



**IRVINE NOVAQUATICS  
SAFE SPORT HANDBOOK**

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## INTRODUCTION

Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. (Novaquatics) always holds the safety of our swimmers at the utmost importance. Our consideration of safety is not only for protection of physical injury, but also protection from sexual and non-sexual misconduct.

This Novaquatics Safe Sport Handbook attempts to address all forms of sexual and non-sexual misconduct, as determined by USA Swimming and the U.S. Center for Safe Sport. Novaquatics has adopted our own Safe Sport policies on; 1) Locker Room safety, 2) Photography, 3) Travel, 4) Bullying, and 5) Grievance Reporting. The handbook also addresses Advised Consent, Parent and Athlete Education, USA Swimming's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP), Code of Conduct for Parents, Athletes and Coaches, and provides consent forms to be printed, signed and returned to Novaquatics administration (Kim Hoesterey). Returning signed forms may be done electronically, or via the United States Postal Service.

If ever a Novaquatics Safe Sport policy, or portion of a policy is in doubt, the USA Swimming Safe Sport policies and MAAPP will supersede.

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Creating a positive environment where excellence is inevitable.*

### Philosophy

The Novaquatics swim team (Nova) is committed to providing an enjoyable and complete swimming experience for swimmers of all ages and abilities. It is the tradition of Nova to provide a challenging and positive teaching and training environment in which swimmers can develop a sense of self-esteem and pride through individual and team achievement. Nova is additionally committed to excellence in performance and we continue to strive to be the competitive leader in regional, national, and international competitions. As with all organizations our team can be successful only if everyone is an active member and participates in all activities. We expect families to volunteer their time, energy and talents on behalf of the team.

### Objectives

NOVA is a team that cares for the welfare of all its members. Our objectives may be summarized as follows:

- As a USA Swimming (USA-S) team and in full support an in accordance with the objectives of USA Swimming, Nova promotes the ideals of integrity and fairness, positive environment, leadership, excellence, innovation and creativity.
- Nova provides professional instruction in skills associated with competitive swimming.
- Nova provides an appropriate environment to encourage the full development and participation of all swimmers with the focus on realizing maximum individual potential at a pace appropriate for each individual
- Through participation with the Nova program, swimmers will be taught personal responsibility and accountability, sportsmanship and citizenship through positive reinforcement and recognition of the individual's pursuit towards accomplishing defined goals.
- Provide a well-educated and professional coaching/teaching staff whose interest is in the development of the team and the individual swimmer.
- Promote family and community support and involvement in competitive swimming.
- Provide opportunities for swimmers at all levels to participate in competitions and other club-oriented activities.

- Through training excellence, focus and directions provided by its coaching professionals, Nova is committed to excellence in competition, both individually and as a team, at the highest level: regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- Creating a positive environment where excellence is inevitable.

The Nova coaching staff, and club administrators feel very strongly about the philosophy and objectives of the program. We expect each parent and swimmer to understand and adhere to these principles and objectives and encourage every member to strive toward building the strongest team possible, through individual and teamwork.

## DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Throughout this handbook there are references that might require further definition. The following are USA Swimming definitions.

Applicable Adult: USA Swimming defines and applicable adult as the following. Any one of the four descriptions qualify a person as an Applicable Adult

- 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.

Athlete Members: Athlete members are considered to be any USA Swimming athlete age 18 and older.

Minor Athlete: Minor athletes are any athletes under the age of 18.

Non-Athlete Members: Non-athlete members are any member of USA Swimming that is not considered an athlete, such as coaches and officials.

Observable and Interruptible: When an interaction between an Adult and a minor is taking place, it should be in such a way that another adult can see all interactions that are happening AND 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 and/or vocal interruption.

Private Instruction: When a parent or guardian hires a coach (or any adult) 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 occurring in the course of a team practice or USA Swimming event. 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 one-on-one interaction that is recommended and not required.

“Expose” – The term 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.

“Except under emergency circumstances – 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.

Telephone Calls: A telephone call between an Applicable Adult and a minor athlete is considered on-on-one contact and must be observable and interruptible.

# Section I - USA SWIMMING SAFE SPORT POLICY

## MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY (MAAPP)

### This Policy Applies To:

- 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 minor athletes.

### General Requirement

USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club.

### One-On-One Interactions

#### I. Observable and Interruptible

One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see below) or under emergency circumstances.

#### II. Meetings

- a. Meetings between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.
- b. If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
- c. Meetings must not be conducted in an Applicable Adult or athlete's hotel room or other overnight lodging location during team travel.

