



Starting September 1, 2021, all USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the General Requirement section of the policy.

General Requirement

USA Swimming Zones, LSCs and member clubs 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/legal guardians, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club or LSC, as applicable.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does the requirement to implement this updated MAAPP in full replace the previous Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention policy released in June 2019?

A: Yes. The updated MAAPP contains new requirements throughout. Clubs and LSCs are required to implement this policy in full as sections of MAAPP are replacing the previous MAAPP policy. Additionally, this policy continues to replace the requirement to have separate policies in the areas of communication and electronic communication. [Note: USA Swimming rules continue to require clubs to establish an anti-bullying policy. MAAPP does not replace that requirement.]

Q: Do all Adult Participants have to review MAAPP and agree to it in writing?

A: No. Only athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs must review and agree to MAAPP in writing on an annual basis. This requirement does not extend to Participating non-members (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.) who are not athletes, parents, coaches or other non-athlete members of member clubs.

Q: How long should a club retain the written agreement?

A: Clubs should retain the written agreement for the current year and replace it when the next annual written agreement is signed.

Q: Can the written agreement be completed electronically?

A: Yes. The written agreement can be completed electronically or on paper. The club can determine the most appropriate method for it to collect the written agreement.

Q: Do very young athlete members have to review and agree to MAAPP in writing?

A: No. It is sufficient for the athlete's legal guardian to certify in writing that MAAPP has been explained to the young athlete. The club can determine at what age it will require an athlete to individually agree to MAAPP in writing.



Starting September 1, 2021, USA Swimming, its Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the One-on-One Interactions section of the policy.

One-on-One Interactions

One-on-One Interactions present a risk for an Adult Participant to abuse a minor athlete or initiate grooming behaviors to do so. This portion of the policy sets the expectation that if a one-on-one interaction occurs, it is done in a way that is observable and interruptible by another adult.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What does observable and interruptible mean?

A: Observable and interruptible means that the interaction takes place in such a way that another adult can see all the interactions that are happening AND another adult 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 interruption and/or a vocal interruption.

Q: What does “except under emergency circumstances” mean?

A: 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.

Q: Can a lifeguard or pool facility staff serve as the “other adult” within an observable and interruptible distance?

A: Yes, if the lifeguard is an adult and can completely observe the interaction and interrupt in the moment. However, remember that a lifeguard or pool facility staff’s responsibility is to those in the pool and the facility and accordingly likely will not be able to observe or interrupt a one-on-one interaction.



Starting September 1, 2021, USA Swimming, its Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the Meetings and Individual Training Sessions section of the policy.

Meetings and Individual Training Sessions

Adult Participants often engage in meetings with athletes and by providing individual training instruction outside of regular practice activities. Such activities can create opportunities for one-on-one interaction, limited supervision and accountability.

Adult Participants must following all one-on-one interaction requirements during any meetings and individual training sessions with minor athletes. A minor athlete's parent/legal guardian must provide advanced written consent, at least annually, with a copy provided to the organization, which can be withdrawn at any time, for individual training sessions to occur. Additionally, parents/legal guardians must be allowed to observe the individual training session.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can an individual training session be observable but not interruptible as long as a parent/guardian provides consent?

A: No. Individual training sessions must ALWAYS be observable and interruptible unless one of the exceptions exists. Parent/guardian consent is required annually for ALL training sessions.

Q: Is advanced written consent required for a coach to provide individual instruction during practice sessions or competitions?

A: No. Individual instruction during a practice with other minor athletes present does not require consent. The instruction must still follow the one-on-one interactions requirements.



Starting September 1, 2021, all USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the Electronic Communication section of the policy.

Electronic Communications

Private electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a minor athlete present an opportunity for the Adult Participant to initiate grooming behaviors that may lead to abuse. Just as one-on-one interactions between an Adult Participant and a minor athlete must be observable and interruptible, any communications between an Adult Participant and a minor athlete should be open and transparent. Additionally, electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a minor athlete must involve the minor's legal guardian and take place during reasonable hours.

Before MAAPP, USA Swimming rules required every team establish a social media/electronic communication policy. This section of MAAPP replaces that requirement. Members will note that this section of the MAAPP is similar to the USA Swimming's previous Model Policy on Electronic Communication and published Best Practice Guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If an athlete member turns 18 years old and becomes an Adult Participant, can that athlete member still communicate with minor athlete friends and teammates through social media and electronic communication?

A: If the adult athlete does not have authority over the minor athlete, and is no more than four years older than the minor athlete, they can communicate one-on-one with the minor athlete. If the adult athlete does not meet this exception, the adult athlete will need have to follow the electronic communications section of MAAPP.

Q: How should an Adult Participant respond if they receive a call or text from a minor athlete?

A: The Adult Participant should include the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian unless another exception applies.

Q: What does Electronic Communication include?

