



# Safe & Purposeful Reopening of Aquatics Facilities

## ***Prepared for Interested Parties***

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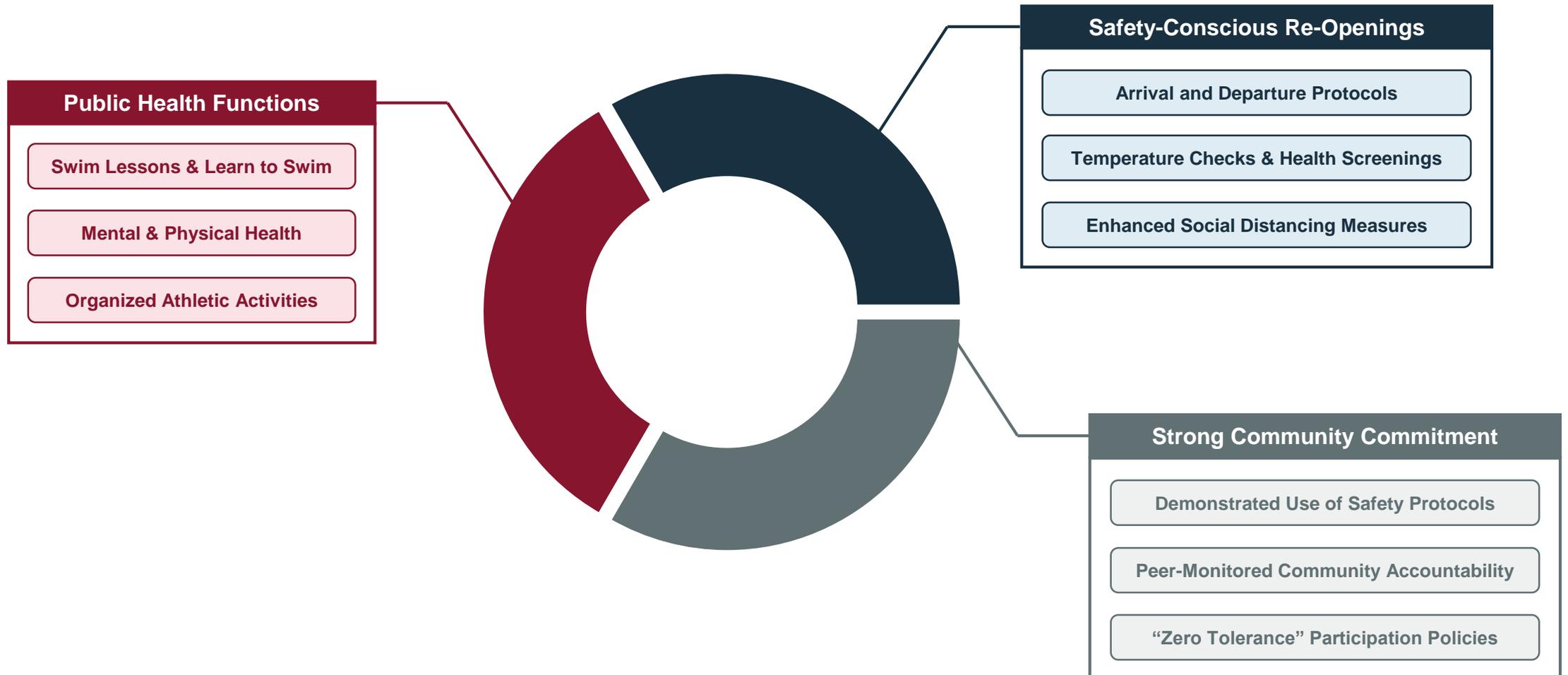
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# Aquatics facilities serve critical public health functions and can be re-opened safely, especially with demonstrated community commitment



# Aquatics facilities serve several critical public health functions in communities for Michiganders of all ages and backgrounds



## Swim Lessons/Learn to Swim Programs

### LEARNING TO SWIM IS ESSENTIAL

- Swim lessons are vital to ensuring that young children **remain safe** in the water.
- Drowning is the **number one cause of accidental death** in children under the age of four.
- During the summer months, parents and children flock to many of Michigan's stellar beaches, but **many do not know how to swim and are at increased risk of drowning**.
- Trained and certified lifeguards are **essential to protecting those who do not know how to swim**, both in pools and open bodies of water.

### TYPICAL VENUES

Indoor Facilities



## Mental & Physical Health

### PURPOSE-DRIVEN SWIMMING HAS SIGNIFICANT MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH BENEFITS

- Aquatics-based exercise and rehabilitation programs have **proven to be key contributors to improved mental and physical health**.
- For many individuals, including senior citizens and those with disabilities, **aquatics-based exercise may be the only physical activity they are able to safely participate in**, mainly because the buoyancy of the water offers low-impact on the joints.
- Regular physical activity is a core component of long-term health and **reducing risk factors for contracting illnesses**.