#### III. Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers

If a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider meets with a minor athlete in conjunction with participation, including at practice or competition sites, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:

- a. The door remains unlocked;
- b. Another adult is present at the facility;
- c. The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and
- d. Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider, with a copy provided to Kim Hoesterey.

#### IV. [Recommended] Individual Training Sessions

Individual training sessions outside of the regular course of training and practice between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the training session.

### Social Media and Electronic Communications

#### I. Content

All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.

II. Open and Transparent

Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult must copy the minor athlete's legal guardian on any electronic communication response to the minor athlete.

When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult must copy another adult.

III. Requests to Discontinue

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by Nova, LSC or by an Applicable Adult subject to this Policy. The organization must abide by any such request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.

IV. Hours

Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.

V. Prohibited Electronic Communication

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may "friend" Nova and/or LSC's official page.

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

**Travel**

I. Local Travel

Local travel consists of travel to training, practice and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).

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 otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's legal guardian.

[Recommended] Legal guardians must pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.

II. Team Travel

Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.

a. During team travel, when doing room checks two-deep leadership (two Applicable Adults should be present) and observable and interruptible environments must be maintained.

When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each competition for the minor athlete to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.

Team Managers and Chaperones who travel with Nova or LSC must be USA Swimming members in good standing.

- b. Unrelated Applicable Adults must not share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with a minor athlete.

Minor athletes should be paired to share hotel rooms or other sleeping arrangements with other minor athletes of the same gender and of similar age.

- c. Meetings during team travel must be conducted consistent with the One-on-One Interactions section of this Policy (i.e., any such meeting must be observable and interruptible). Meetings must not be conducted in an individual's hotel room or other overnight sleeping location.

### **Locker Rooms and Changing Areas**

#### **I. Requirement to Use Locker Room or Changing Area**

The designated locker room or changing area must be used when an athlete or Applicable Adult changes, in whole or in part, into or out of a swimsuit when wearing just one suit (e.g., deck changing is prohibited).

#### **II. Use of Recording Devices**

Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces by a minor athlete or an Applicable Adult is prohibited.

#### **III. Undress**

An unrelated Applicable Adult must not expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to a minor athlete under any circumstance. An unrelated Applicable Adult must not request an unrelated minor athlete to expose the minor athlete's breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to the unrelated Applicable Adult under any circumstance.

#### **IV. One-on-One Interactions**

Except for athletes on the same team or athletes attending the same competition, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area, except under emergency circumstances. If the organization is using a facility that only has a single locker room or changing area, separate times for use by Applicable Adults must be designated.

#### **V. Monitoring**

Nova must regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas to ensure compliance with this Policy. Locker rooms and changing areas may be monitored by use of the following methods:

- a. Conducting a sweep of the locker room or changing area before athletes arrive;
- b. Posting staff directly outside the locker room or changing area during periods of use;
- c. Leaving the doors open when adequate privacy is still possible; and/or
- d. Making occasional sweeps of the locker rooms or changing areas with women checking on female locker rooms and men checking on male locker rooms.

Every effort must be made to recognize when a minor athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition, and, if the minor athlete does not return in a timely fashion, to check on the minor athlete's whereabouts.

#### **VI. Legal Guardians in Locker Rooms or Changing Areas**

Legal guardians are discouraged from entering locker rooms and changing areas. If a legal guardian does enter a locker room or changing area, it must only be a same-sex legal guardian and the legal guardian should notify a coach or administrator in advance.

### **Massages and Rubdowns/Athlete Training Modalities**

- I. Definition: In this section, the term “Massage” refers to any massage, rubdown, athletic training modality including physical modalities (e.g., stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g., stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.).
- II. General Requirement  
Any Massage performed on an athlete must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and must be performed by a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. However, even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach must not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.
- III. Additional Minor Athlete Requirements
  - a. Written consent by a legal guardian must be obtained in advance by the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to Nova.
  - b. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the Massage.
  - c. Any Massage of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and the person performing the Massage in the room.
  - d. [Recommended] Any Massage of a minor athlete must only occur after a proper diagnosis from a treating physician and be done in the course of care according to the physician’s treatment plan.

