**PENN Aquatics Electronic Communications Policy**

**USA swimming has mandated that all clubs have an electronic communications policy.**

Penn Aquatics recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our coaches, swimmers and parents 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. There are also boundaries to be considered among coach to parent communications.

**GENERAL CONTENT**

All electronic communications between a coach 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:

\*drugs or alcohol use;

\*sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity;

\*the adult’s or athletes’ personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems and/or inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

Coach to parent communications should also be professional in nature and mainly for the purpose of communicating information about team activities and/or concerns regarding an athletes’ progress or performance. Parents and coaches should be mindful about excessive communications as to not be intended for an athletes’ private personal gain or individualized extra attention.

**FACEBOOK, Instagram, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES**

Coaches may have personal Facebook or Instagram (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request 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 Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

Athletes may follow the Penn Aquatics Facebook and Instagram.

**TWITTER**

The Club may have an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for team‐related matters. Coaches cannot re-tweet an athlete or parent message post. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

**TEXTING**

Texting between a coach and an athlete may only be permitted by an athlete attending High School and not under the age of 15, and only with the athletes’ parents’ permission. Texting between a coach and an athlete shall only be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities within reasonable hours (7am-9pm) in relation to the timing of an event.

Texting between a coach and a parent should be mainly for the purpose of communicating information related to team activities and/or concerns regarding their athletes’ progress or performance. Parents and coaches should be mindful about excessive communications as to not be intended for an athletes’ private personal gain or individualized extra attention.

Personal pictures of coaches and athletes not relating directly to a group or team event should not be sent.

**EMAIL**

When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, board member, or other coach must also be copied.

**REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication. This can be done by contacting the Penn Aquatics Board President at [pennaquaticspres@gmail.com](mailto:pennaquaticspres@gmail.com)