

New to NOVA or new to traveling out of town for a swim meet? Find some frequently asked questions and answers here. If you need more information please contact Julie Farney at [novatravel@novaswim.org](mailto:novatravel@novaswim.org)

NOVA goes to many out of town swim meets. To help families keep costs down, we offer several different options. The meet schedule posted on the website usually has listed the type of meet.

**Parent Travel** - For some out of town meets, parents travel with their swimmers. NOVA coordinates group room blocks at discounted rates. Hotel information can be found on the NOVA website under the Swim Team tab, Hotel Information. Parents make their own reservations before the cut off date listed to reserve rooms in the block. Parents provide all transportation and meals for their own swimmer.

**Team Travel** - These meets are noted on the meet schedule in red under the special comments. There are usually about 6 team travel meets offered each season. Select 12 & Under swimmers attend a meet in January and June. All 13 & Over swimmers have a team travel option in December and June. Select swimmers may also team travel to high level meets in March and August. Swimmers who do not wish to team travel may decline, and ask to be redirected to a parent travel meet, but may not attend a team travel meet on their own with a parent.

**Team travel for 12 & Under** trips have a dedicated trip manager, a 3:1 swimmer to chaperone ratio for 10 & under swimmers, and a 12:1 or 16:1 ratio for 11-12 year old swimmers. All adults traveling with NOVA undergo a strict chaperone certification process, laid out by USA Swimming. Details of the certification process can be found under the Parent Tab on the NOVA website. Parents interested in chaperoning a trip should send an email to their swimmer's coach and the travel coordinator, as soon as you know that you are available. Chaperones are chosen on a first come first served basis, taking into consideration previous experience and the size of the group to be chaperoned. These trips provide a way for swimmers to bond with teammates, experience different pools/meets with preliminary and finals formats, gain independence, and prepare for travel at the 13 & over age. For this reason, parents attending team travel meets not as a chaperone, are asked to sit in separate areas of the pool, and allow the chaperones to watch over the swimmers. At no time may a swimmer go off with his/her parent at the meet, at any lunch or dinner

places, or at the hotel. This is for the safety and control of the entire group during team travel meets. Each meet has its own nuances and the designated trip manager is a good point of contact for parents who choose to come to watch their swimmers. Trip information sheets are sent to all families to give an estimate of the schedule, costs, and activities on the trip, as well as the names of the chaperones and the trip manager. Hotel, most meals, and transportation is planned by the travel coordinator. All swimmers stay together at the hotel, meals and on deck at the meets, moving as a group the entire trip. If a meet has finals, all swimmers go to finals, and if are not swimming are there to cheer for their teammates. Any changes in arrival or departure, requested by swimmers and parents from a team travel trip, will be considered by the coach and the travel coordinator before the trip departs, ONLY IF it is communicated in writing to the coach and travel coordinator no later than 3 days in advance of the trip leaving. Parents attending team travel meets not as a chaperone are asked to sit in separate areas of the pool, and allow the chaperones to watch over the swimmers. At no time may a swimmer go off with his/her parent at the meet, at any lunch or dinner places, or at the hotel. This is for the safety and control of the entire group during team travel meets.

**Team Travel for 13 & Over** trips have a dedicated trip manager, and a maximum 25:1 swimmer to chaperone ratio. All chaperones undergo the same certification process as a 12 & U chaperone. Again if parents are interested in chaperoning, please email your swimmer's coach and the travel coordinator as soon as you know you are available. The travel coordinator plans hotel, transportation including flights if necessary, food and activities. Trip information sheets are sent to all families to give an estimate of the schedule, costs, and activities on the trip, as well as the names of the chaperones and the trip manager. All swimmers move together as a group for the entire trip. If a meet has finals, all swimmers go to finals, and if are not swimming are there to cheer for their teammates. Some longer more expensive trips require a Commitment Form to be turned into the travel coordinator. These forms are emailed to the families to be printed, signed and returned. 13 & Over swimmers are more independent, and for longer trips, may have hotel rooms with kitchens, and may make grocery store runs for food, snacks and drinks. Again, swimmers may not travel to a Team Travel meet with a parent. Any

changes in arrival or departure, requested by swimmers and parents from a team travel trip, will be considered by the coach and the travel coordinator before the trip departs, ONLY IF it is communicated in writing to the coach and travel coordinator no later than 3 days in advance of the trip leaving.

**Team Travel Optional** - There are meets that NOVA offers swimmers a choice to travel with the team or with the parent. This will be communicated to the swimmers and parents who are qualified to attend such meets. Examples of meets which fall under this category are MAAGS (Stafford in November) and NCSA Age Group Championships (Orlando in March). Team travel is offered to help families keep costs down, but is not required. If you choose team travel NOVA and the travel coordinator make all the plans for the swimmer, and you receive the same type of trip information sheet as a regular team travel meet. If you choose to parent travel to this type of meet, the parent and swimmer are responsible for all hotel, transportation, and meal planning. They must also follow all on deck warm up times as listed on the NOVA website.

This is a brief overview of a complex and always evolving process. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions  
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