## **REPORT CONCERNS**

To deal with a Safe Sport concern, contact USA Swimming at:  
(719) 866-4578 or

<https://www.usaswimming.org/articles-landing-page/2017/05/08/safe-sport-report>

To make a report to the U.S. Center for Safe Sport, call (720) 524-5640 or use the online reporting form at <https://safesport.i-sight.com/portal> or find more information at <http://www.usacenterforsafesport.org/>

## **Section II – IRVINE NOVAQUATICS SAFE SPORT POLICIES**

### **IRVINE NOVAQUATICS SAFE SPORT**

#### **ADVISED CONSENT NOTICE TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

USA Swimming Safe Sport and Irvine Novaquatics have implemented guidelines and procedures for all members, non-members and volunteers to comply with, in an effort to meet the requirements of The U.S. Center for Safe Sport ([www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org)). Irvine Novaquatics is reminding parents/guardians to exercise an abundance of caution when entrusting their child to unrelated adults. Ask questions and be involved in your child's swimming endeavors.

The overwhelming majority of coaches and administrators have the best interest of your child at heart. Unfortunately, would be perpetrators know how to fit in and look like a great caring individual. It is not always possible to pick out perpetrators from the general public. Nova wants to reassure you that appropriate pre-employment background checks have been conducted prior to hiring any of our coaches, or any staff that will have influence over your child during Nova related activities.

One-on-One contact between an adult and unrelated minor athlete is strongly discouraged. However, where circumstances necessitate one-on-one meetings, parents/guardians need to understand which behaviors are appropriate. Isolating a minor athlete is a key grooming tool used by predators. It usually comes about when the adult (coach or other unrelated adult) also "grooms" the parent/guardian, creating an atmosphere of trust, to allow the unfettered access to the minor.

When a coach suggests one-on-one contact with a minor athlete, the coach should be able to:

- Articulate why the contact must be one-on-one
- Explain why it can't be done at a routine team practice
- Tell you when and where the session will take place
- Reassure you that it will be in an area that is open (no closed doors)
- Invite you to observe any one-on-one sessions

Be aware of any signs that make you uncomfortable. Ask questions of the coach or other adult. Don't let flattery of your child blind you to potential risks.

We all have a role to play in making our sport safe for minor athletes. Remain vigilant!

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Locker Room Monitoring Policy

### PURPOSE

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

### FACILITIES

Irvine Novaquatics swimmer's practice at four permanent sites: William Woollett Jr Aquatics Center (WWAC), Northwood High School, Soka University and Los Caballeros Sports and Tennis Club. All four sites share facilities with adult students, faculty, parents, staff, and the general public. As such, there are likely to be people who are not associated with Novaquatics using the locker rooms and changing areas around the time the team is holding practices. The following can be expected at these sites:

William Woollett Jr. Aquatics Center (WWAC) – The locker rooms are shared by other aquatics clubs as well as the public. The facilities have individual changing stalls which should be used whenever possible. Parents are discouraged from entering the locker rooms and changing areas when they are in use by minor athletes, unless cleared in advance, as per this policy. Lifeguards employed by the City of Irvine will make periodic sweeps through the locker rooms, to ensure everything is in order.

Soka University – Locker rooms are not to be used by Novaquatics athletes, however, restrooms at the base of the stairwell may be used. Parents and coaches should use the restrooms at the top of the staircase whenever a minor athlete is changing in the restroom on the ground floor.

Northwood High School – The locker rooms are shared with the general public. Athletes may choose to get dressed on deck but must not remove their swimsuit unless in the locker room. Donning clothing over the swimsuit is acceptable until the athlete is at home, or changes in the locker room.

Los Caballeros Sports and Tennis Club – Locker room use at Los Cab is limited. Athletes under the age of 14 may not use the locker room without being accompanied by their parent. There is not currently a policy for monitoring use of the locker rooms or changing areas, so athletes must be aware of this when using those facilities.

### MONITORING

Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition, and if they do not return in a timely manner the coach should check on the athlete's whereabouts.

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is absolutely necessary, or required by policy (in particular, Los Cab). If an athlete needs assistance getting dressed (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents or legal guardians let the coach know beforehand. The parent or guardian must be of the same sex as the child they are attending to in the locker room. Novaquatics has varied groups practicing at different times throughout each day, therefore, it is not practical or safe to constantly monitor locker rooms and changing areas the entire time. Volunteers or coaches will make occasional sweeps of the locker rooms or changing areas throughout the duration of practice times. The sweeps will be conducted by parents in pairs, with women checking the female locker room, and men checking the male locker room.

## **SAFETY AWARENESS**

An unrelated Applicable Adult must not expose any part of his or her naked torso to a minor athlete under any circumstances. Nor shall an unrelated applicable adult request that a minor athlete expose their naked torso to the adult, under any circumstances.

Except for athletes on the same team or athletes attending the same competition, at no time are unrelated applicable adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area, except under emergency circumstances.

