when participating in team traveling events:

1. Individuals are expected to behave appropriately and represent CIA in a mature manner.
2. Athletes are not allowed to leave either the hotel or the pool without permission from the head coach and/or chaperone.
3. Athletes are required to be in their rooms and have lights out at a time specified by the coach and/or chaperone.
4. No long-distance phone calls are to be made from hotel rooms.
5. No pay movies are to be ordered from hotel rooms.
6. Individuals are expected to treat hotel facilities, guests and staff with respect. No damage will be tolerated.
7. No individual is allowed in a room of the opposite gender unless approved by the head coach or chaperone. If approval is given, room door must remain wide open at all times.
8. Individuals are responsible for their own wake-up calls (or bring an alarm). The team will leave the hotel at the time specified by the coach.
9. Any additional guidelines for the team will be established as needed by the coach and chaperones.
10. If a coach also participates as an athlete, he/she will be considered a coach for purposes of this policy.
11. Any individual that is found to have violated any team rules will be subject to disciplinary action by the team and/or local authorities. An individual may be sent home at the expense of the individual, their parents or legal guardians.

Chaperoned Travel Meets

CIA will arrange for accommodations and ground transportation for the chaperoned swimmers and the chaperones. Each chaperoned swimmer will be responsible and will be billed by CIA, for a pro-rata portion of all chaperoned swimmers' ground transportation and accommodations, and for a pro-rata portion of all of the chaperones' covered expenses. All swimmers and chaperones will be directly responsible for their own meal expenses. The following items apply to chaperoned travel meets;

- **Consent Form** - All chaperoned swimmers attending a travel meet, as well as one of their parent/guardians if they are under the age of 18, will be required to sign a travel consent form prior to the meet.
- **Air Travel** - If the head coach allows CIA parent/guardians to directly arrange and pay for their chaperoned swimmers' airfare, those parent/guardians who do so will not be billed by CIA for airfare (but will still be required to pay their portion of the rest of the expenses, as set forth above).
- **Adult Swimmers** - If the head coach allows a swimmer who is 18 years or older to arrange and pay for his or her own transportation and accommodations, that swimmer will not be billed by CIA for such expenses (either his or her own or for any portion of other swimmers') for which the swimmer makes his or her own arrangements.
- **Payment of Expenses** - Whenever possible, CIA will bill swimmers prior to the travel meet for expenses due from them and payment of such expenses will be due prior to travel; all other expenses due from the swimmers will be billed after the travel meet with payment due upon invoice. There will be no refunds of any airfare which has been prepaid by CIA unless another swimmer takes the non-attending swimmer's place. The non-attending swimmer will be charged and responsible for any fees charged to or penalties imposed on CIA as a result of changing the named ticket holder.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities and Information

General Information

In order for CIA to continue being a successful swim program, it requires understanding and cooperation among parent/guardians, athletes, and coaches. The following guidelines will help your athlete reach their full potential as a swimmer;

- Please make every effort to get your swimmers to practice on time.
- Parent/guardians supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make athletes work hard during practice and perform well in competition.
- The coaching staff guides, motivates, and constructively criticizes the performances of our swimmers. When parent/guardians offer coaching advice to athletes, it may confuse them, especially if it conflicts with instructions given by coaches. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint about training, please discuss this with a coach.
- Almost all swimmers have meets where they do not swim well. These plateaus are a normal part of swimming. Remember that you can always find something positive about your athlete's performance.

Team Communication

Communication among members is vital to CIA! We use several channels to reach our membership.

- The CIA website is the main communication tool for the team. It includes current announcements, practice schedules/changes, meet entry information, and financial accounts for each family. New members can register online through the website.
- Email is primary means coaches communicate with members and athletes. Please ensure your email contact information is correct during registration.
- CIA also has a Facebook page and a twitter account that we encourage all members, athletes and their family and friends to follow for team information and pictures.
- General questions or comments can be sent to the following email address; swim@centraliowaaquatics.org. Inquiries are answered promptly.
- The coaching staff always welcomes input from parent/guardians and are available to answer questions before or after practice. Please do not ask questions during practice as this is the swimmers' time.

Problems with Coaches

Some parent/guardians choose to discuss their complaints about coaches/training with other parent/guardians rather than taking directly to a coach. With this approach, problems are never solved and often grow larger. We strongly encourage direct communication with the coaching staff and offer these guidelines for discussing difficult issues.

