

SBA PARENT VOLUNTEERING POLICY FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

SBA relies on parent volunteers to operate. SBA hosts several meets per year as well as participates in “away” meets 2-3 times a month. At these “away” meets, all swim teams are expected to provide parent volunteers to help the meets run smoothly. Mostly that will involve timing.

Below is a list of commonly asked questions since this policy was proposed. Know this list is not complete and will be updated as more questions are asked.

Q. Why was this policy instituted?

SBA relies heavily on parent volunteering to work. As a non-profit swim club, we are also a parent run swim club. It is expected that each swimmer will have a parent/guardian/responsible adult to participate/represent them at swim meets. Since we started tracking parent volunteering, SBA consistently found a number of parents covering the timing slots for a much greater time period than necessary given the number of swimmers at each meet. Conversely, SBA found a small number of parents who did not volunteer at all.

Q. Is the policy final?

Short answer, NO. Since this is the first time we have ever come up with a volunteer policy, we expect it to keep evolving.

Q. Is the policy in place to raise money for the team?

NO. The purpose of the policy is to have people in place to fulfill their obligations to the team, not to make money.

Q. How did you come up with the amount per fine?

The fines originally ranged from \$50-\$100 for each offense. Ultimately, \$20 was reached as the starting point since the goal is to have people volunteer, not to make money. If this amount does not work; however, the board will revisit and may impose a higher fine per offence.

Q. What if I cannot make the parent meeting due to work?

Communication is key. We understand people work on one or both weekend days. Contact us BEFORE the meet begins and see what can be worked out. Issues are easier to solve before the meeting begins.

Q. What if my swimmer carools to the meet?

You are still responsible for volunteering; however, you can discuss with the people bringing your swimmer to the pool to represent you at the parent meeting and ensure you have a timing slot assigned within your block. It is important to note that whoever represents you at the meeting will also be responsible for your timing slot if you do not show.

Q. Why is the fine issued on whether or not the parent meeting is attended?

The idea behind the parent meeting is to make sure people know who is there and with whom they are sharing the timing blocks. Parents not in attendance or without a representative will not be included in the distribution of timing assignments within the timing block and will be assessed a \$20 fine.

**Because there is not a way to monitor who actually shows up at the assigned time, the fine is levied against the parent meeting non attendance and not the actual timing slot.

Q. What if the parent was at the parent meeting, but did not show up at their assigned time?

If a parent at the meeting does not show up and you cover another parent's shift, talk to the parent about taking your next assigned shift. If that does not work, contact the team admin after the meet. Most likely, a fine will be assessed on the parent.

**At present, there is not a system in place to police whether or not people show up for their assigned time. Suggestions are welcome to address this issue. If a person would like to step up and volunteer to attend a meet from start to finish to ensure those at the parent meeting show up to their assigned slot, contact the board.

Q. Are there exceptions to the fine?

Yes. Exceptions are on a case by case basis. The most common exception will be if your swimmer signs up for a meet, but does not attend. You are not responsible for timing and will not be assessed.

Q. Are the fines automatic for missing the parent meeting?

No, the Team Admin will be given a list for each session of those who did not attend the meeting. That list will be checked against who swam in the meet and fines assessed accordingly from there.

Q. What is the process to appeal a fine?

Contact the Team Admin.

Q. What if my swimmer's first event is not until later in the day?

Again, the parent meeting at the beginning of the session determines who will time within a block. If you or your swimmer has been told by the coach to show up later, that does not excuse you from attending the meeting or having a representative speak on your behalf.

Q. What if my swimmer only has a distance event at the end of the session?

Distance events are not separate sessions (unless swam on the first day of the meet (Friday evening)). You are still responsible for either showing up at the meeting or having a representative as well as timing within your assigned block. Most likely, you would be assigned to the last block of the day before distance events start; however, that may not always be the case.

Q. What are the consequences for not paying the fine?

If an account has an unpaid fine for missing the parent meeting, the swimmer may be prohibited from registering for future meets until the fine is paid. SBA has within its discretion to request that the LSC pull the swimmer's USA card to prohibit entry (either attached to SBA or unattached) to future swim meets until the account is settled to SBA's satisfaction. If the swimmer's account is consistently billed for missing the parent meetings, the board will determine whether or not to allow the swimmer to remain on the team. It is the desire of SBA to not get to that point.

Q. How do I know when the parent meetings are?

The time for the parent meetings will be listed either on the attachment with the timing assignments or on the email sent from the Volunteer Coordinator.

Q. I have 2 swimmers in 2 sessions; do I have attend each meeting?

YES. For each session you are listed, you **MUST** attend the parent meeting or have a representative speak on your behalf.

Q. Are there parent meetings for each session?

Yes. If a meet has a split session (12u in AM & 13o in PM), there are 2 separate parent meetings. If you have a swimmer in each session, you **MUST** attend both sessions or have a representative speak for you.

Q. How does this compare with other swim teams?

The Board researched other teams, locally and regionally, to set the policy best suited for SBA. What we found is that all teams researched (around 12) require parents to volunteer or face a monetary consequence. Some teams require anywhere from 18-42 volunteer hours each year or face a fine up to \$40 for each day missed. Others have a buy-out of \$50/day to \$500 a season (long course/short course). Still others charge up to \$1050 for the year and deduct \$25 for each hour volunteered. Lastly, we found teams that require parents to volunteer even if their swimmers drive themselves or do not attend the meet at all.

Q. My swimmer drives. Do I still need to volunteer?

YES. As long as you have an active swimmer on the team, you are responsible for filling a volunteer slot. Again, you can ask another parent to represent you at the parent meeting; however, you or your representative are still responsible for your time.

Q. Is there a cap on fines?

Not at this time. It is the ultimate goal that no one will be assessed for missing the parent meeting or not being representative. Technically, if you have swimmers in each session and there are 2 sessions each day (Saturday/Sunday), you could be assessed up to \$80.

Q. Do Fridays count as a session?

Most of the time, NO. Fridays are generally distance events where you are responsible for timing your swimmer. There is not a parent meeting for those days.

Q. How are the Championship meets handled?

The same principles apply for prelims. Championship finals may be handled differently since the list of available parent volunteers is not determined until the end of the preliminary session. If you swimmer makes finals, you **MUST** have a volunteer slot.