## **USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES IN CHANGING AREAS**

The use of any devices (including cell phones) capable of photo, video, or voice recording in any locker room or changing area (including outdoors) is prohibited.

## **VIOLATIONS**

Any violations of this policy will be reported to a coach or staff member of Novaquatics as soon as possible, so that all suspects, witnesses and victims are available to recall the circumstances of the violation. If deemed necessary, local law enforcement will be notified.

Any Novaquatics coach, parent, staff, volunteer or athlete determined to have intentionally violated this policy, will be asked to leave the team. Any form of sexual misconduct, to include exposure, inappropriate touching, or photographing and/or recording, will be reported to local law enforcement, to be dealt with in the legal system.

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Photography and Videography Policy

Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. (Novaquatics) believes that when used properly photography and videography are excellent tools to celebrate and promote one's involvement and achievements within the sport. We also understand that while the great majority of images are appropriate and are taken in good faith, it is fact that certain images can be misused and/or misinterpreted to put an event participant, most notably children, at risk.

### DEFINITION

The definition of terms related to this policy:

**"Photography and Videography"** refers to a blanket reference to all forms of image capture, including but not limited to still photography, video recording, social media posts and/or video streaming.

**"Start End of the Pool"** refers to either end of a competition pool where athletes will begin their race, whether from starting blocks or the pool edge.

### PROCEDURE

In order to minimize risk, all photographs and video taken during Novaquatics practices, meets and other events, whether taken by a professional photographer or videographer, spectator, athlete, volunteer or team staff (including coaches), must observe generally accepted standards of decency – in particular:

1. Photography and videography are prohibited from behind the start end of the pool.
2. Photography and videography are prohibited in locker-rooms or any changing areas.
3. Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualized image in a sporting context.
4. Action shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or displaced swimsuit.
5. Avoid images, camera angles and poses that may be more prone to misinterpretation or misuse by others.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Novaquatics maintains certain social media accounts, where shared photos and videos of swimmers under the age of 18 might be shared to a large audience. A parent or guardian has the right to refuse to allow their children to appear on any Novaquatics social media. The parent or guardian must sign the "Social Media Photo Sharing Consent Form" to allow or refuse the use of their child's image on any Novaquatics social media.

All event participants and spectators will be reminded of these photography standards before each event by:

1. Notice a notice published on every Southern California Swimming Meet Form, which is found under each specific meet event on the Novaquatics website.
2. Meet Officials will make an announcement at the beginning of every meet, reminding participants and spectators that via the loud speaker system, that, for example "A reminder to participants and spectators; Under NO circumstances are cameras or other recording devices, to include cell phones, allowed in the area immediately behind the Start End during warm-up or competition, OR in locker rooms, bathrooms or any other changing areas."



# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Policy on Team Travel

**Purpose:** This policy pertains to all Irvine Novaquatics athletes and coaches and includes Local as well as Team Travel.

-Local Travel consists of travel to training, practice and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).

-Team travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by the club or LSC.

For the purpose of this policy Applicable Athlete is defined as:

- All USA Swimming non-athlete members and adult athlete (18 years and older) members.
- Club adult staff and board members
- Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes.

**Section 1 – USA Swimming Required Policies:** These policies are required by USA Swimming, and are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook.

- a. The club Travel Policy Agreement must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club.
- b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming, and have successfully passed a USA Swimming administered criminal background check and must be members in good standing.
- c. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that athlete).
- d. When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each competition for the minor athlete to travel alone with said Applicable Athlete.

### Section 2 – Travel

#### Local Travel

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

#### Team Travel

- a. During team travel, when doing room checks, two-deep leadership (two Applicable Adults) should be present in observable and interruptible environments.
- b. Unrelated non-athlete Applicable Adults must not share a hotel room, or other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location, with an athlete.
  1. Overnight lodging locations include, but are not limited to, VRBO rentals, Air BnB's, campers, trailers, etc...
  2. Minor athletes should be paired to share hotel rooms or other sleeping arrangements with other minor athletes of the same gender and of similar age. When a minor athlete and adult athlete share a hotel room, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each instance for the minor to share a hotel room with said adult athlete (18 or older).

3. Meetings during team travel must be conducted in an observable and interruptible distance from another adult. Meetings must not be conducted in an individual's hotel room or other closed or private location.