- Remember that you and the coaches both have the best interests of your athlete at heart. Focusing on this shared goal should produce good rapport and constructive dialogue.
- Keep in mind that coaches must balance what is best for your athlete with the needs of the team or training group.
- If your athlete swims for an assistant coach, always initially discuss the matter with that coach. If the assistant coach cannot satisfactorily resolve your concern, then ask the head coach to join the dialogue as a third party.
- If another parent/guardian uses you as a sounding board for complaints about coaching performance or club policies, listen empathetically but encourage the other parent/guardian to speak directly to a coach.

Volunteering is Crucial

The success of the CIA swim club is largely due to the support of our parent/guardian and family volunteers. We need parent/guardian support in every aspect of this organization for that success to continue. Our volunteers play an important role from board members, to participating in committees, to assisting at swim meets.

It can take more than 100 volunteers to host a single meet. And outside of meets, there are hundreds of task hours that need someone volunteering. Without everyone's help, we simply couldn't host meets or function as a club. Therefore, we have a volunteer requirement that each family must satisfy.

CIA Volunteer Requirements

Volunteer hours are based on the two seasons. Each family that has at least one swimmer practicing with CIA for more than one month during the season must provide volunteer hours at meets hosted by CIA or volunteer in other capacities approved by CIA. Coaches are exempt from volunteer requirements.

- Volunteer Requirement for Short Course Season: 12 hours (8 hours for high school swimmer only)
- Volunteer Requirement for Long Course Season: 8 hours

During registration families will select, based on availability, the volunteer category they'd prefer. Below are some examples of volunteer categories:

- Meet Timers
- Meet Marshalls
- Meet Officials
- Meet Hospitality
- Team Dinners/Awards
- Team Fundraising Events

Volunteers must be 14 years of age or older. If a 13 & under wants to volunteer, special permission must be obtained from the meet director, or the head of the committee in the case on non-meet events, in order for the family to receive credit for those volunteer hours.

At meets, unless excused by the meet director, the volunteer must remain during the entire length of the volunteer slot they are working, regardless of when their own swimmers' races are completed. For non-meet events, unless excused by the head of the committee, the volunteer must remain during the entire length of the volunteer slot they are working.

If at the end of the season, a family has not fulfilled their requirement they will be charged \$75 per hour they did not provide a volunteer. For example, for short course, if a family completed four volunteer hours, \$600 will be charged to their account for the eight hours they did not provide a volunteer.

If a family chooses to leave the team without the intention of returning and requests their account to be closed, they will be charged for unfulfilled service hours. The family must notify the team registrar by the 15th of the month prior to the close of their account. Any unworked hours will be charged \$75 per hour during the next billing cycle. For example: The Smith family is moving out of state, their swimmer was with CIA for two months before closing their account. The balance of the hours not worked would be charged upon the close of their account. Only families with an open account are allowed to receive credit for service hours worked.

[How to Volunteer](#)

Volunteers must sign up online prior to the event. Team Unify has a system for tracking your volunteer hours. You must sign up for your volunteer position under “job sign up” by midnight prior to the start of the event. The jobs are on a first come first serve basis so check the website often and sign up quickly.

Volunteers must also sign the volunteer check-in sheet at the meet in order to receive credit for their participation. It is the volunteer’s responsibility to sign in and this is how your participation is verified.

[Become an Official](#)

USA Swimming relies on certified volunteer officials to facilitate swim meets. All parent/guardians, regardless of swimming knowledge, are welcomed and encouraged to become certified and become part of the USA Swimming Officials team. For more information, contact our representative at ciameetdir@gmail.com.

[CIA Board of Directors](#)

The CIA Board meets monthly and has the following voting and non-voting positions with email links;

Voting Members	Non-Voting Members
President	Head Coach
Vice-President	Volunteer Coordinator
Treasurer	Registrar
Secretary	Website Support
Meet Director	
Fundraising Chair	
Safe Sport/Safety Chair	

To get involved please check our website for volunteer opportunities and signup online or contact any board member. All CIA board meetings are open to our families.

