

# Napa Valley Swim Team Grievance Policy and Procedure

## PURPOSE

We expect excellence at all levels at the Napa Valley Swim Team - from our Coaches, Board of Directors, volunteers, parents and swimmers. The NVST Grievance Procedure provides a method to report and address concerns in a systematic and productive manner, in order for the appropriate parties to investigate, intervene and enact disciplinary actions as warranted. Our members' safety is paramount to the NVST organization, greater community, and USA Swimming. If you experience or witness actions or events that concern you or make you feel uncomfortable, it is important to speak to someone about it. This document will outline the processes when a swimmer, parent, or coach has a complaint or a concern, and how to mitigate it.

## Types of Grievance

- Swimmer Conduct
- Assistant or Age Group Coach Conduct
- Head Coach Conduct
- Employee Conduct (contract services)
- Other adult conduct, i.e., USA Swim Official or swim team parent

## POLICY

The Coaches and potentially members of the Board of Directors have the authority to impose penalties for infractions of the NVST Code of Conduct or any behavior(s) they deem detrimental to the best interests of the Club or other swimmers. Consequences are at the sole discretion of the Coaches and/or the Organization, and may include, but are not limited to: verbal warnings, dismissal from practice, contacting parents, and expulsion. USA Swimming and local law enforcement (if applicable) will be contacted within 24 hours if a swimmer violates the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, Athlete Protection Policy, or local laws.

The person or group to whom the behavior was reported will:

- **Gather information.** The appropriate individuals will reach out to the person who filed the grievance and the person against whom the grievance is being filed to ask questions about what happened. Other witnesses may be contacted for more information, as well.
- **Assess behavior.** The behavior of the person(s) against which the grievance was brought will be assessed using Club policies and facility rules, USA Swimming Code of Conduct, USA Swimming Safe Sport policies, and applicable local and state laws.
- **Give consequences and take appropriate disciplinary action if needed.** These consequences and disciplinary actions will be decided using the following general guidelines:
  - Nature of the misconduct
  - Severity of the misconduct
  - Prior disciplinary actions against individual in question
  - Adverse effect of the misconduct
  - Application of the Code of Conduct

## **Approach (The Grievance Chain-of-Command)**

- **Regarding the Conduct of a Swimmer: Contact the swimmer's coach**  
Should a parent or swimmer feel another swimmer's conduct is inappropriate or violates the Athlete Code of Conduct, the parent/swimmer should discuss these concerns with the coach of the swimmer responsible for the violation (Responsible Coach). This complaint should be made in person or in writing.

- **Regarding the Conduct of an Assistant or Age Group Coach: Contact the Head Coach**

Should a parent or swimmer feel an Assistant or Age Group Coach's conduct is inappropriate or in violation of any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Head Coach of this violation. This complaint should be made in person or in writing.

- **Regarding Conduct of Head Coach: Notify the Board President**

Should a parent or swimmer feel the Head Coach's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the President of the NVST Board of this violation. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. If the Board President is not immediately available, this complaint may be presented to any member of the NVST Board of Directors, with notification made in writing to the President. This complaint will be subject to review and discussion by the NVST Board of Directors.

- **Regarding Employee (contract services) Conduct: Notify the PASA Board President in writing**

Should a parent or swimmer feel an employee's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Board President and the Head Coach of this violation. This complaint should be made in person or in writing. If the Board President is not immediately available, this complaint may be presented to any member of the PASA Board of Directors, with notification made in writing to the Board President. This complaint will be subject to review and discussion by the Board President and the Head Coach.

- **Regarding Board of Director Member Conduct: Notify the NVST Board President and Head Coach**

Should a parent or swimmer feel a Director's conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Head Coach and Board President of this violation in person or in writing. If the Board President is the Director whose conduct is in question, the Board Vice President should be notified in writing or in person instead of the Board President. This complaint will be reviewed and discussed by the Board of Directors (uninvolved parties) and the Head Coach.

- **Regarding Parent, Volunteer or Swim Official Conduct: Notify the Head Coach or any Board Member**

Should a parent or swimmer feel another NVST parent's or volunteer conduct is inappropriate or violates any Club policies or procedures, the parent/swimmer should notify the Head Coach and Board President of this violation in person or in writing. This complaint will be reviewed and discussed by the Board of Directors and the Head Coach.

## PROCEDURE

If you have any concern(s) relating to bullying, parent issues, unfair treatment, or any violations of the USA Swimming Code of Ethics and Conduct (including Safe Sport and the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy - MAAPP), please reach out to the NVST Board President, Safe Sport Coordinator and/or Head Coach. In addition, consult the appropriate person at Safe Sport or USA Swimming as directed below:

When making the decision to report a concern you have, it can often feel intimidating and overwhelming. Please use these guidelines to help you on the first step “Where do I report?”

Please use the provided links which will additionally help you get in touch with the appropriate people.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. If you are not sure who to contact with a concern please [contact Safe Sport Staff at the National Office](#) and we will be sure to talk through your concern, answer your questions and connect you with the correct people.

### **If your concern deals with any of the following:**

- Sexual Misconduct
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexually Explicit/Inappropriate Communication through Social Media

Please contact the U.S. Center for Safe Sport to make a report. Use the [online reporting form](#), call (720) 524-5640, or find more information at [www.uscenterforsafesport.org](http://www.uscenterforsafesport.org).

### **If your concern deals with any of the following:**

- Criminal Charges
- Use, Sale, or Distribution of illegal drugs
- Physical Abuse
- Inappropriate Touching
- Lap Sitting
- Coaches sharing hotel rooms with Athletes
- Rubdown or Massage performed by coaches
- Pictures or video taken in locker rooms or changing areas

Please contact Liz Hahn [ehahn@usaswimming.org](mailto:ehahn@usaswimming.org) at the National Office or complete the online reporting form.

[LINK TO ONLINE REPORTING FORM](#)

### **If your concern deals with any of the following:**

- Peer to Peer Bullying
- Adult to Athlete Bullying
- Parent Issues
- Violations of team rules and team code of conduct

Please make a report to your team. We have provided a [proposed letter of correspondence](#) to assist you in beginning this process.

## APPEALS

Any initial conduct review and disciplinary action will be the responsibility of the initial person(s) responsible for officially receiving said grievance (see “to whom to report” above). A decision, and/or disciplinary action, will be issued as soon as reasonably possible.

If a Parent/Swimmer who registers the complaint with an Assistant or Age Group Coach feels the disciplinary action is insufficient or unsatisfactorily resolves the issue, or if the responsible coach fails to address the parent/swimmer’s concerns in a timely manner, the parent/swimmer may appeal the decision to the Head Coach, in writing, within 7 days of the initial complaint. A decision and/or disciplinary action will be issued by the Head Coach as soon as reasonably possible.

If the parent/swimmer who registers the complaint appeals the Responsible Coach’s conduct review and/or disciplinary action to the Head Coach and feels the Head Coach’s decision/disciplinary action is insufficient or unsatisfactorily resolves the issue, or if the Head Coach fails to address the parent/swimmer’s concerns in a timely manner, the parent/swimmer may request that the NVST Board of Directors review all disciplinary actions and any appeals to the Head Coach up to that point..

The decision made by the leadership team (Head Coach, Board of Directors) regarding any complaint, and any resulting disciplinary action, is final.