#### Conduct during Travel

- a. Behavior and Personal Conduct must always be maintained in accordance with the Irvine Novaquatics Code of Conduct
  1. Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in hotel
  2. Be prompt and on time
  3. Cell phone usage guidelines will be determined by the lead traveling coach
  4. Respect travel vehicles, and wear seatbelts when vehicle is in motion
  5. Dress code will be in accordance with the Irvine Novaquatics Code of Conduct
  6. Use appropriate behavior in public facilities
  7. A mandatory in-room time, and lights out time will be designated by the lead traveling coach
  8. Athletes of mixed gender must only meet in a location that is observable and interruptible.  
There will be no boys in girl's rooms, and no girls in boys rooms
- b. Financial
  1. No room service without permission
  2. Athletes are responsible for all incidental charges
  3. Athletes are responsible for any damages or thievery they may have caused at the hotel

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Bullying Policy and Procedures

Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. (Novaquatics) is committed to provide for all of our members a safe, caring and friendly environment, free of bullying. Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any incidents will be dealt with promptly. Anyone knowing of a bullying incident is expected to tell a coach.

### WHAT IS BULLYING

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. In general, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and/or distress.

The U.S. Center for Safe Sport defines bullying behavior as: Repeated and/or severe (a) aggressive behavior, (b) among Minors (similar adult behavior might be considered harassment or hazing), (c) that is intended or likely to hurt, control or diminish another person emotionally, physically or sexually.

#### 1. Forms

- a. **Physical:** Hitting, pushing, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, spitting or slapping; throwing objects such as sporting equipment at another person
  - b. **Verbal:** Teasing, ridiculing, taunting, name-calling or intimidation or threatening to cause someone harm.
  - c. **Social, including cyberbullying:** Using rumors or false statements about someone to diminish that person's reputation; using electronic communications, social media or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate someone; socially excluding someone and asking others to do the same.
  - d. **Sexual:** Teasing, ridiculing or taunting based on gender or sexual orientation (real or implied), gender traits or behavior (e.g. taunting someone for being too effeminate) or teasing someone about their looks or behavior as it relates to sexual attractiveness.
2. **Rude, mean and conflict-Distinguished:** Conduct may not rise to the level of Bullying Behavior if it is rude (inadvertently saying or doing something hurtful), mean (purposefully saying or doing something hurtful, but not as a part of a pattern of behavior), or arising from conflict or struggle between persons, absent a Power Imbalance, who perceive they have incompatible goals.
3. **Criminal conduct:** Bullying Behavior includes any conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.

### WHAT TO DO

**Coaches:** Stop bullying on the spot using the following steps

#### 1. Gather facts

- a. **Intervene immediately.** Ask for assistance from another coach, if necessary
- b. **Separate the kids involved**
- c. **Make sure everyone is safe.** Remove all swimmers from the pool if there is not another coach available, and ensure they are in a safe place.
- d. **Do not call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.**
- e. **Collect all available information from every witness involved**

#### 2. Determine if it was bullying

- a. **Review definition of bullying**
- b. **Have there been previous conflicts leading up to this one?**

- c. **Is there a power imbalance?** Is there a known or perceived difference in “power” between the individuals involved? Power is not necessarily physical strength but can be a perceived position in a group.
  - d. **Is there a concern that another incident will occur?** It may not matter who “started it”. Consider that annoying or aggressive individuals might actually be the victim.
- 3. Once actual bullying has been determined, be sure to provide support to all individuals involved.**
- a. **Support the kids being bullied**
    - i. Determine if there was a physical injury, and if so, seek immediate first aid
    - ii. Listen and focus on the child
      - 1. What does the victim say happened?
      - 2. Assure the victim that bullying is not their fault.
      - 3. Ask the victim what can be done to make them feel safe.
        - a. Changes to routine should be minimized
        - b. The victim should not be singled out. For example, rearrange all lane assignments, not just the victim. If bigger moves need to happen, such as group moves, the victim should not be forced to move.
      - 4. Develop a game plan
        - a. Maintain open communications between the team and parents.
        - b. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
        - c. Address and stop bullying behavior right away

**Bullying victim or witnesses should:** Follow the procedures as defined in the Irvine Novaquatics Grievance Procedures.

- 1. Report the incident to your coach by one of the following options:
  - a. Talk to the coach in person.
  - b. Send a letter or email to the coach or Novaquatics administrative staff.
  - c. Make a report to USA Swimming Safe Sport ([ehahn@usaswimming.org](mailto:ehahn@usaswimming.org))
- 2. There is no specific time frame for initiating a complaint, but every effort should be made to report the incident as soon as possible, so that memories are still fresh.

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Grievance Policy and Procedures

Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. (Novaquatics) expects excellence from its coaches, parents, volunteers, and swimmers. We are aware that, at times undesirable circumstances, situations, and behaviors happen, but because of our commitment to excellence and safety, individuals or groups will be held accountable for behaviors, words and actions that do not represent the values and conduct expected from USA Swimming and Novaquatics members.