[Team Membership Fees](#)

CIA dues must be paid prior to participation in CIA activities. Any swimmer that participates in a meet or practices in August or March will be charged half month dues for that month. The required payment method is website autopay (credit card or bank draft). Auto pay is required for all families. On the 1st of each month, you will receive an electronic invoice with dues for the upcoming month plus any unpaid fees. Payment is considered late after the 20th of the following month. Swimmers without a paid USA Swimming registration are prohibited from entering the water for insurance purposes. USA registration must be renewed annually.

Annual/Seasonal Fees	
USA Swimming Membership	\$74/year
CIA Registration Fee	\$75/season
Non-volunteer payment	\$75/hr per season*
Monthly Swim Group Fees	
Intro Group	\$85.00
Blue 3 Group	\$140.00
Blue 2 Group	\$160.00
Blue 1 Group	\$175.00
White 2 Group	\$190.00
White 1 Group	\$195.00
Senior 2 Group	\$200.00
Senior 1 Group	\$220.00
*Every hour under 12 hours per family during short course season and every hour under 8 hours per family during long course season or short course season with only a High School swimmer	

Credit Card Processing Fee - All accounts that have their billing set to charge to a credit card will be charged a 30-cent transaction fee and a 2.95% processing fee at billing time on the 1st of the month or if an On-Demand payment is processed during the month. There will not be a fee charged for using ACH.

Family Discount - Families with three or more swimmers receive a discount on their swimmer dues. The registration fee for the third swimmer and additional swimmers beyond three is reduced by 50%. This reduction applies to the swimmer(s) with the least expensive dues.

Financial Assistance - CIA tries to assist families with financial needs. However, limited funds are available. For additional details, please contact either the club registrar (registration@centraliowaaquatics.org), or the CIA board president.

[Central Iowa Aquatics Registration](#)

Central Iowa Aquatics offers a comprehensive training program for all swimmers from those just out of swimming lessons through high school and college swimmers. Training groups are available that fit the needs and abilities of each swimmer.

Annual registration is required for each swimmer in our program. Annual registration begins in mid to late August before the start of the Short Course Season. Swimmers may join the team at any time during the season.

Registering for the team is a commitment to pay dues for the duration of the season for all swimmers except those in the Intro group and the Masters group when it is offered. By continuing to swim with the team during the long course season (beginning late March/early April), you are agreeing to pay dues for the entire long course season.

High school swimmers will have their dues adjusted during the short course season based on their high school season.

CIA offers 2 seasons:

- **Short Course Yards (SCY) Season** – this season runs from late-August to mid-March for the Senior and White groups and September through February for the Blue and Intro groups.
- **Long Course Meters (LCM) Season** – this season runs from late-March to early-August for the Senior and White groups and April through July for the Blue and Intro groups.

At the time of registration, credit card payment of three charges is required for each swimmer:

- **USA Registration** – All swimmers in our program are required to be USA Swimming members. USA Registration is paid annually at the time of registration. The fee for USA registration is currently \$74.
- **CIA Seasonal Fee** – This \$75 fee is assessed twice per year. It will be charged at registration for the Short Course Season and again in April for the Long Course Season.
- **First Month of Swimmer Dues** – This amount varies based on the swim group and day of the month the swimmer joins. Swimmers are assigned to a swim group by the head coach or the head age group coach.

The USA Registration fee and CIA Seasonal fee are non-refundable. Refunds of swimmer dues are only offered if the Extended Leave Policy applies.

The swimmer will be allowed to return to practice upon providing documentation from the same doctor or medical professional clearing the swimmer's return. Swimmer dues will resume at this time. This will apply whether the swimmer returns to practice on a limited basis or full-time basis.

This policy applies to absences for medical reasons. It does not apply to vacation time or participation in other activities. Exceptions to this policy can be requested for review by the board.

[Donations and AmazonSmile Program](#)

Central Iowa Aquatics is completely supported by member dues, fundraising, donations, and income from CIA-hosted swim meets. Since CIA is a non-profit 501.3c organization, donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by the law. Please contact a CIA board member if you are interested in making a donation.

Central Iowa Aquatics is also part of the AmazonSmile program. Whenever you shop through Smile.Amazon.com, and select Central Iowa Aquatics as your recipient organization, Amazon will donate .5% of the sale to CIA. It's Easy!