A: Electronic communication includes but is not limited to phone calls, video calls, texts, social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, etc.), fitness applications, emails, and direct messaging that occurs between an Adult Participant and Minor Athlete(s).

Q: Can our team still use our Electronic Communication Policy instead of this one?

A: No, you cannot use the Electronic Communication Policy that you have had to this point. Every team is required to adopt this policy, including the Social Media and Electronic Communications section, in full.

Q: Are minor athletes still allowed to follow their favorite celebrity swimmer on a fan page?

A: Yes, under the policy, a minor athlete can follow or friend a celebrity swimmers fan page.

Q: What do I do about my pre-existing social media connections with minor athletes?

A: Adult Participants are required to discontinue existing social media connections with minor athletes.

Q: When does a minor athlete's legal guardian need to be copied on an electronic communication to a minor athlete?

A: An Adult Participant with authority over minor athletes must not send a one-on-one communication to a minor athlete. A minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied on an electronic communication sent by an Adult Participant with authority over minor athletes to the minor athlete.

Q: How should an Adult Participant communicate with the team or a group of minor athletes?

A: If an Adult Participant sends a message to a group of minor athletes or an entire team, another Adult Participant must be copied on the communication. It is not required that each minor athlete's legal



guardian be copied on an electronic communication sent by an Adult Participant to a group of minor athletes or an entire team.

Q: What would be an emergency circumstance?

A: An emergency circumstance should be an isolated incident that is an objectively reasonable emergency in order to justify an electronic communication sent outside of 5:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. An example would be to notify the team that early morning practice is cancelled at the last minute.

Q: Can a team change the hours during which electronic communications can be sent to a time period other than 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.?

A: No.

Q: Can an LSC send communications to a committee including an athlete representative outside of 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.?

A: No. LSC staff and board members are Adult Participants with authority over minor athletes. Electronic communications sent to minor athletes must only be sent between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Q: Can an LSC or USA Swimming committee with minor athlete representatives conduct a telephone or videoconference meeting after 9:00p.m.?

A: Telephones and videoconferences are considered electronic communications and are not permitted to be conducted with a minor athlete between the hours of 9:00p.m. – 5:00a.m.

Q: What participant's time zone does this apply to?

A: The time zone where the minor athlete is located.



Starting September 1, 2021, all USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the In-Program Travel and Lodging section of the policy.

Travel and Lodging

Club travel and lodging occur frequently in our sport and presents a series of unique risk factors. The goal of this policy is to minimize the opportunity for an Adult Participant to abuse a minor athlete during travel and lodging.

Before MAAPP, USA Swimming rules required every team establish a travel policy. This section of MAAPP replaces that requirement. Members will note that this section of the MAAPP is similar to USA Swimming's previous Model Policy on Team Travel and published Best Practice Guidelines.

A legal guardian must consent, on an annual basis, in writing, their consent for all In-Program Travel and Lodging that occurs during In-Program Contact. Additionally, in advance, for every instance in which their minor athlete travels alone with an Adult Participant the legal guardian must provide consent. Please note, it is the responsibility of the team to maintain parent consent forms covered in this section.

Teams often try to save money during team travel. For example, it has become a common practice for teams to rent a house which may be more cost effective than paying for hotel rooms. That practice is no longer permissible.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When a carpool is arranged between parents who are not Adult Participants, is this carpool covered under the policy?

A: No. The policy only covers travel between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete. It is still recommended that the parent pick up their child first and drop off their child last to prevent being one-on-one with an unrelated minor.

Q: Can Adult Participants ride alone in a vehicle with a minor athlete?

A: Adult Participants must not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances or one of the three exceptions provided in the MAAPP and must always have at least two minor athletes or another adult in the vehicle, unless agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's legal guardian.

Q: How is "overnight lodging location" in Section II(b) defined?

A: Overnight lodging location refers to a non-traditional lodging situation that teams might use. This includes, but is not limited to, non-traditional arrangements such as VRBO rentals, Air BNBs, campers, trailers, etc. All the travel rules apply to these locations as well.

Q: Can an adult athlete share a hotel or sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete?

A: Yes, an adult athlete can share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with a minor athlete only if the minor athlete's legal guardian provides written permission in advance and one of the policy exceptions applies. A coach may never share a hotel or sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete.

Q: Can families traveling to a competition share an Air BNB or VRBO?

A: Yes. If the travel is not "organized or supervised by the team" and/or one of the policy exceptions exists, then families can make their own arrangements for accommodations. Under no circumstance can a coach share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with an athlete.

Q: What is different between a VRBO or Air BNB and a hotel? Especially if everyone has their own rooms, and bathroom.



A: A temporary residence rental such as a VRBO or an AirBNB provides opportunity for more personal and casual encounters between Adult Participants and minor athletes than a hotel. This sort of casual setting provides an environment where boundaries can be crossed.