The Novaquatics Grievance Procedures gives swimmers, parents, coaches and volunteers a way to address and report grievances in a productive, systematic way that allows the appropriate parties to investigate or intervene and take disciplinary action when needed.

### TYPES OF GRIEVANCES

1. Swimmer conduct
2. Coach conduct
3. Parent or volunteer conduct
4. Board Member conduct
5. USA Swimming Official conduct

### HOW GRIEVANCES WILL BE HANDLED

The coaches and General Manager have the authority to impose penalties for infractions of the Novaquatics Athlete or Parent Code of Conduct, or any behavior(s) they deem not conducive to the best interests of the team. Consequences are at the sole discretion of the Associate Head Coach of the site the athlete predominantly trains, and/or Novaquatics leadership, to include the General Manager or Board of Directors. Consequences might include, but are not limited to verbal warnings, dismissal from practice, contacting parents, or expulsion. USA Swimming and local law enforcement (if applicable) will be contacted within 24-hours of any known violation of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, or local laws.

### THE GRIEVANCE REVIEW PROCEDURE WILL INCLUDE:

1. Information gathering: The Associate Head Coach or his designated representative (another coach or adult staff member) will reach out to the complainant, the subject(s) of the grievance, and any witnesses to gather all facts related to the grievance
2. Assessing behavior: The behavior of the person(s) for which the grievance was brought will be assessed against Novaquatics policies, facility rules, USA Swimming Code of Conduct and Safe Sport Policies, as well as applicable local and state laws.
3. Determination of consequences: If determined appropriate consequences and/or disciplinary actions will be decided using the following considerations:
  - a. Nature of the misconduct (what happened)
  - b. Severity of the misconduct (how did the misconduct effect the complainant, or the team)
  - c. Prior disciplinary actions
  - d. Adverse effect of the misconduct on others
  - e. Application of the Code of Conduct

## **WHOM TO NOTIFY OF A GRIEVANCE**

1. Regarding the conduct of a swimmer – Contact that swimmer’s coach
2. Regarding the conduct of a coach – Contact the Associate Head Coach for the site
3. Regarding the conduct of an Associate Head Coach – Contact the Novaquatics General Manager (Dave Salo)
4. Regarding the conduct of a parent, swim official or volunteer – Contact the team admin (Kim Hoesterey)

## **APPEALS PROCESS**

Initial conduct review and determination of any disciplinary action will be the responsibility of the person receiving the grievance, as outlined in Whom to Notify of a Grievance.

If the complainant feels the disciplinary action is unsatisfactory and does not resolve the issue, or if the responsible coach or staff member fails to address the complainants concern in a timely manner, the complainant may appeal the decision to the next higher level (Associate Head Coach or General Manager).

The decision of the General Manager regarding any complaint is final.

## Section III – SAFE SPORT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### SAFE SPORT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education is a key component of any abuse and misconduct prevention strategy. Awareness training provides everyone, including athletes and Applicable Adults, with information necessary to more effectively minimize the opportunities for Physical and Sexual Misconduct and other types of abuse. *With education comes knowledge, and knowledge empowers an athlete and others to identify misconduct and feel safe to report it.*

It is the policy of USA Swimming that all adult athlete members (athletes 18 and older) and non-athlete members shall be familiar with the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies.

All adults who interact with and have direct and frequent contact with minor athletes, including adult athletes will complete Athlete Protection Training (APT) annually, in order to keep their membership current.

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport/apt>

Coaches: All coaches are required to complete the Athlete Protection Training before any regular contact with an athlete.

Other Volunteers/Employees: All Novaquatics volunteers and employees that will have regular contact with, or supervision over Minor Athletes, shall be required to complete the Athlete Protection Training annually.

Volunteers and employees that have less than regular contact with Minor Athletes are strongly encouraged to complete the Athlete Protection Training.

### Parent and Minor Athlete Education

Parent education is one of the keys to keeping a program safe from abuse and misconduct. Parents can assist by helping to avoid situations in which misconduct can occur, by being aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse, and by reporting suspected abuse. Parents and guardians are encouraged to take the short USA Swimming “Parent Guide to Misconduct in Sport” course online.

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport/learn>

Minor Athletes (ages 12 to 17) should complete the Safe Sport course offered through USA Swimming. The course introduces the athlete to Safe Sport, healthy boundaries, and how to speak up about misconduct, abuse, and the behaviors that lead to abuse. This course is called “Safe Sport for Athletes” and can be found online.