- Instead of shopping via amazon.com, go to smile.amazon.com. Here's a quick link for CIA: www.smile.amazon.com/ch/42-1443780
- Select Central Iowa Aquatics from the list of charities. If you already have a charity selected, you will see Supporting: and the name of a charity just under the search bar. Click the down arrow and select Change Your Charity. Select Central Iowa Aquatics from the list.
- Shop as you normally would and don't worry - if you already started shopping in Amazon when you switch your URL to smile.amazon.com, your shopping cart comes with you!
- Amazon will donate .5% of your purchases to Central Iowa Aquatics.
- Bookmark www.smile.amazon.com to make it easier to shop next time!
- Invite grandparent/guardians and other family members to shop the same way!

[USA Swimming Safe Sport Program](#)

USA Swimming is committed to fostering a fun, healthy, and safe environment for all of its members. For that reason, we have in place a detailed Parent/guardian Code of Conduct. Safe Sport also provides

policies, education, a reporting structure, and tools that are intended to serve our members as we work together to maintain this environment.

CIA swimming code of conduct and athlete protection policies strictly follow USA Swimming policies. Additionally, CIA has a Code of Conduct that covers additional items, a specific travel safety policy, an Anti-Bullying Policy and an Electronic Communication/Photo Policy which may be viewed in the CIA Safe Sport Handbook. If you have question about the Central Iowa Aquatics and USA Swimming Safe Sport program contact the CIA Safety Chair at safety@centraliowaaquatics.org.

CIA Encourages Swimming in College

Information About Swimming in College

Splash magazine had an article which pointed out that serious swimmers usually have two dreams: to swim in the Olympics and to swim in college. The first dream will come true for two out of every 10,000 swimmers in members of USA Swimming. The second can be true for 100% of all members of USA Swimming. The key is finding a program that's right for you, no matter what your ability. Not everyone will be able to swim for a NCAA Division I powerhouse like Stanford or Texas, but there's no shame in swimming for a smaller Division I, II, III, or NAIA school. If you find one where your teammates share similar values and goals, one that will foster your growth as a student athlete, your experience will be a rewarding one.

There is often a misconception in the college search process that if you are not recruited or have not been offered a scholarship you must not be very good. ***That view is completely false.*** The fact is that most colleges just do not have the finances available to offer every good swimmer a scholarship. Another fact is that most colleges do not find out a student-athlete is interested in their program until that student has made "First Contact."

Many families assume that colleges are going to call them first. The reality is that most collegiate swimming programs do not have the manpower to search for athletes. Most coaches rely on meet results from large meets such as Sectionals or High School State, prospective student questionnaires, and through professional recruiters (not sports agents) whom a student-athletes pay a fee to have them send information to schools about them.

With the scholarship limits that are imposed by the NCAA, most college coaches are going to be looking at a student's academic ability. The vast majority of swimming student athletes receive financial aid through academic related scholarships, grants and student loans, not through athletic scholarships.

Athletic Scholarship

An athletic scholarship is a one-year contract between you and a Division I or Division II institution. A school can reduce or cancel a scholarship if you become ineligible for competition, fraudulently misrepresent yourself, quit the team or engage in serious misconduct. During the contract year, a coach cannot reduce or cancel your scholarship on the basis of your athletic ability, performance, or injury. An institution may choose to not renew a scholarship at the end of the academic term provided they notify you in writing and provide you an opportunity for a hearing.

Remember a coach cannot offer you a "four year full-ride scholarship." They do not exist. Each student athlete award is reviewed annually. It is important to ask current collegiate swimmers if they are still on scholarship. Parent/guardians, it is not uncommon for a college program to offer and renew an athletic scholarship for the first 2-3 years of college and then ask the student to pay full tuition for the remainder of their college career.

What Does Swimming in College Look Like?

- Varsity Team
 - Team Requirements (20 hours a week)
 - Class Requirements (passing 12 credit hours)
 - Social Life and Family Life Balance

- Four-year commitment
- Student-Athlete resources (tutors, early class registration)
- Vacation and Breaks may be different
- Club Team
 - A way to continue swimming while in college
 - Different levels of commitment and competition
 - Collegiate Club Swimming Championships

Picking a School

CIA wants every swimmer on the team to swim in college. The club understands the benefits of being part of a team. If the school has a team, start to show interest in the program. Also consider what your desire is to be involved not only in your swim team, but around campus and other activities. Will the team commitments allow you time to be involved in say Greek life or student government? Here are some other considerations;