Starting September 1, 2021, USA Swimming, its Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the Locker Rooms and Changing Areas section of the policy.

Locker Rooms and Changing Areas

Locker rooms and changing areas are private and enclosed spaces in which abuse can occur. To prevent abuse of minor athletes in these private areas, this section of the MAAPP is intended to keep Adult Participants from being present in a locker room or changing area at the same time as minor athletes.

Please note that Adult Athletes are Adult Participants. It is important for adult athletes to carefully read and understand their responsibilities under this section. Please read every point carefully to avoid confusion.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What does it mean to provide a private or semi-private place for minor athletes that need to change clothes or undress?

A: Minor athletes must have an option of a separate space that is private or semi-private to use if they wish. Examples include, without limitation, bathroom stalls with a door and a pop-up changing tent.

Q: Can adult athletes shower before or after practice or an event if they cannot shower with minor athletes?

A: If an adult athlete meets the Close-in-Age Exception, then the adult athlete is permitted to shower with minor athletes present. Additionally, if the shower is part of a pre- or post-event rinse, and swim apparel is being worn, an adult athlete can shower with a Minor Athlete. Otherwise, it is the responsibility of the adult athlete to shower when minor athletes are not present.

Q: What does the word “expose” mean in Section V?

A: 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. Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to areas of the body exposed while wearing swimwear which conforms to the current concept of the appropriate for the individual’s competition category.

Q: Does this policy only apply to locker rooms at competitions?

A: No. MAAPP applies to any and all locker rooms or changing areas used by Adult Participants and minor athletes in connection to In-Program Contact activities such as practice, competition, camps, etc.

Q: Does this policy mean that athletes over the age of 18 cannot share a locker room or changing area with teammates under the age of 18?

A: No. Unrelated Adult Participants must not be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area unless they meet one of the three exceptions built into the policy.

Q: Can U.S. Masters Swimming (“USMS”) members use a locker room at the same time as minor athletes?

A: An unrelated Adult Participant must not be **alone** with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area. If a USMS swimmer meets the definition of an Adult Participant, then the Adult Participant must not be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area. MAAPP would not prohibit an Adult Participant, or Adult Participant (s) from sharing a locker room or changing area with minor athletes so long as the Adult Participant is not alone in the locker room or changing area with a minor athlete.

Q: Can an athlete deck change?

A: NO. Deck changing is prohibited under USA Swimming rules and by MAAPP. Every team has been sent a pop-up changing cabana to assist in enforcing this rule.



Q: If the club or LSC is using a public facility, how can the club or LSC ensure compliance with this section of MAAPP?

A: MAAPP only applies to Adult Participants and does not extend to the general public. Only Adult Participants are required to adhere to MAAPP.

Q: If two teams use the same practice facility, can the adult athletes from one team share a locker room or changing area with minor athletes from another team?

A: Yes. Athletes from two teams sharing a practice facility would be treated similarly to athletes on the same team so long as the adult athletes are not alone one-on-one with a minor athlete.



Starting September 1, 2021, USA Swimming, its Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the Massages, Rubdowns and Athletic Training Modalities section of the policy.

Massages, Rubdowns and Athletic Training Modalities

Massages, rubdowns and athletic training modalities can present a risk for Adult Participants to abuse minor athletes. As a result, all massages, rubdowns and athletic training modalities performed on a minor athlete must be conducted in an observable, interruptible environment by a non-coach licensed professional and must always have a second Adult Participant present in the room.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is an athletic training modality?

A: Examples of an athletic training modality includes stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.

Q: Can a coach assist an athlete stretching a leg or working out a shoulder knot?

A: No. Under no circumstance is a coach permitted to perform a rubdown or massage even if the coach is a licensed massage therapist or athletic trainer.

Q: Is it permissible for a coach to use an applicator to help apply relief creams or work out a muscle?

A: No. The use of instrument assisted modalities by a coach is not allowed.

Q: Does a legal guardian have to give permission for a massage therapist to work on their minor athlete?

A: Yes. The legal guardian must provide advance, written consent to the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to the club, and the legal guardian can withdraw that consent at any time.

Q: Can a coach provide hands-on stroke technique guidance?

A: Yes. In doing so a coach should adhere to the following best practices:

1. First, ask for the athlete's permission. For example, "Is it okay if I show you where to hold your elbow?"
2. Verbally explain what you are going to do and explain why. For example, "I'm going to hold your elbow into this position because this angle allows you to get better leverage in the water."
3. Educate team parents that they may at some point see you performing hands-on stroke technique guidance. Describe what this means, that you will always first ask for the athlete's permission and will also verbally explain to the athlete what will be demonstrated. Allow the parents to opt-out of hands-on stroke technique guidance at any time.
4. All hands-on stroke technique guidance must be performed within an observable and interruptible distance from another adult.