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport/learn>

**APPENDIXES**  
**CONSENT FORMS**

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS PARENT/GUARDIAN TRAVEL CONSENT FORM

Irvine Novaquatics maintains a number of Safe Sport policies, as set out in its Safe Sport Handbook, governing the activities of minors in certain circumstances for which written parental consent is necessary.

This Parental Consent Form serves to document that the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (Minor Athlete) hereby consents to the following activities in which the minor athlete will be permitted to participate. Each activity bearing the initials of the parent or legal guardian on the appropriate line below, will signify that consent for that activity has been given. The absence of appropriate initials will indicate that permission has NOT been given for that activity.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initials as appropriate)

The minor athlete may travel with, or be transported by \_\_\_\_\_ (coach's name), an unrelated adult, without a parent/guardian for the activity/trip described below:

Type of Activity/Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (initials as appropriate)

Parent/Guardian understands that their minor may share a room with other athletes. Every effort will be made to assign an athlete(s) of the same age, however, there may be occasions where slight age differences (up to two years) might be necessary. Room assignments will be published prior to the group departing for the activity. Parent/Guardian authorizes such room assignments.

Activity/Meet: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

This Consent Form shall expire upon completion of the activity, or after 6-months, whichever comes first, unless sooner revoked in writing by the parent or guardian. The applicable coach, Nova admin and the parent/guardian shall be responsible for maintaining a copy of this form, until revoked or expired.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I am the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (Minor Athlete), and that I have reviewed the Nova Travel Policy and Code of Conduct. I affirm that I have the authority to consent on behalf of the Minor Athlete to the activities above. Execution of this form, together with initialing lines by activity above, constitutes my consent to the Minor Athlete's participation in such activity.

PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

RELATION TO ATHLETE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## PHOTO AND VIDEO SHARING CONSENT FORM

Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. (Novaquatics) may wish to publish onto a club Social Media page, or newsletter, photographs of swimmers under the age of 18 that may include your child during their membership in the club. All photos will be considered in line with the Photography and Videography policy as well as parental consent prior to posting.

Novaquatics requires parents or legal guardians to consent or refuse the use of their child's image prior to sharing or publishing any photos. This form will be maintained on file with the Novaquatics administration, and coaches will be made aware of parental consent being given or refused. This consent may be reversed at any time, by the parent or legal guardian only.

As the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ I consent to the following:

Images of my child to be published on the club's secure website

Consent given                       Consent refused

Images of my child to be published in newspaper articles

Consent given                       Consent refused

Images of my child to be shared on Novaquatics social media accounts

Consent given                       Consent refused

Video of my child to be made for training purposes only

Consent given                       Consent refused

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Athlete Code of Conduct

**Behavior and Personal Conduct**, Athletes must:

1. Present themselves at all times in a high standard of personal conduct and behavior.
2. Respect the integrity of swim officials by assuming decisions are based on honest, objective evaluations of performance. Only coaches may approach meet officials for clarification of a ruling.
3. Promote good sportsmanship by setting a positive example, and by encouraging others to do likewise.
4. Language in public or relative group situations must always be appropriate and socially acceptable.
5. Arrive on time, for practices and swim meets, and bring the proper equipment.

**Consumption of Alcohol** is totally forbidden for all athletes considered underage as defined by California Law. The consumption of alcohol for anyone traveling with or for the Irvine Novaquatics, Inc., regardless of age is strictly forbidden, whilst en route to, during, or following a competitive event, training session or team activity.

**Smoking** is prohibited by swimmers whilst en route, prior to, during or following a training session, competitive event, or any Novaquatics team activity.

**Personal Appearance** shall be appropriate to the circumstances and as indicated by the Head Coach or General Manager. Team apparel and equipment shall be worn as directed, and in a good state of cleanliness and repair, when competing, training, when assembling or travelling, at official team functions, or on other occasions as notified.

**Performance Enhancing Drugs and Substances** are strictly forbidden. Swimmers are expected to be aware of the current list of banned substances as published by USA Swimming and FINA. Particular care must be exercised in on a prescribed medication or dietary supplement prior to or during a competition. Novaquatics DOES NOT support the use of any performance enhancers or supplements.

**Illegal Drugs and Substance** use, even when the drug/substance may not appear on the official banned list per USA Swimming and FINA, is nonetheless prohibited.

**Inconsiderate Behavior** WILL NOT be tolerated! A pattern of such continuing behavior shall result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the swimmer's coach, parents or Novaquatics Board of Directors.

**Bullying** of any kind is UNACCEPTABLE and will not be tolerated. Novaquatics is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, it will be dealt with according to the Bullying Policy found in Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. Safe Sport Handbook.