### TYPICAL VENUES

Indoor & Outdoor Facilities



## Organized Athletic Activities

### ORGANIZED ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES PROVIDE AN AVENUE FOR SAFE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Organized athletic activities, such as competitive swimming, serve to keep children active, **building a foundation for an active lifestyle as they mature**.
- For children with difficult family situations, organized athletic activities are **a safe escape** from such stressors and **provide connections to trusted adults who can offer kindness and support**.
- Organized athletic activities are a safe, structured alternative to unstructured recreational activity, **reducing injuries and medical incidents**.

### TYPICAL VENUES

Indoor & Outdoor Facilities

During the summer months, outdoor aquatics facilities can serve these critical public health functions, but as the weather begins to cool down and outdoor pools close, **communities will go without access to aquatics facilities to serve these functions if indoor aquatics facilities are required to remain closed.**

# Aquatics organizations have worked diligently to provide guidelines and protocols that allow aquatics facilities to re-open safely

## MICHIGAN AQUATIC PARTICIPANT GUIDELINES FOR COVID-19 RISK REDUCTION AND CONTACT TRACING

### BEFORE LEAVING HOME

- Take your temperature and complete COVID-19 daily health check. If you answer "Yes" to any COVID-19 health questions, stay home. Symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing, or other symptoms identified by the CDC.
- Shower and dress for swimming or other aquatic activity before leaving home.
- Wear a facemask if traveling to the facility with individuals outside of your immediate family.

### ENTERING AND EXITING FACILITY

- Arrive to the facility approximately 5-10 minutes prior to start time to maximize social distancing when entering the facility. All persons must wear a face covering upon arrival, starting in the parking lot. These safety protocols should be resumed when exiting the facility.
- Post instructions for entering and exiting the facility prior to entry to provide for minimal contact and traffic.
- Provide parking lot signage marking paths throughout the facility to guide swimmers and staff for safe entry and exit procedures.
- Post signage for all non-employees requiring they not enter the facility if answering "Yes" to any COVID-19 health questions.
- Arrive in swimsuits ready to swim, carry minimal personal belongings and exit the facility immediately



### MESSAGING

We believe swimming, like walking, hiking, running, and cycling, is a critical healthy activity within our communities. Swimming does not require direct contact between teammates or coaches and social distancing can be maintained throughout practice. As with all exercise and activity at this time, swimming must comply with standards for social distancing and safety within aquatic facilities. We know, with collaboration between USA Swimming coaches, public health officials, and facility operators we can create safe plans for using aquatic facilities to promote physical and mental health opportunities compliant with public health directives. The CDC has indicated that there is no evidence the disease spreads through treated water. Proper operation and maintenance (including disinfection with chlorine and bromine) of these facilities should inactivate the virus in the water.

### FACILITY, LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

#### Recommendations:

- Each team/club should have a COVID-19 liaison responsible for staying up to date on community and state recommendations and any associated changes.

#### Plan building considerations:

1. What limits and phases has your state/municipality outlined for gatherings in the coming weeks/months?
  - a. Is the transmission rate in your region low to zero?

- b. Does your local health care system have capacity, or is it over-extended due to COVID-19 cases?

2. Who will make the decision about access to your facility?
3. For a facility of your size, what is the capacity for that space within those guidelines?
4. Have you reviewed/complied with the OSHA COVID-19 return to work guidelines? (attached)
5. Have you reviewed/complied with the White House guidelines? (attached)

### MITIGATING HAZARDS

#### Recommendations:

- Eliminate use of low ventilated spaces and rooms that prevent social distancing, such as locker rooms and small dryland rooms.
- Increase water sanitation level - As example keep chlorine closer to 2.0 PPM
- Create visible markers on the floor to indicate appropriate spacing on the pool deck, entrances, etc.

#### Plan building considerations:

1. How will you manage/sanitize bathroom use?
2. What to your plan/checklist for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces?
3. How will you control access/egress of the facility?
4. How will you limit contact points in the facility (e.g., open doors, water bottles, equipment, etc.)?
5. What is your plan should a coach, athlete, etc. become sick?

### SAFE PRACTICES/ PPE

#### Recommendations:

- A coach or staff member should ask athletes, as they come into practice, if they feel ill in any way, specifically listing certain symptoms, and send home those athletes reporting feeling ill or experiencing symptoms.
  - a. Symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing, or other symptoms identified by the CDC.
- Athletes/coaches who begin to cough/sneeze for any reason, must move away from others until coughing/sneezing dissipates.
- Athletes should change clothes and shower at home.

#### Plan building considerations:

1. What is your staffing plan: coaching, lifeguards, a person to control flow of athletes in and out of the facility, and other programmatic considerations?
2. What will be the structure of your practice time, time between sessions, numbers of workouts per week for each group, dryland, etc.?
3. How will you maintain spacing in the pool during workouts?
  - a. Examples: staggered starts, opposite ends, numbers per lane, communication with athletes, stations, markers visible to athletes for start and stop points, (e.g., visible spacing marks on pool deck, on lane lines, etc.) coaches on both end of the pool?
4. What is your plan for staff/coaches protective measures?