- **Evaluate getting accepted** - It is very important to review the acceptance standards of any and all schools that you are interested in attending. If you are unable to meet these standards, it can make your desire to swim on that school's swim team a tougher road.
- **Academic offerings** - If you know your intended major, or even if you don't, it is important to review all of the academic offerings each school has. If you are undecided, do you have plenty of options to explore at the school or are your options limited?
- **Public vs. Private** - Public schools are funded heavily by state and government monies while private institutions are funded by tuition, endowments and donations.
 - Public institutions normally have an "in-state" cost for those students who are residents of the state and an "out-of-state" cost for those who attended from a different state. These price differences can make schools become more reasonably priced for your budget or put them out of reach.
 - Private schools most often have the same pricing for all types of students, in-state and out-of-state.
- **Expense** - Review the different types and all options each school has in terms of scholarships and financial aid. While some schools do not offer athletic scholarships, they could have more academic offerings than others. Schools have academic based scholarships; need based scholarships and private scholarships that students must apply for.
- **Location** - Where is the school located? Is it located in a part of the country that experiences all four seasons and maybe you are only used to mild seasons? Are you going to want to visit your hometown often to see friends and family? If so, is this a car ride away or maybe a flight?
- **Team Trips** - Additionally, does the location of this school require long travel trips for team activities? When making team trips, do you travel by bus or plane and how much time will you spend making these trips?
- **Size** - For some people, attending a large college is just what they are looking for. Classes with 300 people and a campus with tens of thousands. For others, a small intimate campus is more ideal.
- **Conference Competition** - It is possible to gauge the level of a swim team based on how they perform within their conference. Conference championships play an important part of all athletic departments. A good check for your ability to swim at a given school is to check your times against the times posted at the conference championship. Would you be able to swim and score points for your school?

Before starting your search for potential colleges create a list of the most important aspects to YOU of attending a college. It's important to note any college experience is what each individual makes of it.

[NCAA Eligibility Center/General Eligibility](#)

College bound student-athletes are encouraged to register at the beginning of their junior year of high school. Academic Eligibility per NCAA;

- Graduate from high school.
- Complete a minimum of 16 core courses for Division I or 14 core courses for Division II. After August 1, 2013, student-athletes who wish to compete at Division II institutions must complete 16 core courses.
- Earn a minimum required grade-point average in core courses.
- Earn a qualifying test score on either the ACT or SAT.
- Request final amateurism certification from the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- For Division I student-athletes the requirements must also meet the following standards:
 - Earn at least a 2.3 grade-point average in core courses.
 - Meet an increased sliding-scale standard (for example, an SAT score of 1,000 requires a 2.5 high school core course GPA)
 - Successfully complete 10 of the 16 total required core courses before the start of their senior year in high school. Seven of the 10 courses must be successfully completed in English, math and science.
 - Prospects that earn between a 2.0 and 2.3 GPA and meet the current sliding scale standard (for example, an SAT score of 1,000 requires a 2.025 high school core course GPA) will be eligible for practice and athletically related financial aid but not competition.
- Division III college and universities set their own admission standards. The NCAA does not set initial eligibility requirements in Division III.

[College Level Recruiting](#)

NCAA member schools have adopted rules to create an equitable recruiting environment that promotes student-athlete well-being. The rules define who may be involved in the recruiting process, when recruiting may occur and the conditions under which recruiting may be conducted. Recruiting rules seek, as much as possible, to control intrusions into the lives of student-athletes.

The NCAA defines recruiting as “any solicitation of prospective student-athletes or their parent/guardians by an institutional staff member or by a representative of the institution’s athletics interests for the purpose of securing a prospective student-athlete’s enrollment and ultimate participation in the institution’s intercollegiate athletics program.” Below is specific recruiting information;

- [Division I Recruiting Guide](#)
- [Division II Recruiting Guide](#)
- [Division III Recruiting Guide](#)
- [National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics \(NAIA\)](#)

[Recruiting Trips](#)

What is the difference between an official visit and an unofficial visit? Any visit to a college campus by a college-bound student-athlete or his or her parent/guardians paid for by the college is an official visit. Visits paid for by college-bound student-athletes or their parent/guardians are unofficial visits.