**Sanctions:** Breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with in the first instance by the Associate Site Head Coach and/or General Manager. He/she will report the incident to the Novaquatics Board of Directors, who shall take such further action as deemed necessary.

**By signing this Athlete Code of Conduct, I am agreeing to all of the terms and conditions stated within this document.**

**Athlete's Name** (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Athlete's Signature** (or parents if athlete is under 18): \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Parent Code of Conduct

### Behavior and Personal Conduct, Parents must:

6. Respect the integrity of swim officials by assuming decisions are based on honest, objective evaluations of performance. Only coaches may approach meet officials for clarification of a ruling.
7. Promote good sportsmanship by setting a positive example, and by encouraging others to do likewise.
8. Respect the authority of all lifeguards, as well as the staff at Wollett Aquatics Center and all Novaquatics staff.

### Parents agree to:

1. Assist coaches in conducting effective practices by ensuring their swimmers arrive and leave on time.
2. Not talking with, or motioning to swimmers during practice, unless clearing it with the coach first.
3. Realize that swimmers become easily confused when coached (on the pool deck or in private) by parents, and would benefit most with positive reinforcement, and supporting the coach's methods and decisions. Your unconditional support before and after races will help them the most.
4. Remember that Novaquatics coaches' methods and expectations are based on teachings and guidelines by USA Swimming, the American Swim Coaches Association, and other recognized swimming authorities.
5. Maintain open and honest communication with your child's coach.
6. Refrain from illegal or inappropriate behavior that detracts from a positive image of the team or is detrimental to our performance objectives.

**Consumption of Alcohol and Tobacco** is prohibited by anyone while observing a training session, competitive event, or participating in any Novaquatics team activity. Any person violating this policy will be asked to leave the premises.

**Bullying** of any kind is **UNACCEPTABLE** and will not be tolerated. Novaquatics is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, it will be dealt with according to the Bullying Policy found in Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. Safe Sport Handbook.

**Sanctions:** Breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with in the first instance by the Associate Site Head Coach and/or General Manager. He/she will report the incident to the Novaquatics Board of Directors, who shall take such further action as deemed necessary.

**By signing this Athlete Code of Conduct, I am agreeing to all of the terms and conditions stated within this document.**

**Parent Name (printed):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name (printed):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# IRVINE NOVAQUATICS

## Coach Code of Conduct

### Purpose

The purpose of this code of conduct for coaches is to establish common expectations for all members of the coaching staff of Irvine Novaquatics, Inc. (Novaquatics). It is to be used as a guide to promote a positive team environment and good sportsmanship

### Behavior and Personal Conduct, Coaches must:

9. At all times, adhere to USA Swimming's rules and code of conduct.
10. Set a good example of respect and sportsmanship for athletes and parents to follow.
11. Act and dress in a manner that represents the professionalism and dignity expected of all Novaquatics staff.
12. Respect officials and their judgement at all times and abide by the rules of the event.
13. Always treat opposing coaches, athletes and spectators with respect.
14. Instruct your athletes in words and actions that embrace good sportsmanship toward other athletes, coaches and officials.
15. Coach in a positive manner and do not use derogatory comments or abusive language.
16. Win with humility and lose with dignity.
17. Treat every athlete fairly, justly, impartially, intelligently, and with sensitivity.
18. Always place the well-being, health, and safety of swimmers above all other considerations, including developing performance.
19. Continue to seek and maintain your own professional development in all areas in relation to coaching and teaching children.
20. Always abide by all Safe Sport Policies and MAAPP, and ensure that any one-on-one interactions with a minor athlete are all at an observable and interruptible distance.

Any complaints of a coach violating this code of conduct will be brought to the attention of his/her supervisor and or the Novaquatics General Manager.

**By signing this Coach Code of Conduct, I am agreeing to all of the terms and conditions stated within this document.**

**Coach's Name (printed):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## REPORTING SAFE SPORT GRIEVANCES TO NOVAQUATICS STAFF

The email address format for all Novaquatics coaches and staff is:

*(first name).(last name)*@novaquatics.com

Novaquatics Admin is Kim Hoesterey at (714) 731-8065 or  
[kim.@novaquatics.com](mailto:kim.@novaquatics.com)

Novaquatics General Manager  
Dave Salo at [dave.salo@novaquatics.com](mailto:dave.salo@novaquatics.com)

Novaquatics Safe Sport Coordinator  
Quincy Kelly at [quincy.kelly@novaquatics.com](mailto:quincy.kelly@novaquatics.com)