## EXCERPTED HIGHLIGHTS

### Participant Pre-Arrival

- Participants arrive as close as possible to when the activity begins. Do not permit congregation in the parking lots or anywhere outside the facility.
- Participants put on swimsuits at home and bring a full water bottle to avoid touching water faucets or drinking fountains.
- Participants take their temperature and complete a COVID screening before leaving home. If they have a fever or symptoms, they stay home and do not come to the facility.

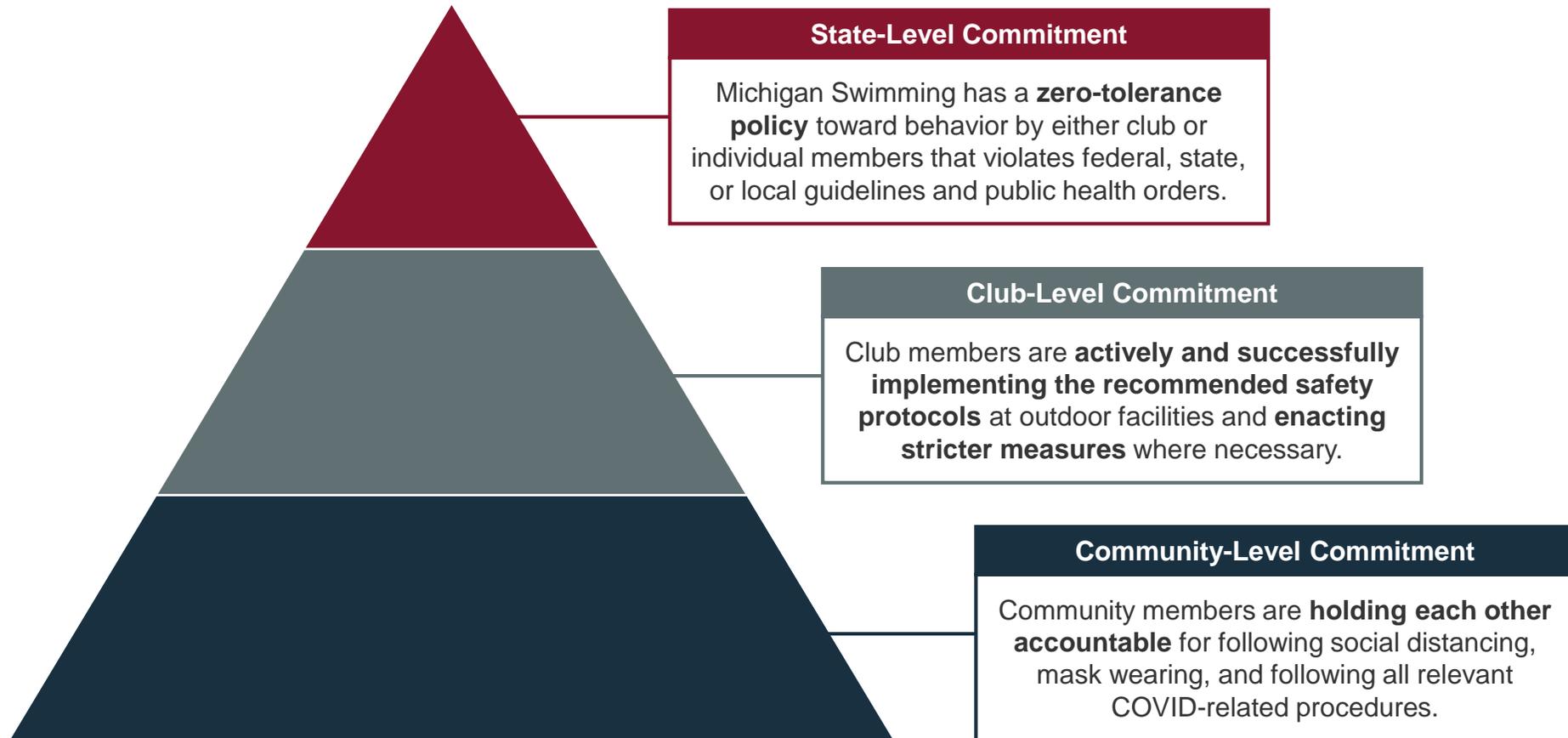
### At The Facility

- Upon participant arrival, take participants' temperatures and complete COVID screenings.
- Keep participants at least 6 feet apart at all times, including during the activity and during breaks (diagrams provided in the USA Swimming guidance).
- Record which participants were in which lanes/spaces for contact tracing purposes, if needed.

### Participant Departure

- Participants exit the facility immediately following the activity without using shared locker rooms to change.

# The broader aquatics community is deeply committed to re-opening aquatics facilities in a safe, responsible manner



To be successful in re-opening aquatics facilities, it is **imperative that all parts of the broader aquatics community work together**. The community recognizes that we can only be successful in this endeavor – and more importantly, safe in this endeavor – if we all do our part to **protect the health and safety of each other and our fellow Michiganders**.

# APPENDIX

It is possible to maintain proper 6-foot social distancing in an competitive swimming environment