During an official visit the college can pay for transportation to and from the college for the prospect, lodging and three meals per day for both the prospect and the parent/guardian or guardian, as well as reasonable entertainment expenses including three tickets to a home sports event.

The only expenses a college-bound student-athlete may receive from a college during an unofficial visit are three tickets to a home sports event.

It is extremely important to remember your visit to a college and meeting with the team and coach can be your one and only chance to make a good impression in person. It is also important to consider:

- What are you wearing? Do you look like you are truly interested in the school and are dressed to impress the coach or do you look like an unorganized, unmotivated student?
- Are you organized with any materials you are presenting to the coach/school? If you sent a resume or document with your information, make sure you bring a matching or updated hard copy.
- Is the student-athlete driving the conversation with the coach or are the parent/guardians? Who is more interested in learning about the program? Remember to get YOUR questions answered. Don't be passive in the experience.

Remember on a recruiting trip, coaches and teammates are doing their best to get you to their school and team. Try to remain objective about the experience. This one weekend with a coach and team may not be the best representation of what your college career will look like at that school. Think about your next four-five years there, not just a single weekend.

As much as you are judging a team, coach and campus they are doing the same to you. They want to know if you will fit in with them. Put your best foot forward and enjoy your time getting to know the team, but know how to balance having a good time and being a responsible recruit.

Verbal Commitment

Verbal commitment is the phrase used to describe a college-bound student-athlete's commitment to a school before he or she is able to sign a National Letter of Intent ("NLI"). A college-bound student athlete can announce a verbal commitment at any time. While verbal commitments have become popular, they are NOT binding on either the college-bound student-athlete or the school. Only the signing of the NLI accompanied by a financial aid agreement is binding on both parties.

Committing to a School

A National Letter of Intent is signed by a college-bound student-athlete when the student-athlete agrees to attend a Division I or II college or university for one academic year. Participating institutions agree to provide financial aid for one academic year to the student-athlete as long as the student-athlete is admitted to the school and is eligible for financial aid under NCAA rules. Other forms of financial aid do not guarantee the student-athlete financial aid.

The National Letter of Intent is voluntary and not required for a student-athlete to receive financial aid or participate in sports. Signing a National Letter of Intent ends the recruiting process since participating schools are prohibited from recruiting student-athletes who have already signed letters with other participating schools.

A student-athlete who has signed a National Letter of Intent may request a release from his or her contract with the school. If a student-athlete signs a National Letter of Intent with one school but attends a different school, he or she will lose one full year of eligibility and must complete a full academic year at their new school before being eligible to compete.

Walk On/Non-Scholarship Athletes

Any athlete who does not receive athletic monies is considered a "walk-on" athlete. These non-athletic scholarship athletes may receive academic monies or other grant/aid from the school or private donors.

Financial Aid

There are many options out there to help students pay for college. It is important for students to look at all possible options to help them pay for college, if needed. Visiting your high school college counselor or guidance counselor may help in the search for different types of scholarships available to you.

Each college and university have a financial aid offices or financial service offices. Take time to look into the options each school has to offer and see if you can apply for additional funds from the school. A quick internet search of "financial aid" can turn up many different websites and pages. Take time to review each site before registering to use them as some are money-making sites and may not be as useful as others.

Additional Athletic Scholarship Information

Individual colleges or universities award athletics grants-in-aid (often described as scholarships) on a one-year, renewable basis. They may be renewed for a maximum of five years within a six-year period of continuous college attendance. Aid can be renewed, canceled or reduced at the end of each year for many reasons. If a student-athlete's aid will be reduced or canceled, the college or university must provide the student-athlete with an opportunity to appeal.

Financial aid is awarded in various amounts, ranging from full scholarships (including tuition, fees, room, board and books) to small awards that might provide only course-required books. Such partial awards are known as "equivalencies." Some Division I sports (including Football Bowl Subdivision football and basketball) do not permit equivalencies.

All scholarships from any source in any amount must be reported to the college financial aid office. The total amount of financial aid a student-athlete can receive and the total amount of athletics aid a team can award may be limited. These limits can affect whether a student-athlete can accept aid from other sources.

Athletics financial aid can be a tremendous benefit to most families, but some costs are not covered (for example, travel between home and school). Also, although the benefits of athletically related financial aid are substantial, the likelihood of participating is relatively small. Any young person contemplating college attendance should use high school for legitimate academic preparation.